

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK VIII

Transference

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I announced for this coming year that I would deal with transference, with its subjective oddity (sa disparate subjective). It is not a term that was easily chosen. It underlines essentially something which goes further than the simple notion of asymmetry between subjects. It poses in the very title... it rebels, as I might say from the beginning, against the idea that intersubjectivity can by itself alone provide the framework in which the phenomenon is inscribed. There are words which are more or less appropriate in different tongues. I am looking for some equivalent for the word impair, for the subjective oddity of transference, for the oddity that it contains essentially. There is no term, except the very term imparite which is not used in French, to designate it. "In its supposed situation" (dans sa pretendue situation) my title also says, indicating by that some reference to this effort over the last years in analysis to organise, around the notion of situation, what happens in analytic treatment. The very word supposed is there again to say that I dispute the validity of, or at least that I take up a corrective position with respect to this effort. I do not believe that one can say purely and simply about psychoanalysis that what we have here is a situation. If it is one, it is one of which one could also say: it is not a situation or again, that it is a false situation.

Everything that presents itself as technique must be inscribed as referring to these principles, to this search for principles which is already evoked by pointing out these differences, and in a word in a correct topology, in a rectification of what is in question, of what is commonly implied in the use that we make every day theoretically of the notion of transference, namely as something which when all is said and done it is question of referring to an experience, which it, we nevertheless know very well, at least to the extent that in some way or other we have some practical experience of analysis. I would like to point (2) out that I took a long time to reach what is this heart of our experience. Depending on how you date this seminar in which I have been guiding a certain number of you for several years, depending on the date that you consider it to have begun, it is in the eighth or tenth year that I am tackling transference. I think that you will see that there are reasons for this long delay.

Let us begin then... at the beginning, everyone charges me with having referred myself to some paraphrase of the formula: "In the beginning was the Word", somebody else said "In Anfang war die

Tat", and for a third, at first (namely at the beginning of the human world), at first there was praxis. Here are three enunciations which appear to be incompatible.

In fact, what is important from the position we are in to settle the matter, namely from analytic experience, what is important is not their value as enunciations, but as I might say their value as enunciatings, or again as annunciations, I mean the way in which they bring to light the ex nihilo proper to all creation and show its intimate liaison with the evocation of the word. At this level, all manifest obviously that they fall within the first enunciation: "In the beginning was the Word". If I evoke this, it is to differentiate it from what I am talking about, this point from which I am going to begin to affront this most opaque term, this kernel of our experience which is transference.

I intend to begin, I want to begin, I am going to try, by beginning with all the necessary awkwardness, to begin today around this, that the term "In the beginning" certainly has another meaning. At the beginning of analytic experience - let us remember - was love. This beginning is something different to this self-transparency of the enunciating which gave their meaning to the above mentioned formulae. Here it is a dense, confused beginning. It is a beginning not of creation but of formation - and I will come back to this later - at the historical point at which there is born what is already psychoanalysis and what Anna O. herself baptised, in the initial observation of Studien über Hysterie, with the term of talking cure or again of chimney sweeping.

But before getting to this I want to recall for a moment, for those who were not here last year, some of the terms around which there turned our exploration of what I called The ethics of psychoanalysis. What I wanted to explain before you last year is - as one might say - to refer to the term of creation which I mentioned above, the creationist structure of the human ethos as (3) such, the ex nihilo which subsists at its heart which constitutes to use a term of Freud's, the kernel of our being, Kern unseres Wesen. I wanted to show that this ethos is enveloped around this ex nihilo as subsisting in an impenetrable vacuum. In order to approach it, to designate this impenetrable character, I began - as you remember - by a critique whose end consisted in rejecting expressly what you will allow me to call (at least those who heard me will let it pass), Plato's Schwärmerei. Schwärmerei in German, for those who do not know it, designates reverie, phantasy directed towards some enthusiasm and more especially towards something which is situated or which is directed towards superstition, fanaticism, in brief the critical connotation in the order of religious orientation which is added by history. In the texts of Kant the term Schwärmerei clearly has this inflection. What I call Plato's Schwärmerei, is to have projected onto what I call the impenetrable vacuum, the idea of the sovereign good. Let us say that this is simply to indicate the path taken, that with more or less success of course I tried to pursue with a formal intention; .... what results from the rejection of the Platonic notion of the sovereign good occupying the centre of our being.

No doubt to rejoin our experience, but from a critical point of view, I proceeded in part from what one can call the Aristotelian

conversion with respect to Plato who without any doubt has been superseded for us on the ethical plane; but at the point that we are at of having to show the historical fate of ethical notions beginning with Plato (undoubtedly the Aristotelian reference), the Nicomachean Ethics is essential. I showed that it is difficult to follow what it contains as a decisive step in the construction of an ethical reflection, not to see that although it maintains this notion of sovereign good, it profoundly changes its meaning. It makes it consist by an inverse movement of reflection in the contemplation of the stars, this most exterior sphere of the existing world which is absolute, uncreated, incorruptible. It is precisely because for us it is decisively volatilised into the dust of the galaxies which is the final term of our cosmological investigation, that one can take the Aristotelian reference as a critical point of what in the traditions of antiquity, at the point that we have got to in them, the notion of sovereign good is.

With this step we came up against a wall, the wall which is always the same ever since ethical reflection has tried to develop itself; it is that we must assume or not what ethical reflection, ethical thinking has never been able to free itself from, namely that there is no good (bon. gut), no pleasure, unless one begins from there. We are still looking for the principle of the Wohltat. the principle of good action. What it infers allows us to say that it is not perhaps simply a question of the good deed, even if it were raised to the Kantian power of the universal maxim. If we have to take seriously the Freudian denunciation of the fallacy of these so called moral satisfactions, in so far as an aggressivity is concealed within them which succeeds in stealing his nouissance from the person (4) who practices it, while at the same time making its ill effects reverberate endlessly on his social partners (what these long circumstantial conditionals indicate is exactly the equivalent of Civilisation and its discontents in Freud's work), so that one ought to ask oneself how one can operate honestly with desire; namely how to preserve desire with this act in which it ordinarily collapses rather than realising itself and which at best only presents to it (to desire) its exploit, its heroic gesture; how to preserve desire, preserve what one can call a simple or salubrious relationship of desire to this act.

Let us not mince words about what salubrious means in terms of the Freudian experience: it means to be rid of, to be as rid as possible of this infection which to our eyes, but not only to our eyes, to eyes ever since they were opened to ethical reflection... this infection which is the teeming foundation of every social establishment as such. This of course presupposes that psychoanalysis, in its very manual of instructions, does not respect what I would call this opaque spot, this newly invented cataract, this moral wound, this form of blindness which constitutes a certain practice from what is called the sociological point of view. I am not going to expand on this. And even, to recall what a recent encounter which presentified to my eyes the useless and scandalous conclusions come to by this sort of research which pretends to reduce an experience like that of the unconscious to the reference of two, three, even four so-called sociological models, the great irritation I felt has since calmed down, but I will leave the authors of such exercises at the pons asinorum which is only too willing to receive them. It

is quite clear also that in speaking in these terms about sociology I am not referring to this sort of meditation where the reflection of Lévi-Strauss is situated in so far - consult his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France - as it expressly refers, in dealing with societies, to an ethical meditation about social practices.

The double reference to a cultural norm situated more or less mythically in neolithic times, and on the other hand to the political meditation of Rousseau, is sufficiently indicative of this.

But let us leave it, this is of no concern to us. I will only recall that it was along the path of the properly ethical reference which is constituted by the wild reflections of Sade, and that it is along the offensive paths of Sadian iouissance that I showed you one of the possible access points to this properly tragic frontier where the Freudian Oberland is situated, and that it is at the heart of what some of you have baptised the between-two-deaths (a very exact term to designate the field in which there is expressly articulated as such everything that happens in the proper universe delineated by Sophocles and not only in the adventure of King Oedipus), that there is situated this phenomenon regarding which I think I can say that we have introduced a reference point in the ethical tradition, in the reflection on the motives and the motivations of the good.

This reference point, in so far as I properly designated it as being that of beauty in so far as it ornaments, has the function of constituting the last barrier before this (5) access to the last thing, to the mortal thing, to this point at which Freud's meditation came to make its final avowal under the term of death instinct.

I ask your pardon for having thought it necessary to delineate, even though in an abbreviated fashion but constituting a long detour, this brief summary of what we said last year. This detour was necessary to recall, at the origin of what we are going to have to say, that the term on which we dwelt concerning the function of beauty (because I do not need I think, for most of you, to evoke what is constituted by this term of the beautiful and of beauty at this point of the inflection of what I called the platonic Schwärmerei) that provisionally I ask you, as a hypothesis, to see as leading to the level of an adventure which is if not psychological at least individual, to see it as the effect of mourning which one can really see is immortal, because it is at the very source of everything which has since been articulated in our tradition about the idea of mortality, of the immortal mourning of the one who incarnated this wager of sustaining his question which is none other than the question of everyone who speaks, at the point where he, this person, received it from his own demon (according to our formula in an inverted form), I am talking about Socrates.

Socrates thus put at the origin, let us say right away, of the longest transference (something which would give to this formula all its weight) that the history of thought has known. Because I am saying it to you right away, I am trying to get you to sense it, the secret of Socrates will be behind everything that we will say this year about transference.

Socrates admitted this secret. But it is not just because one has admitted it that a secret ceases to be a secret.

Socrates claims to know nothing, except to be able to recognise what love is and, he tells us (I come to a testimony of Plato, specifically in the Lysis) namely to recognise infallibly, wherever he encounters them, where the lover is and where the beloved.

I think that it is in paragraph 2 04c. There are

multiple references to this reference of Socrates to love.

And now we have been brought back to our starting point in so far as I want to accentuate it today. However chaste or however indecent may be the veil which is kept half open on this inaugural accident which turned the eminent Breuer aside from giving to this first really extraordinary experience of the talking cure the development it deserved, it remains quite obvious that this accident was a love story, that this love story did not exist only on the side of the patient is absolutely also not in doubt.

It is not enough to say, in the form of these exquisitely correct terms which we use (as Mr. Jones does on one or other page of his first volume of Freud's biography) that undoubtedly Breuer must have been the victim of what we call, says Jones, a rather marked counter-transference. It is quite clear that Breuer loved his (6) patient. We only see as its most obvious proof what in such a case is the properly bourgeois result: the return to a conjugal fervour which had been reanimated in this connection, the sudden trip to Venice with even as a result something that Jones tells us about, namely the fruit of a new little girl being added to the family, whose end many years afterwards Jones rather sadly tells us in this connection is mixed up with the catastrophic invasion of the Nazis into Vienna. There is no need to ironise about these sorts of accidents, except of course in so far as they present us with something typical with respect to a certain so-called particularly bourgeois style relating to love, with this need, this necessity of an awakening in place of this heartlessness which harmonises so well with the type of abnegation within which bourgeois need is inscribed.

This is not what is important. But it does not matter whether he resisted or not. What we should rather bless in that moment is the divorce already inscribed more than ten years ahead of time (because this happens in 1882, and it is only ten years later, then fifteen years, that will be required, for Freud's experience to culminate in the work of Studien über Hysterie written with Breuer) bless the divorce between Breuer and Freud. Because everything is there: the little eros whose malice first struck the first, Breuer, with the suddenness of his surprise, forced him to flee, the little eros finds his master in the second, Freud. And why? I might say - allow me to amuse myself for a moment - that it was because for Freud his retreat was cut off: an element from the same context where he was the votary of intransigent loves (as we know since we have his correspondence with his fiancée). Freud encounters ideal women who respond to him in the physical mode of the hedgehog. Sie streben dagegen (as Freud wrote in Irma's dream, in which the allusions to his own wife are not evident or avowed) they are always being rubbed up the wrong way. There appears in any case an element of the permanent outline that Freud gives us of his thirst, the Frau Professor herself, an object on occasion of Jones' wonder, who nevertheless, if I may believe my sources, knew how to keep her head down. It might be a curious common dominator with Socrates, who as you know also had to deal at home with a shrew who was not at all easy to handle. Even though the difference between the two is obvious, it would be one between the ceremonial otter whose profile Aristophanes shows us, a profile of a Lysistran weasel whose powerful bite we can

appreciate in the replies of Aristophanes. A simple difference (7) of odour. That is enough about this subject. And all the same I would say that I think that there is here only a particular reference and that, in a word, this datum, as regards your conjugal existence is not at all indispensable - everybody can relax - for your good behaviour.

We must search further on the mystery that is in question. Over against Breuer, for whatever reason, Freud took the step that made of him the master of the redoubtable little god. He chooses like Socrates to serve him in order to make use of him. Here indeed is the point where problems are going to begin for all of us. Again is it indeed a question of underlining this "making use of eros". And to make use of it for what purpose? Here indeed is why it was necessary for me to recall to you the reference points of our articulation from last year: to make use of it for good. We know that the domain of eros goes infinitely further than any field that this good may cover, at least we can take this as understood. You see that the problems that transference poses for us are only beginning here. And it is moreover something perpetually presented to your spirit (it is the current language, the common discourse about analysis, about transference): you should indeed not have in any preconceived or permanent way, as a first term of the end of your action the supposed good or not of your patient, but precisely his eros.

I do not think I should fail to recall once more here that which joins in the most risky way the Socratic initiative and the Freudian initiative, by bringing together their outcome in the reduplication of these terms in which there is going to be expressed in a condensed fashion more or less the following: Socrates chose to serve eros in order to make use of it or by making use of it. This led him very far - you should note this - to a very far which people try to camouflage by making a pure and simple accident of what I called above the teeming foundation of social infection. But is this not to do him an injustice, not to give him credit for believing it, for believing that he did not know perfectly well that he was going against the current of this whole social order in the midst of which he inscribed his daily practice, this really senseless, scandalous behaviour with whatever merit the devotion of his disciples afterwards tried to invest it, by highlighting the heroic aspects of Socrates' behaviour. It is clear that they could not but record what is the major characteristic which Plato himself qualified by a word which has remained celebrated among those who have approached the problem of Socrates, it is his atopia (in the order of the city there are no healthy beliefs if they are not verified). In everything which assures the equilibrium of the city, not only does Socrates not have a place, but he is nowhere.

And how can one be surprised if an action so vigorous in its unclassifiable character, so vigorous that it still vibrates down to our own time, took its place. How can one be surprised at the fact

that it culminated in this death sentence, namely in real death in the clearest fashion, qua inflicted at a moment chosen in advance with the consent of all and for the good of all, and after all without the centuries having been ever able to decide since whether the sanction was just or unjust. From here where goes the destiny, a destiny which it seems to me it is not excessive to consider as necessary and not extraordinary, of Socrates?

(8) Freud on the other hand, is it not in following the rigour of his path that he discovered the death instinct, namely something also very scandalous, less costly no doubt for the individual? Is there a real difference here? Socrates as formal logic has repeated for centuries, and there must be a reason for its insistence, Socrates is mortal, therefore he had to die one day. It is not the fact that Freud died quietly in bed that is important for us here. I tried to show you the convergence between what is delineated here and the Sadian aspiration. There is here distinguished this idea of eternal death, of death in so far as it makes of the being itself its detour without our being able to know if we have here sense or nonsense and also indeed the other, that of the body. The second is that of those who uncompromisingly follow eros, eros by means of which bodies are joined, with Plato into one soul, with Freud without any soul at all, but in any case in a single eros in so far - as it unifies unitively. Naturally you could interrupt me here. Where am I leading you? This eros of course - you will grant me this - is indeed the same in the two cases, even if it intolerable to us. But these two deaths, why do you have to bring those back to us, this boat from last year? Are you still thinking about it, to make us pass over what? The river which separates them? Are we talking about the death instinct or about dialectic? My answer to you is yes! Yes, if both one and the other gives rise to astonishment in us. Because of course I am quite willing to grant that I am straying, that it is not my job after all to carry you to the final impasses, that I will make you be astonished, if you are not so already, if not about Socrates, at least about Freud at the starting point. Because people will prove to you that these very impasses are simple to resolve if precisely you are willing to be astonished by nothing. It is enough for you to take as a starting point, something as simple as "Good day", as clear as spring water, intersubjectivity for example. I intersubjectivate you, you intersubjectivate me I swear that the first one who laughs will get a smack, and one that is well deserved!

Because as people say, who does not see that Freud overlooked that there is nothing other in sadomasochistic constancy? Narcissism explains everything. And people address themselves to me saying: "Were you not almost saying that?" It must be said that at that time I was already rather reticent about the function of the narcissistic wound but it does not matter! And I would also be told that my inconvenient Socrates should also have come back in his turn to this intersubjectivity. Because Socrates in fact made only one mistake, it was to violate the procedure according to which we should always regulate ourselves, not to return to the law of the masses, who everyone knows will take a long while to lift a little finger on the terrain of justice, because the masses will always necessarily arrive the day after. This is how astonishment is regulated, made into a fault; errors will never be anything but judicial errors, this without prejudice to personal motivations.

What there may be in me in terms of this need I have always to add to things, and which, of course, is to be looked for in my taste for making things beautiful - we have found our feet again - is my perverse leaning, therefore my sophistry may be (9) superfluous. Therefore we are going to restart by proceeding from 0 and I will take up again in coming down to earth, the force of the litotes in order to aim without your being slightly astonished. Is it intersubjectivity, namely what is most foreign to the analytic



encounter, which for its part stresses that we should flee from it, in the certainty that it must be avoided? The Freudian experience becomes rigid once it appears, it only flourishes in its absence. The doctor and the patient - as we are told - this famous relationship which gets people so excited, are they going to become intersubjective and who is going to do it best? Perhaps, but one can say that in this sense both one and the other take precautions; "He is telling me this for his own comfort or to please me?" thinks the one; "Is he trying to trick me?", thinks the other. Even the shepherd-shepherdess relationship, if it engages in this way, is badly engaged. It is condemned, if it remains there, to end up with nothing. This is precisely why these two relationships, doctor-patient, shepherd-shepherdess, must at all costs be different to diplomatic negotiation and the ambush.

What is called poker, -this theoretical poker, with all due respects to Mr. Henri Lefebvre, is not to be looked for in the work of Mr. von Neumann even though he recently affirmed it, which means that given my benevolence I can only deduce one thing: that all he knows about von Neumann's theory is the title in Hermann's catalogue. It is true that at the same time Henri Lefebvre places on the same register of poker the very philosophical discussion we were dealing with. Obviously if after all it is not his right I can only leave him to reap the rewards that he merits.

To come back to thinking about our intersubjective couple, my first concern as an analyst will be not to be put myself in the position that my patient has even to share such reflections with me and the simplest way to spare him this is precisely to avoid any attitude which lends to an imputation of comforting, and a fortiori of seduction. I will even absolutely avoid, if it happens to escape from me as such, and if I see it happening, in any case I can only intervene to the degree that I underline that I suppose that he is doing this without realising it. Again, it is necessary for me to take precautions to avoid any misunderstanding, namely of appearing to be charging him with a piece of trickery however uncalculated it may be. Therefore this does not even mean that intersubjectivity is to be taken up in analysis only in the movement which would carry it to a second degree, as if the analyst were waiting for the analysand to transfix himself on it in order that he, the analyst, could turn the sword.

(10) This intersubjectivity is properly set aside, or better again put off sine die, in order to allow there to appear a different hold whose characteristic is precisely to be essentially transference. The patient himself knows it, he calls for it. Moreover he wants to be surprised. You may say that it is another aspect of intersubjectivity, even, a curious thing, in the fact that it is I myself who am supposed to have opened up the path here. But wherever one places this initiative, it is a misinterpretation to attribute it to me.

And in fact, if I had not formalised in the position of bridge players the subjective othernesses which are involved in the analytic position, you would never have been able to pretend that you saw me taking a step that converged with the mistakenly daring schema that someone like Rickman thought up one day under the name of two-body psychology. Such theories always have a certain success given the state of amphibious respiration with which analytic thought sustains itself. For them to succeed, two

conditions are enough. First of all, that they are supposed to come from honourable areas of scientific activity from which there may return in the present, from something moreover which may be shop-soiled psychoanalysis, a cheap gloss. This was the case here.

Rickman was a man who had, shortly after the war, this sort of benevolent aura of having been involved in the Russian revolution, thought of putting it at the heart of interpsychological experience.

The second reason for this success was that it did not disturb in any way the routine of psychoanalysis. And also of course a track is remade for the mental switching points which bring us back to the garage. But at least the name of two-body psychology might all the same have had some sense: to wake us up. This precisely is what is completely elided - you should notice - in the way its formula is used. It should evoke the role played by the attraction of bodies in the supposed analytic situation. It is curious that we would have to pass by way of the Socratic reference to grasp its import. In Socrates, I mean when words are lent to him, this reference to the beauty of bodies is permanent. It is as one might say the animator of this movement of interrogation into which - you should notice - we have not even entered into yet, in which we do not even yet know how the function of the lover and the beloved are divided up (although there, all the same, things are called by their name and in terms of these we are able to make some useful remarks).

If effectively something, in the passionate, dialectical interrogation which animates this starting point is related to the body it must be said that, in analysis, this is underlined by features whose accentuated value takes its weight from its particularly negative incidence. That analysts themselves - I hope that nobody here will think that he is being got at - do not recommend themselves by their corporeal charm is something to which Socratic ugliness gives its most noble ancestry, at the same time moreover as it recalls to us that it is not at all an obstacle to love. But we must all the same underline something, which is that the physical ideal of the psychoanalyst, at least as it is modelled according to the imagination of the masses, involves adding on an obtuse density and a narrow minded (11) boorishness which really brings with it the whole question of prestige.

The cinema screen - as I might say - offers the most sensitive revelation of this. If we simply make use of Hitchcock's last film, you can see the form in which the one who solves the riddle is presented, the one who is presented here to finally settle matters when all the other recourses have been exhausted. Frankly he carries all the marks of what we will call an element of the untouchable! So that here moreover we put our finger on an essential element of the convention because we are dealing with the analytic situation. And in order for it to be violated, let us take again the same term of reference, the cinema, in a way that is not revolting, it is necessary that the one who plays the role of the analyst..... let us take Suddenly Last Summer, we see here the personage of a therapist who pushes charity to the point of nobly returning the kiss that an unfortunate woman places on his lips, he is a handsome man, here it is absolutely necessary that he should be. It is true that he is also a neurosurgeon, and that he is promptly sent back to his trepanning. It is not a situation which could last. In short analysis is the only praxis in which charm is a disadvantage. It would break the spell. Who has ever heard tell of a charming analyst?

These are not remarks which are altogether useless. They may seem to be things which might only amuse us. It is important that they should be evoked at the level they are at. In any case it is just as important to note that in the management of the patient this very access to the body, which a medical examination would seem to require, is usually sacrificed according to the rule. And it is worthwhile noting this. It is not enough to say: "It is to avoid the excessive effects of transference". And why should the effects be more excessive at that level? Of course it cannot be accounted for either by a kind of anachronistic prudishness the traces of which one sees subsisting in rural areas, in Islamic gynaeceums, and in that incredible Portugal where the doctor can only auscultate through the clothes of the beautiful stranger. We go even further than this, and however necessary an auscultation may appear at the beginning of a treatment (or in the course of one) it is a way of breaking the rule. Let us look at things from another angle. There is nothing less erotic than that reading - as one might call it - of the instantaneous states of the body that certain psychoanalysts excel at. Because all the characters of this reading is in terms of signifiers - one could say that these states of the body are translated. The distant focus which this reading adapts itself to demands on the part of the analyst just as much interest, let us not settle too quickly the meaning of all of this. One could say that this neutralisation of the body (which seems after all the primary end of civilisation) has to deal here with a greater urgency and so many precautions suppose the possibility of abandoning it. I am not so sure. Only I introduce here the question of what the body is. Let us remain for a moment at that remark. In any case it would be a bad (12) appreciation of things not to recognise at the beginning that psychoanalysis demands from the first a high degree of libidinal sublimation at the level of collective relationships. The extreme decorum that one can say is maintained in the most ordinary fashion in the analytic relationship leads one to think that if the regular confinement of the two people involved in the analytic treatment in a room where they are protected from any indiscretion only rarely culminates at a lack of bodily constraint of one on the other, it is because the temptation which this confining would involve in any other occupation is less here than elsewhere. Let us remain at this point for the moment.

The analytic cell, even if it is a comfortable one, let it be whatever you wish, is all but (n'est rien de moins que) a bed of love and this I think comes from the fact that, despite all the efforts that one makes to reduce it to the common denominator of a situation, with all the resonances that we can give to this familiar term, it is not a situation to come to it - as I said above - it is the falsest situation imaginable. This allows us to understand, it is precisely the reference that we will try to take up the next time to what is in the social context the situation of love itself. It is in the measure that we can circumscribe more closely, dwell on what Freud touched on more than once, what the position of love is in society, a precarious position, a threatened position let us say right away, a clandestine position, it is in this very measure that we can appreciate why and how, in this most protected of all positions, that of the analytic office this position of love becomes here even more paradoxical.

Here I arbitrarily suspend this process. Let it suffice for you to see in what sense I intend that we should take up the question. Breaking with the tradition which consists in abstracting, in

neutralising, in emptying of all its meaning whatever is involved at the basis of the analytic relationship, I intend to begin from the extremes of what I am supposing: to isolate oneself with another to teach him what? What he is lacking!

A still more formidable situation, if we think precisely that by the very nature of transference "what he is lacking" is going to be learned by him as a lover. If I am here for his good, it is not in the completely restful sense in which the Thomist tradition articulates it (Amare est velle bonum alicui) because this good is already a term which is more than problematic - if you were following me last year - superseded, I am not there when all is said and done for his good, but in order that he should love. Does that mean that I must teach him how to love? Undoubtedly, it seems difficult to elide from it the necessity that as regards loving and what love is it must be said that the two things must not be confused. As regards loving and knowing what it is to love, I must all the same, like Socrates, be able to testify on my own behalf that I know something about it.

(13) Now it is precisely, if we enter into analytic literature, that about which least is said. It seems that love in its primordial ambivalent coupling with hate, is a term which is self-evident. You should see nothing other, in my humorous remarks of today, than something destined to tickle your ears.

There is nevertheless a long tradition which speaks to us about love. The final term at which it has culminated is this enormously laborious work by Anders Nygren, which radically splits it into these two terms unbelievably opposed in his discourse of eros and agape.

But behind that, for centuries people spent their time discussing and debating about love. Is this again not another subject for astonishment that we analysts who make use of it, who have this word continually on our lips, that we could say that with respect to a certain tradition we present ourselves really as impoverished, having made no attempt - even a partial one - I will not say to revise, to add to what has been pursued throughout the centuries about this term, but even of something which simply is not unworthy of this tradition. Is there not something surprising here?

In order to show it to you, to make you sense it, I took as the object of my next seminar the recalling of what is really a monumental, original term of interest with respect to this whole tradition of ours on the subject of the structure of love which is the Symposium. If anyone who felt himself sufficiently interested or wanted to have a dialogue with me about the Symposium. I think there would be a lot of advantages in it. Undoubtedly a rereading of this monumental text which is so full of enigmas where everything tends to show us at once how much - as one might say - the very mass of religious lucubration which penetrates all our fibres, which is present in all our experience, owes to this sort of extraordinary testament, the Schwarmerei of Plato, what we can find in it, deduce from it in terms of essential references and - I will show you - up to the history of this debate, of what happened in the first analytic transference. That we can find in it every possible key, is something that I think, when we have put it to the test, you will not doubt. Undoubtedly these are not terms which I would easily allow to be so conspicuous in some published account. Nor are they

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formulae whose echoes I would like to see going to nourish elsewhere the usual buffooneries. I would intend that, this year, we should know who we are working with and who we are.

Seminar 2; Wednesday 23 November 1960

It is a question today of entering into an examination of the Symposium. This at least is what I promised you the last time.

What I told you the last time seemed to have had different destinies among you. The tasters are tasting. They are asking themselves: will it be a good year? Only I would like you not to dwell too much on what may appear as approximate in some of the touches with which I tried to light up our path. I tried the last time to show you the supports of the stage on which there is going to take place what we have to say about transference. It is quite certain that the reference to the body, and specifically to what can affect it in the order of beauty, was not simply an opportunity to make jokes about the transferential reference. Occasionally there is the objection that it sometimes happens in the cinema that the psychoanalyst is a handsome man and not alone in the exceptional case that I remarked on. It should be noted that it is precisely at the moment when in the cinema analysis is taken as a pretext for comedy. In short, you are going to see that the principal references to which I referred the last time find their justification in the path that we are going to have to take today.

It is not easy to give an account of what the Symposium is all about, given the style and the limits which are imposed on us by our place, our particular object which - let us not forget it - is particularly that of analytic experience. To set about giving a proper commentary on this extraordinary text is, perhaps, to force ourselves to make a long detour which would not then leave us enough time for the other parts of the field, given that we choose the Symposium in the measure that there seemed to us to be in it a particularly illuminating introduction to our study.

Therefore we are going to have to proceed using a form which is obviously not the one that would be used in what could be called a university style commentary of the Symposium. On the other hand, of course, I must necessarily suppose that at least some of you have not really been initiated into Plato's thought. I am not telling you that I consider myself to be fully armed from

this point of view. Nevertheless I have all the same enough experience of it, a good enough idea of it to believe that I can allow myself to isolate, to concentrate these spotlights on the Symposium while respecting a whole background. I would moreover (2) ask those who are in a position to do so to supervise me from time to time, to let me know what may be not so much arbitrary - this illumination is necessarily arbitrary - but that which in its arbitrariness may appear to be forced or biased.

On the other hand I do not object to, and I even believe that one must highlight a certain rawness, newness, in approaching a text like that of the Symposium. That is why I hope you will excuse me for presenting it to you at first in a rather paradoxical form or one that may appear to you to be such. It seems to me that someone who reads the Symposium for the first time, if he is not absolutely dulled by the fact that it is a text belonging to a respectable tradition, can hardly fail to experience a feeling which can be described more or less as being stunned. I would say more: if he has a little historical imagination it seems to me that he must ask himself how such a thing could have been preserved for us throughout what I would be happy to call the generations of scribblers, of monks, of people who do not seem to have been destined to transmit something to us; ... which it seems to me that it can hardly fail to strike us, at least in one of its parts (by its end) as belonging rather - why not say it - to what is called in our own days a special type of literature, a literature which can be the object.... which can become subject to enquiries by the police.

To tell the truth if you simply know how to read - it seems to me you can speak all the more freely in so far as, I believe that one swallow does not make a summer, many of you, following my announcement the last time have acquired this work and therefore have been able to dip into it - you can hardly fail to be struck by what happens in the second part at least of this discourse between Alcibiades and Socrates outside the limits of the banquet itself. In so far as we will see later that it is a ceremony which has its rules, a sort of ritual, of an intimate competition between members of the elite, a society game... this society game this Symposium we see is not a pretext for Plato's dialogue, it refers to customs, to habits that are differently regulated according to the locality in Greece, the level of culture we would say, and the rule that is imposed there is not something exceptional: that everyone should bring his share in the form of a little contribution of a discourse determined by a subject (194d). Nevertheless there is something which was not foreseen, there is what one might call a disturbance. The rules were even given at the beginning of the Symposium that there should not be too much drinking; no doubt the pretext is that most of the people there already have a hangover because they had drunk too (3) much the night before. One also notices the importance of the serious character of this elite group that is made up that evening by fellow drinkers.

This does not prevent that at a moment, which is a moment at which not everything is finished, far from it, one of the guests,

Aristophanes, has something to say in the order of a rectification of the agenda, or a demand for explanation. At that very moment there enter a group of people, who are completely drunk, namely Alcibiades and his companions. And Alcibiades, who is pretty high, takes over the chair and begins to make statements which are exactly the ones whose scandalous character I intend to highlight for you.

Obviously this presupposes that we have some idea of what Alcibiades is, of what Socrates is and this takes us very far. All the same I would like you to take into account what Alcibiades is. In any case, for the usual version, you should read in the Nine Greek Lives what Plutarch wrote about him, this to help you to take into account the stature of the personage.

I know well that this again is going to demand an effort from you. This life is described for us by Plutarch in what I would call the Alexandrian atmosphere, namely at a funny moment in history, in which all the personages seem to pass to the state of a sort of shadow. I am speaking about the moral accent of what comes to us from this epoch which involves a sort of emergence of shadows, a sort of nekuia as it is called in the Odyssey.

Plutarch's construction, with what they contain moreover as a model, as a paradigm, for a whole moralistic tradition which followed, have this something or other which makes us think of the being of zombies: it is difficult to see blood flowing through their veins. But try to imagine from this singular career that Plutarch outlines for us, what this man must have been; this man coming here before Socrates, Socrates who elsewhere declares that he was protos erastes, the first to have loved him, Alcibiades, this Alcibiades who on the other hand is a sort of pre-Alexander, a personage no doubt whose political adventures are all marked with the sign of defiance, of extraordinary exploits, of an incapacity to situate himself or to come to a halt anywhere, and wherever he passes upsetting the situation and making victory pass from one camp to the other wherever he goes, everywhere hunted, exiled and, it must be said, because of his misdeeds.

It seems that if Athens lost the Peloponnesian War, it is in so far as it felt the need to recall Alcibiades right in the middle of hostilities to make him account for an obscure story, the one described as the mutilation of Hermes, which appears to us to be (4) as inexplicable as it is ridiculous as we look back on it, but which surely involved fundamentally a character of profanation, of properly speaking insulting the gods.

Nor are we at all able to consider the memory of Alcibiades and his companions as settled. I mean that it is surely not without reason that the people of Athens brought him to book for it. In this sort of practice which evokes, by analogy, some sort of black Mass or other, we cannot fail to see against what kind of background of insurrection, of subversion with respect to the laws of the city, that there emerges a personage like Alcibiades. A background of rupture, of contempt for forms and for



traditions, for laws, no doubt for religion itself... This is the disturbing thing that this personage carries with him. But he carries with him just as much a very singular seduction wherever he goes. And after this suit by the people of Athens, he does neither more nor less than pass over to the enemy, to Sparta, to this Sparta moreover that he Alcibiades has some responsibility in making the enemy of Athens, because, previously, he did all in his power in short, to make the peace negotiations fail.

So he goes over to Sparta and he immediately finds nothing better, nor more worthy of his memory, than to make the queen pregnant, something which everybody saw and knew about. It happens to be very well known that the king Agis has not slept with his wife for ten "months for reasons which I will pass over. She has a child, and right away Alcibiades will say: in any case, it was not for the pleasure of it that I did this, it is because it seemed appropriate to my dignity to ensure that my descendants would have a throne, and in that way to honour the throne of Sparta with one of my own race. This sort of thing, as you can well imagine, may be captivating for a certain time, but it is not forgiven. And naturally as you know Alcibiades, having contributed this present and some ingenious ideas about the manner of conducting hostilities, is going to change quarters again. He can hardly fail to go to the third camp, to the Persian camp, to the one represented by the power of the king of Persia in Asia Minor, namely Tissaphernes who, Plutarch tells us, was a bitter enemy of Greece. To be frank he hates them, but he is seduced by Alcibiades.

It is from there that Alcibiades is going to set about reestablishing the fortunes of Athens. He does it in conditions whose story of course is also extremely surprising because it seems that it is really in the midst of a sort of network of double agents, of permanent betrayal, all the warnings he gives to the Athenians are immediately reported through a circuit to Sparta and to the Persians themselves who make it known to the specific person of the Athenian fleet who passed on the information; so that at the same time he in his turn comes to know, to be informed, that it is perfectly well known in the highest places that he is a traitor.

Each of these personages sorts himself out as best he can. It is certain that in the midst of all this Alcibiades redresses the fortunes of Athens. After all that, without our being able to be absolutely sure of the details, in the way that the ancient (5) historians reported them, we must not be astonished if Alcibiades comes back to Athens with what we could call a really outstanding triumph which, despite the joy of the Athenian people, is going to be the beginning of a change of opinion.

We find ourselves in the presence of someone who cannot fail at every instant to provoke what can be called public opinion. His death is also quite a strange business. There are many obscurities about who is responsible for it; what is certain, is that it seems, that after a succession of reversals of fortune.

of reversions each more astonishing than the other, (but it seems that in any case, whatever difficulties he find himself in, he is never disheartened), a sort of enormous confluence of hatreds is going to culminate in the destruction of Alcibiades by means of procedures which are those, which legend, myth say must be used against the scorpion: he is surrounded by a circle of fire from which he escapes and it is from a distance with javelins and arrows that he must be brought down.

Such is the singular career of Alcibiades. If I have shown you the level of a power, of a penetration of a very active, exceptional mind, I would say that the most outstanding trait is still the reflection which is added to it by what is described not alone as the precocious beauty of Alcibiades as a child (which we know is closely linked to the story of the type of love then reigning in Greece namely, the love of children) but this beauty preserved for a long time which meant that at a rather advanced age it makes of him someone who seduces as much by his form as by his exceptional intelligence.

Such is the personage. And we see him in a gathering which reunites in short learned, serious men (although, in this context of Greek love on which we are going to put the accent later on which already contributes a background of permanent erotism from which these discourses on love are going to emerge) we see him therefore coming to recount to everybody something which we can summarise more or less in the following terms: namely the vain efforts that he made when he was a young man, at the time Socrates loved him, to get Socrates to have sex with him.

This is developed at length with details, and in short with a considerable crudity of language. There is no doubt that he made Socrates lose control, show how disturbed he was, yield to these direct corporal invitations, to a physical approach. And this which is publicly [reported] by a drunken man no doubt, but by a drunken man the whole extent of whose remarks Plato thinks it worthwhile reporting to us - I do not know if I am making myself fully understood.

Imagine a book which might appear, I am not saying in our day, because this appears about fifty years after the scene which is (6) reported, Plato produces it at that distance, suppose that after a certain time, to soften things a little, a personage like for example Mr. Kennedy, in a book composed for the elite, a Kennedy who would have been at the same time James Dean, comes to tell how he did his best while he was at the university to be made love to by .... (let us say some kind of professor), you can choose the personage yourself. It is not absolutely necessary that he should belong to the teaching profession, because Socrates was not quite a professor. But he was all the same a rather special one. Imagine that it is somebody like Mr. Massignon and who at the same time is Henry Miller. That would produce a certain effect. It would lead to some difficulties for Jean-Jacques Pauvert who would have published this work. Let us recall this at the moment when it is a question of noting that this astonishing work has been transmitted to us throughout

the centuries by the hands of what we should call in different ways different kinds of benighted friars, which means that we have without any doubt the complete text.

Well! That is what I thought, not without a certain admiration, in leafing through this admirable edition which Henri Estienne gave us of it in a Latin translation. And this edition is definitive enough for there still to be now, in all the different learned, critical editions, it is already, this edition, the perfect critical one whose pagination is given to us. Those who are coming to this for the first time, should know that the little 272a or others, by which you see noted the pages to which you should refer, is only the pagination of Henri Estienne (1578). Henri Estienne was certainly not benighted, but one finds it difficult to believe that someone who was capable (this was not all he did) of devoting himself to producing such monumental editions [had an] openness to life such that he could fully appreciate the contents of what there is in this text, I mean in so far as it is above all a text about love.

At the same epoch - that of Henri Estienne - other people were interested in love and I can tell you quite frankly: when I spoke to you last year at length about the sublimation of the love of women, the hand which I was holding invisibly was not that of Plato nor of some erudite person, but that of Marguerite of Navarre. I alluded to it without insisting. You should know, for this sort of banquet, of sumposion also which her Heptameron is, she carefully excluded these sort of people with dirty nails who were emerging at the time and renewing the content of the libraries. She only wants knights, lords, personages who, in speaking about love speak about something that they had time to live. And also in all the commentaries which have been given about the Symposium it is indeed this dimension which often seems to be lacking that we thirst after. It does not matter.

(7) Among those people who never doubt that their understanding - as Jaspers says - attains the limits of the concrete-tangible-comprehensible, the story of Alcibiades and Socrates has always been difficult to swallow. As testimony I will only take the following: that Louis le Roy, Ludovicus rejus, who is the first translator into French of these texts which were just emerging from the orient for western culture, quite simply stopped there, at the entry of Alcibiades. He translated nothing after that. It seemed to him that enough beautiful discourses had been made before Alcibiades entered. Which indeed is in fact the case moreover. Alcibiades appeared to him as something added on, apocryphal, and he is not the only one to have behaved in this way. I will spare you the details. But Racine received one day from a lady who had been working on a translation of the Symposium a manuscript to look over. Racine who was a sensitive man had considered that as untranslatable and not alone the story of Alcibiades but all the Symposium. We have his notes which prove that he had looked very closely at the manuscript which had been sent to him; but as regards redoing it, because it was a question of nothing less than redoing it (it needed somebody like Racine to translate the Greek), he refused. A small thing for

him. Third reference. I have the good luck to have found a long time ago, in a corner, handwritten notes from the course given by Brochard on Plato. It is very remarkable, these notes are very well taken, the writing is exquisite. In connection with the theory of love, Brochard of course refers to all the appropriate things: the Lysis, the Phaedrus, the Symposium. Above all the Symposium. There is a very well done operation of substitution when one arrives at the Alcibiades affair. He links up, he switches things onto the Phaedrus which, at that moment takes up the baton. He does not take responsibility for the story of Alcibiades.

This reserve after all deserves rather our respect. I mean that it is all the same the feeling that there is here something which poses questions. And I prefer that than to see it resolved by the singular hypotheses which frequently appear. The prettiest of them - this is one among thousands - Mr. Leon Robin sides with it (and this is astonishing) is that Plato here wanted to justify his master. The scholars have discovered that someone called Polycrates brought out [a pamphlet] some years after the death of Socrates. You know that he was brought down under different accusations which were made by three personages one of whom was called Anytus a certain Polycrates is supposed to have effectively put that in the mouth of Anytus, an indictment the principal body of which was constituted by the fact that Socrates is supposed to have been responsible precisely for what I spoke to you about above, namely for what one can call the scandal, the sowing of corruption; he is supposed to have dragged Alcibiades after him throughout his life, with all the procession of problems indeed of catastrophes which he brought with him.

(8) It must be admitted that the idea that Plato justified the morals if not the influence of Socrates by confronting us with the scene of public confession by this character, is really a backhanded way of doing things. One must really ask what the people who produce such hypotheses are thinking about. That Socrates should have resisted Alcibiades' attempts, that this by itself can justify this piece of the Symposium as something destined to elevate the sense of his mission in public opinion, is something which, as far as I am concerned, leaves me flabbergasted.

It is all the same necessary that either we are confronted with the consequence of reasons that Plato does not tell us about or that this piece has in effect a function, I mean that this irruption of this personage who has all the same the closest relationship with what is in question: the question of love.

To see then what is involved, and it is precisely because, what is involved is precisely the point around which there turns everything that is in question in the Symposium, the point around which there is going to be clarified at the deepest level not so much the question of the nature of love as the question which interests us here, namely, of its relationship with transference. It is because of this that I am going to focus the question on this articulation between the text which is

reported to us of the discourses pronounced in the sumposion, (416BC) and the irruption of Alcibiades.

At this point I must outline for you at first something about the meaning of these discourses, first of all the text of them that is transmitted to us, the narrative. What in fact is this text? What does Plato tell us?

First of all one can ask oneself that question. Is it a fiction, a fabrication, as many of his dialogues manifestly are which are compositions which obey certain laws (and God know that on this point there would be much to say)? Why this genre? Why this law of dialogue? We are going to have to leave these things to one side; I am only indicating to you that there is on this point a whole range of things to be known. But this has all the same a different character, a character moreover which is not altogether foreign to the mode in which we are shown certain of these dialogues.

To make myself understood, I would say the following: if we can take the Symposium as we are going to take it, let us say as a sort of account of psychoanalytic sessions (because effectively it is something like this that is in question) because in the measure that there progress, that there succeed one another these contributions of the different participants in this sumposion something happens which is the successive clarification of each one of these flashes by the one which follows, then at the end something which is really reported to us as the sort of raw even inconvenient happening, the irruption of life into it, the presence of (9) Alcibiades. And it is for us to understand the meaning precisely of this discourse of Alcibiades.

So then, if this is what is in question, we would have according to Plato a sort of recording of it. Since there was no tape recorder, we will say that it is a brain recording. Brain recording is an extremely old practice, which sustained - I would even say - the way of listening for long centuries of people who participated in serious matters, as long as writing had not taken on this function of a dominant factor in the culture which is the one it has in our day. Since things can be written down, the things that must be remembered are for us in what I have called kilograms of language namely, piles of books and heaps of papers. But when paper was rarer, and books much more difficult to fabricate and to diffuse, it was an extremely important thing to have a good memory, and - as I might say - to experience everything that had been heard in the register of the memory which conserves it. And it is not only at the beginning of the Symposium but in all the traditions that we know that we can see the testimony that the oral transmission of science and of wisdom is absolutely essential there. It is because of this moreover that we still know something about it, it is in the measure that writing does not exist that oral tradition functions as a support. And it is indeed to this that Plato referred in the mode in which he presents to us.... in which the text of the Symposium comes to us. He has it recounted by someone who is called Apollodorus. We are aware of the existence of this

personage. He exists historically and this Apollodorus who is made to speak by Plato (because Apollodorus speaks) is supposed to come at a time dated at about a little more than thirty years before the appearance of the Symposium if one takes the date of about 370 for the publication of the Symposium. It is before the death of Socrates that there is placed what Plato tells us is said at that moment that there is to be transmitted by Apollodorus this account about what happened, again fifteen years earlier than the moment when he is supposed to have received it because we have reasons for thinking that it was in 416 that there took place this so called sumposion at which he assisted.

It is therefore sixteen years after that a personage extracts from his memory the literal text of what is supposed to have been said. Therefore, the least that can be said, is that Plato takes all the measures necessary to make us believe at least in what was commonly practised and which is still practised in these phases of culture, namely what I called brain recording. He underlines that this same personage, Aristodemus ... that some of (10) the tape had been damaged, that there may be gaps at certain points. All of this obviously does not at all settle the question of historical veracity but has nonetheless a great verisimilitude. If it is a lie, it is a beautiful lie. Since on the other hand it is obviously the work of love, and that, perhaps we will come to see there being highlighted for us the notion that after all only liars can appropriately reply to love, even in this case the Symposium would respond certainly to something which is like (this on the contrary is bequeathed to us without ambiguity) the elective reference of the action of Socrates to love.

This indeed is why the Symposium is such an important testimony. We know that Socrates himself testifies, affirms that he really does not know anything (no doubt the Theages in which he says it is not one of Plato's dialogues but it is all the same a dialogue of someone who wrote about what was known about Socrates and what remained of Socrates) and Socrates in the Theages is attested to have expressly said that he knew nothing in short except "this little bit of science, smikrou tinos mathematos" which is that of "ton erotikon, the things of love". He repeats it in these very terms, in terms which are exactly the same at a point in the Symposium.

The subject then of the Symposium is this... the subject had been proposed, put forward by a personage called neither more nor less Phaidros. Phaidros will also be the one who has given his name to another dialogue, the one to which I referred last year in connection with the beautiful and in which there is also question of love (the two are linked in Platonic thought). Phaidros is said to be pater tou logou, "the father of the subject" (177d), in connection with what is going to be dealt with in the Symposium, the subject is the following: in short what use is it to know about love? And we know that Socrates claims to know nothing about anything else. It is all the more striking to make this remark which you will be able to appreciate with its

proper value when you refer to the text: you will see that Socrates says almost nothing in his own name. This "almost nothing" I will tell you if we have time today, it is important. [Line missing in Master Copy] to tell you, almost without nothing, is no doubt the essential. And it is around this "almost nothing" that the stage really turns, namely that people begin to really speak about the subject in a way that one would have expected.

Let us say right away that when all is said and done, in the type of adjustment, of arranging the level at which things are to be taken, you will see that when all is said and done Socrates does not set it particularly high with respect to what the others say: (11) it consists rather in centring things, in adjusting the lights so that one can properly see what is the average height. If Socrates tells us something it is, undoubtedly, that love is not something divine. He does not rate it very highly, but that is what he loves, he only loves that. That having been said, the moment at which he begins to speak is also worthwhile underlining, it is just after Agathon. I am obliged to bring them in one after another, in accordance with the rhythm of my discourse, instead of bringing them all in from the beginning namely Phaidros, Pausanias, Aristodemos who had come there I should say as a toothpick, namely that he met Agathon, Socrates, and Socrates brought him; there is also Eryximachos who is a colleague of most of you, who is a doctor; there is Agathon who is the host, Socrates (who brought Aristodemos) who arrives very late because on the way he had what we could call an attack. The attacks of Socrates consist in coming to a sudden halt, and standing on one leg in a corner. He stops in the house next door where he has no business. He is planted in the hallway between the umbrella stand and the coatstand and there is no way of waking him up. You have to give a little bit of atmosphere to these things. They are not as you will see the boring stories that you thought they were at secondary school.

I would like one day to give a discourse in which I would take my examples precisely in the Phaidros, or again in a certain play of Aristophanes, on something absolutely essential without which there is all the same no way of understanding how there is situated, what I would call in everything that is proposed to us by antiquity, the enlightened circle of Greece.

We ourselves live all the time in the midst of light. The night is in short carried on a stream of neon. But imagine all the same that up to an epoch which there is no need to refer to the time of Plato, a relatively recent epoch, night was night. When someone comes to knock, at the beginning of the Phaidros, to wake up Socrates, because he has to get up a little bit before daybreak (I hope that it is in the Phaidros but it does not matter, it is at the start of one of Plato's dialogues) it is quite a business. He gets up, and he is really in the dark, namely that he knocks things over if he tries to take a step. At the beginning of a play by Aristophanes to which I also alluded, when one is in the dark one is really in the dark, it is here that one does not recognise the person who touches your

hand.

To take up what was still happening at the time of Marguerite de Navarre, the stories of the Heptameron are full of stories of this sort. Their possibility rests on the fact that at that time, that when one slipped into a woman's bed at night, it is considered to be one of the things that is most possible, provided you keep your mouth shut, to have oneself taken for her (12) husband or for her lover. And this it appears was frequently practised. This completely changes the dimension of relationships between human beings. And obviously what I would call in a quite different sense the diffusion of lights changes many things because of the fact that night is no longer for us a consistent reality, the fact that you can no longer pour it from a ladle, make of blackness something dense, removes certain things, many things from us.

All of this to come back to our subject which is the one that we must come back to, namely what is signified by this illuminated circle in which we are, and what is in question as regards love when one speaks about it in Greece. When one speaks about it, well... as M. de la Palisse would say, we are dealing with Greek love.

Greek love, you have to get used to this idea, is the love of beautiful boys. And then, hyphen, nothing else. It is quite clear that when one speaks about love one is not speaking about something else. All the efforts that we make to put this in its place are destined to fail in advance. I mean that in order to see exactly what it is we are obliged to move the furniture around in a certain way, to reestablish certain perspectives, to put ourselves in a certain more or less oblique position, to say that this was not necessarily all there was... obviously... of course...

It nevertheless remains that on the plane of love there was nothing but that. But then on the other hand, if one says that, you are going to tell me that love for boys is something which was universally accepted. Well no! Even when one says that it nevertheless remains that in a whole part of Greece a very poor view was taken of it, that in a whole other part of Greece - Pausanias underlines it for us in the Symposium - it was very well regarded, and since it was the totalitarian part of Greece, the Boeotians, the Spartans who belonged to the totalitarians (everything that is not forbidden is obligatory) not alone was it very well regarded, it was what was commanded. One could not stand apart from it. And Pausanias says: there are people who are much better. Among us, Athenians, it is well regarded but it is prohibited all the same, and naturally that reinforces the value of the thing. This is more or less what Pausanias tells us.

All of this, of course, fundamentally, does not teach us very much, except that it was more credible on a single condition, that we should understand more or less what it corresponds to. To have an idea of it, you must refer to what I said last year



about courtly love. It is not of course the same thing, but it occupies an analogous function. I mean that it is quite obviously of the order and of the function of sublimation, in the sense that I tried last year to contribute to this subject a slight rectification in your minds about what is really involved in the function of sublimation.

(13) Let us say that there is nothing involved here which we [cannot] put under the register of a kind of regression on a collective scale. I mean that this something which analytic doctrine indicates to us as being the support of the social bond as such, of fraternity among men, homosexuality, attaches it to the neutralisation of the bond. . It is not a question of dissolving this social bond, of returning to the innate form, it is quite obviously something else. It is a cultural happening and it is also clear that it is in the milieu of the masters of Greece, amongst people of a certain class, at the level at which there reigns and at which there is elaborated culture, that this love is put into practice. It is obviously the major centre for the elaboration of interhuman relationships.

I recall in a different form, the thing that I already indicated at the end of the last seminar, the schema of the relationship of perversion with culture in so far as it is distinguished from society. If society brings with it by its censoring effect a form of disintegration which is called neurosis, it is in a contrary sense of development, of construction, of sublimation - let us say the word - that perversion can be conceived when it is produced by culture. And if you wish, the circle closes in on itself: perversion contributing elements which torment society, neurosis favouring the creation of new elements of culture. However much a sublimation it may be, this does not prevent Greek love from being a perversion. No culturalist point of view should predominate here. We cannot tell ourselves on the pretext that it was an accepted, approved, even celebrated perversion... homosexuality remains nevertheless what it was: a perversion. That to want to tell us in order to arrange things that if, we, for our part, treat homosexuality, it is because in our day homosexuality is something quite different, it is no longer the fashion, and that in the time of the Greeks on the contrary it played its cultural function and as such is worthy of all our respect, this really is to evade what is properly speaking the problem. The only thing which differentiates the contemporary homosexuality with which we have to deal and the Greek perversion, God knows, I believe that one can scarcely find it elsewhere than in the quality of objects. Here, schoolboys are acned and cretinised by the education they receive and these conditions are not really favourable for them to become the object of our homage; it seems that one has to go searching for objects in out of the way places, the gutter, that is the whole difference. But there is no difference in the structure itself.

(14) Naturally this causes scandal, given the outstanding dignity with which we have invested the Greek message. And then there are the fine sentiments with which one surrounds oneself for this purpose, namely that we are told: all the same you must not

believe that for all that women did not receive appropriate homage. Thus Socrates, do not forget, precisely in the Symposium, where, as I told you, he says very little in his own name - but what he speaks is extraordinary - only he makes a woman speak in his place: Diotima. Do you not see that the testimony, that the supreme homage comes back, even in the mouth of Socrates, to the woman? Here at any rate is what right thinking people never fail at this point to highlight for us; and in addition, you know that from time to time he would go to visit Lais, Aspasia - historians collect all sorts of gossip - Theodota who was Alcibiades' mistress. And as regards the famous Xanthippes, about whom I spoke to you the other day, she was there the day he died as you know, and she even gave out the most deafening cries. There is only one problem... this is attested for us in the Phaedo, in any case, Socrates suggests that she should be put to bed immediately, that she should be got out as quickly as possible so that they can talk calmly, there are only a few hours left.

Except for this, the function of the dignity of women will be preserved. I have no doubt in fact about the importance of women in antique Greek society, I would say even more, it is something very serious whose import you will subsequently see. It is that they had what I would call their true place. Not alone did they have their true place, but this means that they had a quite outstanding weight in love relationships and we have all sorts of testimonies of this. It appears in fact, provided always that one knows how to read - one must not read the antique authors with wire netting on one's glasses - that they had this role which is veiled for us but nevertheless is very outstandingly their own in love: simply the active role, namely that the differences between the antique woman and the modern woman is that she demanded her due, that she attacked the man. This is something that you can, I believe, put your finger on in many cases. In any case when you have woken up to this point of view on the question you will notice many things which otherwise, in ancient history, seem strange. In any case Aristophanes who was a very good music-hall producer, did not dissimulate from us how the women of his time behaved. There has never been anything more characteristic and more crude concerning the enterprises - as I might say - of women. And it is precisely for that reason that learned love - as I might call it - took refuge elsewhere.

We have here in any case one of the keys for the question which should not astonish psychoanalysts too much.

(15) This may appear perhaps quite a long detour to excuse the fact that in our enterprise (which is to analyse a text whose object is to know what it means to know about love) we take something obviously, we take what we know, that it refers to the time of Greek love, this love as I might say of the school, I mean of schoolboys. Well, it is for technical reasons of simplification, of example, of a model which allows to be seen an articulation that otherwise is always elided in what is too complicated in love with women, it is because of this that this

love of the school can be of use to us, can legitimately be of use to all (for our object) as a school for love.

This of course does not mean, that this is something to be relaunched. I would like to avoid any misunderstanding, because soon people will be saying that I am setting myself up here as a proponent of Platonic love. There are many reasons why this can no longer serve as a school for love. If I were to tell you about them, this would again be a question of giving great sword thrusts through curtains when one does not know what there is behind - believe me - in general I avoid it. There is one reason why there is no reason to begin again, because of which it is even impossible to begin again, and one of the reasons which will astonish you perhaps if I put it forward before you is that, for us, at the point that we are at, even if you have not realised it yet you will realise it if you reflect a little bit, love and its phenomenon and its culture and its dimension has for some time become disengaged from beauty. That may astonish you, but that is the way it is.

You can verify that from both sides. From the side of beautiful works of art on the one hand, from the side of love also, and you will see that it is true. It is in any case a condition which renders difficult... and it is precisely for this reason that I make this whole detour to accustom you to what is in question... we return to the function of beauty, to the tragic function of beauty because this is what I put forward last year - the dimension - and this is what gives its veritable meaning to what Plato is going to tell us about love.

On the other hand, it is quite clear that at the present time it is not at all at the level of tragedy, nor at another level of which I will speak in a moment that love is bestowed, it is at the level of what in the Symposium is called, in Agathon's discourse, the level of Polymnie. It is at the level of lyricism, and in the order of artistic creations, at the level of what presents itself indeed as the most vivid materialisation of fiction as essential, namely what we call the cinema. Plato would have been delighted by this invention. There is no better illustration for the arts of what Plato put at the origin of his vision of the world, than this "something" which is expressed in the myth of the cave that we see illustrated every day by those (16) dancing rays which are able to manifest on the screen all our feelings in a shadowy way.

It is indeed to this dimension that there belongs most outstandingly in the art of our day the defence and the illustration of love. This indeed is the reason that one of the things that I told you - which will nevertheless be the one around which we are going to centre our progress - one of the things I told you and which does not fail to arouse a certain reticence, because I said it quite incidentally: love is a comic sentiment. All the same, an effort is required for us to come back to the proper point of adaptation which gives it its import.

There are two things which I noted in my former discourse about

love and I recall them. The first is that love is a comic sentiment, and you will see what will illustrate it in our investigation. We will complete in this connection the loop which will allow us to bring forward what is essential: the true nature of comedy. And it is so essential and indispensable that it is for this reason that there is in the Symposium, something which since that time the commentators have never been able to explain, namely, the presence of Aristophanes. He was, historically speaking the sworn enemy of Socrates; nevertheless he is there.

The second thing that I wanted to say - as you will see - that we rediscover at every moment, which will serve us as a guide, is that love is to give what one does not have. This you will also see arriving at one of the essential hinges of what we will have to encounter in our commentary.

In any case, to enter into this subject, into this dismantling through which this discourse of Socrates about Greek love will be something illuminating for us, let us say that Greek love allows us to separate out in the love relationship the two partners in a neutral way (I mean at this something pure which is actually expressed in the masculine gender), it is to allow there to be articulated at first what happens at the level of this couple who are respectively the lover and the beloved, erastes and eromenos.

What I will tell you the next time consists in showing you how, around these two functions of lover and beloved, the process of what unfolds in the Symposium is such that we are going to be able to attribute respectively, with all the rigour that analytic experience is capable of, what is in question..... in other words we will see there articulated clearly, at a time when analytic experience as such was lacking, when the unconscious in its proper function with respect to the subject is undoubtedly a dimension which is not even suspected, and therefore with the limitation that this involves, you will see articulated in the (17) clearest fashion this something which comes to meet the summit of our experience; that which I tried throughout all these years to unfold before you under the double rubric, the first year of Object Relations, the year which followed, of Desire and its interpretation .... you will see clearly appearing and in formulae which are probably those to which we have come: the lover as subject of desire (and taking into account all the weight that we give to the word desire) the eromenos, the beloved, as being the one who in this couple is the only one to have something.

The question of knowing whether "what he has" (because it is the beloved who has it) has a relationship I would say even any relationship whatsoever with that which the other, the subject of the desire lacks. I would say the following, the question of the relationships between desire and the one before whom desire is fixed - as you know - has already led us around the notion of desire qua desire for something else. We arrived at it by means of an analysis of the effects of language on the subject. It is strange that a dialectic of love, that of Socrates, which is

precisely made up entirely by means of dialectic, by a testing of the imperative effects of questioning as such, does not lead us to the same crossroads. You will see that indeed far from leading us to the same crossroads it will allow us to go beyond, namely, to grasp the moment of tipping over, the moment of reversal where from the conjunction of desire with its object qua inadequate, there must emerge the signification which is called love.

It is impossible, without having grasped this articulation, the conditions it involves in the symbolic, the imaginary and the real... not to grasp what is in question, namely in this effect so strange in its automatism which is called transference, to measure, to compare what is the part, the proportion between this transference and love, what there must be attributed to each one of them and reciprocally, in terms of illusion or of truth. In this the path and the investigation that I introduced to you today is going to prove to be of inaugural importance for us.

Seminar 3; Wednesday 30 November 1960

We stopped the last day at the position of the erastes and the eromenos, of the lover and the beloved, as the dialectic of the Symposium will allow us to introduce it as what I have called the basis, the turning point, the essential articulation of the problem of love. The problem of love interests us in so far as it is going to allow us to understand what happens in transference, and I would say up to a certain point, because of transference.

To justify such a long detour as this one which may appear to those of you who are newly come this year to this seminar and which may after all appear to you as a superfluous detour, I will try to give you the grounds, to presentify to you the meaning, which you should immediately apprehend, of what our research involves.

It seems to me that at whatever level of his formation he may be, something should be present to the psychoanalyst as such, which may strike him, catch him by the coat-tails at many a turning point (and is not the most simple the one which it seems to me is difficult to avoid after a certain age and which for you it seems must already involve in a very live way just by itself what the problem of love is). Have you never been struck at this turning point by the fact that, in what you have given - I mean to those who are closest to you - there was something missing, and which not only was missing, but which has left those mentioned, those closest to you irremediably lost to you? And what is it? .... it is that precisely those closest to you (with them) one does nothing but turn around the phantasy whose satisfaction you have more or less sought for (in them), which (for them) has more or less substituted its images or its colours. This being of which you may suddenly be reminded by some accident whose resonance can be best understood by death, this veritable being, which is what I am evoking for you, already distances itself and is already eternally lost. Now this being is all the same the very one that you are trying to rejoin along the paths of your desire. Only that being is yours, and as analysts you know well that it is, in some way or other, because of not wanting it, that you have also more or less missed it.

But at least here at the level of your sin and your failure you are exactly the measure.

(2) And those others whom you have cared for so badly, is it because you have made of them as people say simply your objects? Would to God that if you had treated them as objects whose weight, whose taste, whose substance is appreciated, you would today be less disturbed by their memory, you would have done them justice, rendered them homage and love, you would at least have loved them like yourself, except for the fact that you love badly (but it is not even the fate of the unloved that we have had our share of) you would have made of them no doubt as they say, subjects as if this was the end of the respect that they merited, the respect as it is said of their dignity, the respect owed to our fellows (nos semblables). I am afraid that this neutralised use of the term our fellows, is indeed something different to what we are dealing with in the question of love and, as regards these fellows that the respect that you give them may go too rapidly towards respect for the similar, leaving them to their quirks of resistance, to their stubborn ideas, to their congenital stupidity, indeed to their own concerns... let them sort it out for themselves! This is, I believe, the foundation of this coming to a halt before their liberty which often directs your behaviour, the liberty of indifference it is said, but not so much of theirs as of yours.

And it is indeed here that the question is posed for an analyst, namely what is our relation to this being of our patient? Nevertheless we know well all the same that this is what is in question in analysis. Is our access to this being one of love or not? Has our access some relation with what we know about the point we place ourselves at as regards the nature of love? This as you will see will lead us rather far, precisely to know that which - if I may express myself in this way by using a metaphor - is in the Symposium when Alcibiades compares Socrates to some of these tiny objects which it seems really existed at the time, to little Russian dolls for example, these things which fitted into one another; it appears that there were images whose outside represented a satyr or a Silenus, and, within we do not really know what but undoubtedly some precious things.

What there should be, what there may be, what there is supposed to be, of this something, in the analyst, is indeed what our question will tend towards, but right at the end.

In approaching this problem of this relationship which is that of the analysand to the analyst, which manifests itself by this very curious phenomenon of transference which I am trying to approach in a fashion which circumscribes it more closely, which evades as little as possible its forms (at once known to all, and which people try more or less to make into abstractions, to avoid their proper weight), I believe that we cannot do better than begin (3) from a questioning of what this phenomenon is supposed to imitate to the highest degree, or even to become confused with.

There is as you know a text of Freud, celebrated in this sense.

which is found in what are usually called The papers on technique, with that to which it is closely linked, namely let us say that something has ever since always remained suspended to something in the problem of love - an internal discord, some duplicity or other which is precisely what we should circumscribe more closely namely perhaps clarify by this ambiguity of this other thing, this substitution en route which after some time of the seminar here you should know to be all the same what happens in analytic action, and which I can summarise in this way.

The person who comes to see us in principle with this supposition that he does not know what is wrong with him (there is already there a whole implication of the unconscious, of the fundamental "he does not know" and it is through this that there is established the bridge which can link our new science to the whole tradition of "know thyself"; of course there is a fundamental difference, the accent of this "he does not know" is completely displaced) - and I think that I have already said enough about this to you for me not to have to do any more than indicate the difference in passing..... but what is it? What he truly has in himself, what he is demanding to be, not only formed, educated, released, cultivated according to the method of all the traditional pedagogies, (he puts himself under the mantle of the fundamentally revelatory power of some dialectics which are the offspring, the offshoots of the inaugural step taken by Socrates in so far as it is a philosophical one) is it towards this that we are going, in analysis, to lead whoever comes to see us as an analyst?

Simply as readers of Freud, you should all the same already know something of that which in its first appearance at least may present itself as the paradox of what presents itself to us as end, telos, as the completion, the termination of analysis. What does Freud tell us if not when all is said and done that what the one who follows this path will find at the end is nothing other essentially than a lack? Whether you call this lack castration or whether you call it Penisneid this is the sign, the metaphor. But if this is really what analysis comes up against, is there not there already some .....?

In short by recalling this ambiguity to you, this sort of double register between what in principle is the beginning and the starting point and this end (at first sight it may appear so (4) necessarily disappointing) a whole development is inscribed, this development, is properly speaking this revelation of something entire in its text which is called the unconscious Other.

Of course all of this, for someone who hears it spoken about for the first time - I do not believe that this is the case for anybody here - cannot be understood except as an enigma. This is not at all the way in which I am presenting it to you, but as the collecting together of terms in which our action as such is inscribed. It is also to illuminate right away what I could call, if you wish, the general plan according to which our journey is going to unfold, when it is a question after all of



nothing other than immediately apprehending, of seeing there in fact the analogy there is between this development and these terms and the fundamental starting point of love. [This situation] even though it is after all evident, has never been, as far as I know, also, situated in any terms, placed at the starting point in these terms that I am proposing to you to articulate immediately, these two terms from which we are beginning: erastes, the lover, or again eromenos, the loving one and eromenos, the one who is loved.

Is everything not already better situated at the start (there is no need to play hide-and-seek). Can we not see immediately in such a gathering what characterises the erastes, the lover, for all those who have questioned him, who approach him, is it not essentially what he is lacking? And we for our part can immediately add, that he does not know what he is lacking, with this particular accent of unknowing which is that of the unconscious. And on the other hand the eromenos, the beloved object, is he not always situated as the one who does not know what he has, the hidden thing he has, what gives him his attraction? Because is not this "what he has" that which in the love relation is called on not only to reveal itself, [but] to become, to be, to presentify, that which up to then is only possible?

In short with the analytic accent, or without this accent, he also does not know. And it is something else that is in question. He does not know what he has.

Between these two terms which constitute, as I might say, in their essence, the lover and the beloved, you should notice that there is no coinciding. What is lacking to the one is not this "what he has", hidden in the other. And this is the whole problem of love. Whether one knows this or not is of no (5) importance. One encounters at every step in the phenomenon, its splitting apart, its discordance and a person has no need for all that to dialogue, to engage in dialectics, dialektikeuesthai about love, it is enough for him to be involved, to love, in order to be caught up in this gap, in this discord.

Is that all there is to say? Is it sufficient? I cannot do any more here. I am doing a lot in doing what I am doing, I am exposing myself to the risk of a certain immediate incomprehension, but I assure you, I have no intention here of leading you on, I am putting my cards on the table immediately. Things go further than that. We can propose, in the terms that we use, that which the analysis of the creation of meaning in the signifier-signified relationship already indicated (we will see, provided we see how it is to be handled, the truth in what follows) already indicated about the question, namely that precisely love as signification, (because for us it is one and it is only that), is a metaphor, in the measure that we have learned to articulate metaphor as substitution, and this is where we enter into obscurity and that I would ask you for the moment simply to admit, and to keep what I am here putting forward as what it is in your hands: an algebraic formula.

It is in so far as the function where it occurs of the erastes, of the loving one, who is the subject of lack, takes the place of, substitutes itself for the function of the eromenos who is the object, the beloved object, that there is produced the signification of love. We will spend a certain time perhaps in clarifying this formula. We have the time to do it in the year before us. At least I will not have failed to give you from the beginning this reference point which may serve, not as a riddle, at least as a point of reference to avoid certain ambiguities (when I will have developed it).

And now let us enter into this Symposium of which in a way the last time I gave you the setting, presented the personages, the personages who have nothing primitive about them as regards the simplification of the problem that they present to us. We must really admit that they are extremely sophisticated personages! And here, to retrace one of the aspects of what I spent my time telling you the last time, I will resume it in a few words, because I think it important that its provocative character should be expressed, articulated.

There is all the same something rather humorous [after] twenty-four centuries of religious meditation (because there is not a single reflection on love throughout these twenty-four centuries, either among free-thinkers or among priests, there is not a (6) single meditation on love which has not referred to this inaugural text) [this text] after all (taken in its external aspect) for someone who enters into it without being warned, represents all the same a sort of tonicity, as they say, between people who we must all the same remind ourselves (for the peasant who emerges there from his little garden around Athens) are a collection of old queens. Socrates is fifty-three, Alcibiades still handsome it appears, is thirty-six and Agathon himself in whose house they are gathered, is thirty. He had just won the prize of the competition for tragedies; this is what allows us to date the Symposium exactly. Obviously one must not stop at these appearances. It is always in salons, namely in a place where people have nothing particularly attractive in their appearance, it is in the houses of duchesses that the most subtle things are said. There are lost forever of course but not for everyone, not for those who say them in any case. Here we are lucky enough to know what all these personages, in turn, exchanged that evening.

Much has been said about this Symposium, and there is no need to tell you that those whose job it is to be philosophers, philologists, Hellenists have examined it microscopically, and that I have not exhausted everything that they have said. But it is not inexhaustible either, because it always turns around one point. However little inexhaustible it may be, there is all the same no way in which I could put before you the totality of these tiny debates which are carried on about one or other line; first of all it cannot be assumed that it is the way not to allow something important to escape. It is not very comfortable for me who am neither a philosopher, nor a philologist, nor a Hellenist, to put myself in this role, to put myself in this

position and give you a lecture on the Symposium.

What I can simply hope, is to give you first of all a first grasp of this something which I would ask you to believe does not just like that depend on a first reading. Trust me, and credit me in your thinking that it is not the first time and simply for this seminar that I have gone into this text. And do me the credit also of believing that I have taken some trouble to refresh the memories I had about the works that are consecrated to it, indeed to inform myself about the ones that I may have neglected up to now.

This in order to excuse myself for having (and all the same because I believe it is the best way) tackled things from the end; namely that which, simply because of the method that I teach you, should be the object for you of a sort of reserve, namely what I understand of it. It is precisely here that I am running the greatest risks; you should be thankful to me that I am running them in your place. Let this serve you simply as an introduction to the criticisms which are not so much to be aimed (7) at what I am going to tell you that I understood here, as at what there is in the text, namely that which in any case is subsequently going to appear to you as being that which my understanding latched onto. I mean that which explains, makes necessary, this true or false understanding, and as a text then, as an impossible signifier, even for you, even if you understand it differently, impossible to distort.

I will pass over then the first pages, which are these pages which always exist in Plato's dialogues. And this is not a dialogue like the others, but nevertheless this kind of situation constructed to create what I have called the illusion of authenticity, these withdrawals, these indications of the transmission of the one who repeated what the other had told him. It is always the way in which Plato intends, at the beginning, to create a certain depth, which no doubt is of use to him to give a wide-spread repercussion to what he is going to say.

I will pass over also the regulations to which I alluded the last time, the laws of the Symposium. I pointed out to you that these laws were not simply local, improvised, that they referred to a prototype. The sumposion was something which had its laws. No doubt not quite the same ones in different places; they were not quite the same in Athens or in Crete. I will pass over all these references.

We will come then to the carrying out of the ceremony which will involve something which in short should be called by a name, and a name which lends itself - I point it out to you in passing - to discussion: the praise of love. Is it encomion, is it epainesis? I will pass over all of this which has its interest, but which is secondary. And I would like simply today to situate what I would like to call the progress of what is going to unfold around this sequence of discourses which are first of all that of Phaidros, that of Pausanias.... Phaidros is another quite curious personage, you would have to trace out his

character. It is not very important. For today you should simply know that it is curious that it is he who should have given the subject, that he is the pater tou logou, the father of the subject (177d). It is curious because we know him a little bit from elsewhere through the beginning of Phaedros, he is a curious hypochondriac. I am telling you this right away, it will perhaps be of use to you subsequently.

While I think of it I must also right away apologise to you. I do not know why I spoke to you about the night the last time. Of (8) course I remembered that it is not in Phaedrus that things begin at night, but in Protagoras. Having corrected this let us continue.

Phaidros, Pausanias, Eryximachos and before Eryximachos, it should have been Aristophanes, but he has a hiccup, he lets the other go before him and he speaks afterwards. It is the eternal problem in this whole story to know how Aristophanes, the comic poet, found himself there with Socrates, whom as everyone knows he did more than criticise, whom he ridiculed, defamed in his comedies and who, generally speaking, historians hold in part responsible for the tragic end of Socrates, namely his condemnation. I told you that this implies no doubt a profound reason, whose final solution I am not giving you any more than anybody else but perhaps we will try first of all to start throwing a little light on things.

Then comes Agathon and, after Agathon, Socrates. This constituting what is properly speaking the Symposium, namely everything that happens up to this crucial point which, the last time, I pointed out to you should be considered as essential, namely the entry of Alcibiades, to which corresponds the subversion of all the rules of the Symposium, if only because of the following: he comes in drunk, and he puts himself forward as being essentially drunk and speaks as such in drunkenness.

Let us suppose that you were to say to yourselves that the interest of this dialogue, of this Symposium, is to manifest something which is properly speaking the difficulty of saying something about love which hangs together. If it were only a question of this we would be purely and simply in a cacophony but what Plato - at least this is what I claim, it is not particularly daring to claim it - what Plato shows us in a fashion which will never be unveiled, which will never be revealed, is that the contour that this difficulty outlines is something which indicates to us the point at which there is the fundamental topology which prevents there being said about love something which hangs together.

What I am telling you there is not very new. Nobody dreams of contesting it. I mean that all of those who have busied themselves with this "dialogue" - in quotes - because it is scarcely something which deserves this title, because it is a succession of praises, a sequence in short of comic songs, of drinking songs in honour of love, which take on all their importance because these people are a little bit smarter than the

others (and moreover we are told that It is a subject which is not often chosen, which at first sight may astonish us).

We are told then that each one expresses the affair with his own tone, at his own pitch. We do not really know moreover why for example Phaidros is going to be charged to introduce it (we are told) from the angle of religion, of myth or even of ethnography. (9) And in effect there is some truth in all of this. I mean that Phaidros introduces love to us by telling us that he is a megas theos, he is a great god (178a). That is not all he says, but in fact he refers to two theologians, Hesiod and Parmenides, who from different aspects spoke about the genealogy of the gods, which is all the same something important. We are not going to feel ourselves obliged to refer to the Theogony of Hesiod and to the Poem of Parmenides on the pretext that a verse of them is quoted in the discourse of Phaidros.

I would say all the same that two or three years ago, four maybe, something very important was published on this point by a contemporary, Jean Beaufret, on the Poem of Parmenides. It is very interesting to read it. Having said that, let us leave it to one side and let us try to take account of what there is in this discourse of Phaidros.

There is then the reference to the gods. Why to the gods in the plural? I would like simply all the same to indicate something. I do not know what meaning "the gods" have for you, especially the antique gods. But after all there is enough said about them in this dialogue for it to be all the same useful, even necessary that I should respond to this question as if it were posed by you to me. What after all do you think about gods? Where are they situated with respect to the symbolic, to the imaginary and to the real? It is not at all an empty question. Up to the end the question that is going to be dealt with, is whether or not love is a god, and one would at least have made the progress, at the end, of knowing with certitude that it is not one.

Obviously I am not going to give you a lecture on the sacred in this connection. Quite simply, like that, let us pin down some formulae on the subject. The gods, in so far as they exist for us in our register, in the one which we use to advance in our experience, in so far as these three categories are of some use to us, the gods it is quite certain belong obviously to the real. The gods are a mode of revelation of the real. It is for this reason that all philosophical progress tends in some way, by its own necessity, to eliminate them. It is for this reason that Christian revelation finds itself, as Hegel very well remarked, on the way to eliminating them, namely that in this register, Christian revelation finds itself a little bit further on, a little bit more profoundly on this path which goes from polytheism to atheism.....that with respect to a certain notion of the divinity of the god as the high point of revelation, of lumen, as radiation, aspiration, (it is a fundamental, real thing) Christianity incontestably finds itself on the path which goes towards reducing, which goes in the final analysis towards abolishing the god of this very revelation in so

far as it tends to displace him, as dogma, towards the word, towards the logos as such, in other words finds itself on a path parallel to that which philosophy follows, in so far as I told you above its destiny is to deny the gods.

(10) These same revelations then which are met with up to then by man in the real, (in the real in which that which is revealed is moreover real)... but this same revelation, it is not the real which displaces it (this revelation) he is going to seek in the logos. He is going to seek it at the level of a signifying articulation.

Every interrogation which tends to articulate itself as science at the beginning of Plato's philosophical progress, teaches us rightly or wrongly, I mean truly or untruly, that this was what Socrates was doing. Socrates required that this thing with which we have this innocent relationship which is called doxa (and which of course is sometimes true) should not satisfy us, but that we should ask why, that we should only be satisfied with this certain truth which he calls episteme, science, namely which gives an account of its reasons. This Plato tells us was the business of Socrates' philosophiein.

I spoke to you about what I called Plato's Schwärmerei. We have to believe that something in this enterprise finally fails in order that [despite] the rigour, the talent deployed in the demonstration of such a method (so many things in Plato which afterwards all the mystagogies profited from - I am speaking above all about Gnosticism, and let us say that in which Christianity itself has still remained gnostic), it nevertheless remains that what is clear is that what pleases him is science. How could we blame him for having taken this path from the first step to the end?

In any case then, the discourse of Phaidros refers, to introduce the problem of love, to this notion that he is a great god, almost the oldest god, born immediately after Chaos says Hesiod. The first one of whom the mysterious Goddess, the primordial Goddess of Parmenides discourse, thought.

It is not possible here for us not to evoke at this level (in Plato's time) for us not to attempt (this enterprise may moreover be impossible to carry out) to determine all that these terms could have meant in Plato's time, because after all try to start from the idea that the first time that these things were said (and this was in Plato's time) it is completely impossible that all of this should have had an air of pastoral stupidity (that this has for example in the seventeenth century in which when people speak about Eros they are play-acting, all of this is inscribed in a completely different context, in a context of (11) courtly culture, echoing L'Astree, and everything that follows it namely words that carry no weight) here the words have their full importance, the discussion is really theological. And it is also to make you understand this importance that I found no better way than to tell you in order to really grasp it, to get hold of the second of Plotinus' Enneads, and see how he

speaks about something which is placed more or less at the same level. It is also a level of eros, and it is only about that. You could not, provided you have read a little a theological text on the Trinity, have failed to glimpse that this discourse of Plotinus (by simply... I think there would have to be three words changed) is a discourse (we are at the end of the third century) on the Trinity.

I mean that this Zeus, this Aphrodite, and this Eros, are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This simply to allow you to imagine what is in question when Phaidros speaks in these terms about Eros. To speak about love, in short, for Phaidros is to speak about theology. And after all it is very important to see that this discourse begins with such an introduction, because for a lot of people still, and precisely in the Christian tradition for example, to speak about love is to speak about theology. It is all the more interesting to see that this discourse is not limited to that, but goes on to an illustration of its subject. And the mode of illustration that is in question is also very interesting, because we are going to hear about this divine love, we are going to hear about its effects.

These effects, I underline, are outstanding at their level through the dignity that they reveal with the theme which has become a little bit worn out since in the developments of rhetoric, namely the fact that love is a bond against which every human effort will come to grief. An army made up of lovers and beloveds (and here the underlying classical illustration by the famous Theban legion) would be an invincible army and the beloved for the lover, just as the lover for the beloved would be eminently suitable to represent the highest moral authority, one that one does not yield on, one that one cannot dishonour.

This culminates in the extreme case, namely at love as principle of the final sacrifice. And it is not without interest to see emerging here the image of Alcestis, namely in a reference to Euripides, which illustrates once more what I put forward to you last year as delimiting the zone of tragedy, namely properly speaking this zone of between-two-deaths. Alcestis, the only one among the whole family of the king Admetus, a man who is happy but whom death all of a sudden warns, Alcestis the incarnation of love, is the only one (and not his old parents as Admetus says who have such a short time to live in all (12) probability and not the friends and not the children, nobody), Alcestis is the only one who substitutes herself for him to satisfy the demands of death. In a discourse which deals essentially with masculine love, this is something which may appear remarkable to us, and which is worth our while retaining. Alcestis therefore is proposed to us here as an example. Saying this has the interest of giving its import to what is going to follow. Namely that two examples succeed that of Alcestis, two which according to the orator also advanced into this field of the between-two-deaths.

Orpheus, who succeeded in going down to Hell in order to seek out his wife Eurydice, and who as you know came back empty-handed

because of a sin which he had committed, that of turning back before the permitted moment, a mythical theme reproduced in many legends of civilisations other than the Greek. There is a celebrated Japanese legend. What interests us here is the commentary that Phaidros has given it.

And the third example is that of Achilles. I can hardly push things further today than to show you what emerges from the bringing together of these three heroes, which already puts you on the path of something which is already a first step along the path of the problem.

The remarks first of all which he makes about Orpheus, what interests us is what Phaidros says (it is not whether he gets to the bottom of things or whether it is justified we cannot go that far) what matters to us is what he says, it is precisely the strangeness of what Phaidros says which ought to retain us. First of all he says about Orpheus, Oïagros' son, that the gods did not at all like what he had done (179d). And the reason that he gives for it is in a way given in the interpretation that he gives of what the gods did for him.

We are told that the gods (for someone like Orpheus who was not in short someone all that good, but a weakling - we do not know why Phaidros blames him, nor why Plato does so) did not show him a real woman, which I think sufficiently echoes that through which I introduced above my discourse about the relationship to the other, and the difference there is between the object of our love in so far as it overlaps our phantasies, and that which love questions in order to know whether it can reach this being of the other.

In this way it seems according to what Phaidros says, we see here that Alcestis really substituted herself for him in death.... you will find in the text this term which cannot be said to have been put there by me huper... apothanein (179b) here the substitution-metaphor of which I spoke to you above is realised in the literal (13) sense, that it is in place of Admetus that Alcestis authentically places herself. This hyperapothanein, I think that M. Ricoeur who has the text before his eyes can find it. It is exactly at 180a, where this hyperapothanein is enunciated to mark the difference there is, Orpheus then being in a way eliminated from this race of merit in love, between Alcestis and Achilles.

Achilles, is something else. He is epapothanein, the one who shall follow me. He follows Patroclos in death. You should understand what this interpretation of what one could call Achilles' gesture means for a man of antiquity, it is also something which would deserve much commentary, because all the same it is less clear than for Alcestis. We are forced to have recourse to Homeric texts from which it results that in short Achilles is supposed to have had the choice. His mother Thetis told him: if you do not kill Hector (it was a question of killing Hector uniquely to avenge the death of Patroclos) you will return home in all tranquility, and you will have a happy and quiet old



age, but if you kill Hector your fate is sealed, death is what awaits you. And Achilles was so sure about this that we have another passage in which he makes this reflection to himself in an aside: I could go back peaceably. And then this is all the same unthinkable, and he says for one or other reason. This choice is by itself considered as being just as decisive as the sacrifice of Alcestis; the choice of moira the choice of destiny has the same value as this substitution of being for being. There is really no need to add to that (as M. Mario Meunier does for some reason or other in a note - but after all he was very erudite - to the page that we are speaking about) that afterwards apparently Achilles killed himself on the grave of Patroclos.

I have given a good deal of attention these days to the death of Achilles because it was worrying me. I cannot find anywhere a reference in the legend of Achilles which would permit there to be articulated something like that. I saw many modes of death attributed to Achilles, which, from the point of view of Greek patriotism attribute curious activities to him, because he is supposed to have betrayed the Greek cause for love of Polyxenes who is a Trojan woman, which would take something from the importance of Phaidros' discourse. But to remain at, to stay with Phaidros discourse, the important thing is the following: Phaidros devotes himself to a lengthily developed consideration concerning the reciprocal function of Patroclos and Achilles in their erotic bond.

(14) He undeceives us at a point which is the following: you must not at all imagine that Patroclos, as was generally thought, was the beloved. It emerges from an attentive examination of the characteristics of the personages Phaidros tells us in these terms, that the beloved could only have been Achilles who was much younger and beardless. I am noting this because this business is always coming up, of knowing at what moment one should love them, whether it is before the beard or after the beard. People talk about nothing else. One meets this business about the beard everywhere. One can thank the Romans for having rid us of this business. There must be a reason for it. So that Achilles had no beard. Therefore, in any case, he is the beloved.

But Patroclos, it appears, was about ten years older. From an examination of the texts he is the lover. What interests us is not that. It is simply a first indication, this first mode in which there appears something which has a relationship with what I gave you as being the point to be aimed at towards which we are going to advance, which is that whatever the case may be, what the gods find so sublime, more marvellous than anything else, is when the beloved behaves in short as one would have expected the lover to have behaved. And he opposes strictly on this point the example of Alcestis to the example of Achilles.

What does that mean? Because it is the text, one cannot really see why he should go through all this business which takes two pages if it were not important. You think that I am exploring the map of tenderness (la carte du Tendre), but it is not I, it

is Plato and it is very well articulated. It is necessary also to deduce from it what imposes itself, namely then, because he expressly opposes him to Alcestis, and because he makes the balance of the prize to be given to love by the gods tip in the direction of Achilles, which is what that means. That means therefore that Alcestis was, for her part, in the position of the erastes. Alcestis, the woman, was in the position of the erastes, namely of the lover, and it is to the extent that Achilles was in the position of the beloved that his sacrifice (this is expressly said) is much more admirable.

In other words this whole theological discourse of the hypochondriacal Phaidros ends up by showing us, by indicating that it is at this there ends up what I called above the signification of love, the fact is that the apparition of it which is most sensational, most remarkable, sanctioned, crowned by the gods, gives a very special place in the Islands of the Blest to Achilles (and everyone knows it is an island which still exists at the mouth of the Danube, where they have now stuck an asylum or something for delinquents). This reward goes to Achilles, and very precisely because of the fact that a beloved behaves like a lover.

(15) I am not going to take my discourse any further today. I am going to end on something suggestive, which is going perhaps all the same to allow us to introduce here a practical question. It is the following: it is that in short it is from the side of the lover, in the erotic couple, that there is found, as one might say, in the natural position, the activity. And this will be full of consequences for us if, by considering the couple Alcestis-Admetus, you are willing to glimpse the following which is particularly within your reach by what we discover from analysis about what the woman can as such, experience about her own lack; we do not at all see why at a certain stage we do not conceive that in the couple, the heterosexual one in this instance, it is at once on the side of the woman that we say the lack exists, no doubt, but also at the same time the activity.

In any case, Phaidros, for his part, does not doubt it. And that on the other hand it is from the side of the beloved, of the eromenos, or, put it in the neuter, of the eromenon because in so far as one eromene's, what one ere's, what one loves in this whole business of the Symposium is what? It is something which is always said and very frequently in the neuter form, it is ta paidika. It is called in the neutral form the object. This is indeed what it designates as such, wherever we see associated with this function of the eromenos or of the eromenon, of that which is loved, of the beloved object, a neutral function: it is that it is on its side that the strong term is. You will see this subsequently when we will have to articulate what ensures, as one might say, that the problem is at a superior more complex stage when it is a question of heterosexual love, this thing which is seen so clearly at that level, this dissociation of the active and of the strong will be of use to us. It was in any case important to point out at the moment at which this is found so manifestly illustrated by the example precisely of Achilles

and of Patroclos. It is the mirage that the strong is supposed to be confused with the active. Achilles because he is obviously stronger than Patroclos is not supposed to be the beloved. This indeed is what is denounced here, in this corner of the text, the teaching that we have to retain here in passing. Having got to this point of his discourse Phaidros hands over to Pausanias.

As you will see - I will recall it to you - Pausanias was taken throughout the centuries as expressing Plato's opinion about the love of boys. I have reserved some very particular care for Pausanias; I will show you that Pausanias who is a very curious personage, who is far from meriting this esteem of being on this occasion... (and why would he have put him there in the second place, immediately) from meriting the imprimatur. He is I believe quite an episodical personage. He is all the same important from a certain point of view, in so far as the best thing, as you will see, to put as a commentary in the margin of the discourse of Pausanias, is precisely this truth of the gospel that the kingdom of heaven is prohibited to the rich. I hope to show you the next time why.

Seminar 4;Wednesday 7 December 1960

Epithumian men diaplasiasthe'isan erota einai  
Erota de diaplaxasthenta manian gignesthai

[A desire redoubled is love.  
 But redoubled love becomes delusion]

I am going to try today to advance in the analysis of the Symposium which is the path that I have chosen to introduce you this year to the problem of transference. Remember where we had got to the last time at the end of the first discourse, Phaidros' discourse. I would not like ..... each one of these discourses, as they succeed one another: that of Pausanias, that of Eryximachos, that of Aristophanes, that of Agathon who is the host of this Banquet which was witnessed by Aristodemos, and which Apollodoros tells us about by reporting what he got from Aristodemos. Therefore from beginning to end it is Apollodoros who is speaking, repeating what Aristodemos said. After Agathon comes Socrates, and you will see the singular path he takes to express what he, for his part, knows love to be. You also know that the final episode is the entry of Alcibiades, a sort of public confession which is astonishing and almost indecent which is the one presented to us at the end of this dialogue and which has remained an enigma for all the commentators. There is also something afterwards, which we will come to. I would like to avoid your having to take this whole journey step by step, or your finally going astray or becoming wearied and forgetting the goal we are aiming at, the meaning of this point that we are heading for.

And this is why the last time I introduced my discourse by those words about the object, about this being of the object which we can always say (always more or less correctly but always correctly in some sense) we have missed, I mean we have missed out on. This reaching towards which it was appropriate for us to seek while there was time, this being of the other, I will come back to it by specifying what is in question as compared with the two terms of reference of what are called on this occasion intersubjectivity, I mean the accent put on the fact that we should recognise in this other a subject like ourselves and that it would be in this "I", in this direction that there lies the essential of this getting to the being of the other. In another direction also, namely what I mean when I try to

articulate the role, the function of desire in this apprehension of the other, as it emerges in the erastes-eromenos couple, the (2) one which has organised all the meditation on love from Plato up to the Christian meditation. This being of the other in

desire, I think I have pointed it out enough already, is not at all a subject. The eromenos is, I would say eromenon for that

matter ta paidika in the neuter plural: things connected with the beloved child, it could be translated. The other properly, in

so far as he is aimed at in desire, is aimed at I have said, as beloved object. What does that mean? It is that we can say

that what we missed in the one who is already too distant for us to recover from our failure, is indeed his quality as object, I mean that essentially what initiates this movement (which is what is in question in the access that love gives us to the other) is this desire for the beloved object which is something that, if I wanted to image it, I would compare to the hand that is put out to grasp the fruit when it is ripe, to draw towards us the rose which has opened, to poke the log which suddenly catches fire.

Listen carefully to the rest of what I am going to say. [What] I am doing, in this image which will stop there: I am outlining before you what is called a myth, and you are going to see the miraculous character of what follows the image. When I told you

the last time that the gods from which one begins (megas theos

Love is a great god, Phaidros says at the beginning) the gods,

are a manifestation of the real .... every passage from this manifestation to a symbolic order distances us from this revelation of the real. Phaidros tells us that Love, who is the

first god conceived by the Goddess of Parmenides (on whom I cannot dwell here) and who Jean Beaufret in his book on Parmenides identifies, I believe, more correctly than to any other function, to truth, truth in its radical structure - and on this consult the way I spoke in "The Freudian Thing": the first conception, invention of truth, is love - and moreover it is presented to us here as being without father or mother. "Parents Love has none" (178b). Nevertheless the reference is already

made in the most mythical forms to Hesiod. In the presentation of the gods something is organised which is a genealogy, a kinship system, a theogony, a symbolism.

At this halfway point of which I spoke to you which goes from theogony to atheism, this halfway point which is the Christian god, you should notice from the point of view of his internal organisation, what this triune god, this "one and three" god is, the radical articulation of kinship as such in what is its most irreducible, mysteriously symbolic, most hidden relationship and, as Freud says, the least natural, the most purely symbolic, the relationship of Father to Son. And the third term remains present there under the name of love.

This is where we started from, from Love as god, namely as reality which reveals itself in the real, which manifests itself in the real and as such we can only speak about it in a myth. It is for this reason that I am also authorised to fix before you the goal, the orientation of what is in question when I try to direct you towards the metaphor-substitution formula of erastes for eromenos. It is this metaphor which engenders this

signification of love.

I have the right in order to introduce it here, to materialise it before you, to complete its image, to really make a myth of it. And as regards this hand which stretches towards the fruit, towards the rose, towards the log which suddenly bursts into flame, first of all to tell you that its gesture of reaching, of (3) poking, is closely linked to the maturation of the fruit, to the beauty of the flower, to the flaming of the log, but that, when in this movement of reaching, of drawing, of poking, the hand has gone far enough towards the object, if from the fruit, from the flower, from the log, a hand emerges which stretches out to encounter your hand, and that at that moment it is your hand which is fixed in the closed fullness of the fruit, the open fullness of the flower, in the explosion of a hand which bursts into flame, what is produced at that point is love! Again it is important not to stop even there and to say that we are face to face with love, I mean that it is yours when it was you who were first of all the eromenos, the beloved object, and that suddenly you become the erastes, the one who desires. Look at what I am trying to accentuate by this myth: every myth refers to the inexplicable of the real, it is always inexplicable that anything should respond to desire. The structure in question, is not this symmetry and this return. So that this symmetry is not really one. In so far as the hand stretches out, it is towards an object. It is in the hand which appears from the other side that the miracle lies; but we are not there to organise miracles, quite the contrary, we are there to know. And what it is a question of accentuating, is not what passes from there to the beyond, it is what is happening there, namely this substitution of the erastes for the eromenos or for the eromenon. In other words I underline it, some people thought, I believe, that there was some uncertainty in what I articulated the last time on the one hand about the substitution of the erastes for the eromenos, a metaphorical substitution, and wanted in a way to see in this some contradiction in the supreme example to which the gods themselves give the accolade, before which the gods themselves are astonished agasthentes (179d), this is the term used, namely that Achilles, the beloved epapothanein: dies - we are going to see what that means - let us say to remain imprecise: dies for Patroclos. It is in this that he is superior to Alcestis when she alone was willing to die in place of her husband whom she loved: huper tou autēs andros apothanein. The terms used in this connection by Phaidros, huperapothanein as opposed to epapothanein..... huper.... apothanien Phaidros says earlier in the text: she dies in place of her husband. Epapothanein, is something different. Patroclos is dead. Alcestis changes places with her husband whom death demands, she crosses over this space mentioned above, which is between the one who is there and the other. She already performs there something which undoubtedly is destined to extract from the gods this disarmed testimony before this extreme act which will make her, before all human beings, receive this singular prize of having come back from among the dead. But there is still better. This indeed is what Phaidros articulates. What is better is that Achilles should have accepted his tragic destiny,

his fatal destiny: the certain death which is promised him instead of returning to his country with his father to his fields, if he pursues the vengeance of Patroclos. Now Patroclos was not his beloved. It is he who was the beloved. Rightly or wrongly it does not matter to us, Phaidros articulates that Achilles, in the couple, was the beloved, that he could only have had that position, and that it was because of that position that his act (which is in short to accept his destiny as it is written) if he does not remove something from it, if he puts himself, not in place of, but following after Patroclos, if he makes of the destiny of Patroclos the debt for which he himself has to answer, which he himself must face.... it is to this that to the eyes of the gods the most necessary, the greatest admiration is given, that the level reached in the order of the manifestation of love is, Phaidros tells us, more elevated, that as such Achilles is more honoured by the gods in so far as it is (4) they who have judged something to which their relationship, let us say in passing, is only a relationship of admiration, I mean of astonishment; I mean that they are overwhelmed by this spectacle of the value of what human beings bring them in terms of the manifestation of love. Up to a certain point the gods, impassible, immortal, are not meant to understand what happens at the level of mortals. They measure as if from the outside something which is like a distance, a miracle in what happens as a manifestation of love.

There is indeed therefore in what Phaidros\* text means, in the epapothanein, an accent put on the fact that Achilles, an eromenos, transforms himself into an erastes. The text says it and affirms it: it is as as erastes that Alcestis sacrifices herself for her husband. This is less of a radical, total, spectacular manifestation of love than the change of role which is produced at the level of Achilles when, from being an eromenos he transforms himself into an erastes.

It is not a question therefore in this erastes over eromenon of something whose humorous image - as I might put it - would be given by the lover over the beloved, the father over the mother, as Jacques Prevert says somewhere. And this is no doubt what inspired this sort of bizarre error of Mario Meunier that I spoke to you about, which says that Achilles kills himself on the tomb of Patroclos. It is not that Achilles as eromenos manages in some way to substitute himself for Patroclos, it is not a question of that because Patroclos is already beyond anybody's reach, anybody's attacks, it is that Achilles who is himself the beloved transforms himself into a lover. It is this which is in itself the properly miraculous event. It is through this that there is introduced into the dialectic of the Symposium the phenomenon of love.

Immediately afterwards we enter into Pausanias' discourse. We should punctuate Pausanias' discourse. We cannot take it in all its detail, line by line, as I told you because of time. Pausanias' discourse - you have generally enough read the Symposium for me to say it to you - is something which is introduced by a distinction between two orders of love. Love,

he says, is not one and, to know which we are to praise.... there is there a nuance between encomion and epainos (I do not know why the last time I made the word epainesis out of epainein). The meaning of epainos is the praise of love: the praise of Love should begin from the fact that Love is not one. He makes the distinction from its origin. Aphrodite he says is never without Love, but there are two Aphrodites. The essential distinction between the two Aphrodites is the following, that one has nothing to do with women, that she is motherless, that she is born from the spattering onto the earth of the rain engendered by the castration of Uranus. It is by this primordial castration of Uranus by Kronos, it is from this that there is born the Uranian Venus who owes nothing to the duplication of sexes. The other Aphrodite is born shortly after the union of Zeus and Dione who is a Titaness. The whole history of the advent of the one who governs the present world, of Zeus, is linked - for this I refer you to Hesiod - to his relationships with the Titans, the Titans who are themselves his enemies. Dione is a Titaness. I will not insist on it. This Aphrodite is born of man and woman (5) arrenos. This one is an Aphrodite who is not called Uranian but Pandemian. The depreciatory and contemptuous accent is expressly formulated in Pausanias' discourse. It is the Common Venus. She belongs entirely to the people. She belongs to those who confuse all loves, who seek them at levels which are inferior to them, who do not make of love a superior element of domination, which is what is contributed by the Uranian Venus, the Uranian Aphrodite.

It is around this theme that there is going to develop Pausanias<sup>1</sup> discourse which, contrary to the discourse of Phaidros (which is a discourse of a mythologist, which is a discourse about a myth), is a discourse - one could say that we are not forcing anything - of a sociologist.... this would be exaggerated.... of an observer of societies. Everything in appearance is going to be based on the diversity of positions in the Greek world with regard to this superior love, this love which takes place between those who are at once the strongest and who have most spirit, those who are also the most vigorous, those who are also agathoi, those who know how to think (181e) namely between people placed at the same level because of their capacities: men.

Custom, Pausanias tells us, varies greatly between what happens in Ionia or among the Persians, where this love (the testimony about this we have from him) is supposed to be disapproved of, and what happens elsewhere in Elis or among the Lacedaimonians where this love is highly approved of, where it seems to be very bad for the beloved to refuse his favours, charizesthai, to his lover (182b), and what happens among the Athenians which appears to him the superior mode of apprehension of the ritual, as one might say, of giving a social form to love relationships.

If we follow what Pausanias says about it, we see that if he approves the Athenians for imposing obstacles, forms, interdictions to it (as least it is in this way in a more or less idealised form that he presents it to us) it is with a certain goal, with a certain end, it is in order that this love should



manifest itself, prove itself, establish itself over a certain duration, indeed more, over a duration formally expressed as being comparable to conjugal union. It is also in order that the choice which follows the competition of love (agonotheton he says somewhere speaking about this love) presides at the struggle, at the competition between the postulants of love by putting to the test those who present themselves in the position of lover (184a). Here the ambiguity is particularly well sustained for a whole page. Whence is there placed this quality, this function of the one who chooses? Because also the one who is loved (even though he would want him to be a little bit more than a child already capable of some discernment) is all the same the one of the two who knows least, who is least capable of judging the quality of what one could call the profitable relationship between the two (it is something which is left to a sort of ambiguous testing, a testing between the two of them). It is moreover in the lover namely in the mode in which his choice is directed according to what he seeks in the beloved, and what he is going to seek in the beloved, is something to give him. The conjunction of the two, their encounter on what he calls somewhere the point of encounter of the discourse, both are going to meet at this point at which there is going to be a meeting place (184e).

It is a question of what? It is a question of this exchange which will mean that the first (as Robin has translated it in the text which is in the Budé collection) being thus able to (6) contribute something for wisdom and virtue in general, the other desiring to get this for education and wisdom in general (184e), are here going to meet in order according to him to constitute the couple and from an association which - as you see - is in short at the highest level: kai ho men aúnamenos eis pronesin ten alien areten sumballesthai, ho de deomenos eis paidensin kai ten alien sophian ktasthai,... ..it is on the plane of ктаομαι, of an acquisition, of a profit, of an acquiring, of a possession of something, that there is going to be produced the meeting between the terms of the couple which is going forever to articulate this love which is called superior, this love which will remain, even when we will have changed its partners, which will be called for the centuries that follow "Platonic love".

But it seems that it is very difficult in reading this discourse, not to sense, not to see the register to which all this psychology belongs. The whole discourse - if you reread it - is elaborated in function of a quotation, of a search for values, I would say of quoted shares (valeurs cotees). It is well and truly a question of investing the psychic investment funds that one has. If Pausanias demands somewhere that rules, severe rules - let us go back a little in the discourse - should be imposed on this development of Love, in courting the beloved, these rules are justified by the fact that it is appropriate that polle spoude (181e), a great deal of earnestness (it is indeed a question of this investment that I spoke about above) might not have been spent, wasted on these little boys who are not worth the trouble. Moreover it is for this reason that we are asked to wait until they are better formed, so that we know what we are

dealing with. Further on again he will say that is is savages, barbarians, who introduce into this order of seeking for merit, disorder, that in this respect access to the beloved should be preserved by the same sorts of interdictions, of laws, of reservations, thanks to which we try to prevent, he says, access to freeborn women in so far as they are the ones through whom there are united two families of masters, that they are in a way in themselves, representative of everything you want in terms of name, of a value, of a firm, of a dowry, as we say today. Under this title they are protected by this order. And it is a protection of this order which should prohibit to those who are not worthy of it access to desired objects.

The more you advance in this text, the more you see affirmed this something which I indicated to you in my discourse the last time in so far as it is properly speaking the psychology of the rich man. The rich man existed before the bourgeois. Even in a still more primitive agricultural economy, the rich man exists. The rich man exists and manifests himself from the beginning of time, even if it is only in the fact whose primordial character we have seen, by periodic manifestations in the matter of festivals, of ostentatious spending which is what constitutes the first duty of the rich man in primitive societies.

It is curious that in the measure that societies evolve this duty seems to pass to a lower plane, or at least a clandestine one. But the psychology of the rich man reposes entirely on the fact that what is in question for himself, in his relationship with the other, is worth (la valeur): it is about what can be evaluated in accordance with modes that are open to comparison, (7) on a scale, between what can be compared in an open competition which is properly speaking that of the possession of goods.

What is in question, is the possession of the beloved because he is a good security, the term is there: chrestos, and that a whole life would not be enough to make the most of this security (183e). So that Pausanias, some years after this Symposium (we know this through the comedies of Aristophanes) will go a little further precisely with Agathon, who is here as everyone knows his beloved, even though there is already a payment because he has what I called here a beard on his chin, a term which has here all its importance. Agathon here is thirty and has just taken the prize at the tragedy competition. Pausanias is going to disappear some years later into what Aristophanes calls the domain of the blessed. It is a remote place, not just out in the country but in a distant land. It is not Tahiti but it is in Macedonia. He will remain there as long as his security is assured.

The ideal of Pausanias in the matter of love is - I might say - the capital that is put to one side, the putting in a safe of what belongs to him by right as being that which he was able to discern of what he is capable of making the best use of.

I am not saying that there are no sequelae to this personage, as

we glimpse him in the Platonic discourse, in this other type whom I will rapidly designate for you because he is in short at the end of this chain, who is someone that I have met, not in analysis - I would not tell you about it - but whom I met enough for him to open up to me what was in what served him for a heart. This personage was really well-known and known for having a lively sentiment of the limits that are imposed in love precisely by what constitutes the position of the rich man. He was an extremely rich man. He had if I can express myself in this way - it is not a metaphor - strong boxes full of diamonds (because one never knows what might happen... it was immediately after the war... the whole planet might have gone up in flames).

This is nothing. The fashion in which he conceived it... because he was a rich Calvinist - I apologise to those here who may belong to that religion - I do not think that it is the privilege of Calvinism to create rich people, but it is not unimportant to indicate it here, because in a word all the same it can be noted that Calvinist theology had the effect of making appear, as one of the elements of moral direction, that God fills with good things those he loves on this earth (elsewhere also perhaps, but starting from this earth), that the observation of laws and commandments has as fruit worldly success, which has not been without its fruitfulness moreover in all sorts of enterprises. In any case the Calvinist in question treated exactly the order of merits that he would acquire from this earth for the future world in the register of a page of accounts: on such a day this was bought. And there also all his actions were directed towards acquiring for the beyond a well-filled safe.

I do not wish in making this digression to seem to be recounting a too facile apologue, but nevertheless, it is impossible not to complete this picture by outlining what his matrimonial fate was. One day he knocked down somebody on the street with the bumper of his big car. Even though he always drove very carefully. The (8) person knocked down shook herself. She was very pretty, she was the daughter of a concierge, which is not at all impossible when one is pretty. She received his excuses coldly, and still more coldly his propositions for damages, still more coldly again his propositions that they should dine together. In short, in the measure that the difficulty became greater of gaining access to this miraculously encountered object, the notion grew in his mind. He told himself that there was here a real asset (valeur). And it was for this very reason that all of this led him into marriage.

What is in question is properly speaking the same theme which is proposed to us by the discourse of Pausanias. It is namely that to explain to us the degree to which love is a value - judge for yourselves - he tells us: "Love is forgiven everything. For if, wishing to get money from someone or to win public office or to get any other power, a man should behave as lovers do towards their beloved he would reap the greatest disgrace". He would be guilty of what is called low morals, aneleutheria, because that is what that means, flattery, kolakeia. He would flatter, "something which is not worthy of a master, to obtain what he

desires" (183b). It is by measuring something as going beyond the danger level that we can judge what love is. This indeed is the same register of reference that is in question, the one which led my Calvinist accumulator of goods and of merits to have in effect for a certain time a lovable wife, to cover her of course with jewels which every evening were removed from her body to be put back in the safe, and arrive at this result that one day she went off with an engineer who was earning fifty thousand francs a month.

I would not like to appear to be overdoing things on this subject. And after all in introducing this discourse of Pausanias (which is particularly presented to us as the example of what there is supposed to be in antique love in terms of some kind of exalting of the moral quest) I do not need to have got to the end of this discourse to perceive that this shows the flaw that there is in any morality, which in any fashion attaches itself uniquely to what one can call the external signs of value. The fact is that he cannot end his discourse without saying that if everybody accepted the primary, prevalent character of these beautiful rules by which assets are only accorded to merit, what would happen? "In this case even to be deceived is not ugly. . . . for if one in pursuit of riches gratifies a lover supposed to be rich, and is deceived and gets no money because the lover turns out to be poor, it is no less ugly; for such a one is thought to show, as far as in him lay, that for money he would do anyone and everyone any and every service, and that is not beautiful. By the same argument observe that even if one gratifies another as being good, expecting to be better himself because of his affection for the lover, but since the other turns out to be bad (*kakos*) and not possessed of virtue, he is deceived, nevertheless the deceit is beautiful." (184e-185b)

One sees there generally something in which curiously people would like to find, to recognise the first manifestation in (9) history of what Kant called right intention. It seems to be that this is really to share in a singular error. The singular error is not to see rather the following: we know by experience that this whole ethic of educative love, of pedagogical love in the matter of homosexual love and even of the other, is something in itself which always shares - we see it from experience - in some lure which in the end cannot completely conceal itself. If it has happened to you, because we are on the plane of Greek love, to have some homosexual brought to you by his protector (it is always undoubtedly, on his part, with the best of intentions), I doubt that you have seen in this order some very manifest effect of this more or less warm protection with regard to the development of the one who is put before you as the object of this love which would like to present itself as a love for the good, for the acquisition of the greatest good. This is what allows me to say to you that it is far from being Plato's opinion. Because scarcely has the discourse of Pausanias - rather suddenly I must say - concluded on something which says more or less the following: "all the others were ..... and those who were not should betake themselves to the Pandemian Venus, the goddess of easy virtue who is not one either, let them

go and screw themselves if they want! It is on this, he says, that I would conclude my discourse on love. As for the plebs, in other words for popular love, we have nothing more to say about it.

But if Plato agreed, if this were really what was in question, do you believe that we would see what happens immediately afterwards? Immediately afterwards Apollodoros begins to speak again and says to us: Pausaniou... pausamenou, Pausanias paused upon this clause (185c), it is difficult to translate into French and there is a little note which says: "there is no corresponding French expression, because the numerical symmetry of the syllables is important, it is probably an allusion, see the note...."

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I will pass over it. M. Leon Robin is not the first one to react to it. Already in the edition of Henri Estienne there is a marginal note. Everybody has reacted to this Pausaniou... pausamenou because people saw an intention there. I think that I am going to show you that they have not seen what it is, because in fact, immediately after this little bit of cleverness - it is well underlined for us that it is a bit of cleverness - because in parenthesis the text tells us: "that's how the stylists teach me to jingle!" Didaskousi gar me isa legein outosi oi sophoi "the masters have taught me to speak that way isologically", let us say.... a play on words, but isology is not a play on words, it is really a technique. I will pass over all the ingenious efforts that have been made to discover what master, is it Prodicus, is it not a Prodicus? Is it not rather Isocrates because also in Isocrates there is an iso and it would be particularly iso to isologize Isocrates. This leads to problems! You cannot imagine the amount of research that this has engendered! Were Isocrates and Plato pals....?

I have been reproached for not always quoting my sources, and starting from today I have decided to do it, here it is Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. I am telling you this because he is a sensational character. If you can put your hands on them, if you can read German, get his books (there is book on Simonides that I would really like to have) he lived at the beginning of this century and he was an erudite gentleman of his time, a (10) considerable personage whose works on Plato are absolutely illuminating. He is not the one I am blaming in connection with Pausaniou... pausamenou, he did not waste his time on this sort of trivial gossip.

What I wanted to tell you is the following, it is that I do not believe on this occasion in a particularly distant reference to the way in which Isocrates handles isology when it is a question of demonstrating for example the merits of a political system. The whole development that you will find in the preface to this book of the Symposium as it has been translated and commented by Leon Robin appears to me to be something undoubtedly interesting but unrelated to this problem and here is why. My conviction was already formed no doubt concerning the import of the discourse of Pausanias, and I even gave it all to you the last

time in saying that the discourse of Fausanias is truly the image of the Gospel's malediction: what is really worthwhile is forever refused to the rich. Nevertheless it happens that I think I found here a confirmation which I propose to your judgement. Last Sunday I was - I am continuing to quote my sources - with someone, and I would be angry with myself if I have not already told you how important he was in my own formation, namely Kojeye. I think that some of you all the same know that it is to Kojève that I owe my introduction to Hegel.

I was with Kojève with whom, of course, because I am always thinking of you, I spoke about Plato. I found in what was said to me by Kojève (who is doing something completely different to philosophy now because he is an eminent man who all the same writes from time to time two hundred pages on Plato, manuscripts that make their way into different places).... He shared with me a certain number of things about his very recent discoveries in Plato, but he was not able to say anything to me about the Symposium because he had not reread it. This did not form part of the economy of his recent discourse. It was a little bit then as if I had gone to some trouble for nothing, even though I was very encouraged by many of the things that he said to me about other points of the Platonic discourse, and particularly by the fact that it is quite certain (which is altogether obvious) that Plato essentially hides what he thinks from us just as much as he reveals it and that it is according to the measure of the capacity of each one (namely up to a certain limit very certainly not supersedable) that we can glimpse it. You must not blame me then if I do not give you the last word on Plato because Plato was quite determined not to tell us this last word.

It is very important, at the moment at which perhaps everything that I am telling you about Plato will make you open Phaedo for example, that you might have the idea that perhaps the object of Phaedo is not quite to demonstrate, despite appearances, the immortality of the soul. I would even say that its end is very obviously the contrary. But let us leave this to one side.

On leaving Kojève I said to him that we had not spoken very much after all about the Symposium, and since Kojève is a very superior sort of person, namely a snob, he answered me: "In any case you will never interpret the Symposium if you do not know why Aristophanes had a hiccup!"

I already told you that it was very important because it is obvious that it is very important. Why would he have had a hiccup if there were no reason for it? I had no idea why he had a hiccup, but all the same encouraged by this little push, I said to myself, moreover with a great weariness, that I expected nothing less annoying than to discover again speculations about (11) hiccuping, sneezing, the antique or even the psychosomatic value that this might have.... very distractedly I reopen my copy and I look at this text at the place Pausaniou... pausamenou because it is immediately afterwards that there is going to be a question of Aristophanes (he is the one who is supposed to speak) and I noticed the following which is that for sixteen lines all

that is dealt with is stopping this hiccup (when will this hiccup stop - will it stop - will it not stop - if-it-will-not-stop-you-take-this-or-theJ -sort-of-thing-and-it-will-end-up-by-stopping) in such a way that the terms pausai, pausomai, pause, pausethai, pausetai, if we add Pausaniou...pausamenou give seven repetitions of paus, in these lines, or an average of two lines and a seventh interval between these eternally repeated paus ...; if you add here the fact that this will or will not achieve something and that when all is said and done I will do what you said I should do, namely that the term poieso is added to it, repeated with an almost equal insistence, which reduces to a line and a half the homophonies, indeed the isologies, that are in question, it is all the same extremely difficult not to see that if Aristophanes has a hiccup, it is because during the whole of the discourse of Pausanias he is convulsed with laughter - and so is Plato! In other words, that if Plato says something to us like Pausaniou...pausamenou: "The louse tried everything" (toto a tout tente) that he then repeats to us for these sixteen lines the word "tendant" (trying) and the word "tente (tried), should all the same make us prick up our ears, because there is no other example in any text of Plato of a passage which is so crudely like something out of l'almanach Vermot. Here too of course is one of the authors in whom I was formed in my youth. It was there even that the first time I read a Platonic dialogue which was called Theodore cherche des allumettes, by Courteline, which was really a prize morsel!

Therefore I think it is sufficiently affirmed that for Plato himself, in so far as it he is who speaks here under the name of Apollodoros, the discourse of Pausanias is indeed something derisory.

Well.... because we have got to a rather late hour, I will not analyse for you today the discourse of Eryximachos which follows. Eryximachos speaks instead of Aristophanes who should have spoken then. We will see the next time what the discourse of Eryximachos, the doctor, means as regards the nature of love. We will also see - because I think it is much more important - the role of Aristophanes and we will see in his discourse that Aristophanes will make us take a step, the first really illuminate --- one for us, if not for the ancients for whom the discourse of Aristophanes has always remained enigmatic like an enormous farce. It is a question of dioecism of this dioecism? Miemei. As it is put, of separation in two. It is a question - < of this Spaltung, of this splitting which, even though it is not identical to the one I am developing for you on the graph, has undoubtedly some relationship to it.

After the discourse of Aristophanes I will look at the discourse of Agathon. What I want starting from now so that you will know where you are going while you are waiting for the next time... if you look closely at this text (there is in any case one sure (12) thing, and here I do not need a learned preparation to give it greater value), at whatever moment of analysis you tackle this text you will see that there is one thing and one thing only that Socrates articulates when he speaks in his own name, it is first

of all that Agathon's discourse, the discourse of the tragic poet, is utterly worthless.

It is said: it is to spare Agathon's feelings that he is going to have himself replaced as I might say, by Diotima, that he is going to give his theory of love through the mouth of Diotima. I do not see at all how you can spare the feelings of someone who has been executed. This is what he does to Agathon. And starting from now - even if it is only to object to me if there is reason for it - I would ask you to highlight what is in question, which is that what Socrates is going to articulate after all the beautiful things that Agathon in his turn will have said about Love, which is not alone here all the goods of Love, all the profit that one can draw from Love but, let us say, all its virtues, all its beauties... there is nothing too beautiful to be accounted for by the effects of Love... Socrates in a single flash undermines all of this at the base by bringing things back to their root which is the following: Love, love of what?

From love we pass to desire and the characteristic of desire, if it is a fact that Eros, era, that Eros desire's is what is in question, namely what it is supposed to bring with it, the beautiful itself, is lacking to it endes, endeia, in these two terms it is lacking, it is identical of itself to the lack in these two terms. And the whole contribution of Socrates in his personal name in this discourse of the Symposium is that starting from there something is going to begin which is very far [from] reaching something that you can catch hold of, how is this conceivable. . . up to the end we plunge on the contrary progressively into a darkness and we will find here the antique night is always greater.. . And everything that there is to be said about the thought of love, in the Symposium begins here.



Seminar 5; Wednesday 14 December 1960

In order to see correctly the nature of the enterprise that I am involved in, in order that you may be able to tolerate the wearisome aspects of these detours - because after all you do not come here to hear a commentary on a Greek text, we are drawn into it, I do not claim to be exhaustive - I assure you that after all I have done the greater part of the work for you, I mean in your place, in your absence, and the best service that I can give you is in short to encourage you to refer to this text. Without any doubt, if you have referred to it as I suggested, it will happen perhaps that you will read it to some degree at least through my spectacles, this no doubt is better than not reading it at all. All the more so because the goal that I was seeking, what dominates the whole enterprise - and the way in which you can accompany it in a more or less commented fashion - is that it is highly appropriate not to lose sight of what we are destined to arrive at, I mean something which responds to the question from which we begin.

This question is simple, it is that of the transference, I mean that it is proposed [starting from] terms which are already elaborated. A man, the psychoanalyst, from whom one comes to seek the knowledge of what is most intimate to oneself (because this is the state of mind in which one approaches him usually) and therefore of what should be supposed from the beginning to be the thing most foreign to him and moreover that one supposes at the same time to be most foreign to him (we encounter this at the beginning of analysis) is nevertheless supposed to have this knowledge. Here is a situation which we are proposing here in subjective terms, I mean in the disposition of the one who comes forward as the demander. We do not have for the moment even to bring into it all that this situation involves, sustains objectively namely, what we should introduce into it about the specificity of what is proposed to this knowledge namely, the unconscious as such. The subject has not the slightest idea about this, whatever else he may have.

How can this situation, by simply being defined objectively in this way, engender something, which in a first approximation

resembles love (because this is the way transference can be defined)? Let us put it better, let us say further, which puts love in question, puts it in question profoundly enough for us, for analytic reflection, because it has introduced into it as an essential dimension, what is called its ambivalence; let us say it, a new notion compared to a certain philosophical tradition which it is not vain for us to search for here right at the origin. This close coupling of love and of hate, is something that we do not see at the beginning of this tradition, because this beginning (because we must choose it somewhere) we choose as Socratic, even though... we are going to see it today, there is something earlier from which precisely it starts.

Naturally, we could not advance so daringly in posing this question if already in some way the tunnel had not already been opened up at the other end. We are setting out to meet something. We have already rather seriously circumscribed the (2) topology of what the subject, as we know, ought to find in analysis in place of what he seeks. Because as we know, if he sets out to seek what he has and does not know about, what he is going to find is what is lacking to him. It is indeed because we have articulated, posed this earlier in our journey that we can dare to pose the question that I formulated at first as being that in which there is articulated the possibility of the emergence of transference. We know well then that it is as what he lacks that there is articulated what he finds in analysis, namely his desire, and the desire not being therefore a good in any sense of the term, nor quite precisely in the sense of a ktesis, treasure, this something which under some title or other he might have. It is in this moment, in this birth of transference-love, this moment defined in the double chronological and topological sense that there should be read this inversion, as one might say, of the position which, out of the search for a good, produces properly speaking the realisation of desire.

You understand of course that this discourse supposes that the realisation of desire is specifically not the possession of an object, it is a matter of the emergence to reality of desire as such. It is indeed because it seemed to me, and not because of a chance encounter but in a way when I was seeking (in order to begin as it were from the heart of the field of my memories, guided by some compass which is created from an experience) where to find as it were the central point of the articulated things that I had been able to retain in what I had learnt.... it seemed to me that the Symposium was, however distant from us it was, the locus in which there was debated in the most vibrant fashion the meaning of this question. Properly speaking in this moment which concludes it when Alcibiades - one could say strangely, in every sense of the term - moreover which is the work at the level of the composition by Plato in which manifestly he broke off there on this supposed stage and the succession of organised, programmed discourses which is all of a sudden broken off by the irruption of the real feast, by the disturbance of the order of the feast.... And in its very text, this discourse of Alcibiades (because it is a matter of the avowal of his own disconcertment)

everything that he says is really about his suffering, how disturbed he is by an attitude of Socrates which still leaves him, almost as much as at the time, wounded, eaten by some strange wound or other. And why this public confession? Why in this public confession this interpretation by Socrates which shows him that this confession has an altogether immediate goal: to separate him from Agathon, the occasion right away for a sort of return to order? All of those who have referred to this text, since I have been speaking to you about it, have not failed to be struck by how consonant this whole strange scene is with all sorts of situations, of instantaneous positions which are liable to happen in transference. Again of course, this is only an impression, there is question here of something which must be related to it. And of course it is in a tighter, more subtle analysis that we will see what is given to us by a situation which in any case is not obviously to be attributed to something which is supposed to be a sort (as Aragon says in Le Paysan de Paris) of foreshadowing of chicanalyse. No! But rather an (3) encounter: a sort of apparition of some features in it should be revelatory for us here.

I believe, and this is not simply because of a sort of stepping back before a leap (which ought to be like the one Freud attributes to the lion, namely unique) that I am delaying showing it to you, because to understand what this advent of the Alcibiades-Socrates scene fully means, we must thoroughly understand the general design of the work, namely of the Symposium.

And this is where we are advancing. It is indispensable to set out the terrain. If we do not know what Plato meant by bringing in the Alcibiades scene, it is impossible to situate exactly its import, and that is the reason why. Today we are at the beginning of the discourse of Eryximachos, of the doctor, let us hold our breath for a moment.

That it is a doctor should all the same interest us. Does that mean that the discourse of Eryximachos should lead us into a research about the history of medicine? It is quite clear that I cannot even outline it, for all sorts of reasons, first of all because it is not our business because this detour, itself, would all the same be rather excessive, and then because I do not really think it is possible. I do not believe that Eryximachos is really specified, that Plato is thinking of a particular doctor in bringing us this personage. All the same there are fundamental traits in the position that he brings forward (which are the ones which are to be distinguished, and which are not necessarily a historical feature, except in function of a very general dividing line), but which perhaps is going to make us reflect for a moment in passing about what medicine is.

It has already been remarked that there is in Socrates a frequent almost pervasive reference to medicine. Very frequently, Socrates, when he wants to bring his interlocutor onto the plane of dialogue where he wants to direct him towards the perception of a rigorous step, refers himself to some art of the technician.

I mean: "If you want to know the truth about such or such a subject, who would you address yourself to?" And among them the doctor is far from being excluded and he is even treated with a particular reverence, the level at which he is put is certainly not that of a lower order in Socrates' eyes. It is nevertheless clear that what regulates his progress is something which is far from being able to be reduced in any way to what one could call a mental hygiene.

The doctor in question speaks as a doctor, and immediately even promotes his medicine as being the greatest of all the arts: medicine is the great Art (186b).... Immediately after having begun his discourse, and here I will only briefly note the confirmation given to what I told you the last time about the discourse of Pausanias in the fact that, beginning his discourse Eryximachos expressly formulates the following: "Because Pausanias, hormesas, began well", it is not a good translation "but ended feebly" - not in an appropriate fashion. It is a litotes, it is clear that for everybody (and I even believe that the degree of it should be underlined here) there is implied as obvious this something - to which it must be said that our ear is not exactly attuned - we do not have the impression that this discourse of Pausanias ended all that badly, we are so used to hearing idiocies of this kind about love. It is very strange the degree to which, in his opinion, this feature in the discourse of Eryximachos really appeals to the consent of everybody, as if in short, the discourse of Pausanias had really revealed itself to everyone as feeble, as if it were obvious that all these rude jokes about the pausamenou, on which I insisted the last time, were obvious for the reader in antiquity.

(4) I believe it is rather essential for us to refer to what we can glimpse about this question of tone, to which after all the ear of the mind always latches on, even if it does not always openly make a criterion of it, and which is so frequently invoked in the Platonic texts as something to which Socrates refers at every instant. How often before beginning his discourse, or beginning a parenthesis in a discourse of another, does he not invoke the gods in a formal and express way in order that the tone may be sustained, may be maintained, may be harmonised. As you are going to see, this is very close to what concerns us today.

I would like, before entering into the discourse of Eryximachos, to make some remarks a distance from which, even if it leads us to altogether primary truths, is nonetheless something which is not all that easily given. Let us observe the following, in connection with the discourse of Eryximachos.... I will demonstrate to you in passing that medicine has always thought of itself as scientific. Eryximachos makes remarks which refer - because in short, it was instead of you, as I said above, that I had to spend these days trying to disentangle this little chapter in the history of medicine.... in order to do it I had to leave the Symposium and refer to different points of the Platonic text. There are a series of schools which you have heard about, however

neglected this chapter of your formation in medicine may have been: the most celebrated, the one everybody knows about, the school of Cos. You know that there was a school, before the school of Cnidos, in Sicily, which is earlier again, whose great name is Alcmeon and the Alcmeonians, Croton is the centre of it. What must be realised, is that it is impossible to dissociate its speculations from those of a scientific school which flourished at the same time, at the same place, namely the Pythagorians. See where that leads us. We have to speculate on the role and the function of Pythagorism on this occasion, and moreover, as everyone knows, it is essential in order to understand Platonic thought. We see ourselves here engaged in a detour in which we would literally lose ourselves. So that I am going rather to try to separate out its themes, as they concern very strictly our concerns, namely that towards which we are advancing, the meaning of this episode of the Symposium, I mean of this discourse, the Symposium in so far as it is problematic.

Here we will retain only one thing, which is that medicine ...; whether it is that of Eryximachos (we do not, I believe, know very much about the personage of Eryximachos in himself) or that of the people who are supposed to have taught a certain number of other personages whom we know something about, personages who intervene in the discourses of Plato and who are directly attached to this medical school through the Alcmeonians, in so far as they were attached to the Pythagoreans: we know that Simmias and Cebes, the people who dialogue with Socrates in the Phaedo are disciples of Philolaus (who is one of the masters of the first Pythagorean school). If you refer to the Phaedo, you (5) will see what is contributed by Simmias and Cebes in response to the first propositions of Socrates, specifically about what should assure the soul about its immortality, that these responses refer to the same terms exactly as the ones which I am going to talk to you about here, namely those which are put in question in the discourse of Eryximachos, in the first rank of which there is the notion of harmonia, of harmony, of concord (187a).

Medicine therefore, as you can notice here, always believed itself to be scientific. It is moreover how it has always shown its weaknesses. Through a sort of necessity within its position, it has always referred to a science which was that of its time, whether it was good or bad (how can you know from the point of view of medicine whether it is good or bad?). As for us, we have the feeling that our science, our physics, is always thought to be a good science, and that, throughout the centuries, we had a very bad physics. This is indeed quite certain. What is not certain, is what medicine has to do with this science, namely how and through what opening and what end it is to deal with it, as long as something is not elucidated for medicine itself, and which is not as you are going to see, the least important thing, because what is in question is the idea of health.

Very exactly: what is health? You would be wrong to think that even for modern medicine which, with regard to all the others,

believes itself to be scientific, the matter is altogether certain. From time to time the idea of the normal and of the pathological is proposed as a thesis-subject to some student; it is a subject which is in general proposed to them by people who have a philosophical formation, and on this we have an excellent work by M. Canguilhem. Obviously, it is a work whose influence is very limited in properly medical circles.

Now there is something in any case (without trying to speculate at a level of Socratic certitude about health in itself) which by itself shows us especially as psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, the degree to which the idea of health is problematical: it is the means themselves that we employ to get back to the state of health; these means show us, to put things in the most general terms that, whatever about nature, about the successful form which is supposed to be the form of health, at the heart of this successful form we are led to postulate paradoxical states - it is the least that one can say about them - the very ones whose manipulation in our therapeutics is responsible for the return to an equilibrium which remains on the whole, as such, rather uncriticised.

Here then is what we find at the level of postulates which are the least accessible to demonstration from the medical position as such. It is precisely the one which is here going to be promoted in the discourse of Eryximachos under the name of harmonia. We do not know the harmony that is in question, but the notion is very fundamental to every medical position as such, all that we should seek, is concord. If we have not advanced very much compared to the position in which someone like Eryximachos situates himself about what constitutes the essence, the substance of this idea of concord, namely something borrowed from an intuitive domain to the sources of which he is simply closer, it is historically more defined and tangible when here we expressly perceive that it is referred to the musical domain in so far as here the musical domain is the Pythagorean model and form. Moreover everything which in one way or another refers to (6) this according of tones, even of the most subtle kind, even if it is the tone of the discourse to which I alluded above, brings us back to this same appreciation - it is not for nothing that I spoke in passing about the ear - to this same appreciation of consonance which is essential for this notion of harmony. This is what introduces, as you will see provided you enter into the text of this discourse - which I will spare you the boredom of reading line by line, which is never very possible in the midst of such a large audience - you will see in it the essential character of this notion of concord in order to understand what is meant by, how there is introduced here this medical position, and you will see that everything that is articulated here has the function of a support which we can neither exhaust, nor in any way reconstruct, namely the thematic of discussions which in advance we can suppose here to be present in the minds of the listeners.

Let us not forget that we find ourselves here at the historic culminating point of a particularly active, creative epoch: these

VIth and VIIth centuries of the great period of Hellenism abound in mental creativity. There are good works to which you can refer. For those who read English there is a big book of the kind that only English editors can give themselves the luxury of producing. It is part of a philosophical testament because it is Bertrand Russell in his old age who has written it. This would be a very good book for the New Year, because I assure you - you only have to read it - it is studded with wonderful drawings in colour in its large margins, drawings of extreme simplicity addressed to the imagination of a child, in which there is after all everything that should be known starting from this fruitful period to which I am referring today (which is the pre-Socratic epoch) up to our own day, to English positivism; and no one really important is left but. If you really want to be unbeatable when you dine out, when you have read this book you will know really everything, except of course the only things that are important, namely those that are not known. But I would all the same advise you to read it. It will fill in for you, for each and every one of you, a considerable number of the almost necessary lacunae in your information.

Let us therefore try to put a little order in what is delineated when we engage ourselves along the path of trying to understand what Eryximachos means. The people of his time found themselves always faced with the same problem as the one that we find ourselves faced with, except that, for want of having as great an abundance as we have of tiny facts with which to furnish their discourse (I am giving here moreover a hypothesis which arises from allurements and illusion) they go more directly to the essential antimony which is the same as the one that I began to put before you a while ago, which is the following: that we cannot in any case be content to take any concord at its face value. What experience teaches us, is that something is concealed at the heart of this concord, and that the whole question is to know what can be required from this underpinning of concord; I mean from a point of view which cannot be settled simply by experience, which always involves a certain mental a priori which cannot be posed outside a certain mental a priori.

At the heart of this concord must we require the similar or can we be content with the dissimilar? Does every concord suppose some principle of concord or can concord emerge from discordance, from conflict? You must not imagine that it was only with Freud (7) that such a question emerges for the first time. And the proof, is that it is the first thing that the discourse of Eryximachos brings before us. This notion of what is concordant or discordant - for us, let us say, of the function of anomaly compared to the normal - comes in the first place in his discourse (186b, around line 9). "In fact what is unlike desires and loves things unlike. Then," continues the text, "there is one love in the healthy, and another in the diseased. So you see just as, according to what Pausanias said just now, it is beautiful to gratify good men, and ugly to gratify the intemperate, ...."

We have been brought now to the question of physique of what this

virtue and this disorder signify, and immediately we find a formula which I note, which I can only pin-point on the page. It is not that it gives us very much, but that it should all the same for us analysts be the object of a type of interest in passing, when there is some sort of surface noise that interests us. He tells us that "medicine is knowledge of the body's loves: episteme ton tou somatos erotikon" (186c). One could not give a better definition of psychoanalysis, it seems to me. And he adds "pros plesmonen kai kenosin, for filling and emptying" the text translates brutally. It is indeed a question of the evocation of two terms of the full and of the empty the role of which two terms we are going to see in the topology, in the mental position of what is in question at this meeting point of physics and the operation of medicine.

It is not the only text, I can tell you, where this full and this empty are evoked. I would say that the role of these terms is one of the fundamental intuitions that would have to be extracted, to be highlighted in the course of a study on the Socratic discourse. And anyone who engaged himself in this enterprise would not have to go very far to find a further reference. At the beginning of the Symposium, when Socrates, as I told you, who had delayed in the hallway of the house next door where we can suppose him to be in the position of a gymnosophist, standing on one foot like a stork and immobile until he had found the solution to some problem or other, he arrives at Agathon's after everybody has been waiting for him: "Well! you have found what you were looking for, come near me", Agathon says to him. At which Socrates gives a little speech to say: "What a blessing it would be, Agathon, if wisdom could run from the fuller among us to the emptier, while we touch one another, as when two cups are placed side by side a bit of wool conveys water from the fuller to the emptier!" (175d) We must suppose that this amusing physical operation was, for some reason or other, frequently practiced, because that probably served as an image for everybody. Effectively, this passage from within one vase to another, this transformation from the full into the empty, this communication of the content is one of the fundamental images of something which regulates what one could call the fundamental covetousness of every philosophical exchange, and it is to be retained to understand the meaning of the discourse that is proposed to us.

A little further on, this reference to music as being at the beginning of the concord which is the foundation of what is going to be proposed to us as being the essence of the function of love between beings, is going to lead us on the page that follows - namely in paragraph 187 - to encounter in a living way in the discourse of Eryximachos this choice which I told you above was primordial on the subject of what is conceivable as being at the beginning of concord, namely: the similar and the dissimilar, order and conflict. Because here in passing we see, when it is question of defining this harmony, Eryximachos noting that no (8) doubt we encounter from the pen of an author about a century earlier, Heraclitus of Ephesus, a paradox when it is to the opposition of contraries that Heraclitus refers expressly as



being the principle of the composition of all unity. "The One," Eryximachos tells us, "at variance with itself is brought together again, like a harmony of bow and lyre." This hosper harmonian toxou te kai luras (187a) is extremely celebrated, if only because it was cited here in passing - and it is cited by many other authors. It has come to us in these few scattered fragments that the German scholars have collected for us about pre-Socratic thinking. This one, among those which remain to us from Heraclitus, remains really dominant. I mean that, in Bertrand Russell's book which I recommended you to read above, you will find there effectively represented the arc and its cord, and even the simultaneous drawing of a vibration from which the movement of the arrow begins.

What is striking is this bias, the reason for which we cannot see very clearly in passing, which Eryximachos demonstrates concerning the Heraclitean formulation: he finds fault with it. It seems to him that there are exigencies here whose source we cannot clearly fathom, because we find ourselves here at a confluence where we do not know what share to accord to prejudice, to a priori's, to choices made in function of a certain consistency of time in a whole theoretical ensemble, or to psychological aspects which really we are unable (especially when it is a matter of personages who are ghosts from the past) to give an origin to. We have to be satisfied with noting that effectively (something whose echo we find in many other places in the Platonic discourse) some aversion or other is shown at the idea of referring to any conjunction of the opposition of contraries (even if in some way it is situated in the real) the birth of something which does not appear to him to be in any way assimilable - namely the creation of the phenomenon of concord, something which is affirmed and is posed, is experienced, is assented to as such. It seems that even in its very principle the idea of proportion when it is a question of paying attention to that of harmony, to speak in medical terms of diet or of dosage, with everything that this involves in terms of measure, of proportion, must be maintained [but] that in no way can the Heraclitean vision of conflict as creator in itself, for some minds, for some schools - let us leave the matter in suspense - be sustained.

There is here a bias which for ourselves, to whom of course all sorts of models in physics have brought the idea of the fruitfulness of contraries, of contrasts, of oppositions and of the absolute non-contradiction of the phenomenon with its conflictual principle (in a word that the whole of physics tends much more towards the side of the image of the wave than - whatever modern psychology has made of it - to the side of the form, of the Gestalt, of the good form)... we cannot help being surprised, I was saying, as much in this passage as in many others of Plato, to even see sustained the idea of some impasse or other, of some aporia or other, of some choice or other to be made, of some preference or other to be given which would be on the side of the necessarily conjoined, fundamental character, of concord with concord, of harmony with harmony.

As I have told you, this is not the only passage and, if you refer to a dialogue which I must say is extremely important to read as an underpinning for our understanding of the Symposium, namely the Phaedo you will see that the whole discussion with Simmias and Cebes is based on that. That, as I was telling you the other day, the whole pleading of Socrates in defence of the (9) immortality of the soul is presented there in the most obvious fashion in the form of a sophism which is properly speaking the following (which is none other than the one around which I have been making my remarks about the discourse of Eryximachos revolve), namely that the very idea of the soul qua harmony does not suppose there to be excluded that there should enter into it the possibility of its rupture. Because when Simmias and Cebes object that this soul, whose nature is constant, whose nature is permanence and duration, might well vanish at the same time as its elements are dislocated, these elements which are corporeal elements, whose conjunction creates the harmony Socrates gives nothing else as an answer, except that the idea of harmony in which the soul participates is in itself impenetrable, that it would hide itself, that it would flee before the very approach of anything that would put its constancy in question. The idea of the participation of anything that exists in this sort of incorporeal essence which is the Platonic idea, openly demonstrates its fiction and its lure and to such a degree in this Phaedo that it is really impossible not to tell oneself that we have no reason to think that Plato did not see this lure any less than ourselves. This unimaginable, extraordinary pretension that we have of being more intelligent than the personage who has developed the Platonic oeuvre has something really bewildering about it!

This indeed is why when, after the discourse of Pausanias, we see developing that of Eryximachos (he gives out his patter, this does not immediately have obvious consequences), we are nevertheless entitled to ask ourselves by making succeed to one another in this order this series of tirades among which we have at least seen that that of Pausanias which immediately precedes is derisory. And if, after all, we hold onto the general characteristic, the overall tone which characterises the Symposium, we are legitimately entitled to ask ourselves if what is in question is not properly speaking something which is consonant with a comic work as such: in dealing with love, it is clear that Plato has taken the path of comedy. All that follows will confirm it - and I have my reasons for beginning to affirm it now - at the moment when there is going to come on the scene the great comic, the great comic Aristophanes about whom people have always been puzzled as to why Plato had him come to the Symposium. It is scandalous because, as you know, this great comic is one of those responsible for the death of Socrates. If Phaedo, namely the drama of the death of Socrates, is presented to us with this lofty character which gives it the tragic tone that you know (and besides it is not so simple, there too there are comical things, but it is quite clear that tragedy dominates and that it is represented before us), the Symposium already teaches us that there is not (and including the ever-so-brief discourse of Socrates in so far as he speaks in his own name) a

single point of this discourse which is not put before us with this suspicion of the comic. And I would even say that this point, in order to leave nothing out and to respond specifically to one of my listeners whose presence does me the greatest honour, with whom I had on this subject a brief exchange.... I would say specifically that even the discourse of Phaidros at the beginning which not unreasonably, not without a motive, not incorrectly he thought he understood me to be taking at its face value as opposed to the discourse of Pausanias, I would say that this goes just as much in the direction of what I am here affirming precisely: the fact is that precisely this discourse of Phaidros by referring to the judgement of the gods on the subject of love, also has an ironic value. Because the gods are unable, precisely, to understand anything about love. The expression of a divine stupidity is something which to my way of thinking ought to be more widespread. It is often suggested by the behaviour of those people to whom we address ourselves precisely on the (10) terrain of love. To take the gods to testify at the bar about what is in question concerning love appears to me to be something which in any case is not heterogeneous for what follows in Plato's discourse.

We have now arrived at the brink of the discourse of Aristophanes. Nevertheless, we are not yet going to enter into it. I would simply like to ask you yourselves, using your own means, to complete what remains to be seen in the discourse of Eryximachos. For M. Lion Robin it is an enigma that Eryximachos takes up again the opposition between the theme of Uranian love and Pandemic love given precisely what he tells us about the physical medical handling of love. He does not see very clearly what justifies it. And in fact I believe that our astonishment is really the only attitude which is appropriate to respond to that of the author of this edition. Because the thing is clarified in the very discourse of Eryximachos confirming the whole perspective in which I tried to situate it for you.

If he refers, concerning the effects of love (par. 188a-b) to astronomy, it is indeed in so far as what is in question, this harmony, to which it is a question of bringing together, of according, concerning the good order of the health of mankind, is one and the same as that which reigns over the order of the seasons and that, when on the contrary, he says, violent love (hubris, something excessive), has more power on the seasons of the year, it is then that there begin disasters, and confusion, the prejudices (as he calls them), damage, among which of course there are pestilences, but at the same level are placed hoar frosts and hails and blights and a whole series of other things.

This to replace us in the context where I believe all the same that the notions that I am putting forward before you as the fundamental, radical categories to which we are forced to refer to pose a worthwhile discourse for analysis namely, the imaginary, the symbolic and the real, are utilisable here.

People talk about primitive thinking, and there is astonishment that a Bororo identifies himself with an ara. Does it not seem

to you that it is not a question of primitive thinking, but of a primitive position of thinking concerning that with which for everyone, for you as for me, it has to deal? When we see that man interrogating himself not about his place, but about his identity, has to locate himself not at all within the limited enclosure which is supposed to be his body, but has to locate himself in the total and raw real with which he has to deal - and that we do not escape from this law from which it follows that it is at the precise point of this delineation of the real in which the progress of science consists that we will always have to situate ourselves. At the time of Eryximachos, it is completely outside the question, for want of any knowledge whatsoever about what a living tissue as such is, that the doctor could make, let us say of humours, something heterogeneous to humidity in which (11) in the world natural vegetations are able to proliferate; the same disorder which will provoke in man such and such an excess due to intemperance, to violence, is the one which will lead to the disorders in the seasons which are enumerated here.

Chinese tradition represents for us at the beginning of the year the emperor, the one who can with his hand accomplish the major rites on which depends the equilibrium of the whole Middle empire, tracing the first furrows whose direction and rectitude are destined precisely to ensure during the year the equilibrium of nature.

There is not, I dare say, in this position anything that is not natural. The one to which Eryximachos attaches himself here, which is to call it by its name, that to which is attached the notion of man as microcosm, is namely what? Not at all that man is in himself a resume, a reflection, an image of nature, but that they are one and the same thing, that one can only dream of constituting man from the order and the harmony of cosmic components. Here is a position with which simply I wished to leave you today with this question of whether it does not preserve, despite the limitation within which we believe we have reduced the meaning of biology, some traces in our mental pre-suppositions. . . . undoubtedly, detecting them is not so important as to perceive where we place ourselves, in what zone, more fundamental level we place ourselves, we analysts, when we bestir ourselves to understand for our part notions like the death instinct, which is properly speaking as Freud did not fail to recognise, an Empedoclean notion. Now it is to this that the discourse of Aristophanes is going to refer. What I will show you the next time, is that this gag which is manifestly presented as the entry of the clowns going head over heels in a scene from Athenian comedy, refers expressly as such - I will show you the proofs for this - to this cosmological conception of man. And starting from there I will show you the surprising opening of what results from it, the opening left gaping wide about the idea that Plato was able to construct of love, I am going that far - concerning the radical derision which the simple approach to the problems of love brought to this incorruptible, material, supra-essential, purely ideal order, participating in the eternal and the uncreated which is the one, ironically perhaps, that his whole work uncovers to us.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 21 December 1960

Our account, I hope, will today with the celestial conjunction pass through its winter solstice; I mean that drawn along by the orb that it involves, it may have seemed to you that we are getting further and further away from our subject of transference. Reassure yourselves then. We will reach today the lowest point of this ellipse and I believe that from the moment that we glimpsed - if this is to be proved valid - something to be learned from the Symposium, it was necessary to push forward to the point to which we are going to push it today the analysis of the important parts of the text which might seem not to have a direct relationship with what we have to say. In any case what does it matter! Here we are now engaged in the enterprise and, when one has begun on a certain path of discourse, it is precisely a sort of non-physical necessity which makes itself felt when we want to take it to its term.

Here we are following the guide of a discourse, the discourse of Plato in the Symposium, the discourse which has around it all the charge of significations (like a musical instrument or even a music box), all the significations that it made resonate throughout the centuries. A certain aspect of our effort is to return as closely as possible to the meaning of this discourse. I believe that to understand this text of Plato, to judge it, one cannot avoid evoking in what context of discourse it is, in the sense of the universal concrete discourse. And here again, let me make myself clearly understood! It is not a question properly speaking of resituating it in history. You know well that it is not at all our method of commentary and that it is always for what it makes us ourselves understand that a discourse (even when pronounced at a very distant epoch when the things that we have to understand were not at all to be seen) is questioned by us. But it is not possible, as regards the Symposium, to avoid referring to something which is the relationship of discourse and history namely, not how discourse is situated in history, but how history itself arises from a certain mode of entry of discourse into the real.

And so I must remind you here (at the time of the Symposium at which we are at, in the second century from the birth of concrete discourse about the universe)... I mean that we must not forget

this philosophical efflorescence of the VIth century, which is so strange, so singular moreover because of the echoes or other modes of a sort of terrestrial choir which make themselves heard at the same epoch in other civilisations, without any apparent relationship.

But let us leave that to one side; it is not the history of the philosophers of the VIth century, from Thales to Pythagoras or to Heraclitus and so many others that I wish even to outline. What I want you to sense, is that it is the first time that in this occidental tradition (the one to which this book by Russell which I recommended you to read refers) this discourse is formed there as expressly aiming at the universe for the first time, as aiming at rendering the universe discursive. Namely that at the (2) beginning of the step of science as being wisdom, the universe appears as a universe of discourse. And, in a sense, there will never be anything but a universe of discourse. Everything that we find at that epoch including the definition of elements, whether there are four or more, has something which carries the brand, the mark, the stamp of this petition, of this postulate that the universe should surrender itself to the order of the signifier. Naturally, of course, it is not at all a question of finding in the universe elements of discourse but [elements] linking together like a discourse. And all the steps that are articulated at that epoch among the supporters, the inventors of this vast questioning movement, show clearly that if, one cannot discourse in a fashion coherent with the laws of discourse about one of these universes which is forged, there are radical objections. Remember the mode of operation of Zeno, the dialectician when, in order to defend his master Parmenides, he proposes sophistical arguments which are meant to throw his adversary into inextricable confusion.

Therefore in the background of this Symposium, of this discourse of Plato, and in the rest of his work, we have this grandiose attempt in its innocence, this hope which dwelt in the first philosophers who are called physicists of finding under the guarantee of discourse, which is in short the whole of their experimental instrumentation, the final grasp on the real.

I ask your pardon if I avoid it. This is not the place where I could maintain a discourse on Greek philosophy before you. I propose to you, to interpret a special text, the minimal thematic that it is necessary for you to have in mind in order to judge this text properly. And this is why I must remind you that this real, this grasp of the real was not conceived at that epoch as correlative to a subject, even a universal one, but as the term which I am going to borrow from Letter VII of Plato, where in a short digression there is said what is sought by the whole operation of the dialectic: it is quite simply the same thing that I had to take into account last year in our account of the Ethics and which I called "la Chose", here to pragma [which] you should understand precisely in the sense that it is not Sache, an affair (une affaire); understand it if you wish as the great affair, the final reality, that on which there depends the very thought which confronts it, which discusses it and which is only.

as I might say, one of the fashions of putting it into practice. It is the essential to pragma, the thing, the praxis. You can be certain that the theory, which term comes to birth at the same epoch (however contemplative it may affirm itself to be and it is not simply contemplative as the praxis from which it emerges, the Orphic practices, sufficiently demonstrate) is not, as our use of the word theory implies, the abstraction from this praxis, nor its general reference, nor the model, however one may imagine it of what is supposed to be its application, when it makes its appearance it is this praxis itself. The theoria is itself the exercise of the power of the to pragma, the great affair.

(3) One of the masters of this epoch who is the only one I have chosen to quote, Empedocles, because he is thanks to Freud one of the patrons of speculation, Empedocles, in his no doubt legendary guise (because also what is important is that it is this guise that has been bequeathed to us), Empedocles is someone all-powerful. He advances as master of the elements, capable of resurrecting the dead, a magician, lord of the royal secret on the same terrain where the charlatans, later, will present themselves with a similar style. Miracles are demanded of him and he produces them. Like Oedipus, he does not die, he re-enters the heart of the world in the fire of the volcano and the yawning chasm.

All of this, as you are going to see, remains very close to Plato, moreover it is not by chance that it is, taking it from him, at a much more rationalist epoch, that quite naturally we borrow the reference of the to pragma.

But Socrates? It would be quite singular that the whole historical tradition should have been mistaken in saying that over against this background he contributes something original, a rupture, an opposition. Socrates explains himself, in so far as we can trust Plato at the place where he presents him to us more manifestly in the context of a historical testimony concerning him. It is a movement of withdrawal, of lassitude, of disgust with respect to the contradictions manifested by these first attempts as I have just tried to characterise them for you. It is from Socrates that there proceeds this new essential idea: it is first necessary to guarantee knowledge and the path of showing them all that they know nothing, is in itself a revelatory path - revelatory of a virtue which, despite its privileged successes, does not always succeed. And that which Socrates himself calls episteme, science, what he discovers in short, what he separates out, what he detaches, is that discourse engenders the dimension of truth. The discourse which is assured of an inner certainty as regards its very action assures, where it can, the truth as such. It is nothing other than this practice of discourse.

When Socrates says that it is the truth, and not himself, that refutes his interlocutor, he shows something whose most solid aspect is its reference to a primitive combinatory which is always the same at the basis of our discourse. From which it results, for example, that the father is not the mother and that it is in the same respect, and in this respect alone, that one

can declare that the mortal should be distinguished from the immortal. Socrates refers back in short to the domain of pure discourse the whole ambition of discourse. He is not, as is believed, as is said, very specially the one who leads man back to man, nor even all things to man (it is Protagoras who had given that slogan: man is the measure of all things), Socrates brings the truth back to discourse. He is in short, as one might say, the super-sophist, and it is in this that his mystery lies - because if he were only a super-sophist he should not have engendered anything more than the sophists, namely what remains of them, namely a doubtful reputation.

It is precisely something other than a temporal subject which inspired his action. And here we come to the atopia, to this unsituatable aspect of Socrates which is precisely the question which interests us since we sense in it something which may illuminate us about the atopia which is demanded of us. It is this atopia, from this nowhere of his being that he certainly provoked, because history attests it to us, this whole line of researches whose destiny is linked in a very ambiguous fashion to a whole history which can be fragmented, the history of (4) consciousness, as it is said in modern terms: the history of religion.... of morality, of politics certainly at the limit, and less of art. To designate this whole ambiguous, I am saying, diffuse and living line I would only have to point out to you (through the question most recently renewed by the most recent imbecile: Pourquoi des philosophes) whether we did not experience this line, as solidary with a flame transmitted in fact, which is foreign to everything that it illuminates, whether it be the good, the beautiful, the true, the same, which it takes pride in occupying itself with.

If one tries to read, through testimonies which are near at hand as well as through the distant effects - near, I mean in history - as through the effects which are still there of the Socratic posterity, there might come to us in effect the formula of a sort of perversion without object. And in truth, when one tries to accommodate, to approach, to imagine, to fix for oneself what effectively this personage might be, believe me, it is tiring and I believe that I could not better formulate the effect of this tiredness than in words which came to me one Sunday evening: this Socrates is killing me! It is a curious thing, I woke up the following morning feeling much livelier.

It seems all the same (in order to try to say things about this) impossible not to start by taking literally what is attested to us by the entourage of Socrates, and this even on the eve of his death, that he is the one who said that after all we have nothing to fear from a death of which we know nothing. And specifically we do not know, he adds, whether it might not be a good thing. Obviously, when one reads that.... one is so used to reading only fine words in classical texts that one does not pay attention to them any more. But it is striking when we make that resonate in the context of the last days of Socrates, surrounded by his last followers, he gave them this last look from under his brows which Plato photographs on the document (he was not there) and



which he calls the look of a bull.... and his whole attitude at his trial. If The Apology of Socrates reproduces exactly for us what he said before his judges it is difficult to think, hearing his defence, that he did not expressly wish to die. In any case he repudiates expressly and as such the whole pathetic aspect of the situation, thus provoking his judges who are used to the ritual, classical, supplications of the accused.

Therefore what I am aiming at here as a first approach to the enigmatic nature of a desire for death which no doubt can be held to be ambiguous (he is a man who is supposed, after all, to have spent seventy years to obtain the satisfaction of this desire), it is quite sure that it cannot be taken in the sense of a tendency to suicide, nor to failure, nor to any sort of masochism, moral or otherwise; but it is difficult not to formulate this tragic minimum linked to the maintenance of a man in a zone of no man's land, of a sort of gratuitous entre-deux-morts.

You know that when Nietzsche discovered Socrates it went to his head. The birth of tragedy and all Nietzsches' subsequent work came from there. The tone in which I am speaking to you about it should mark clearly some personal impatience. One cannot all the same not see that undoubtedly (Nietzsche put his finger on it... it is enough to open at random a dialogue of Plato) the profound incompetence of Socrates every time he touches on this subject of tragedy is something quite tangible. Read Gorgias. (5) Tragedy is dealt with there in three lines among the arts of flattery, a rhetoric like another, with nothing more to be said about it (Gorgias 502 b d).

No tragic, no tragic sentiment, as it is put in our days, sustains this atopia of Socrates. Only a demon, the daimon - do not forget it, because he speaks to us about it ceaselessly - which hallucinates him it seems in order to allow him to survive in this space; he avoids the holes into which he might fall: do not do that. And then, in addition, a message from a god whose function he himself testifies to us in what one can call a vocation, the god of Delphi, Apollo, that a disciple of his had the rather absurd idea of telling him to go and consult. And the god had replied: "There are some wise men, there is one who is not too bad, namely Euripides, but the wisest of all, the best of all, the sacred one, is Socrates." And from that day forward Socrates said: "I must realise the oracle of the god, because I did not know that I was the wisest, but because he said it, I must be." It is exactly in these terms that Socrates presents to us the sharp turn of what one could call his passage to public life. He is in short a madman who believes that he is at the service, at the command of a god, a messiah, and what is more in a society of chatterboxes. No other guarantee of the word of the Other (with the capital O) than this word itself, and there is no other source for the tragic than this destiny which may well appear to us from a certain aspect to be that of nothingness.

With all that, he is led to surrender the terrain about which I

spoke to you the other day, the terrain of the reconquest of the real, of the philosophical, namely the scientific conquest, to surrender a good part of the terrain to the gods. It is not in order to make paradoxes as certain have confided in me: "You were very amused to have surprised us when you asked: what are the gods?" Well, as I told you, the gods belong to the real! - Everyone expected me to say: to the symbolic. Not at all! - "You were really joking, you said: they belong to the real." Well, not at all! Believe me, I am not the one who invented it. For Socrates, manifestly they belong only to the real. And this real has nothing to do with the principle of his own behaviour, Socrates himself aims only at the truth. He satisfies himself with obeying the gods on occasion, provided that he himself defines this obedience. Is this really to obey them or is it not rather acquitting oneself ironically vis-a-vis beings which have themselves their own necessity? And in fact we do not sense any necessity which does not recognise the supremacy of internal necessity in the deployment of the true, namely science.

We may be surprised at the seduction exercised by such a severe discourse. In any case this seduction is attested to us in the course of one or other of the dialogues. We know that the discourse of Socrates, even repeated by children, by women, exercises a charm which one could call bewildering. We could really say: thus spoke Socrates. A force is transmitted in it "which raises up those who approach it" the Platonic texts always say, in short, that the simple murmur of his word, some say "at its contact". Notice again, there are no disciples, but rather friends, the curious also, and then the bewitched (struck by some secret or other), .... as they are called in the stories of Provence and then, the disciples of others also come knocking at the door.

(6) Plato is none of these, he is a late-comer, much too young to have seen anything but the end of the phenomenon. He was not among those who were there at the end. And this indeed is the ultimate reason - it has to be said in passing very quickly - for this obsessional cascade of testimonies which he latches onto every time he wants to speak about his strange hero: "Such a person heard it from such a person who was there, from one or other visit when they carried on such and such a debate. I have what was recorded on their brains, here in a first, there in a second edition." Plato is a very particular kind of witness. One could say that he lies and on the other hand that he is truthful even when he lies because, in interrogating Socrates, it is his own question that, he, Plato explores. Plato is something completely different. He does not go around barefoot; he is not a wanderer; no god has either spoken to him nor called him and, in truth, I think that for him, the gods do not amount to much. Plato is a master, a true one; a master at the time when the city is breaking apart, swept away by the winds of democracy, prelude to the time of the great imperial unifications. He is a sort of Sade but funnier. One cannot even, naturally, like anybody else.... one cannot even imagine the nature of the powers that are reserved for the future. The great mountebanks of the world tribe: Alexander, Seleucides,

Ptolemy, all of that is still properly speaking unthinkable. One cannot yet imagine mystical soldiers! What Plato sees at the horizon, is a communal city just as revolting to his eyes as to our own. A stud farm, this is what he promises us in a pamphlet which has always been a bad dream for all those who with their sentiment of the good cannot get over the ever-accentuated discord of the order of the city. In other words, this is called The Republic and everybody took it seriously. People believe that it is really what Plato wanted!

Let us pass over some other misunderstandings and some other mythical lucubrations. [If] I were to tell you that the myth of Atlantis seems to me to be rather the echo of the failure of Plato's political dreams (it is not unrelated to the adventure of the Academy) perhaps "you would find that my paradox would need to be better fleshed out, that is why I am passing over it.

What he himself wants in any case, is all the same the thing, to pragma. He is relaying with the magi of the previous century at a literary level. The Academy is a sort of reserved city, a refuge for the best people. And it is in the context of this enterprise, whose horizon certainly went very far.... what we know about what he dreamt of in his voyage to Sicily (curiously to the same places where his adventure is in a way a sort of echo of the dream of Alcibiades who, for his part, clearly dreamt about a Mediterranean empire with Sicily as its centre) bore a sign of the most lofty sublimation: it is like a sort of Utopia of which he thought he could be director. From the heights of Alcibiades, obviously all of this is reduced to a level that is certainly less elevated.

Perhaps it would go no further than a high point of masculine elegance. But it would all the same be to depreciate this metaphysical dandyism not to see the range of which it was in a way capable. I think that one is right to read the text of Plato from the angle of what I am calling dandyism: they are writings for the outside, I would even go so far as to say that he throws to the dogs that we are tiny scraps which may be good or bad, the debris of an often rather infernal humour. But it is a fact, that he has been understood differently. The fact is (7) that Christian desire, which has so little to do with all these adventures, this Christian desire whose core, whose essence is in the resurrection of bodies (you have to read St. Augustine to glimpse the place that that holds).... that this Christian desire recognised itself in Plato for whom the body must dissolve into a beauty that is super-terrestrial and reduced to an extraordinarily incorporeal form, of which we are going to speak in a little while, is the sign obviously that there is here a complete misunderstanding.

But it is precisely that which brings us back to the question of transference and to this delusional character of such a taking-up of the discourse into another context which is properly speaking contradictory to it. What is in it, if not that the Platonic phantasy, which we are going to approach as closely as possible - do not believe that these are only general considerations - is

already affirmed as a transference phenomenon. How did the Christians for whom a God reduced to the symbol of the Son had given his life as a sign of love allow themselves to be fascinated by the speculative stupidity - I remind you of the term I used above - offered as intellectual food by the most disinterested of men: Socrates? Must we not recognise here the effect of the only tangible convergence between the two thematics which is the Word presented as object of adoration? This is why it is so important (over against the Christian mystique, in which one cannot deny that love produced rather extraordinary fruits, follies according to the Christian tradition itself) to delineate what the import of love is in the transference which is produced around this other, Socrates who, himself, is only a man who claims to know about love but who only leaves of it the most simply natural proof, namely that his disciples tease him for losing his head from time to time before a beautiful young man and, as Xenophon testifies to us, to have one day - this does not amount to much - touched with his shoulder the naked shoulder of the young Cristobulos; Xenophon himself tells us the result of it: it left him with neither more nor less than an ache - which is not nothing, for such an experienced cynic! Because already in Socrates there are all the figures of the cynic. This proves in any case a certain violence of desire, but it leaves, it must be said, love in a rather instantaneous position.

This explains to us, makes us understand, allows us to situate that in any case for Plato these love stories are simply farce, that the final mode of union with the to pragma, the thing, is certainly not be sought in the direction of the effusion of love in the Christian sense of the term. And there is no need to seek the reason for this elsewhere than in the Symposium, the only one who speaks appropriately about love, is a clown (un pitre) - you will see what I understand by this term.

Because Aristophanes for Plato is nothing else, a comic poet for him is a clown. And one sees very well how this gentleman who is very distant - believe me - from the crowd, this man, this obscene Aristophanes about whom I do not need to remind you of what you can find by opening the least of his comedies.... the least thing that you can see being produced on stage, for example the one in which the parent of Euripides is going to disguise himself as a woman in order to expose himself to the fate of Orpheus, namely to be cut to pieces by the gathering of women instead of Euripides in this disguise.... we are made to assist (8) on the stage at the burning of the hairs of his ass because women, as they still do today in the Orient, pluck their hair. And I will spare you all the other details. All that I can tell you is that all of this goes beyond anything that one can see today except on the stage of a London music hall, which is saying quite a lot! Simply the words are better, but they are not more distinguished for all that. The term of "gaping asshole" is one which is repeated in ten replies one after another to designate those among whom should be chosen those whom we would today call in our language candidates who are most apt for all the progressive roles, because these are the people that Aristophanes particularly hates.

So then, that it should be a personage of this type (and what is more - as I already said - who had the role you know about in the defamation of Socrates) that Plato chooses to make him say the best things about love should make us use our loaves a little!

To make clearly understood what I mean in saying that he gives him the best things to say about love, I am going to illustrate it for you immediately. Moreover someone as reflective, as measured in his judgements, as prudent, as the learned university man who produced the edition that I have before my eyes, M. Leon Robin, even he, cannot fail to be struck by it. It draws tears from his eyes.

He is the first one who speaks about love, God knows, as we speak about it, namely that" he says things which grab you by the throat and which are the following. First of all this rather subtle remark (one might say that this is not what is expected from a clown, but it is precisely for that reason that it is put into the mouth of a clown) he is the one who makes the remark: "No one," he says, "could suppose that it is he ton aphrodision sunousia", which is translated: "la communauté de la jouissance amoureuse" (192c), I must say that this translation appears detestable to me; I believe moreover that M. Leon Robin made another one for La Pléiade which is much better, because really this means: it is not for the "pleasure of being in bed together as if this could make anyone delight in another<sup>1</sup>'s company so seriously as all that," in Greek outos epi megales spoudes it is the same spoude that you found last year in the Aristotlian definition of tragedy; of course, spoude means solicitude, care, readiness, it also means seriousness; because in fact, these people who love one another, have a strangely serious air.

And let us leave to one side this psychological note to show all the same, to designate where the mystery is. Here is what Aristophanes says: "Plainly the soul of each wants something else - what, it cannot say, but it divines and riddles what it wants. And as they lie together suppose Hephaistos" (namely Vulcan, the character with the hammer and the anvil) "were to stand beside (9) them with his tools, and ask: What do you want from each other, men?" (the object of your wishes) "Is it only that you desire to be together as close as possible, and not to be apart from each other night or day? For if that is what you desire, I am ready to melt you and weld you together, so that you two may be made one, and as one you may live together as long as you live, and when you die you may die still one instead of two, and be yonder in the house of Hades together. Think if this is your passion, and if it will satisfy you to get this. If that were offered, we know that not a single one would object, or be found to wish anything else, he would simply believe that he had heard that which he had so long desired, to be united and melted together with his beloved, and to become one from two!" (192c-192e).

This is what Plato has Aristophanes say. Aristophanes does not say only that. Aristophanes says things that raise a laugh, things moreover which he himself had announced as operating

between the laughable and the ridiculous, in so far as there is divided between these two terms the fact that the laugh is directed at what the comic aims at, or at the comedian himself.

But what is Aristophanes making a laugh of? Because it is clear that he raises a laugh and that he gets past the barrier of the ridiculous. Is Plato going to make him make us laugh at love? It is quite evident that this already bears witness to the contrary. We would even say that, nowhere, at any moment of these discourses, is love taken so seriously, or so tragically. We are exactly at the level that we moderns impute to this love, after courtly sublimation and after what I could call the romantic misinterpretation of this sublimation, namely the narcissistic overvaluing of the subject, I mean of the subject supposed in the beloved object. Because this is the romantic misunderstanding compared to what I taught you last year about courtly sublimation. Thanks be to God, in Plato's time, we have not yet got to that point, except for this strange Aristophanes, but he is a clown.

Rather are we involved in a sort of zoological observation of imaginary beings, which takes its value from what they evoke from what can undoubtedly be taken in a derisory sense in real beings. Because this indeed is what is in question in these beings who are sliced in two like a hard-boiled egg, one of these bizarre beings like the ones we find on a sandy bottom, a flatfish, a sole, a plaice are evoked here (190e, 191d), which appear to have all that is necessary, two eyes, all these even organs, but which are flattened in a way that they seem to be half of a complete being. It is clear that in the first behaviour which follows the birth of these beings which are born from such a division in two, what Aristophanes shows us at first and what is the underpinning of what immediately comes here in a light which for us is so romantic, is this kind of panicky fatality which is going to make each one of these beings seek above all his half, and then, clinging to it with a tenacity, which one might say has no way out, effectively makes them perish side by side because of their incapacity to rejoin one another. Here is what he depicts for us in these long developments, which is given with all the details, which is extremely vivid, which naturally is projected onto the plane of myth, but which is the way in which, there is forged, by the sculptor who the poet is here, his image of the love relationship.

But is it in this that there lies what we must suppose, what we must put our finger on, that this is something laughable? Quite obviously not. This is inserted into something which (10) irresistibly evokes for us what we can still see in our day on the circus mat when the clowns enter, as is sometimes done, embracing or hooked on in some way or other two by two, coupled belly to belly with a great whirling of four arms, of four legs and of their two heads going head over heels for one or more circuits. In itself, it is something that we would see going very well with the style of fabrication of this type of choir which gave, in a different genre, The Wasps, The Birds, or again The Clouds, about which we will never know under what kind of

screen these plays were produced on the stage in antiquity.

But here what kind of ridicule is in question? Is it simply the rather cheerful character of the image all by itself? It is here that I will begin a little development for which I ask your pardon since it may involve us in a rather long detour, because it is essential.

If you read this text, you will see the degree to which, to the degree that this also strikes M. Leon Robin - it is always the same thing, I am not the only one who knows how to read a text - in an extraordinary way, he insists on the spherical character of this personage. It is difficult not to see it, because this spherical, this circular, this sphaira is repeated with such insistence, we are told that the "shape of man was quite round, back and ribs, pleuras kuklo echon, passing about it in a circle" (189e) And we must see this, as I told you above, as the two wheels perched on one another and all the same flat, while here it is round. And this annoys M. Leon Robin who changes a comma that no one has ever changed saying: "I am doing that because I do not want too much stress on the sphere; the important thing is the slicing." And I am not the person to diminish the importance of this slicing, we are going to come back to it a little later. But it is difficult all the same not to see that we are before something very singular and whose term, whose final word I am going to give you immediately, it is that the derision that is in question, what is put under this ridiculous form, is precisely the sphere.

Naturally this does not make you laugh, because the sphere does not affect you in the least! Only be very sure of this, that for centuries it was not that way. You only know it under the form of this fact of psychological inertia which is called good form. A certain number of people, Mr. Ehrenfels and others perceived that there was a certain tendency in forms towards perfection, to rejoin in a doubtful state the sphere, that in short it was this that gave pleasure to the optic nerve. This of course, naturally is very interesting and only makes a start at the problem, because I would point out to you in passing that these Gestalt notions into which people venture so lightly only relaunch the problem of perception. Because if there are such (11) good forms, it is because perception must consist, as one might say, in rectifying them in the sense of the bad ones which are the true. But let us leave to one side the dialectic of the good form on this occasion.

This form has a quite different sense to this properly psychological objectification which has a limited interest. At the time and at the level of Plato, and not only at the level of Plato, but well before him, this form, Sphairos as Empedocles also says, whose verses time prevents me from reading to you, Sphairos in the masculine is a being who, "from every side is similar to itself, and without limit on any side. Sphairos kukloteres, Sphairos which has the form of a ball, this Sphairos reigns in its royal solitude filled by its own contentment", its

own sufficiency. This Sphairos haunts the thinking of antiquity. It is the form that takes, at the centre of the world of Empedocles, the phase of gathering together what he himself calls, in his metaphysics Philie or Philotes, Love. This Philotes which he calls elsewhere "schedune Philotes, the Love which gathers together, which agglomerates, which assimilates, which agglutenates"; exactly agglutenated, it is the kresis, it belongs to the kresis of love.

It is very singular that we have seen re-emerge from Freud's pen this idea of love as the pure and simple power of unifying and, as one might say, of attraction without limits in order to oppose it to Thanatos; while we have correlatively and - as you can sense - in a discordant fashion, a very different and very much more fruitful notion in the love-hate ambivalence.

We rediscover this sphere everywhere. I was speaking to you the other day about Philolaos, he admits the same sphere at the centre of a world in which the earth has an eccentric position, already at the time of Pythagoras it was suspected for a very long time that the earth was eccentric, but it is not the sun which occupies the centre, it is a central spherical fire to which we, the face of the inhabited earth, always have our backs turned. With respect to this fire we are the way the moon is with respect to our earth and this is why we do not feel it. And it seems that it was in order that we should not nevertheless be burned by the central radiation that this person called Philolaos invented this lucubration which already perplexed the people of antiquity, even Aristotle himself: antichton, the anti-earth. What indeed could have been, apart from that, the necessity of this invention of this strictly invisible body (which was supposed to conceal all the powers opposed to those of the earth, which played at the same time, it appears, the role of fireguard), this is something - as they say - which would need to be analysed.

(12) But this is only intended to introduce you to this dimension (to which you know I accord a very great importance) of what one can call the astronomical, or again the Copernican revolution; and to definitively dot the i's on this point, namely - as I have pointed out to you - that it is not the geocentrism supposedly dismantled by Canon Koppernigk (Copernicus) which is the most important thing, and this is even the reason why it is rather false, rather vain, to call it a Copernican revolution. Because, if in his book On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres, he shows us a form of the solar system which resembles our own (also the ones you find in the text books for the first year of secondary school) in which one sees the sun in the middle and all the stars turning around in the orb, it must be said that it was not at all a new schema, in the sense that everyone knew at the time of Copernicus (we are not the ones who discovered this) that, in antiquity, there was someone called Heraclitus, then Aristarchus of Samos, this has been absolutely confirmed, who had made the same schema.

The only thing which could have made of Copernicus something



other than a historical phantasy, because he was nothing other than that, is if his system were, not just closer to the image that we have of the real solar system, but more true. And more true, that means more disencumbered from imaginary elements which have nothing to do with the modern symbolisation of the stars, more disencumbered than the system of Ptolemy. But this is not at all the case. His system is just as full of epicycles.

And what are epicycles? They are something invented and moreover no one could believe in the reality of epicycles; do not imagine that they were stupid enough to think that they would see, in the way you see when you open your watch, a series of little wheels. But there was this idea that the only perfect movement that one could imagine to be conceivable was the circular movement. Everything that was seen in the heavens was damned hard to interpret, because - as you know - these little wandering planets got into all sorts of irregular interloopings between themselves, whose zig-zags it was a question of explaining. People were not satisfied until each of the elements of their circuit could be reduced to a circular movement. The singular thing is that a better result was not arrived at, because, by combining turning movements with turning movements one might in principle think that one could manage to account for everything. In reality it was well and truly impossible for the reason that in the measure that they were better observed it was perceived that there were more things to explain, if only, when the telescope appeared, their variation in size. But it does not matter. The system of Copernicus was just as laden down with this kind of imaginary redundancy which encumbered it, weighed it down, as the system of Ptolemy.

What you must read during this vacation and - you are going to see that it is possible - for your pleasure, is namely how Kepler .... beginning from elements in Plato from the same Timaeus which I am going to speak to you about, namely from a purely imaginary conception - with the accent that this term has in the vocabulary that I use with you - of the universe entirely regulated according to the properties of the sphere articulated as such, as (13) being the form which carries within itself the virtues of sufficiency which mean that it can essentially combine in itself the eternity of the same place with eternal movement; it is around speculations which are moreover very refined of this kind .... because to our stupefaction he brings in the five perfect solids (as you know there are only five of them) inscribable within the sphere. And starting from this old Platonic speculation (already displaced thirty times, but which already was coming back into fashion at this turning point of the Renaissance) and from the reintegration into the occidental tradition of Platonic manuscripts, literally in the head of this personage (whose personal life, believe me, in the context of the Peasants' Revolt, then of the Thirty Years' War, is something special and which as you will see I am going to give you the means of referring to) the aforesaid Kepler, searching for these celestial harmonies, and by prodigious tenacity - one really sees the hide-and-seek of unconscious formations - manages to give the first grasp that we have had of something which is that in which

there really consists the birth-date of the science of modern physics. In searching for a harmonic relationship, he comes to this relationship of the velocity of the planet on its orb to the area of the surface covered by the line which links the planet to the sun. Namely that he perceived at the same time that planetary orbits are ellipses.

And - believe me because people are talking about it everywhere - Koestler has written a very fine book which is called The Sleepwalkers, published by Johns Hopkins, which has been recently translated. And I asked myself what could Arthur Koestler make of it since he is not always considered to be an author whose inspiration is all that sure. I assure you that it is his best book. It is phenomenal, marvellous! You do not even need to know elementary mathematics, you will understand everything through the biography of Copernicus, of Kepler and of Galileo - with a bit of partiality as regards Galileo, it must be said that Galileo is a communist, he himself admits.

All of this to tell you that, communist or not, it is absolutely true that Galileo never paid the slightest attention to what Kepler discovered (however much of a genius Galileo was in his invention of what one can really call modern dynamics, namely to have discovered the exact law for the fall of bodies, which was an essential step) and of course despite the fact that it was always about this affair of geocentrism that he had all his problems, it nevertheless remains that Galileo was here, just as backward, just as reactionary, just as attached to the idea of perfect circular movement therefore the only possible one for celestial bodies, as the others. To speak plainly, Galileo had not even broken through what we call the Copernican revolution which as you know does not belong to Copernicus. You see then the time that truths take to make their way in the presence of a prejudice so solid as that of the perfection of circular movement.

I could talk to you about this for hours, because it is all the same very amusing to consider effectively why this is so, namely what are really the properties of circular movement and why the Greeks made of it the symbol of the limit, peirar as opposed to apeiron♦ A curious thing, it is precisely because it is one of the things most prepared to tip over into the apeiron, it is for this reason that I must do a little bit here to enlarge, to decrease, to reduce to a point, to infinitise this sphere for you. You know moreover that it served as a usual symbol for (14) this famous infinity. There is a lot to be said. Why should this form have privileged virtues? Naturally, this would plunge us into the heart of the problems concerning the value of the function of intuition in mathematical construction.

I would simply like to tell you that before all of these exercises which made us exorcise the sphere, so that its charm has continued to be exercised on dupes, the fact is that it was something all the same to which, as I might say, the philia of the spirit itself also stuck and nastily like some funny adhesive. And in any case, for Plato, here is where I would

like to refer you to the Timaeus, and to the long development on the sphere; this sphere that he depicts for us in all its details corresponds curiously like an alternating strophe with everything that Aristophanes says about these spherical beings in the Symposium. Aristophanes tells us that they have feet, little members which point, which turn round and around.

But there is a relationship such that, from another side what Plato (with a kind of accentuation which is very striking as regards geometrical development) experiences the need to point out to us in passing, it is that this sphere has everything that it needs within: it is round, it is full, it is content, it loves itself, and then above all it does not need either eye nor ear because by definition it is the envelope of everything which might be living - but because of this fact it is Living Reality (le Vivant) par excellence. And what Living Reality is, all of that, is absolutely essential to know in order to give ourselves the mental dimension in which biology was able to develop. The notion of form as being essentially what constituted Living Reality was something which we should take in an extremely strict imaginary spelling out. So it has neither eyes, nor ears, it has no feet, no arms and a single movement was reserved to it, the perfect movement, one on itself; there are six of them; upwards, downwards, to the left, to the right, forward and backwards.

What I mean, is that from a comparison of these texts, the result is that through this kind of double-triggered mechanism, of making play the clown a personage who, for him, is the only one worthy of speaking about something like love, what we arrive at is that Plato seems to be amusing himself in the discourse of Aristophanes by engaging in a clowning, a comic exercise about his own conception of the world and of the soul of the world. The discourse of Aristophanes, is the deriding of the Platonic Sphairos, of the proper Sphairos articulated in the Timaeus. I am constrained by time and, of course, there would be many other things to say about it. So that the astronomical reference may be sure and certain, I am going to give you all the same - because it may seem to you that I am amusing myself - the proof: Aristophanes says that these three types of spheres that he has imagined, the all-male one, the all-female one, the male and female one (they each have all the same a pair of genitals) the heramphrodites as they are called, have origins and that these origins are in the stars. The first, the males, come from the sun; the others, the all-females, come from the earth, and the hermaphrodites from the moon. In this way there is confirmed the lunar origin of those, Aristophanes tells us (because it means nothing else than to have a composite origin) who have a tendency to adultery.

Does something here not highlight, and in a fashion I believe is sufficiently clear, in this relationship, this fascination illustrated by this contrast of this spherical form as being the form which it is a matter of not touching, a matter of not even (15) contesting. For centuries it left the human spirit in this error that there was a refusal to think that in the absence of

any outside action, of any outside impulsion, the body is either at rest, or in a rectilinear uniform movement; the body at rest was supposed not to be able to have, outside the state of rest, anything other than a circular movement. All dynamics was barred by that.

Do we not see, in this sort of striking illustration which is given by the pen of this someone whom one can also call a poet, Plato, what is in question in these forms where nothing overlaps, where nothing allows itself to be hooked onto; nothing other than no doubt something which has its foundations in the imaginary structure - and I told you a little while ago that one could comment on it - but the adhesion, to which in so far as it is affective depends on -what... on nothing other than the Verwerfung of castration.

And it is so true that we also have it within the discourse of Aristophanes. Because these beings separated in two like half pears which are going, for a time which is not specified for us moreover because it is a mythical time, to die in a vain embrace as they try to rejoin one another and fated to these vain efforts of procreation in the earth (I will pass over also this whole myth of procreation from the earth, of beings born from the earth, this would take us too far). How will the question resolve itself; Aristophanes speaks to us here exactly like little Hans: they are going to have the genital organ which is in the wrong place unscrewed (because obviously it was at the place where it was when they were round, outside) and it is going to be screwed on to their stomachs, exactly like the tap in the dream which you know from the observation to which I am alluding.

The possibility of loving pacification is referred (which is something unique and stupefying from the pen of Plato) to something which undoubtedly has a relationship, to say the least, with an operation on the subject of the genitals. Whether or not we put that under the rubric of the castration complex, it is clear that what the detour of the text insists on here, is on the passage of the genitals to the anterior face, which does not simply mean that they come there to offer the possibility of coupling with, of rejoining the beloved object, but that literally the passage of the genitals comes with the beloved object into this kind of relationship as superimposition, as superimposition almost. It is the only point at which there is betrayed, at which there is expressed... how can one fail to be struck by it, in a personage like Plato whose apprehensions manifestly (concerning tragedy, he gives us a thousand proofs for it) did not go much further than those of Socrates, how can we fail to be struck by the fact that here, for the first time, the unique time, he brings into play in a discourse, and in a discourse concerning an affair which is a serious affair, that of love, the genital organ as such. And this confirms what I have told you to be the essential mainspring of the comic, which is always at bottom concerned with this reference to the phallus, it is not by chance that it is Aristophanes who says it. Only Aristophanes can talk like that. And Plato does not perceive that in making him talk about that he makes him talk about what

is found here to bring us the see-saw, the hinge, the something which is going to immediately make all that follows in the discourse take on a different aspect. This is the point at which we will take things up the next time.

Seminar 7:        Wednesday 11 January 1961

A little pause before making you enter into the great enigma of transference-love.        A pause - I have my reasons for pausing from time to time.        It is in effect a question of understanding one another, of not losing our bearings.

Since the beginning of this year, then, I feel the need to remind you that I think, in everything that I am teaching you, that all I have been pointing out to you is that the doctrine of Freud implicates desire in a dialectic.        And there already I must pause for you to note that the branch road has already been taken; and already because of this, I said that desire is not a vital function, in the sense that positivism has given its status to life.

Therefore desire is taken up into a dialectic, because it is suspended - begin a parenthesis, I have said the form in which it was suspended: in the form of metonymy - suspended on a signifying chain, which is as such constitutive of the subject, that through which the subject is distinct from individuality taken simply in the hie et nunc - because do not forget that this hie et nunc is what defines it.

Let us make the effort to penetrate into what individuation might be, the instinct of individuality then, in so far as individuation is supposed for each of the individualities to have to reconquer, as is explained to us in psychology, through experience or through teaching, the whole real structure (which is not after all an easy matter) and moreover, something one is not able to conceive of without the supposition that it is more or less prepared for that by an adaptation, a cumulative adaptation.        Already the human individual, qua knowledge, is supposed to be the flower of consciousness at the end of an evolution, as you know, of thought, something I put profoundly in doubt; not after all because I consider that this is a fruitless, or a pointless direction, but only in so far as the idea of evolution mentally habituates us to all sorts of elisions which are very damaging for our reflection - and I would say especially for us analysts, for our ethic.        In any case, to return to these elisions, to show the gaps which the whole theory of evolution leaves open in so far as it always tends to cover up, to facilitate the understandableness of our experience, to reopen

these gaps is something which to me seems essential. If evolution is true, in any case one thing is certain, which is that it is not, as Voltaire said speaking about something else, so natural as all that.

As regards desire, in any case, it is essential to refer ourselves to its conditions, which are the ones given by our experience ..... upsets the whole problem of data which consist in the fact that the subject preserves an articulated chain outside consciousness, inaccessible to consciousness, a demand and not a pressure, a discontent, an imprint or whatever it may be that you attempt to characterise as being definable in the order of primitive tendencies. But on the contrary there is (2) traced there a trace, as I might say, invested with a trait, isolated as such, raised to a power that one could call ideographic, on condition that this term "ideographic" is well underlined as being in no way an index which can be brought to bear on anything isolated whatsoever, but always linked to the concatenations of the ideogram on a line with other ideograms themselves invested with this function which makes them signifying. This demand constitutes a claim eternalised in the subject, although latent and inaccessible to him: - a statute, a book of charges, (not at all the modulation which would result from some phonetic inscription of the negative inscribed on a film, a tape), - a trace, but one which fixes a date forever, - a recording (enregistrement) yes, but if you put the accent on the term recristre, one filed in the dossier, - a memory, yes, but in the sense that this term has in an electronic machine.

Well, it is the genius of Freud to have designated the support of this chain. I think that I have shown it sufficiently to you and I will show it again especially in an article which is the one I thought I should re-do around the Royaumont Congress and which is going to appear. Freud designates its support when he speaks about the Id (Ca) in the death drive itself, in so far as he designated the deathlike character of the automatism of repetition. Death (this is here articulated by Freud as tendency towards death, as desire in which an unthinkable subject presents itself in the living being in whom the it (ca) speaks) is responsible precisely for what is in question, namely for this eccentric position of desire in man which has always been the paradox of ethics, a paradox it seems to me quite insoluble in the evolutionary perspective. In what one could call their transcendental permanence, namely the transgressive character which is fundamental to them, why and how would desires be neither the effect nor the source of what they constitute, namely after all a permanent disorder in a body supposedly submitted to the statutes of adaptation whatever may be the incidence under which one admits the effects of this adaptation?

There, as in the history of physics, all that has been attempted up to now is "to save the appearances" and I believe that I have made you sense, have given you the occasion to understand more fully the accent of what "to save the appearances" means when it is a question of the epicycles of the Ptolemaic system. You must not imagine that the people who taught this system

throughout the centuries, with the proliferation of epicycles that it required (from thirty to seventy-five according to the exigencies of exactitude that were put into it) really believed in epicycles! They did not believe that the heavens were constructed like little armillary spheres. Moreover you see them, they fabricated them with their epicycles. I recently saw in a corridor of the Vatican a lovely collection of these epicycles regulating the movements of Mars, of Venus, of Mercury. You had to put a certain number around the little ball to make it (3) correspond to the movement! Nobody ever seriously believed in epicycles. And "to save the appearances", simply meant giving an account of what one saw in function of a fundamental exigency, of a prejudice regarding the perfection of this circular form.

Well, it is more or less the same when one explains desires by the system of needs, whether they are individual or collective (and I hold that nobody believes it anymore in psychology, I mean a psychology which goes back to a whole moralistic tradition) even at the time when people were occupied with them, nobody ever believed in epicycles. "To save the appearances", in one case as in the other, signifies nothing other than wanting to reduce to forms which are supposedly perfect, supposedly required at the basis of the deduction, and which one cannot in any way from a common sense point of view bring into it.

It is therefore the topology, the fundamental topology of this desire, of its interpretation and in a word, of a rational ethics, that I am trying to establish with you. In this topology, you have seen being separated out in the course of last year this relationship called no man's land (*l'entre-deux-morts*) which is not as I might say, all the same in itself so difficult to swallow, because it means nothing other than the fact that there is not for man a coincidence between the two frontiers which refer to this death. I mean the first frontier (whether it is linked to a fundamental outcome which is called old age, growing old, going downhill, or to an accident which breaks the thread of life), the first frontier, the one in effect where life ends and is unravelled.... well, the situation of man is inscribed in the fact that this frontier - it is obvious and has always been so, that is why I say that it is not so difficult to swallow - is not confused with the one which one can define in its most general formula by saying that man aspires to annihilate himself in it in order to be inscribed in it in terms of being; if man aspires, this is obviously the hidden contradiction, the little drop you have to swallow, if man aspires to destroy himself in the very fact that he eternalises himself.

This you will rediscover everywhere inscribed in this discourse as well as in the others. In the Symposium you will find traces of it. After all, I took great care to illustrate this space for you last year in showing you the four corners within which is inscribed the space where tragedy is played out. Something of this tragic space (to say the word) had been historically stolen from the poets in the tragedy of the XVIIth century, for example the tragedy of Racine (and take any one at all of his tragedies),



you will see that it is necessary, in order that there should be the semblance of tragedy, that from some angle or other this space of l'entre-deux-morts be inscribed. Andromacrué. Iphigénie. Baiazet - do I need to recall the plot to you? - if you show that something subsists here which resembles a tragedy, it is because, however they may be symbolised, these two deaths are always there. Andromache situates herself between the death of Hector and that suspended over the head of Astyanax, this of course is only the sign of another duplicity. In a word, the fact that the death of the hero is always between this imminent menace towards his life and the fact that he affronts it "in order to be remembered", is here only a derisory form of the problem of posterity. This is what is signified by the two terms always rediscovered from this duplicity of the death-bearing drive.

Yes, but it is clear that even though this may be necessary to maintain the framework of tragic space, it is a question of how this space is inhabited. And all I want to do in passing is to carry out this operation of tearing away the spider's web which (4) separates us from a direct vision in order to encourage you - however rich in poetic resonances they remain for you because of all their lyrical resonances - to refer to the high points of Christian tragedy, to the tragedy of Racine, in order to see - take Iphigénie for example - everything that is happening; everything that happens there is irresistibly comic. Test it out: Agamemnon is here in short fundamentally characterised by his terror of the conjugal scene: "There, there are the cries that I feared I would hear"; Achilles appears there in an unbelievably superficial position with regard to everything that is happening. And why? I will try to highlight it for you a little later, precisely in function of his relationship with death, this traditional relationship for which always he is brought back, quoted in the foreground by one of the moralists of the most intimate circle around Socrates. This story of Achilles, who deliberately prefers death which will make him immortal to the refusal to fight which would leave him his life, is everywhere re-evoked there; in the Apology of Socrates itself, Socrates makes much of it to define what is going to be his own behaviour before his judges; and we find the echo of it in the very text of Racine's tragedy - I will quote it for you later on - illuminated in a much more important way. But this belongs to the commonplaces which, throughout the centuries, ceaselessly reverberate, rebound always growing in this resonance which is always more empty and swollen.

What then is missing in tragedy, when it is carried on outside the field of its limits, limits which gave it its place in the respiration of the ancient community? The whole difference reposes on some shadows, obscurities, concealments which refer to the commandments of the second death. In Racine, these commandments no longer cast any shadow for the reason that we are no longer in the text where the Delphic oracle can even make herself understood. It is nothing but cruelty, vain contradiction, absurdity. The characters cavil, dialogue, monologue in order to say that in the final analysis there is

surely something amiss.

This is not at all the way it is in ancient tragedy. The commandment of the second death, because it is there under this veiled form, can be formulated there and be received there as arising from this debt which accumulates without a guilty party and is discharged on a victim without this victim having merited the punishment; this "he did not know", in a word, which I inscribed for you at the top of the graph on what is called the line of fundamental enunciating of the topology of the unconscious, here is what is already reached, prefigured - I would say, if it was not an anachronistic word in ancient tragedy - prefigured with regard to Freud who recognises it at once as referring to the raison d'être that he had just discovered in the unconscious. He recognises his discovery and his domain in the tragedy of Oedipus, not because Oedipus had killed his father, nor because he wanted to sleep with his mother. A very entertaining mythologist (I mean who has made a vast collection, a vast gathering together of myths which is quite useful.... it is a work which has no reputation, but is of good practical use) who has reunited in two little volumes published by Penguin Books the whole of ancient mythology, believes he can act the smart alec about the Oedipus myth in Freud. He says: why does Freud not seek out his myth in Egyptian mythology where the hippopotamus is famous for sleeping with his mother and crushing his father? And he says: why did he not call it the hippopotamus complex? And with that, he believes that he has given Freudian mythology a good kick in the backside!

(5) But that is not why he chose it. There are many other heroes besides Oedipus who are the locus of this fundamental conjuncture. The important thing, and the reason why Freud rediscovers his fundamental figure in the tragedy of Oedipus is because "he did not know...." that he had killed his father and had slept with his mother.

Here then we have recalled these fundamental terms of our topology because it is necessary in order for us to continue the analysis of the Symposium, namely in order that you should perceive the importance of the fact that it should now be Agathon, the tragic poet, who comes to give his discourse on love.

I must again prolong this little pause to clarify my account, on the subject of what little by little I am promoting before you throughout this Symposium, about the mystery of Socrates, a mystery about which I was telling you the other day, that for a moment, I had this feeling of being killed by it. I do not think it is unsituatable, not only do I not think it is unsituatable, but it is because I believe that we can perfectly well situate it which justifies our having started from it for our research of this year. I recall this therefore in the same annotated terms which are the ones which I have just rearticulated before you, I recall it, in order that you may go and confront it with the texts of Plato about which (in so far as they are our primary document) for some time I have been

remarking that it is no longer in vain that I refer you to these readings. I would not hesitate to tell you that you should reduplicate the reading of the Symposium which almost all of you have done, with a reading of Phaedo which will give you a good example of what the Socratic method is and why it interests us.

We will say then that the mystery of Socrates, and you must have first hand experience of this document to make its originality shine for you again, is the establishment of what he himself calls science, episteme, whose meaning you can check out by referring to the text. It is quite obvious that this does not have the same resonance, the same accent as for us .....that there was not the slightest beginnings of what has been articulated for us under the rubric of science. The best formula that you can give of the establishment of this science in what? In consciousness, in a position.... in the dignity of something absolute or more exactly in a position of absolute dignity, it is a question of nothing else than what we can, in our vocabulary, express as the promotion to this position of absolute dignity of the signifier as such. What Socrates calls science, is what is necessarily imposed on all interlocution in function of a certain manipulation, of a certain internal coherence, linked, or which he believes is linked, to the pure and simple reference to the signifier.

You will see it being pushed to its final term by the incredulity of his interlocutors who, however compelling his arguments may be, do not manage - any more than anybody else - to completely yield to the affirmation by Socrates of the immortality of the soul. What Socrates is going to refer himself to in the final analysis (and naturally in a way which for everybody, at least for us, is less and less convincing) is to properties like those of odd and even. It is from the fact that the number three could never in any way receive the qualification of evenness, it is on points like that that there rests the demonstration that the soul cannot accept, because it is at the very principle of life, the qualification of destructibility (Phaedo 103d-106d). You can see to what point what I am calling this privileged reference promoted as a sort of cult, of essential rite, the reference to (6) the signifier, is all that is in question as regards the new, original, striking, fascinating, seductive thing - we have historical testimony for it - contributed by the emergence of Socrates in the midst of the Sophists.

The second term to be extracted from what we have of this testimony, is the following, it is that, through Socrates and through what this time is the total presence of Socrates, through his destiny, through his death and what he affirms before dying, it appears that this promotion is coherent with this effect which I showed you in a man, of abolishing in him, in what appears to be a total fashion, what I would call in a Kierkegaardian term "the fear and trembling" before what? Precisely not before the first but before the second death. There is no hesitation for Socrates on this. He affirms to us that this second death incarnated (in his dialectic) in the fact that he raises to absolute power, to the power of being the only foundation of

certitude this coherence of the signifier, it is here that he, Socrates, will find without any doubt whatsoever his eternal life.

I will allow myself almost in the margin to sketch as a sort of parody - provided of course you do not give it more weight than what I am going to say - the picture of Cotard's syndrome: this tireless questioner seems to me to overlook the fact that his mouth is flesh. And that is why this affirmation, one could not say this certitude, is coherent. We are here almost before a sort of apparition which is foreign to us, when Socrates (do not have any doubt about it, in a very exceptional fashion, in a fashion which to employ our language and to make myself understood and to go quickly - I would call in a fashion which is of the order of a psychotic core) implacably unfolds his arguments which are notreally arguments, but also this affirmation, more affirming perhaps than any that one has ever heard, to his disciples the very day of his death concerning the fact that he, Socrates, serenely leaves this life for a truer life, for an immortal life. He does not doubt that he will rejoin those who, let us not forget, still exist for him, the Immortals. Because the notion of Immortals cannot be eliminated, reduced for his thinking; it is in function of the antimony (the Immortals and the mortals) which is absolutely fundamental in ancient thought - and no less, believe me, in our own - that his living, experienced testimony takes its value.

I summarise then: this tireless questioner, who is not a speaker, who rejects rhetoric, the metrical, the poetic, who reduces metaphor and who lives entirely in the game not of the forced card but of the forced question and who sees in it his whole subsistence, engenders before you, develops throughout the whole time of his life what I would call a formidable metonymy whose result as is also attested - we are beginning from historical attestation - is this desire which is incarnated I would say in this set, sad, affirmation of immortality "black and wreathed immortality" Valery writes somewhere, this desire for infinite (7) discourse. Because in the beyond, if he is sure of rejoining the Immortals, he is also more or less sure he says of being able to continue throughout eternity with interlocutors who are worthy of him (those who have preceded him and all the others who will come to rejoin him), his little exercises, which, you have to admit is a conception which, however satisfying it may be for people who love allegory or an allegorical picture is all the same a conception which has a singular odour of delusion. Arguing about odd and even, of justice and injustice, of mortality and immortality, of the hot and the cold and of the fact that the hot cannot admit the cold into itself without weakening it, without withdrawing to one side in its essence as hot (as is explained to us at length in the Phaedo as principle for the reasons of the immortality of the soul), to argue about this throughout eternity is truly a very singular conception of happiness!

We have to set things off against their background: a man experienced in that way the question of the immortality of the

soul, I would say further, of the soul as we are still manipulating it and I would say as we are still encumbered with it. The notion of the soul, the figure of the soul that we have, which is not the one which has developed throughout all the generations of traditional heritage (I mean the soul that we have to deal with in the Christian tradition), the soul has as apparatus, as framework, as metallic rod in its interior, the side-product of Socrates' delusion of immortality. We are still living off it. And what I want simply to put before you, is the highlighting, the energy of this Socratic affirmation concerning the soul as immortal. Why? It is obviously not for the import that we habitually accord it. Because if we refer to this import, it is quite obvious that after some centuries of exercises, and even of spiritual exercises, the rate as I might say, what can be called the level of belief in the immortality of the soul among all of those whom I have before me - I would dare say - believers or unbelievers - is very tempered in the way one says a scale is tempered. This is not what is in question, this is not the interesting thing, to refer you to the energy, to the affirmation, to the highlighting, to the promotion of this affirmation of the immortality of the soul at a date and on certain foundations (by a man, who in his wake, stupefies in short his contemporaries by his discourse), it is so that you may interrogate yourselves, that you may refer yourselves to something which is very important: in order that this phenomenon could have been produced in order that a man should have been able to say.... as we say: "Thus spake..." (This personage has the advantage over Zarathoustra of having existed) .....what must have been, to Socrates, his desire?

Here is the crucial point that I believe I can highlight for you, and all the more easily, in specifying all the better its meaning because I described at length before you the topology which gives its meaning to this question.

If Socrates introduces this position regarding which I would ask you to open after all any passage, any dialogue whatever of Plato (which refers directly to the person of Socrates) in order to verify the cogency, namely the decisive, paradoxical position of his affirmation of immortality and that on which there is founded this idea he has about science, in so far as I deduce it as this pure and simple promotion to absolute value of the function of the signifier in consciousness to what does this respond.... to what atopie, I would say - the word, as you know, regarding Socrates is not mine - to what atopia of desire?

(8) The term atopia, atopos, to designate it, atopos, an unclassifiable, unsituatable case.... we do not know where to shove this atopia, boys! This is what is in question, this is what the discourse of his contemporaries muttered about Socrates. For me, for us, this atopie of desire which I am questioning, does it not in a certain fashion coincide with what I could call a certain topographical purity, precisely in the fact that it designates the central point where, in our topology, this space of the entre-deux-morts is as such in its pure and empty state the place of desire as such, desire being there nothing more than

its place - in so far as it is no longer for Socrates anything but the desire for discourse, for the revealed discourse, forever revealing? From which there results of course the atopia of the Socratic subject himself, if it is the case that never before him had there been occupied by any man, in such a purified way, this place of desire.

I am not answering this question. I am posing it, because it is likely, that it at least gives us a first reference point to situate what our question is, which is a question that we cannot eliminate from the moment that we have once introduced it. And after all I am not the one who introduced it. It is, already, introduced from the moment that we perceived that the complexity of transference could in no way be limited to what is happening in the subject who is called the patient, namely the analysand. And in consequence the question is posed of articulating in a slightly more advanced way than has ever been done up to now what the desire of the analyst should be.

It is not sufficient now to speak about catharsis, the didactic purification, as I might say, of the greater part of the analyst's unconscious, all of this remains very vague. We must give credit to analysts that for some time they have not been satisfied with it. We must also notice, not to criticise them, but to understand the sort of obstacle that we have to deal with, that we have not even made the slightest beginning in what one could articulate so easily in the form of questions concerning what must be acquired by someone for him to be an analyst: he is now supposed to know a little bit more about the dialectic of his unconscious? When all is said and done what exactly does he know about it? And above all how far must what he knows have gone concerning the effects of knowledge? And simply I pose you this question: what must remain of his phantasies? - You know that I am capable of going further, of saying "his" phantasy, if indeed there is a fundamental phantasy. If castration is what must be accepted at the final term of analysis, what ought to be the role of his scar to castration in the eros of the analyst?

These are questions of which I would say it is easier to pose them than to resolve them. That indeed is the reason why they are not posed. And, believe me, I would not pose them either like that in a vacuum, like that as a way simply of tickling your imagination, if I did not think that there must be a method, an indirect, even oblique, even roundabout method, of throwing some light on these questions to which it is obviously impossible for us for the moment to respond all at once. All that I can tell you is that it does not seem to me that what one calls the doctor-patient relationship (with what it involves in terms of presuppositions, of prejudices, of a swarming syrup, which looks like cheese worms), is something which allows us to advance very far in this sense.

It is a question then of trying to articulate, in accordance with reference points which are, which may be designated for us starting with a topology that had already been sketched out as the coordinates of desire, what must be, what is fundamentally

the desire of the analyst.

(9) And if it is a question of situating it, I believe that it is neither by referring oneself to the articulations of the situation for the therapist or observer [nor] to any of the notions about situation as a phenomenology elaborates them for us, that we can find our proper reference points. The desire of the analyst is not something that can content itself, be satisfied with a dyadic reference. It is not the relationship with one's patient through a series of eliminations, of exclusions, which can give us the key to it. It is a question of something more intrapersonal. And, of course, I am not telling you either that the analyst must be a Socrates, or a die-hard, or a saint. No doubt these explorers, like Socrates or the die-hards or the saints, can give us some indications about the field that is in question, and not just some indications, but precisely this is the reason that on reflection we refer to it, for our part, all our science, I mean experimental science, in the field in question. But it is precisely starting from the fact that the exploration is carried on by them, that we can perhaps articulate, define in terms of longitude and of latitude the coordinates that the analyst should be capable of attaining simply to occupy the place which is his own - which is defined as the place that he must offer as vacant to the desire of the patient in order that he may realise himself as desire of the Other. This is why the Symposium interests us, it is because by this altogether privileged place that it occupies concerning the testimonies about Socrates (in so far as it is considered to place before us Socrates tackling the problem of love), the Symposium is for us a useful text to explore.

I believe I have said enough about it to justify our tackling the problem of transference, by beginning with the commentary on the Symposium. I believe also that it was necessary for me to recall these coordinates at the moment that we are going to enter into what occupies the central or quasi-central place of these celebrated dialogues, namely the discourse of Agathon.

Is it Aristophanes, or is it Agathon who occupies the central place? It is not important to decide. Between the two of them, in any case, they undoubtedly occupy the central place, because everything that had previously been according to all appearances demonstrated is considered by them as right away rejected, devaluated, because what is going to follow will be nothing other than the discourse of Socrates.

On this discourse of Agathon, namely the tragic poet, there would be a world of things to be said which are not simply erudite, but which would draw us into a detail, indeed into a history of tragedy which you have seen that I highlighted for you a little while ago, this is not the important thing. The important thing is to make you perceive the place of Agathon's discourse in the economy of the Symposium. You have read it. There are five or six pages in the French translation by Robin published by Guillaume Bude. I am going to take it near its high point, you will see why: I am here not so much to give you a more or less

elegant commentary on the Symposium as to lead you to the way in which it can or must be of use to us.

After having given a discourse of which the least one can say is that it has always struck every reader by its extraordinary "sophistry", in the most modern, the most common, pejorative sense of the word. The very type for example of what you can call this sophistry, is to say that: "Love wrongs not and is not wronged, wrongs no god and is wronged by none, wrongs no man (10) and is wronged by none." Why? Because - "nothing that happens to him comes by violence for violence touches not love;" - therefore - "nothing he does is violent, for everyone willingly serves Love in everything," Agathon tells us - "and what a willing person grants to a willing is just - so say the city's king, the laws'" (196c) The moral: love is then what is at the principle of the laws of- the city, and so on. . . since love is the strongest of all desires, irresistible voluptuousness, it will become confused with temperance, because temperance being what regulates desires and pleasures by right, love ought then to be confused with this position of temperance.

Obviously we are having fun. Who is having fun? Is it just we, the readers? I think that we would be quite wrong to believe that we are the only ones. Agathon is here in a posture which is certainly not secondary if only by the fact that, because, at least in principle, in the terms, in the position of the situation, he is the beloved of Socrates. [I believe] that Plato - we will give him this much credit - is also having fun with what I would call already - and you will see that I am going to justify it still more - the macaronic discourse of the tragedian on love. But I believe, I am sure and you will be sure of it once you have also read it, that we would be quite wrong not to understand that it is not we, nor Plato alone who are amusing ourselves here about this discourse.

It is quite clear... (contrary to what the commentators have said) it is completely out of the question that the one who is speaking, namely Agathon, does not himself know very well what he is doing.

Things are taken so far, things are so extreme, that you are simply going to see that at the high point of this discourse Agathon is going to tell us: "And I am moved to speak something of him in verse myself", and he expresses himself

eirenen men en anthropois                      peleagei de galenen (197c)

... "eirenen men en anthropois, peace among men," says M. Leon Robin; which means: love brings troubles to an end; a singular notion it must be said because we really had not the slightest suspicion of it until this idyllic modulation; but in order to dot the i's, he adds to it, pelagei de galenen, which means absolutely: "Nothing is working, dead calm on the deep". In other words, you must remember what calm weather on the sea meant for the ancients, that meant: nothing is working any more, the vessels remain blocked at Aulis and, when that happens to you in



mid-ocean, it is very embarrassing, just as embarrassing as when that happens to you in bed. So that when one evokes pelagei de galenen in connection with love, it is quite clear that one is having a little giggle. Love is what makes you break down, it is what causes you to make a fiasco of things.

And then that is not all. Afterwards he says, "respite from winds".... love is put aside.... there is no more love nenemian anemon, this sounds moreover like what are always comic verses in a certain tradition. It is like two verses by Paul-Jean Toulet:

(11) "Sous le double ornement d'un nom mol ou sonore,

Non, il n'est rien que Nanine et Nonore."

We are in that register. And in addition koiten, which means in bed, "coucouche panier", nothing in the bed, "no more wind in the winds, all the winds have gone asleep" [and then] hupnon t'eni kedei a singular thing, -love brings us "in trouble rest and sleep", one might translate at first glance. But if you look at the sense of the occurrences of this kedos, the Greek term, always rich in underpinnings (which would allow us to revalorise in a particular way what one day - with no doubt a lot of benevolence towards us, but perhaps lacking despite everything by not following Freud in something essential - M. Benveniste, for our first number, articulated about the ambivalences of signifiers), kedos is not simply trouble, it is always kinship. The hupnon t'enikedei gives us an outline of kedos as "a relation by marriage of an elephant's thigh" somewhere in Lévi-Strauss and thus hupnos, "peaceful sleep", t'eni kedei "in relationships with the family-in-law", seems to me to be something worthy of crowning these verses which are undoubtedly constructed to shake us up, if we have not yet understood that Agathon is making fun.

Moreover from that moment on literally he cuts loose and tells us that love, is that which literally frees us, "empties us of estrangement, and fills us with friendliness" (197d).

"Naturally when you are possessed by love, you realise that we all form part of a big family, it is really from that moment on that one feels warm and comfortable." And so on.... It continues for lines.... I will leave you the pleasure of licking your chops over it some evening.

(12) In any case, if you agree that love "provides gentleness and banishes savagery; ....loves to give goodwill, hates to give illwill"; - there is here an enumeration on which I would like to spend a long time with you - the fact is that it is said to be the father of what? The father of Truphe, Habrotes, Chiide, Charites, Himeros and of Pothos. we would need more time than we have at our disposal here to draw the parallel of those terms which one could initially translate as "Luxury, Daintiness, Delicacy, Grace, Longing, Desire", and to do the double work that would consist in confronting them with the register of blessings, of honesty in courtly love as I recalled it for you last year.

It would be easy for you then to see the distance, and to see that it is quite impossible to satisfy oneself with the rapprochement which M. Leon Robin makes in a note with the Carte du Tendre or with the knightly virtues in La Minne: moreover he

does not evoke it, he only speaks about the Carte du tendre.

Because what I would show you text in hand, is that there is not one of these terms (Truphe for example, which people are happy to connote as Wellbeing) which has not been used by the majority of authors, not simply comic authors, with most disagreeable connotations. Truphe for example in Aristophanes, designates that which in a woman, in a wife, is introduced all of a sudden into the life, into the peace of a man, in terms of intolerable pretension. The woman who is said to be trupheros or truphera, is an intolerable little snob: she is the one who never stops for a single instant making the most in front of her husband of the superiorities of her rank and the quality of her family and so on....

There is not a single one of these terms which is not habitually and for the major part, conjoined, juxtaposed by the authors (whether it is a question this time of tragedians, even the poets like Hesiod) juxtaposed (chlide. delicacy for example), with the use of authadia, signifying this time one of the most intolerable forms of hubris and of infatuation.

I only want to point these things out to you in passing. It continues: love is "careful of good things, careless of bad things; in hardship, in fear, in the heat of passion and in talk a pilot...." (197d). These are translations which signify absolutely nothing, because in Greek you have: en pono, en phobo, en logo; en pono, that means in trouble; en phobo in fear; in logo, in speech, kubernetes, epibates, is the one who holds the rudder, the one also who is always ready to direct. In other words, its all a big joke. Pono, phobo, logo are in the greatest of disorder. What is in question, is always to produce the same effect of irony, indeed of disorientation which, in a tragic (13) poet, has really no other meaning than to underline that love is really what is unclassifiable, that which comes to put itself crosswise in all significant situations, that which is never in its place, that which is always out of season.

That this position is really something which is defensible or not, in rigorous terms, this of course is not the high point of the discourse, concerning love in this dialogue; this is not what is in question. The important thing is that it should be in the perspective of the tragic poet that we are given on love precisely the only discourse which is openly, completely derisive. And moreover, to underline what I am telling you, to seal the cogency of this interpretation you only have to read when Agathon concludes: "This, Phaidros, is my speech," he said; "may the god accept my dedication partly play, partly modest seriousness, and the best that I am able to do" (197e). The discourse itself is marked, as one might say, by its connotation as an amusing discourse, the discourse of someone who wishes to amuse.

And it is none other than Agathon as such, namely as the one whose triumph at the competition for tragedy is being

celebrated - let us not forget it, we are on the day following his success - who has the right to speak about love.

It is quite certain that there is nothing there which ought to disorient at all events. In every tragedy situated in its full context, in the ancient context, love always figures as an incident in the margins and, as one might say, lagging behind. Love, far from being the one who directs and who runs ahead, only lags behind here, to take up the very terms that you will find in the discourse of Agathon, lagging behind the thing to which curiously enough he compares it in a passage, namely the term which I put forward before you last year under the function of Ate in tragedy (195d).

Ate, misfortune, the thing that has been crucified and which can never be exhausted, the calamity which is behind every tragic adventure and which, as the poet tells us - because it is to Homer that on this occasion reference is made - "Tender are her feet; she comes not near the ground, but walks upon the heads of men.", this is the way Ate passes, rapid, indifferent, and forever striking and dominating and bending heads, driving them mad; that is what Ate is. It is a singular thing, that in this discourse it should be under the reference of telling us that, like Ate, Love must have very tender feet, for it also not to be able to move except upon the heads of men! And on this point, once again, to confirm the phantastical character of this discourse, some jokes are made about the fact that after all not all the skulls are as tender as all that! (195e)

Let us come back one more time to the confirmation of the style of this discourse. All our experience of tragedy and you will see it more especially in the measure that, because of the Christian context, the vacuum (which is produced in the fundamental fatalism of antiquity, in the inscrutability, the incomprehensibility of the fatal oracle, the inexpressibility of the commandment at the level of the second death) can no longer be sustained because we find ourselves before a god who is not capable of giving senseless or cruel orders; you will see that love comes to fill this vacuum.

(14) Iphigenie by Racine is its most beautiful illustration, in a sense a sort of incarnation. It was necessary for us to have arrived at the Christian context for Iphigenia not to suffice as tragic. She has to have Eriphile as understudy, and properly so, not simply in order that Eriphile can be sacrificed in her place, but because Eriphile is the only true lover ..... with a love which is presented to us as terrible, horrible, bad, tragic in order to restore a certain depth to the tragic space and regarding which we also see clearly that it is because love which, moreover sufficiently occupies the play (principally with Achilles), every time it manifests itself as pure and simple love, and not as black love, the love of jealousy, is irresistibly comic.

In short, we have arrived at the crossroads where, as will be recalled at the end of the final conclusions of the Symposium, it

is not enough in order to speak about love to be a tragic poet, it is also necessary to be a comic poet. It is at this precise point that Socrates receives the discourse of Agathon and, to appreciate how he welcomes it, it was necessary, I believe - you will see it in what follows - to articulate it with all the accent that I believed I had to give to it today.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 18 January 1961

We have arrived then, in the Symposium, at the moment when Socrates is going to begin to speak in the epainos or the encomion. I told you in passing, these two terms are not altogether equivalent. I did not want to dwell on their difference which would have drawn us into a rather eccentric discussion. In terms of praising love, it is said, affirmed by himself - and the word of Socrates cannot be contested in Plato - that if Socrates knows anything, if there is something that he is not ignorant of, it is the business of love (198d). We should not lose sight of this in everything that is going to happen.

I underlined for you, in a sufficiently convincing fashion I think, the last time, the strangely derisive character of the discourse of Agathon. Agathon, the tragedian speaks about love in a way which gives the feeling that he is clowning .... of a macaronic discourse. At every instant, it seems that the expression that is suggested to us, is that he ..... a little. I underlined, in the content, in the body of the arguments, in the style, in the very details of elocution, the extremely provocative character of the little verses in which he himself expresses himself at a particular moment. It is rather disconcerting to see the theme of the Symposium culminating in such a discourse. This is not new, it is the function, the role that we give it in the development of the Symposium which may be, because this derisive character of the discourse has always struck those who have read and commented on it. To such a degree that, to take for example what a personage of German science at the beginning of this century - whose name, the day I mentioned it to you, made you laugh, I do not know why - Wilamowitz Moellendorff, following in this the tradition of almost all those who preceded him, states that the discourse of Agathon is characterised by its Nichtigkeit, its emptiness.

It is quite strange that Plato should have put this discourse then into the mouth of the one who is going to immediately precede the discourse of Socrates, in the mouth of the one who is, let us not forget it, currently and on this occasion the beloved of Socrates, at the time of the Symposium.

Moreover the way Socrates is going to introduce his intervention, is by two points. First of all, even before Agathon speaks, there is a sort of interlude where Socrates himself said something like: "After having heard all that we have heard and, if Agathon now adds his discourse to the others, how am I going

to be able to speak?" (194a). Agathon for his own part excuses himself. He also announces some hesitation, some fear, some intimidation at speaking before what we could call such an (2) enlightened, such an intelligent, emphrones public. And the beginnings of a sort of discussion, of debate, takes place with Socrates who begins at that moment to question him a little in connection with the remark which had been made that, if Agathon, the tragic poet, had just triumphed on the tragic stage, it is because on the tragic stage he is addressing a crowd, and that here it is a question of something else. And we begin to be engaged on a slope which could be ticklish. We do not know where we might be led when Socrates begins to question him. It is more or less the following: "Would you be ashamed of something in which you might eventually show yourself to be inferior, only in front of us? In front of the others, in front of the crowd, in front of the mob, would you feel yourself more at ease in advancing themes which might be less certain..." (194c). And here, God knows, we do not know very well what we are getting involved in: whether it is a sort of aristocratism, as one might call it, of dialogue or if, on the contrary, Socrates' goal is to show (as seems more likely and as his whole practice bears witness) that even a slave, that even an ignorant person, is capable, if appropriately questioned, to show in himself the germs of truth, the germs of a sound judgement.

But on this slope someone intervenes, Phaidros who, interrupting Agathon, does not allow Socrates to draw him along this path. He knows well that Socrates does not care about anything, as he says expressly, except conversing with someone he loves, and that if we get into this dialogue, we will never get finished....

Then at that Agathon begins to speak, and Socrates finds himself in the position of reproving him. He reproves him. In order to do it, he has as one might say the best of roles and the method immediately shows itself to be of striking superiority, as regards the ease with which it shows up in the middle of the discourse of Agathon what has split apart dialectically, and the procedure is such that here it can be nothing other than a refutation, than an annihilation of the discourse of Agathon, properly speaking, in a way that denounces its ineptitude, its Nichtigkeit, its emptiness. [So that] the commentators and specifically the one whom I evoked above, think that Socrates himself is reluctant to push too far the humiliation of his interlocutor and that here we have a reason for what we are going to see. The fact is that at a given moment Socrates stops and allows to speak in his place (takes as an intermediary someone who is going to be a prestigious figure for the rest of the story) Diotima, the foreigner from Mantinea; that if he allows Diotima to speak and if he allows himself to be taught by Diotima, it is in order not to remain any longer, vis-a-vis the one to whom he has dealt a decisive blow, in the position of magister. And he allows himself to be taught, and he relays himself through this imaginary personage in order to mitigate the disarray into which he has thrown Agathon. I am completely against this position. Because if we look at the text more closely, I believe that we cannot say that this is altogether its meaning. I would say that, just as people want to show, in the discourse of Agathon, a sort of avowal of his (3)

going astray: "I fear, Socrates, I knew nothing of what I said!" (201b), the impression that remains with us in hearing him is rather that of someone who might respond: "We are not on the same level, I spoke in a fashion that had a meaning, in a fashion which was well grounded, I spoke let us say at the limit even, in enigmas"; let us not forget that ainos with ainittomai, leads us straight to the etymology of the enigma: "What I said was said in a certain tone".

And so we read, in the discourse-response of Socrates, that there is a certain fashion of conceiving praise that for a moment Socrates devaluates, namely to place, to wrap around the object of praise everything good that can be said. But is this really what Agathon did? On the contrary, it seems, in the very excesses of this discourse, that there was something which it appears was only waiting to be heard. In a word for an instant we can, by listening in a certain fashion - and in fashion which I think is the correct one - to the response of Agathon, we have the impression at the limit that by introducing his critique, his dialectic, his mode of interrogation, Socrates finds himself in the pedantic position.

I mean that it is clear that Agathon says something, which has its share of irony and it is Socrates who, arriving there with his big boots, simply changes the rules of the game. And in truth, when Agathon says again: ego, phanai, o Socrates, soi ouk an dunaimen antilegein, "Socrates, I really could not contradict you; let it be as you say." (201c) there is there someone who disengages himself and who says to the other: "Now let us pass on to the other register, to the other fashion of acting with the word!"

But one could not say, like the commentators and even the one whose text I have before my eyes, Leon Robin, that it is a sign of impatience on the part of Agathon. In a word, if the discourse of Agathon can truly be put between the quotation marks of this really paradoxical game, of this sort of sophistical tour de force, we only have to take seriously - which is the proper way - what Socrates himself says about this discourse which, to use the French term which corresponds best to it, bewilders him (le sidère), méduse's him as it is put expressly, because Socrates makes a play on words on the name of Gorgias and the figure of the Gorgon. Such a discourse closes the door to the operation of dialectic, petrifies Socrates and transforms him, he says, into stone.

But this is not an effect to be disdained. Socrates brought things onto the plane of his method, of his interrogative method, of his way of questioning, of his way also (shown to us by Plato), of articulating, of dividing the object, of operating according to this diairesis, thanks to which the object is presented to examination to be situated, articulated in a certain fashion whose register we can locate with the progress constituted by a development of knowledge suggested at the origin by the Socratic method.

(4) But the import of Agathon's discourse is not for all that annihilated. It belongs to another register, but it remains

exemplary. It plays in a word an essential function in the progress of what is demonstrated for us by way of a succession of paeans about love. No doubt it is significant, rich in teaching for us, that it should be the tragic which, as one might say produced the comic romancero about love or on love, and that it should be the comic Aristophanes who spoke about love with an almost modern accent, in its sense of passion. This is eminently rich in suggestions, in questions for us. But the intervention of Socrates intervenes as a rupture, and not as something which devaluates, reduces to nothing what had just been enounced in the discourse of Agathon. And after all can we consider as nothing, and as a simple antiphrase, the fact that Socrates puts all the accent on the fact that it was - he says it properly speaking: kalon . . . . . logon, "a beautiful discourse", that he spoke very beautifully (198b).

Often the evocation of the ridiculous has been made, of that which may provoke laughter in the preceding text. He does not seem to say to us that it was in any way ridicule that was in question at the moment of this change of register. And at the moment when Socrates brings forward the wedge that his dialectic has driven into the subject in order to bring to us what one expects from Socratic illumination, we have a feeling of discord, not of a balancing which would entirely cancel out what had been formulated in the discourse of Agathon.

Here we cannot fail to remark that, in the discourse of Socrates, what is articulated as being properly method, his interrogative method, which means that, if you will allow me this play on words in Greek, the eromenos, the beloved, is going to become erotomenos (the one interrogated), with this properly Socratic interrogation, Socrates only makes emerge one theme which is the one which from the beginning of my commentary I announced on several occasions namely: the function of lack.

Everything that Agathon says most especially . . . . ., that beauty for example belongs to it, is one of its attributes, saying all of this succumbs before the interrogation, before this remark of Socrates: "Is Love such as to be a love of something, or of nothing?" "Is it when he has what he desires and loves that he desires and loves it, or when he has not?" (199d - 200a). I will pass over the detail of the articulation of this question properly so-called. He turns it, returns it, with an acuity which as usual makes of his interlocutor someone whom he manipulates, whom he manoeuvres. This indeed is the ambiguity of the questioning of Socrates: the fact is that he is always the master, even where, for us who are reading it, in many cases there may appear to be a way of escape. It does not matter either to know what on this occasion ought or can be developed in strict rigour. It is the testimony that is constituted by the essence of the Socratic interrogation that is important to us here, and also what Socrates introduces, expressly wishes to produce, that of which he conventionally speaks for us.

We are assured that the adversary cannot refuse the conclusion, (5) namely, as he expressly expresses it: "Then he, and every other who desires, desires what is not in his possession, tou me hetoimou, kai tou me parontos, and not there, kai ho me echei.



what he has not, kai ho me estin autos, and what he is not himself" - it is translated- "kai hou endees esti, what he lacks? Toiaut' attā estin on he epithumia te kai ho eros estin, those are the sort of things of which there is desire and love" - the text is certainly translated in a weak fashion - "epithumei he desires tou me hetoimou" - is properly speaking - "what is not ready-made, tou me parontos what is not there, what he does not have, ho me echei kai ho me estin autos, that he is not himself, that which he is lacking, that which he essentially lacks" in the superlative (200e). Here is what is articulated by Socrates in what he introduces to this new discourse, this something which he says is not to be placed on the plane of verbal games - through which we would say that the subject is captured, captivated, is fixated, fascinated (199b).

The thing that distinguishes it from the sophistical method, is that it makes there reside the progress of a discourse which he tells us he pursues without any search at all for elegance in words in this exchange, this dialogue, [in] this consent obtained from the one to whom he addresses himself, and in this consent presented as the emergence, the necessary evocation in the one to whom he addresses himself of knowledge that he already has. Here, as you know, is the essential articulating point on which the whole Platonic theory, of the soul and also of its nature, of its consistency, of its origin, reposes. All this knowledge is already in the soul and it is enough to have the correct questions in order to re-evoke, to reveal it. This knowledge is there from all time and bears witness in a way to the precedence, the antecedent nature of knowledge; from the fact that not only has it always existed, but that because of it we can suppose that the soul shares in an infinite anteriority, it is not only immortal, it has always existed. And this is what gives rise and lends credence to the myth of metempsychosis, of reincarnation, which of course on the plane of myth, on a different plane to that of dialectic, is all the same what accompanies in the margin the development of Platonic thought.

But there is one thing here which is likely to strike us, it is that having introduced what I called a little while ago this wedge of the notion, of the function of lack as essential, constitutive of the relationship of love, Socrates speaking in his own name remains there. And it is no doubt a correct question to ask oneself why he substitutes the authority of Diotima for himself.

But it also seems to me that it is a very facile way of resolving this question to say that it is to spare the self-love of Agathon. Things are the way we are told: namely that Plato has only to produce a quite elementary piece of judo or jiu-jitsu: "I fear I knew nothing of what I said, my discourse is elsewhere" (201b), as he says expressly. - It is not so much Agathon who is in difficulty as Socrates himself. And as we cannot suppose, in (6) any way, that what was conceived here by Plato, is to show Socrates as a heavy-handed pedant, after what was undoubtedly an airy, if only because of its amusing style, discourse given by Agathon, we must believe that if Socrates hands over in his discourse, it is for another reason than the fact that he himself

would not have been able to continue, and we can immediately situate this reason: it is because of the nature of the affair of the thing, of the to pragma, that we are dealing with.

We can suspect - and you will see that it is confirmed by what follows - that it is because it is love that is being spoken about that this path must be taken, that he is led to proceed in this fashion. Let us note in effect the point upon which his question was brought to bear. The efficacy that he had put forward, produced, being the function of lack, and in a very obvious fashion, the return to the desiring function of love, the substitution of epithumai, he desires, for era, he loves. And in the text, one sees a moment when, interrogating Agathon on the fact: whether he thinks or not "that love is love of something".... there is substituted the term: love or desire of something (199d - 199e).

It is quite obviously in so far as love is articulated in desire, is articulated in a fashion which here is not properly speaking articulated as substitution, that substitution is not - one can legitimately object - the very function of the method of Socratic knowing, it is precisely because the substitution is here a little rapid that we have a right to point it out, to notice it.

That is not to say that for all that there is any mistake, because it is indeed around the articulation of Eros, Love and of eros, desire, that there is going effectively to turn the whole dialectic as it develops in the dialogue as a whole. Again it is appropriate that something should be pointed out in passing. Here, let us remark again that it is not for nothing that what is properly speaking the Socratic intervention is isolated in this way. Socrates goes very precisely to the point where what I called the last time his method, which is to bring the effect of his questioning to bear on what I called the consistency of the signifier, is properly speaking manifest, visible in the very delivery, in the fashion in which he introduces his question to Agathon:

einai tinos ho Eros eros, e oudenos?

"Yes or no, is Love such as to be a love of something (de quelque chose), or of nothing?" And here he specifies, because the Greek genitive tinis [of something] like the French genitive has its ambiguities: quelque chose can have two meanings, and these meanings are in a way accentuated in an almost massive, caricatural fashion and in the distinction that Socrates makes: tinis can mean: to come from someone, to be the descendant of someone, "I do not mean to ask," he says, "if he is a love of such a mother or such a father" but what is behind it.

This is precisely all the theogony of which there was question at the beginning of the dialogue. It is not a question of knowing from what love descends, from whom it comes - as one says: "My kingdom is not of (de) this world" - in a word from what god love comes? It is a question of knowing, on the plane of the interrogation of the signifier, of what, as signifier, love is the correlative. And this is why we find marked.... we cannot for our part, it seems to me, not notice that what Socrates opposes to this way of posing the question: from whom does this

love come? What is in question is the same thing, he says, as this name of the Father - we rediscover it here because what we (7) rediscover is the same father, it is the same thing as to ask: when you say Father, what does that imply, not in terms of the real father, namely what he has as a child, but when one speaks about a father one necessarily speaks about a son. The Father is father of a son by definition, qua father. "You would say, I suppose, if you wanted to answer right" - translates Leon Robin - "that the Father is father of son or daughter" (199d)

We are here properly speaking on the terrain which is the very one on which there develops the Socratic dialectic of interrogating the signifier about its consistency as signifier. Here he is very able.," Here he knows what he is doing. And even that which permits this rather rapid substitution that I spoke about between eros and desire, is that. It is nevertheless a process, a progress which is marked, he says, by his method.

If he hands over to Diotima, why should it not be because, concerning love, things could not go any further with the properly Socratic method. I think that everything is going to demonstrate this and the discourse of Diotima itself. Why should we be surprised about it, I would say already: if there is a step which constitutes compared to the contemporaneity of the sophists the beginning of the Socratic procedure, it is that a knowledge (the only sound one Socrates tells us in the Phaedo), can affirm itself from the simple consistency of this discourse which is dialogue which is carried on in terms of the necessary apprehension, the apprehension as necessary of the law of the signifier.

When one speaks about odd and even, with which, do I need to remind you that in my teaching here, I think I took enough pains, exercised you for long enough to show you that it is a question here of the domain which is entirely closed off in its own register, that the odd and the even owe nothing to any other experience than that of the operation of signifiers themselves, that there is no odd or even, in other words nothing countable, except what is already raised to the function of an element of the signifier, of the texture of the signifying chain. One can count words or syllables, but one can only count things because of the fact that words and syllables are already counted.

We are on this plane, when Socrates begins to speak, outside the confused world of the discussion, of the debate of physicists who like the sophists preceded him who, at different levels, in different ways, organise what we might call in an abbreviated fashion - you know that I would only accept it with the greatest of reservations - the magical power of words. How does Socrates affirm this knowledge which is internal to the operation of the signifier: he posits, at the same time as this knowledge which is entirely transparent of itself, that this is what constitutes its truth.

Now is it not on this point that we have taken the step which makes us disagree with Socrates; in this no doubt essential step which assures the autonomy of the law of the signifier, Socrates,

for us, prepares this field of the word precisely, properly speaking, which, for its part, has permitted the whole critique of human knowledge as such.

But the novelty, if what I am teaching you about the Freudian revolution is correct, is precisely the fact that something can be sustained in the law of the signifier, not simply without this involving a knowledge but by expressly excluding it, namely by constituting itself as unconscious, namely as necessitating at its level the eclipsing of the subject in order to subsist as unconscious chain, as constituting what is fundamentally irreducible in the relationship of the subject to the signifier. All this to say that this is why we are the first, if not the only ones, not to be necessarily surprised that the properly Socratic discourse, the discourse of episteme, of knowledge transparent to itself, cannot be pursued beyond a certain limit (8) with regard to a particular object, when this object, if indeed it is the one on which Freudian thought has been able to bring new light, this object is love.

In any case, whether you follow me in this or whether you do not follow me, with respect to a dialogue whose effect, throughout the ages, has maintained itself with the force and the constancy, the interrogative power and the perplexity which develop around it, Plato's Symposium, it is clear that we cannot satisfy ourselves with such miserable reasons as saying that if Socrates allows Diotima to speak, it is simply to avoid too greatly irritating the self-love of Agathon.

If you will allow a comparison which keeps all its ironic value, suppose that I have to develop for you the totality of my doctrine on analysis verbally and that - verbally or in writing does not matter - in doing it, at a certain point, I hand over to Francoise Dolto, you would say: "All the same there is something.... why, why is he doing that?" This, naturally supposing that if I hand over to Francoise Dolto this is not to have her say stupid things! This would not be my method and, moreover, I would have great trouble making her say such things.

This embarrasses Socrates much less, as you are going to see, because the discourse of Diotima is characterised precisely by something which at every instant allows there to appear gaps which undoubtedly allow us to understand why Socrates does not assume them. What is more, Socrates punctuates these gaps with a whole series of replies which are in a way - it is tangible, it is enough to read the text - more and more amused. I mean that there are first of all very respectful replies, then more and more of the style: "Do you really think that?", then afterwards: "Very well, let us go as far as you are leading me", and then, at the end, that becomes clearly: "Have fun, my girl, I'm listening, talk away!". You must read this discourse in order to understand that this is what is in question.

Here I cannot avoid making a remark which it seems has not struck the commentators: Aristophanes, in connection with Love, had introduced a term which is transcribed quite simply in French under the name of dioecisme (193a). It is a question of nothing other than this Spaltung, of this division of the completely

round primitive being, of this kind of derisory sphere of Aristophanes' image whose value I told you about. And this dioecisme, he describes in this way by comparing it to a practice which, in the context of community relations, of relations in the city, was the mainspring on which there depended the whole of politics in Greek society, [this practice] consisted [in the fact], when one wished to destroy an enemy city - this is still done in our own day - in dispersing the inhabitants and putting them into what are called reassembly camps. This had been done not long before, at the time that the Symposium appeared and it is even one of the reference points around which turns the date that we can attribute to the Symposium. There is here, it appears, some anachronism or other, the thing to which Plato was alluding, namely an initiative of Sparta, having happened after the text, the supposed meeting of the Symposium and its unfolding around the praise of love. This dioecisme is very evocative for us.

It is not for nothing that I used the term Spaltung above, a term evocative of subjective splitting, and what, at the moment that - this is what I am in the process of exposing before you - in the measure that something which, (when it is a question of the (9) discourse of love) escapes the knowledge of Socrates, ensures that Socrates is effaced, is split (se dioecise) and allows a woman to speak in his place. Why not the woman who is in him?

In any case, no one contests it and certain people, Wilamowitz Moellendorff in particular, have accentuated, underlined that there is in any case a difference of nature, of register, in what Socrates develops on the plane of his dialectical method and what he presents to us in terms of myth throughout everything that the Platonic testimony transmits, restores to us of it. We should always.... (and in the text it is always quite clearly separated out) when one comes (and in many other fields besides that of love) to a certain term of what can be obtained on the plane of episteme, of knowledge, in order to go beyond (we can easily conceive that there is a limit in so far as on the plane of knowledge there is only what is accessible to the pure and simple operation of the law of the signifier). In the absence of well-advanced experimental conquests, it is clear that in many domains - and in domains which we for our part can pass over - there will be a pressure to let myth speak.

What is remarkable, is precisely this rigour which ensures that when one engages with, one locks into the plane of myth, Plato always knows perfectly well what he is doing or what he makes Socrates do and that one knows that one is in the realm of myth. I do not mean myth in its common usage, muthous legein is not what that means, muthous legein, is the common discourse, what is said, that is what it is. And throughout the whole Platonic work we see in the Phaedo, in the Timaeus, in the Republic, myths emerging, when they are required, to supply for the gap in what cannot be assured dialectically.

Starting from there, we are going to see better what one could call the progress of the discourse of Diotima. Somebody here once wrote an article which he called, if I remember rightly: "Un desir d'enfant". This article was entirely built on the

ambiguity of the term: desir de l'enfant, in the sense that it is the child who desires; désir d'enfant, in the sense that one desires to have a child. It is not a simple accident of the signifier that things are that way. And the proof, is that you have all the same been able to notice that it is around this ambiguity that there is precisely going to pivot the wedge-like attack on the problem by Socrates.

When all is said and done what did Agathon tell us? It was that Eros was the eros of beauty, the desire of Beauty, I would say in the sense that one might say that the god Beauty desires. And what Socrates retorts to him, is that a desire for beauty implies that one does not possess beauty.. These verbal quibbles have not the vain, pinpricking, confusing character which would tempt one to turn aside from them. The proof, is that it is around these two terms that the whole discourse of Diotima is going to develop.

And first of all, to clearly mark the continuity, Socrates is going to say that it is on the same plane, that it is with the same arguments that he had used with regard to Agathon that Diotima introduced her dialogue with him. The stranger from (10) Mantinea who is presented to us in the personage of a priestess, and magician (let us not forget that at this turning point of the Symposium we are told a good deal about these arts of divination, of how to operate, in order to make oneself heard by the gods in order to move natural forces), is a woman who is wise in the matter of witchcraft, of divination as the comte de Cabanis would say, of all sorts of sorcery (goétie). The term is Greek, goetia, and is in the text (203a). Moreover, we are told something about her which I am astonished to find not much is made of in reading this text, which is that she is supposed to have succeeded by her artifices in putting off the plague for ten years, and what is more at Athens! It must be admitted that this familiarity with the powers of the plague is all the same something to make us reflect, to make us situate the stature and the style of the figure of the person who is going to speak to you about love.

It is on this plane that things are introduced and it is on this plane that she takes up the thread about that which Socrates, who at that moment acts naive or pretends to be foolish, poses her the question: "If Love is not beautiful, then it must be ugly?" (201e) Here in effect is where there ends up the results of the method called through more or less, of yes or no, of presence or absence, proper to the law of the signifier (what is not beautiful is ugly), here at least is what is implied in all rigour by the pursuit of the ordinary mode of interrogation of Socrates. At which the priestess is able to respond to him: "My son" - I would say - "you must not blaspheme! And why should everything that is not beautiful be ugly?"

In order to say it, she introduces to us the myth of the birth of Love which is all the same worth our while dwelling on. I would point out to you the myth exists only in Plato that, among the innumerable myths, I mean the innumerable mythical accounts about the birth of Love in ancient literature - I took the trouble of studying a certain amount of it - there is not a trace of this

thing which is going to be enounced here. It is nevertheless the myth which has remained, as I might say, the most popular one. It appears then, it seems, quite clear that a personage who owes nothing to tradition in the matter, to speak plainly a writer of the epoch of the Aufklärung like Plato, is quite capable of forging a myth, and a myth which makes its way throughout the centuries in an altogether living way in order by functioning as a myth, because who does not know since Plato told us, Love is the son of Poros and of Penia.

Poros, the author whose translation I have before me - simply because it is the translation which is opposite the Greek text - translates it in a way which is not properly speaking irrelevant, by Expedient. If expedient means resource, it is undoubtedly a valid translation, cleverness also, if you wish, because Poros is the son of Metis which is again more Ingenuity than wisdom. Over against him we have the feminine person in the matter, the one who is going to be the mother of Love, who is Penia, namely Poverty, even destitution, and in an articulated fashion in the text who is characterised by what she knows well about herself, aporia namely that she is without resources, this is what she knows about herself, that she is without any resources! And the word aporia, which you recognise, is the same word that serves us concerning the philosophical process, it is an impasse, it is something before which we have to give in, we are at the end of our resources.

(11) Here then the female Aporia face to face with the male Poros, Resource, which seems rather illuminating for us. But there is something which is very fine in this myth, which is that in order that Aporia should engender Love with Poros, there is a necessary condition which it expresses, which is that at the moment this happened, it was Aporia who was staying awake, who had her eyes wide open and had, we are told, come to the feast for the birth of Aphrodite and, like any good self-respecting Aporia in this hierarchical epoch, had remained on the steps, near the door, she had not of course entered, because she was aporia, namely having nothing to offer, she did not enter the festive hall.

But the good thing about feasts is precisely that at them there happen things which upset the ordinary order and that Poros falls asleep. He falls asleep because he is drunk, which is what allows Aporia to make herself pregnant by him, namely to have this offspring which is called Love and whose date of conception coincides then with the birth-date of Aphrodite. This indeed is why it is explained to us that Love will always have some obscure relationship with beauty, which is what is in question in the whole development of Diotima, and it is because Aphrodite is a beautiful goddess.

Here then the matter is clearly put. The fact is that on the one hand it is the masculine which is desirable and that, it is the feminine which is active, this at least is how things happen at the moment of the birth of Love and, when one formulates "love is giving what one does not have", believe me, I am not the one who is telling you this in connection with this text in order to produce one of my hobby horses, it is quite evident that this

is what is in question here because the poor Penia, by definition, by structure has properly speaking nothing to give, except her constitutive lack, aporia. And what allows me to tell you that I am not forcing things here, is that if you refer to number 202a of the text of the Symposium you will find the expression "to give what one does not have" literally written there in the form of the development which starting from there Diotima is going to give to the function of love, namely: aneu tou echein logon dounai - it fits exactly, in connection with the discourse, the formula "to give what one does not have" - it is a question here of giving a discourse, a valid explanation, without having it. It is a question of the moment when, in her development, Diotima is going to be led to say what love belongs to. Well, love belongs to a zone, to a form of affair, a form of thing, a form of pragma, a form of praxis which is at the same level, of the same quality as doxa, namely the following which exists, namely that there are discourses, ways of behaving, opinions - this is the translation that we give to the term doxa - which are true without the subject being able to know it.

The doxa in so far as it is true, but is not episteme, it is one of the commonplaces of the Platonic doctrine to distinguish its field, love as such is something which forms part of this field. It is between episteme and amathia, just as it is between the beautiful and the true. It is neither one nor the other. To remind Socrates that his objection (a naive pretended objection no doubt, that if love lacks the beautiful then it must be ugly, but it is not ugly)... there is a whole domain which is, for example, exemplified by the doxa to which we ceaselessly refer in the Platonic discourse and which can show that love, according to the Platonic term, is metaxu, "between the two".

That is not all. We cannot be satisfied with such an abstract, indeed negative definition of the intermediate. It is here that (12) our speaker Diotima, brings into play the notion of the demonic: the notion of the demonic as intermediate between immortals and mortals, between gods and men, is essential to evoke here in so far as it confirms what I told you about the way we must think of what the gods are, namely that they belong to the field of the real. We are told this, these gods exist, their existence is not at all contested here and the demoniacal the demon, to diamonion, there are many others besides love, is that through which the gods make their message heard by mortals, "whether they are awake or asleep" (203a) a strange thing which does not seem either to have caught people's attention much is that: "whether they are awake or asleep" if you have heard my phrase, who does this refer to, to the gods or to men? Well, I can assure you that in the Greek text there is some doubt about it. Everybody translates, according to the norms of commonsense, that this refers to men, but it is in the dative which is precisely the case in which the theios are in the phrase, so that it is another little riddle on which we will not dwell very long.

Simply, let us say that the myth situates the order of the demonic at the point where our psychology speaks about the world of animism. It is calculated in a way also to encourage us to rectify what is over-hasty in this notion that the primitive has



an animist world. What we are told here, in passing, is that it is the world of what we would call enigmatic messages, which means simply for us messages in which the subject does not recognise his own part. The discovery of the unconscious is essential in that it has allowed us to extend the field of messages which we can authenticate - the only ones that we can authenticate as messages, in the proper sense of this term in so far as it is founded in the domain of the symbolic - namely that many of those which we would believe to be opaque messages of the real are only our own, this is what has been conquered from the world of the gods, this is also what at the point that we have got to, has still not been conquered.

It is around this thing which is going to develop in the myth of Diotima that we will continue with from beginning to end the next time; and having gone right through it we will see why it is condemned to leave opaque that which is the object of the praises which constitute the sequence of the Symposium, condemned to leave it opaque and to leave as a field in which there can be developed the elucidation of its truth only what is going to follow after the entry of Alcibiades.

Far from being an addition, a useless part which is to be rejected, this entrance of Alcibiades is essential, because it is from it, it is in the action which develops with the entry of Alcibiades, between Alcibiades, Agathon and Socrates, that there can only be given in an efficacious fashion the structural relationship. It is even there that we will be able to recognise what the discovery of the unconscious and the experience of psychoanalysis (specifically the transferential experience), allows us for our part, finally, to express in a dialectical fashion.

Seminar 10:                    Wednesday 1 February 1961

I left you the last time, as a kind of staging-post in our account, on the word to which I also told you I would leave until the next occasion all its enigmatic value, the word agalma.

I did not think that what I said would turn out to be so true. For a great number, the enigma was so total that people were asking: "What was that?      What did he say?      Do you know?". Well, for those who manifested this unease, one of my own family was able at least to give this response - which proves at least that in my house secondary education has its uses - that means: "ornament, adornment".      In any case, this response was only in effect a first level response about something that everyone should know: agalma, from agallo, "to adorn, to ornament", signifies in effect - at first sight - "ornament, adornment". First of all the notion of ornament, of adornment is not that simple; it can be seen immediately that this may take us very far.      Why, and with what does one adorn oneself?      Or why does one adorn oneself and with what?

It is quite clear that, if we are here at a central point, many avenues should lead us to it.      But I finally retained, in order to make of it the pivot of my explanation, this word agalma. You should not see in it any taste for rarity but rather the fact that in a text which we suppose to be extremely rigorous, that of the Symposium, something leads us to this crucial point which is formally indicated at the moment at which I told you the stage revolves completely and, after these games of praising regulated as they had been up to then by this subject of love, there enters this actor, Alcibiades, who is going to change everything.      As proof I only need the following: he himself changes the rules of the game by making himself the presiding authority.      From that moment on he tells us, it is no longer a question of praising love but the other person and specifically each one is to praise his neighbour on the right.      You will see that this is important for what follows, that it is already a lot to say about it, that, if it is a question of love, it is in act in the relationship of one to the other that it is here going to have to manifest itself (213e, 214d).

I pointed out to you the last time, it is noteworthy that from the moment that things get started on this terrain, with the experienced producer whom we suppose to be at the source of this

dialogue (which is confirmed for us by the incredible mental genealogy which flows from this Symposium, whose second-last echo I highlighted for you the last time in connection with Kierkegaard's banquet - the last, I already named for you: it is Eros and Agape by Anders Nygren, all this is still dependent on the framework, the structure of the Symposium) well then, this experienced personage can do nothing else.... once it is a question of bringing the other into play, there is not just one of them, there are two others, in other words there are a minimum (2) of three. This, Socrates does not allow to escape in his reply to Alcibiades when, after this extraordinary admission, this public confession, this thing which is somewhere between a declaration of love and almost one might say a malediction, a defamation of Socrates, Socrates replies to him: "It was not for me that you were speaking, it was for Agathon" (222c,d). All of this makes us sense that we are getting into a different register.

The dual relationship of the one who, in the ascent towards love, proceeds by way of identification (if you wish, moreover by the production of what we have indicated in the discourse of Diotima) being helped in it by this marvel of beauty and, coming to see in this beauty itself identified here at the end with the perfection of the work of love, finds in this beauty its very term and identifies it to this perfection.

Something else therefore comes into play here other than this univocal relationship which gives to the term of the work of love this goal, this end of identification to what I put in question here last year, the thematic of the sovereign good, of the supreme good. Here we are shown that something else is suddenly substituted in the triplicity, in the complexity, which shows us, presents itself to reveal to us that in which, as you know, I maintain the essential of the analytic discovery is contained, this topology in which fundamentally there results the relationship of the subject to the symbolic in so far as it is essentially distinct from the imaginary and its capture. This is our term, this is what we will articulate the next time to bring to a close what we will have to say about the Symposium. It is with the help of this that I will make re-emerge old models which I have given you of the intrasubjective topology in so far as this is the way that we should understand the whole of Freud's second topography.

Today therefore, what we are highlighting, is something which is essential in order to rejoin this topology, in the measure that it is on the subject of love that we have to rejoin it. It is about the nature of love that there is question, it is about a position, an essential articulation too often forgotten, elided, and to which we analysts nevertheless have contributed the element, the mainspring which allows its problematic to be defined, it is on this that there should be concentrated what I have to say to you today about agalma.

It is all the more extraordinary, almost scandalous that this should not have been better highlighted up to now, that it is a

properly analytic notion that is in question, is what I hope to be able to make you sense, put your finger on in a little while.

Agalma, here is how it is presented in the text: Alcibiades speaks about Socrates, he says that he going to unmask him - we will not today get to the end of what the discourse of Alcibiades signifies - you know that Alcibiades goes into the greatest detail about his adventure with Socrates. He tried what? To make Socrates, we will say, manifest his desire to him because he knows that Socrates has a desire for him; what he wanted was a sign.

Let us leave this in suspense, it is too soon to ask why. We are only at the beginning of Alcibiades\* approach and, at first sight, this approach does not seem to be essentially distinguished from what was said up to then. At the beginning there was question, in the discourse of Pausanias, of what one was going to look for in love and it was said that what each one sought in the other (an exchange of proper procedures) was what he contained in terms of eromenon, of the desirable. It indeed is the same thing that appears ... that seems to be in question now. Alcibiades tells us that Socrates is someone whose "amorous dispositions draw him towards beautiful boys...". - this (3) is a preamble - "he is ignorant of everything and knows nothing, agnoei; that is his pose!" (216d) - and then, he goes into the celebrated comparison with the Silenos which has a double import. I mean first of all that this is what he appears like, namely with nothing beautiful about him and, on the other hand, that this Silenos is not simply the image that is designated by this name, but also something which is its usual aspect: it is a wrapping, a container, a way of presenting something - these things must have existed. These tiny instruments of the industry of the time were little Silenos which served as jewel boxes, as wrapping to offer presents and precisely, this is what is in question.

This topological indication is essential. What is important, is what is inside. Agalma can indeed mean "ornament or adornment", but it is here above all "a precious object, a jewel, something which is inside". And here expressly, Alcibiades tears us away from this dialectic of the beautiful which was up to then the path, the guide, the mode of capture on this path of the desirable and he undeceives us in connection with Socrates himself.

"Iste hoti, you should know," he says, "Socrates apparently loves beautiful boys, oute ei tis kalos esti meleis auto ouden, whether one or other is beautiful, melieis auto ouden, does not matter a straw to him, he does not give a hang, on the contrary he despises it, kataphronei", we are told, "as no one would ever believe, tosouton hoson oud'an eis oietheie you could not even imagine...". and that really, the aim that he pursues - I am underlining it because after all it is in the text - it is expressly articulated at this point that it is not alone external goods, riches for example, which everyone up to then (we are delicate souls) has said that it was not what one sought in

others, "nor any of the other advantages which might seem in any way to procure makaria, happiness, felicity, hupo plethous to anyone whatsoever;" one is quite wrong to interpret it here as a sign that it is a question of disdaining goods which are goods "for the mob". What is rejected, is precisely what had been spoken about up to then, good things in general (216e).

"On the other hand", Alcibiades tells us, "do not pause at his strange appearance if, eironeuomenos, he pretends ignorance, he questions, he plays the fool in order to get a response, he really behaves like a child, he spends his time making fun. But spoudasantos de autou" - not as it is translated - "when he decides to be serious" - but - it is - "you, be serious, pay careful attention to it, and open this Silenos, anoichthentos, opened out, I don't know if anyone has ever seen the agalmata which are inside, the jewels" about which right away Alcibiades states that he really doubts whether anyone has ever been able to see what he is talking about.

We know that this is not alone the discourse of passion, but the discourse of passion at its most quaking point, namely the one (4) which is in a way entirely contained in the origin. Even before he explains himself, he is there, charged with the most fundamental aspect of everything that he has to tell us, what is going to begin. Therefore it is indeed the language of passion.

Already this unique, personal relationship: no one has ever seen what is in question, as I once happened to see; and I saw it!" "I found them, these agalmata already so divine, chrusa", c'est chou, "it was golden and all beautiful and wonderful, that there remained only one thing to do, en brachei, as soon as possible, by the quickest means, do whatever Socrates commands, poieteon, what is to be done"; what becomes duty, is whatever Socrates is pleased to command (217a).

I do not think it useless for us to articulate a text like this a step at a time. This is not to be read as one reads France-Soir or an article in the International journal of psychoanalysis. It is indeed something whose effects are surprising. On the one hand we are not told for the present what these agalmata (in the plural) are and, on the other hand, this involves all of a sudden this subversion, this falling under the influence of the commandments of the one who possesses them. You cannot fail to find here all the same something of the magic which I already highlighted for you around the Che vuoi? What do you want? It is indeed this key, this essential cutting edge of the topology of the subject which begins with: what do you want? - In other words: is there a desire which is really your will?

"And" - Alcibiades continues - "as I thought he was in earnest when he spoke about hora, eme hora" - this is translated by - "youthful bloom...", and there begins the whole seduction scene.

But as I told you, we will not go any further today, we will try to make you sense that which renders necessary this passage from the first phase to the other one, namely why it is absolutely

necessary that at any price Socrates should unmask himself. We are only going to stop at these agalmata. I can honestly tell you that it is not - give me credit for this - to this text that there goes back for me the problematic of agalma, not that this would be in the least inappropriate because this text suffices to justify it, but I am going to tell you the story as it is.

I can tell you, without being really able to date it, that my first encounter with agalma is an encounter like every encounter, unexpected. It is in a verse of Euripides' Hecuba that it struck me some years ago and you will easily understand why. It was all the same a little while before the period when I introduced here the function of the phallus, with the essential articulation that anaJLytic experience and Freud's doctrine shows us that it has, between demand and desire; so that in passing, I did not fail to be struck by the use that was given to this term in the mouth of Hecuba. Hecuba says: "Where am I going to be brought, where am I going to be deported?"

As you know, the tragedy of Hecuba takes place at the moment of the capture of Troy and, among all the places that she envisages in her discourse, there is: "Might it be to this at once sacred and plague-stricken place.... Delos?" - As you know no one had the right either to give birth there or to die there. And then, at the description of Delos, she makes an allusion to an object which was celebrated, which was - as the fashion in which she speaks about it indicates - a palm tree of which she says that (5) this palm tree, is odinos agalma dias, namely odinos, of the pain, agalma dias, the term dias designates [Leto], it is a question of the birth of Apollo, it is "the agalma of the pain of the divine one". We rediscover the thematic of giving birth but all the same rather changed because here this trunk, this tree, this magical thing erected, preserved as an object of reference throughout the ages, is something which cannot fail - at least for us analysts - to awaken the whole register that there exists around the thematic of the [female] phallus in so far as its phantasy is, as we know, at the horizon and situates this infantile object [as a fetish].

The fetish that it remains can hardly fail either to be for us the echo of this signification. But in any case, it is quite clear that agalma cannot be translated here in any way by "ornament, adornment", nor even as one often sees it in the texts, "statue" - because often theon agalmata, when one is translating rapidly one thinks that it fits in, that it is a question in the text of "statues of the gods". You see right away, the point I am keeping you at, the reason why I believe that it is a term to highlight in this signification, this hidden accent which presides over what must be done to hold back on this path of banalisation which always tends to efface for us the true sense of texts, the fact is that each time you encounter agalma - pay careful attention - even if it seems to be a question of "statues of the gods", if you look closely at it, you will perceive that it is always a question of something different.

I am giving you already - we are not playing at riddles here -

the key to the question in telling you that it is the fetish-  
 accent of the object in question that is always stressed.  
 Moreover of course, I am not giving here a course of ethnology,  
 nor even of linguistics. And I am not going, in this  
 connection, to link up the function of the fetish nor of those  
 round stones, essentially at the centre of a temple (the temple  
 of Apollo for example). You very often see (this thing is very  
 well known) the god himself represented, a fetish of some people,  
 tribe at the loop of the Niger; it is something unnamable,  
 formless, upon which there can be poured out on occasion an  
 enormous lot of liquids of different origins, more or less  
 stinking and filthy and whose accumulated superimposition, going  
 from blood to shit, constituted the sign that here is something  
 around which all sorts of effects are concentrated making of the  
 fetish in itself something quite different to an image, to an  
 icon, in so far as it might be a reproduction.

But this occult power of the object remains at the basis of the  
 usage whose accent, even for us, is still preserved in the term  
 idol or icon. In the term idol, for example in the use  
 Polyeuctus makes of it, it means: it is nothing at all, it is to  
 be thrown away. But all the same if you say about one or other  
 person: "I have made him my idol", that means all the same that  
 (6) you do not simply make of him the reproduction of yourself or  
 of him but that you make of him something else, around which  
 something happens.

Moreover it is not a question for me here of pursuing the  
 phenomenology of the fetish but of showing the function that this  
 occupies in its place. And in order to do this I can rapidly  
 indicate to you that I tried, as far as my strength allowed me,  
 to make a survey of the passages which remain of Greek literature  
 where the word agalma is employed. And it is only in order to  
 go quickly that I will not read each one to you.

You should simply know for example that it is from the  
 multiplicity of the deployment of significations that I extract  
 for you what is in a way the central function that must be seen  
 at the limit of the usages of this word; because naturally, it is  
 not our idea - I think here along the line of the teaching I give  
 you - that etymology consists in finding the meaning in the root.

The root of agalma is not all that easy. What I want to tell  
 you, is that the authors, in so far as they link it to agauos  
 from this ambiguous word agamai, "I admire" but just as much "I  
 am envious, I am jealous of", which is going to give agazo, "what  
 one tolerates with difficulty", going towards agaiomai which  
 means "to be indignant", from which the authors looking for roots  
 (I mean roots which carry a meaning with them, which is  
 absolutely contrary to the principle of linguistics) separate out  
gal or gel the gel of gelao the gal which is the same in glene,  
 "the pupil", and galene - the other day, I quoted it for you in  
 passing - "it is the sea which shines because it is perfectly  
 unified": in short, that it is an idea of eclat which is hidden  
 here in the root. Moreover aglaos, Aglae, the Brilliant is  
 there to provide us with a familiar echo. As you see, this does

not go against what we have to say about it. I only put it here in parentheses, because also this is rather only an occasion to show you the ambiguities of this idea that etymology is something which carries us not towards a signifier but toward a central signification.

Because one could just as well interest oneself not in gal, but in the first part of the phonematic articulation, namely aga which is properly the reason why agalma interests us with respect to agathos. And along this path, you know that if I do not jib at the import of the discourse of Agathon, I prefer to go frankly to the great phantasy of the Cratylus you will see that the etymology of Agathon is agastos, admirable, therefore God knows why one should go looking for agaston, the admirable that there is in thoon, rapid! This moreover is the way in which everything is interpreted in the Cratylus, there are some rather fine things; in the etymology of anthropos there is "articulated language". Plato was really someone very special.

(7) Agalma, in truth, it is not to that aspect that we have to turn to give it its value; agalma, as one can see, had always referred to images on condition that you see clearly that, as in every context, it is always a very special type of image. I have to choose among the references. There are some in Empedocles, in Heraclitus, in Democritus. I am going to take the most popular, the poetic, the ones that everybody knew by heart in antiquity. I am going to look for them in an interlined edition of the Iliad and of the Odyssey. In the Odyssey for example there are two places where one finds agalma.

It is first of all in Book III in the Telemachus section and it is a question of sacrifices which are being made for the arrival of Telemachus. The pretenders, as usual, make their contribution and there is sacrificed to the god a boos which is translated by "a heifer", which is a specimen of the bovine species. And it is said that there was specially invoked someone called Laerkes who is a goldsmith, like [Hephaistos] and who is charged with making "a golden ornament", agalma for the horns of the beast. I will spare you all the practicalities of the ceremony. But what is important, is not what happens afterwards, whether it is a question of a voodoo-type sacrifice, what is important is what it is said they expect from agalma; agalma in effect is involved in this, we are expressly told it. The agalma, is precisely this golden ornament, and it is as an offering to the goddess Athena that this is sacrificed, so that having seen it, she may be kecharoito, "gratified" - let us use this word, because it is a word from our own language. In other words, the agalma appears indeed as a kind of trap for the gods; the gods, these real beings, there are contraptions which catch their eye.

You must not believe that this is the only example that I would have to give you of the use of agalma, for example when, in Book VIII of the same Odyssey, we are told what happened at the fall of Troy, namely the famous history of the big horse which contained in its belly the enemies and all the misfortunes. [The horse] who



was pregnant with the ruin of Troy, the Trojans who had dragged it inside the walls question themselves and ask themselves what they are going to do with it. They hesitate and we have to think that this hesitation was what was fatal for them, because there were two things to do - either, to open the belly of the hollow wood to see what is inside - or, having dragged it to the summit of the citadel, to leave it there to be what? Mega agalma. It is the same idea, it is the charm. It is something which is here as embarrassing for them as for the Greeks. To tell the truth it is an unusual object, it is this famous extraordinary object which is so much at the centre of a whole series of preoccupations which are still contemporaneous - I do not need to evoke here the surrealist horizon.

What is certain is that, for the ancients also, the agalma is something in terms of which one can in short capture divine attention. There are a thousand examples of it that I could give you. In the story of Hecuba (again in Euripides), in another place, there is recounted the sacrifice to Achilles' manes, of her daughter Polyxenes. And it is very well done: we (8) have there the exception which is the occasion for evoking in us erotic mirages: it is the moment that the heroine herself offers her admirable breast which is we are told "like an agalma, hos agalmatos". Now it is not sure.... there is nothing to indicate that we should be satisfied here with what that evokes, namely the perfection of the mammary organs in Greek statuary. I indeed rather believe that what is in question, given that at the epoch it was not about objects in a museum, is indeed rather about something the signs of which we see everywhere moreover in the use that is made of the word when it is said that in the sanctuaries, in temples, in ceremonies people "hang up anapto, agalmata". The magical value of objects which are evoked here is indeed linked rather to the evocation of these objects which we well know which are called ex voto. In a word, for people much closer than we are to the differentiation of objects at the origin, it is as beautiful as ex voto breasts; and in effect ex voto breasts are always perfect, they are machine-turned, moulded. Other examples are not lacking, but we can stay with that.

What is in question, is the brilliant sense, the gallant sense, because the word galant comes from galer in old French; it is indeed, it should be said, the function of this that we analysts have discovered under the name of partial object. One of the greatest discoveries of analytic investigation is this function of the partial object. The thing which on this occasion should astonish us most, us analysts, is that having discovered such remarkable things our whole effort should always be to efface their originality.

It is said somewhere, in Pausanias, also in connection with a usage of agalma, that the agalmata which referred in such and such a sanctuary to sorceresses who were there expressly to hold back, to prevent Alcmenes from giving birth were amudroteros amudrota, "a little bit effaced". Well, that's it!

We ourselves have also effaced, as far as we were able, what is meant by the partial object; namely that our first effort was to interpret what had been a marvellous discovery, namely this fundamentally partial aspect of the object in so far as it is pivot, centre, key of human desire, this would have been worth (9) dwelling on for a moment.... But no, not at all! This was directed towards a dialectic of totalisation, namely the only one worthy of us, the flat object, the round object, the total object, the spherical object without feet or paws, the whole of the other, the perfect genital object at which, as everyone knows, our love irresistibly comes to term! We did not say to ourselves in connection with all of this that - even by taking things in this way - perhaps that qua object of desire, this other is the addition-of a whole lot of partial objects (which is not at all the same as a total object), that what we ourselves perhaps, in what we elaborate, have to handle in this foundation which is called our Id, is perhaps a question of a vast trophy of all these partial objects.

At the horizon of our ascesis, of our model of love, we have placed the other.... which is not altogether wrong, but of this other, we have made the other to whom there is addressed this bizare function which we call oblativity: we love the other for himself - at least when one has arrived at the goal and at perfection, at the genital stage which blesses all of this!

We have certainly gained something by opening up a certain topology of relationships to the other which moreover, as you know, is not simply our privilege because a whole contemporary speculation which is personalist in different ways turns around it. But it is funny all the same that there is something that we have left completely to one side in this affair - it has to be left to one side when one approaches things from this particularly simplified perspective - and which supposes, that with the idea of pre-established harmony, the problem is resolved: that in short it is enough to love genitally to love the other for himself.

I did not bring - because I dealt with it elsewhere and you will see it coming out soon - the incredible passage which, on this, is developed on the subject of the characterology of the genital person, in this volume which is called La Psychanalyse d'Aujourd'hui. The sort of sermonising which takes place around this terminal idealness is something whose ridiculousness I have, I believe, for a long time made you sense. There is no need for us to dwell on it today. But in any case, it is quite clear that to come back to the starting point and to sources, there is at least one question to pose on this subject. If this oblativity love is truly only in a way the homologue, the development, the flowering of the genital act in itself (which would be enough, as I would say, to give its secret, its pitch, its measure), it is clear that the ambiguity persists as regards whether our oblativity is what we dedicate to this other in this love which is all-loving, all for the other, whether what we are seeking is his jpuissance (as seems self-evident from the fact that it is a question of genital union) or indeed his perfection.

When one evokes such high-flown moral ideas as that of oblativity, the least that can be said about it, which is something that reawakens old questions, is all the same to evoke the duplicity of these terms. After all these terms, in such a worn down, simplified form can only be sustained by what is underlying, namely the altogether modern supposition of the subject and the object. Moreover once an author who is a little bit careful to write in a style which is permeable to the (10) contemporary audience develops these terms, it will always be around the notion of the subject and the object that he will comment on this analytic theme: we take the other as a subject and not at all purely and simply as our object. The object being situated here in the context of a value of pleasure, of enjoyment, of jpuissance, the object being supposed to reduce this uniqueness of the other (in so far as he should be for us the subject) to this omnivalent function (if we make of him only an object) of being after all any object whatsoever, an object like others, to be an object which may be rejected, changed, in short to be profoundly devalued.

Such is the thematic which underlies this ideal of oblativity, as it is articulated, when it is made for us into a type of ethical correlative necessary for acceding to a true love which is supposed to be sufficiently connoted by being genital.

You should note that today I am less in the process of criticising - this is also why I dispense myself with recalling the texts - this analytic foolishness, than of putting in question that on which it reposes, namely that there is supposed to be some superiority or other in favour of the beloved, of the love partner in the fact that he is thus, in our existential-analytic vocabulary, considered as a subject. Because I do not know whether after having accorded a pejorative connotation to the fact of considering the other as an object, anyone has ever made the remark that to consider him as a subject is no better. Because if one object is as good as another according to its thinking, on condition that we give to the word object its initial meaning (that there are objects in so far as we distinguish them and can communicate them), if it is deplorable therefore that the beloved should ever become an object, is it any better that he should be a subject?

To respond to this it is enough to make the remark that if one object is as good as another, for the subject it is still worse, because it is not simply another subject that he is as good as. A subject strictly speaking is another! The strict subject, is someone to whom we can impute what? Nothing other than being like us this being who enarthron echein epos, "who expresses himself in articulated language", who possesses the combination and who therefore can respond to our combination by his own combinations, whom we can bring into our calculations as someone who combines like us.

I think that those who are formed according to the method that we have introduced, inaugurated here are not going to contradict me on this, it is the only sound definition of the subject, in any

case the only sound one for us - the one which permits there to be introduced how a subject obligatorily enters into the Spaltung determined by his submission to this language. Namely that starting from these terms we can see how it is strictly necessary that something happens, which is that in the subject there is a part where it (c\_a) speaks all by itself, this thing from which nevertheless the subject remains suspended. Moreover - it is precisely what it is a question of knowing and how is it possible to forget it - what function there can be occupied in this rightly elective, privileged relationship that the love relationship is by the fact that this subject with whom among all others we have this bond of love.... the way precisely this question has a relationship with the fact that he is the object of our desire. Because if one suspends this mooring point, this turning point, this centre of gravity, of hooking-on of the love (11) relationship, if one highlights it and if, in doing so, one does not do it in a distinctive way, it is really impossible to say anything at all that is not a conjuring trick as regards the love relationship. It is precisely by that, by this necessity of accentuating the correlative object of desire in so far as this is the object, not the object of equivalence, of the transitivity of goods, of the transaction about things that are coveted, but this something which is the aim of desire as such, that which accentuates one object among all as being without equivalence to the others. It is with this function of the object, it is to this accentuating of the object that there responds the introduction into analysis of the function of the partial object.

And moreover in fact everything which gives, as you know, its weight, its resonance, its accent to metaphysical discourse, always reposes on some ambiguity. In other words, if all the terms you make use of when you are doing metaphysics, were strictly defined, had each only a univocal signification, if the dictionary of philosophy triumphed in any way (the eternal goal of professors!) you would no longer have to do metaphysics at all, because you would no longer have anything to say. I mean that you perceive that as regards mathematics, it is much better there, one can move about signs that have a univocal sense because they do not have any.

In any case, when you speak in a more or less passionate way about the relationships of the subject and the object, it is because under subject you put something other than this strict subject that I spoke to you about above and, under object, something other than the object which I have just defined as something which, at the limit, is confined to the strict equivalence of an unequivocal communication of a scientific object. In a word, if this object impassions you it is because within, hidden in it there is the object of desire, agalma (the weight, the thing that makes it interesting to know where this famous object is, to know its function and to know where it operates just as much in inter- as in intrasubjectivity) and in so far as this privileged object of desire, is something which, for each person, culminates at this frontier, at this limiting point which I have taught you to consider as the metonymy of the

unconscious discourse where it plays a role that I tried to formalise - I will come back to it the next time - in the phantasy.

And it is always this object which, however you have to speak about it in analytic experience - whether you call it breast, phallus, or shit -, is a partial object. This is what there is question of in so far as analysis is a method, a technique which advanced into this abandoned field, into this discredited field, into this field excluded by philosophy (because it is not managable, not accessible to its dialectic and for the same reasons) which is called desire. If we are not able to highlight, highlight in a strict topology, the function of what there is signified by this object at once so limited and so fleeting in its shape, which is called the partial object, if therefore you do not see the interest of what I am introducing today under the name of agalma (it is the major point of analytic experience) and I cannot believe it for an instant given that, however misunderstood this is, the force of things brings it about that the most modern things that are done, said in the analytic dialectic turn around this fundamental, radical function, the Kleinian reference of the object qua good or bad, which indeed is considered in this dialectic as a primordial given. It is indeed on this that I would ask you to allow your minds to dwell for an instant.

We bring into play a lot of things, a lot of functions of identification: identification to the one from whom we demand something in the appeal of love and, if this appeal is rejected, (12) identification to the very one to whom we address ourselves as the object of our love (this very tangible passage from love to identification) and then, in a third sort of identification (you should read a little Freud: the Essais de psychanalyse), the function of third which this certain characteristic object takes on in so far as it may be the object of the desire of the other to whom we identify ourselves. In short, our subjectivity is something we entirely construct in plurality, in the pluralism of these levels of identification which we will call the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, which we will also call the desiring Ego.

But it is all the same necessary to know where in this articulation there functions, there is situated the partial object. And there you can simply remark, with the present development of analytic discourse, that this object, agalma, little o, object of desire, when we search for it according to the Kleinian method, is there from the beginning before any development of the dialectic, it is already there as object of desire. The weight, the intercentral kernel of the good or the bad object (in every psychology which tends to develop itself and explain itself in Freudian terms) is this good object or this bad object that Melanie Klein situates somewhere in this origin, this beginning of beginnings which is even before the depressive phase. Is there not something there in our experience, which by itself alone is already sufficiently descriptive?

I think that I have done enough today in saying that it is around

this that concretely, in analysis or outside analysis, there can and there should be made the division between a perspective on love which, it, in a way, drowns, diverts, masks, elides, sublimates everything that is concrete in experience (this famous ascent towards a supreme Good whose cheapened vague reflections it is astonishing to see being still kept in analysis by us, under the name of oblativity, this sort of loving in God, as I might say, which is supposed to be at the basis of every loving relationship), or whether, as experience shows, everything turns around this privilege, around this unique point constituted somewhere by what we only find in a being when we really love. But what is that.... precisely agalma, this object which we have learned to circumscribe, to distinguish in analytic experience and around which, the-next time, we will try to reconstruct, in its triple topology (of the subject, of the small other and of the big Other), at what point it comes into play and how it is only through the Other and for the Other that Alcibiades, like each and every person, wants to make his love known to Socrates.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 25 January 1961

We arrived the last time at the point where Socrates, speaking about love, makes Diotima speak in his place. I stressed with a question mark this astonishing substitution at the acme, at the point of maximum interest of the dialogue, namely when Socrates after having brought about the decisive turning point by producing lack at the heart of the question about love (love can only be articulated around this lack because of the fact that there can only be lack of what it desires), and after having brought about this turning point in the always triumphant, magisterial style of this questioning in so far as it is brought to bear on this consistency of the signifier - I showed you that it was what was essential in Socratic dialectic - the point at which he distinguishes from all other sorts of knowledge, episteme, science, at this point, in a singular fashion, he is going to allow to speak in an ambiguous fashion the person who, in his place, is going to express herself by what we have properly speaking called myth - myth about which on this occasion I pointed out to you that it is not as specified a term as it is in our tongue - with the distance that we have taken about what distinguishes myth from science: muthous legein, is at once both a precise story and the discourse, what one says. This is what Socrates is going to rely on by letting Diotima speak.

And I underlined, accentuated with a stroke, the relationship there is between this substitution and the dioecisme whose form, essence Aristophanes had already indicated as being at the heart of the problem of love; by a singular dividing up it is perhaps the woman, the woman who is in him I said, that Socrates from a certain moment allows to speak.

You all understand that this totality, this succession of forms, this series of transformations - employ it as you wish in the sense that this term takes on in combinations - is expressed in a geometrical demonstration; this transformation of figures in the measure that the dialogue advances, is where we are trying to rediscover the structural reference points which, for us and for Plato who is guiding us here, will give us the coordinates of what is called the object of the dialogue: love.

That is why, reentering the discourse of Diotima, we see that something develops which, in a way, is going to make us slip

further and further from this original trait that Socrates introduced into his dialectic by posing the term lack which Diotima is going to interrogate us about; what she is going to lead us to takes its beginnings already around an interrogation, about what is envisaged by the point at which she takes up Socrates' discourse: "What is lacking to the one who loves?"

And there, we find ourselves immediately brought to this dialectic of goods for which I would ask you to refer to our discourse of last year on Ethics. "Why does the one who loves love these good things?" And she continues: "It is in order to (2) enjoy them" (205a). And it is here that the arrest, the return takes place: "Is this dimension of love going to arise then from all these goods?" And it is here that Diotima, by making a reference also worth noting to what we have accentuated as being the original function of creation as such, of poiesis, is going to take it as her reference in order to say: "When we speak about poiesis, we are speaking about creation, but do you not see that the use we make of it is all the same more limited, because it is to these sorts of creators who are called poets, this sort of creation which means that it is to poetry and to music that we are referring, just as in all the good things there is something which is specified for us to speak of love..." (205d), this is how she introduces the theme of the love of beauty, of beauty as specifying the direction in which there is exercised this appeal, this attraction for the possession, for the enjoyment of possessing, for the constitution of a ktema which is the point to which she will lead us in order to define love (204c-206a).

This fact is tangible in the rest of the discourse, something is sufficiently underlined in it as a surprise and as a leap: this good thing, in what way does it refer to what is called and what is specially specified as beauty? Undoubtedly, we have to underline at this turning point of the discourse this feature of surprise which means that it is at this very passage that Socrates bears witness in one of his replies to a marvelling, to the same bewilderment which had been evoked for the sophistical discourse, and regarding which he tells us that Diotima demonstrates the same priceless authority as that with which the Sophists exercise their fascination; and Plato warns us that at this level Diotima expresses herself just like a Sophist and with the same authority (206b-208b).

What she introduces is the following, that this beauty has a relationship with something which concerns not having, not anything which can be possessed, but being, and being properly speaking in so far as is it that of the mortal being. What is proper to a mortal being is that he perpetuates himself by generation. Generation and destruction, such is the alternation which rules the domain of what is perishable, such also is the mark which makes of it an inferior order of reality, at least this is the way that this is ordered in the whole perspective which unfolds in the Socratic line of descendants, both in Socrates and in Plato.



This alternation of generation and corruption is here what is striking in the very domain of the human, this is what ensures that it finds its eminent rule elsewhere, at a higher level, where precisely neither generation nor corruption attack the essences, in the eternal forms in the participation in which alone what exists is assured in its foundation as being.

Beauty therefore, says Diotima, is that which in short in this movement of generation (in so far, she says, as it is the mode in which the mortal is reproduced, that it is only by this that he approaches the permanent, the eternal, that this is his fragile mode of participation in the eternal), beauty is properly speaking that which in this passage, in this participation at a distance, what helps him, as one might say, to get through the difficult points. Beauty is the way of a sort of giving birth, not without pain but with the least pain possible, this painful manoeuvring of all that is mortal towards what it aspires to, namely immortality.

The whole discourse of Diotima properly articulates this function of beauty as being first of all - it is properly in this way that she introduces it - an illusion, a fundamental mirage through which the perishable, fragile being is sustained in its (3) relationship, in its quest for everlastingness which is its essential aspiration. Of course, there is in this almost shamelessly an opportunity for a whole series of slippages which are so many conjuring tricks. And in this connection, she introduces as being of the same order this same constancy in which the subject recognises himself as being in his life, his short individual life, always the same, despite - she underlines this remark - the fact that when all is said and done there is not a point or a detail of his carnal reality, of his hair and even his bones, which is not the locus of a perpetual renewal. Nothing is ever the same, everything flows, everything changes (the discourse of Heraclitus underlies this), nothing is ever the same and nevertheless something recognises itself, affirms itself, says that it is always itself. And it is to this that she refers significantly in order to tell us that it is analogously, that when all is said and done it is of the same nature as what happens in the renewal of beings by way of generation: the fact that one after another these beings succeed one another by reproducing the same type. The mystery of morphogenesis is the same as that which sustains in its constancy the individual form.

In this first reference to the problem of death, in this function which is attributed to this mirage of beauty as being that which guides the subject in his relationship with death (in so far as he is at once both distanced from and directed by the immortal), it is impossible for you not to make the rapprochement with what last year, I tried to define, to approach, concerning this function of beauty in this effect of defence in which it intervenes, of a barrier at the extreme point of this zone which I defined as being that of the entre-deux-morts. In short what beauty appears to us to be destined to cover over in the very discourse of Diotima is, if there are two desires in man

which capture him in this relationship to eternity with generation on the one hand, corruption and destruction on the other, it is the desire for death qua unapproachable that beauty is designed to veil. The thing is clear at the beginning of Diotima's discourse.

One finds this phenomenon which we brought out in connection with tragedy in so far as tragedy is at once the evocation, the approach of the desire for death as such which is hidden behind the evocation of Ate, of the fundamental calamity around which there turns the destiny of the tragic hero and of the fact that, for us, in so far as we are called to participate in it, it is at this maximal moment that the mirage of tragic beauty appears.

Desire of beauty, desire for beauty, it is this ambiguity around which the last time I told you there was going to operate the sliding of the whole discourse of Diotima. I am leaving you here to follow it yourselves in the development of this discourse. Desire of beauty, desire in so far as it is attached, as it is captured in this mirage, this is what corresponds to what we have articulated as corresponding to the hidden presence of the desire for death. The desire for beauty, is that which, in a way, reversing the function, brings it about that the subject chooses the traces, the appeals of what his objects offer him, certain of his objects.

It is here that we see operating in the discourse of Diotima this slippage which, from this beauty which was there, not medium but transition, a mode of passage, makes it become, this beauty, the very goal which is going to be sought. By dint, one might say, of remaining the guide, it is the guide which becomes object, or (4) rather which substitutes itself for the objects which can be its support, and not without also the transition being extremely marked by it in the discourse itself. The transition is forced. We see Diotima, after having gone as far as possible in the development of functional beauty, of beauty in this relationship to the goal of immortality, as having gone as far as paradox here because she is going (evoking precisely the tragic reality to which we referred ourselves last year) as far as to give this enunciation which does not fail to provoke some derisive smiles: "Do you think that those who show themselves capable of the most beautiful actions, Ascestis" - about whom I spoke last year in connection with the entre-deux-morts of tragedy - "in so far as she accepted to die in place of Admetus did not do it so that people would speak about her, so that discourse would make her immortal forever?" (208d).

It is to this point that Diotima brings her discourse and she stops, saying: "Perhaps even you may become an initiate; but as for the higher revelations (epopteia), I do not know if you could ever become an adept" (210a). Evoking properly speaking the dimension of the mysteries, she takes up her discourse again on this other register (what was only a transition becomes the goal) in which, developing the thematic of what we could call a sort of Platonic Don Juanism, she shows us the ladder which is proposed to this new phase which develops as an initiatory one,

which makes objects resolve themselves in a progressive ascent to what is pure beauty, beauty in itself, beauty without admixture. And she suddenly passes to something which seems indeed to have no longer anything to do with the thematic of generating, namely that which goes from love (not just simply of a beautiful young man, but of this beauty that there is in all beautiful young people) to the essence of beauty, from the essence of beauty to eternal beauty and, by taking things at a very high level, grasping its operation in the order of the world of this reality which turns around the fixed plane of the stars which - as we have already indicated - is that by which knowledge, in the Platonic perspective, rejoins properly speaking that of the Immortals.

I think that I have sufficiently made you sense this sort of conjuring through which beauty, in so far as it finds itself as first defined, encountered as a prize on the path of being, becomes the goal of the pilgrimage, how the object which was presented to us at first as the support of beauty becomes the transition towards beauty, how really - if we bring it back to our own terms - one could say that this dialectical definition of love, as it is developed by Diotima, encounters what we have tried to define as the metonymical function in desire.

It is something which is beyond all these objects, which is in the passage from a certain aim, from a certain relationship, that of desire through all the objects towards a limitless perspective; this is what is in question in the discourse of Diotima. One might believe, from numerous indications, that this is in the final analysis the reality of the discourse. And more or less, it is indeed what we are always used to considering as being the perspective of eros in the Platonic doctrine. The erastes, the eron, the lover, in search of a distant eromenos is led by all the eromenoi, everything that is lovable, worthy of being loved (a distant eromenos or eromenon, is moreover a neutral goal) and the problem is what is signified, what can (5) continue to be signified beyond this breakthrough, this leap which is stressed by that which, at the beginning of the dialectic, presented itself as ktema, as the goal of possession.

No doubt the step that we have taken sufficiently marks that we are no longer at the level of having as term of what is envisaged, but at that of being and that moreover in this progress, in this ascesis, it is a transformation, a becoming of the subject that is in question, that it is a final identification with what is supremely lovable that is in question (the erastes becomes the eromenos). In a word, the further the subject directs his aim, the more he is entitled to love himself - in his Ideal Ego as we would say - the more he desires, the more he himself becomes desirable. And it is here again moreover that theological articulation raises a finger to tell us that the Platonic eros is irreducible to what Christian agape has revealed to us, namely that in the Platonic eros the lover, love, only aims at his own perfection.

Now the commentary on the Symposium that we are carrying out

seems to me to be precisely of a nature to show that it is nothing of the kind, namely that this is not the point at which Plato remains, on condition that we are prepared to see after this highlighting what is signified by the fact that first of all that instead of Socrates precisely he allowed Diotima to speak and then to see afterwards what happens once Alcibiades arrives on the scene.

Let us not forget that Diotima had introduced love at first as being not at all of the nature of the gods, but of that of demons in so far as it is, an intermediary between the immortals and the mortals (202e). Let us not forget that in order to illustrate it, to give a sense of what is in question, she made use of nothing other than the comparison with this intermediary between episteme, science in the Socratic sense, and amathia, ignorance, this intermediary which in the Platonic discourse, is called doxa, true opinion in so far no doubt as it is true, but in a way that the subject is incapable of accounting for it, that he does not know why it is true. And I underlined these two very striking formulas - that of the aneu tou echein logon dounai which characterises the doxa, "to give the formula, the logos, without having it", of the echo there is in this formula with what we give here in this place as being that of love which is precisely "to give what one does not have", and the other formula, the one which confronts the first, no less worthy of being underlined - in the court as I might say - namely looking from the side of amathia, namely that "this doxa is not ignorance either, oute amathia, because that which by chance reaches the real, to gar tou ontos tugchanon, that which encounters what there is, how could it also be complete ignorance?" (202a).

This indeed is what we must sense, for our own part, in what I could call the Platonic staging of the dialogue. It is that Socrates, even given the only thing in which he says he has some ability, (it is concerning the affairs of love), even if it is posed at the start that he knows about it, precisely he cannot speak about it except by remaining in the zone of the "he did not know".

(6) Although knowing, he speaks, and not being himself who knows able to speak, he must make speak someone in short who speaks without knowing. And this indeed is what allows us to resituate the intangibility of Agathon's response when he escapes from the dialectic of Socrates by quite simply saying to him: "I fear I knew nothing of what I said" (201b). But it is precisely for that reason, this is precisely what gives the accent that I developed on this extraordinarily derisive mode that we have underlined, that which gives its import to the discourse of Agathon and its special import, to have precisely been delivered from the mouth of a tragic poet. The tragic poet, as I showed you, can only speak about it in the style of a clown, just as it was given to Aristophanes the comic poet to accentuate these passionate traits which we confuse with the tragic approach.

"He did not know...". Let us not forget that this is what gives its meaning to the myth that Diotima introduced about the birth

of Love, that this Love is born of Aporia and Poros. It is conceived during the sleep of Poros, the omniscient, the son of Metis, the ingenious one par excellence, the omniscient-and-omnipotent, resource par excellence. It is while he is asleep, at a time when he no longer knows anything, that there is going to be produced the encounter from which Love is going to be generated. And the one who at that moment insinuates herself by her desire to produce this birth, Aporia, the feminine Aporia, here the erastes, the original desiring one in the true feminine position which I underlined on several occasions, she is well defined in her essence, in her nature all the same before the birth of Love and very precisely by what is missing, it is that she has nothing of the eromenon about her. Aporia, absolute Poverty, is posed in the myth as being in no way recognised by the banquet which is being held at that moment, that of the gods on the birthday of Aphrodite, she is at the door, she is in no way recognised, she does not have in herself, as absolute Poverty, any good which gives her a right to be at the table of beings. This indeed is the reason why she is before love. It is because the metaphor where I told you that we would recognise always that it is a question of love, even in a shadow, the metaphor which substitutes the eron, the erastes for the eromenon is missing here through lack of the eromenon at the start. The step, the stage, the logical time before the birth of love is described in this way.

On the other side, the "he did not know...." is absolutely essential for the other step. And here let me give an account of what came to my mind while I was trying last night to highlight, to punctuate for you this articulating moment of the structure, it is nothing less than the echo of this poetry, of this admirable poem - which you will not be astonished at because it was intentionally that in it I chose the example in which I tried to demonstrate the fundamental nature of metaphor - this poem which all by itself would be sufficient, despite all the objections that our snobbery may have against him, to make to Victor Hugo a poet worthy of Homer, Booz endormi and the echo which suddenly came to me of it as if always having had it, of these two verses:

Booz ne savait pas qu'une femme était là,  
Et Ruth ne savait point ce que Dieu voulait d'elle.

Reread the whole of this poem so that you may perceive that all the givens of the fundamental drama, that everything which gives to the Oedipus complex its eternal meaning and weight, that none of these givens are lacking, even including the entre-deux-morts evoked a few strophes before in connection with the age and the widowhood of Booz:

(7) Voilà longtemps que celle avec qui j'ai dormi,  
O Seigneur! a quitté ma couche pour la vôtre;  
Et nous sommes encor tout mêlés l'un à l'autre,  
Elle à demi vivante et moi mort à demi.

Nothing is lacking to the relationship of this entre-deux-morts

with the tragic dimension which is indeed the one evoked here as being constitutive of the whole paternal transmission; nothing is lacking to it, and that is why this poem is the very locus of the presence of the metaphorical function which you will ceaselessly discover in it. Everything, even including as one might say the aberrations of the poet is here pushed to extremes, to the point of saying what he has to say by forcing the terms that he uses:

Comme dormait Jacob, comme dormait Judith,

Judith never slept, it was Holofernes, it does not matter, he is the one who is correct after all because what is outlined at the end of this poem, is what is expressed by the formidable image with which it ends:

(...) et Ruth se demandait,

Immobile, ouvrant l'oeil a moitié sous ses voiles,  
 Quel Dieu, quel moissonneur de l'éternel été'  
 Avait, en s'en allant, négligemment jeté  
 Cette faucille d'or dans le champ des étoiles.

The billhook with which Kronos was castrated could not fail to be evoked at the end of this complete constellation composing the paternity complex.

I ask your pardon for this digression on the "he did not know". But it seems to me to be essential in order to make understandable what is in question in the position of the discourse of Diotima in so far as Socrates can only pose himself here in his knowledge by showing that, there is no discourse about love except from the point where he did not know, which, here, appears to be the function, the mainspring, the starting point of what is meant by this choice of Socrates of his style at this moment of teaching what he is at the same time proving. Neither do we have here something that allows us to grasp what is happening about what the love-relationship is: but it is precisely what is going to follow, namely the entry of Alcibiades.

As you know, it is after (without in fact Socrates appearing to resist it) this marvellous, splendid oceanic development of the discourse of Diotima and, significantly, after Aristophanes had raised his finger to say: "All the same let me put in a word....". Because in this discourse allusion has been made to a certain theory and in effect it was his that the good Diotima has carelessly pushed away with her foot, in what should be noted as a quite significant anachronism (because Socrates says that Diotima had recounted all that to him in the past, but that does not prevent Diotima speaking about the discourse given by Aristophanes). Aristophanes, and with good reason, has his word to say and it is here that Plato gives an indication, shows that there is someone who is not satisfied.... so that the method of sticking to the text is going to make us see whether precisely what is going to develop subsequently does not have some relationship with this indication, even if, this raised finger,

says it all, he is interrupted by what? By the entry of Alcibiades.

(8) Here there is a change of perspective and we must carefully set up the world into which all of a sudden, after this great fascinating mirage, all of a sudden he replunges us. I say replunge because this world is not the world beyond, precisely, it is the world as it is where, after all, we know how love is lived out and that, however fascinating all these beautiful stories appear, an uproar, a shout, a hiccup, the entry of a drunken man is enough to bring us back to it as it really is.

This transcendence where we have, seen played out in a ghostly way the substitution of another for another, we are now going to see incarnated. And if, as I teach you, three and not just two are necessary to love, well here we are going to see it.

Alcibiades enters and it is not a bad thing for you to see him emerging in the shape in which he appears, namely with the big bloated face which gives him not alone his state of being officially intoxicated, but the pile of garlands that he is wearing and which, manifestly has an outstanding exhibitionistic signification, in the divine state that he holds as a leader of men. You should never forget what we lose by no longer having wigs! Imagine what learned and also frivolous discussions must have been in the conversations of the XVIIth century when each of these personages shook at each word this sort of lion-like rig-out which was moreover a receptacle for dirt and vermin, imagine then the wig of the Grand Siecle, from the point of view of its mantic effect! If we are lacking this, Alcibiades does not lack it and he goes straight to the only personage whose identity he is capable in his condition of discerning (it is, thank God, the master of the house!) Agathon. He goes to lie next to him, without knowing where that puts him, namely in the metaxu position, "between the two", between Socrates and Agathon, namely precisely at the point that we are at, at the point at which the debate is in the balance between the operation of the one who knows, and knowing, shows that he must speak without knowing and the one who, not knowing, spoke of course like a bird-brain, but who nevertheless spoke very well as Socrates underlined: "You said some very beautiful things". This is where Alcibiades places himself, but not without jumping back when he perceives that this damned Socrates is there again.

It is not for personal reasons that today I am not going to push you to the end of the analysis of what is contributed by the whole of this scene, namely the one which develops after this entry of Alcibiades; nevertheless I must propose to you the first highlights of what this presence of Alcibiades introduces: well, let us call it an atmosphere like the Last Supper. Naturally, I am not going to accentuate the caricatural aspect of things. Incidentally, I spoke in connection with this Symposium, of a gathering of old queens, given that they are not all in the first bloom of youth, but all the same, they are people of some stature, Alcibiades is all the same someone! And when Socrates asks for protection against this personage who does not allow him

to look at anyone else, it is not because the commentary on this Symposium throughout the centuries has been carried on in respectable university chairs with all that that involves in terms of nobility and of redundancy, this is all the same not a reason for us not to perceive - as I already underlined - the really scandalous style of what is happening here.

(9) The dimension of love is in the process of showing before us this something in which we must all the same recognise being delineated one of its characteristics, and first of all that it does not tend, wherever it manifests itself in the real, towards harmony. It does not seem after all that this beauty towards which the procession of desiring souls seems to be ascending is something that structures everything into this sort of convergence. Curiously, it is not given in the modes, in the manifestations of love, to call on all to love what you love, to blend themselves with you in the ascent towards the eromenon. Socrates, this most lovable of men, because he is put before us from the first words as a divine personage, after all, the first thing that is in question, is that Alcibiades wants to keep him for himself. You will say that you do not believe it and that all sorts of things go to show it, that is not the question, we are following the text and this is what is at stake. Not only is this what is at stake, but it is properly speaking this dimension which is introduced here.

If the word competition is to be taken in the sense and with the function that I gave it (in the articulation of these transitivisms in which there is constituted the object in so far as it establishes communication between the subjects), something indeed is introduced here of a different order. At the heart of the action of love there is introduced the object, as one might say, of a unique covetousness, which is constituted as such: an object precisely from which one wishes to ward off competition, an object that one does not even wish to show. And remember that this is how I introduced it three years ago now in my discourse, remember that in order to define the object o of phantasy for you I took the example, in La Grande Illusion by Renoir, of Dalio showing his little automaton and the feminine blushing with which he effaces himself after having directed his phenomenon. It is the same dimension in which there unfolds this public confession linked to some embarrassment or other which Alcibiades himself is aware that he is developing as he speaks.

Of course we are in the dimension of the truth that comes from wine and this is articulated in the In vino Veritas which Kierkegaard will take up when he too recreates his banquet. No doubt we are in the dimension of the truth that comes from wine, but all the boundaries of shame must have been broken to really speak about love as Alcibiades speaks about it when he shows what happened to him with Socrates.

What is behind it as the object which introduces into the subject himself this vacillation? It is here, it is at the function of the object in so far as it is properly indicated in the whole of



this text that I will leave you today in order to introduce you to it the next time, it is around a word which is in the text. I think I have rediscovered the history and the function of this object in what we can glimpse about its usage in Greek around a word: agalma, which we are here told is what Socrates, this type of hirsute Silenus, conceals. It is around this word agalma, whose closed-off enigma in the discourse itself I will leave you with today, that I will make revolve what I have to say to you the next time.

Seminar 10:            Wednesday 1 February 1961

I left you the last time, as a kind of staging-post in our account, on the word to which I also told you I would leave until the next occasion all its enigmatic value, the word agalma.

I did not think that what I said would turn out to be so true. For a great number, the enigma was so total that people were asking: "What was that?    What did he say?    Do you know?". Well, for those who manifested this unease, one of my own family was able at least to give this response - which proves at least that in my house secondary education has its uses - that means: "ornament, adornment".    In any case, this response was only in effect a first level response about something that everyone should know: agalma, from agallo, "to adorn, to ornament", signifies in effect - at first sight - "ornament, adornment". First of all the notion of ornament, of adornment is not that simple; it can be seen immediately that this may take us very far.    Why, and with what does one adorn oneself?    Or why does one adorn oneself and with what?

It is quite clear that, if we are here at a central point, many avenues should lead us to it.    But I finally retained, in order to make of it the pivot of my explanation, this word agalma. You should not see in it any taste for rarity but rather the fact that in a text which we suppose to be extremely rigorous, that of the Symposium, something leads us to this crucial point which is formally indicated at the moment at which I told you the stage revolves completely and, after these games of praising regulated as they had been up to then by this subject of love, there enters this actor, Alcibiades, who is going to change everything.    As proof I only need the following: he himself changes the rules of the game by making himself the presiding authority.    From that moment on he tells us, it is no longer a question of praising love but the other person and specifically each one is to praise his neighbour on the right.    You will see that this is important for what follows, that it is already a lot to say about it, that, if it is a question of love, it is in act in the relationship of one to the other that it is here going to have to manifest itself (213e, 214d).

I pointed out to you the last time, it is noteworthy that from the moment that things get started on this terrain, with the experienced producer whom we suppose to be at the source of this

dialogue (which is confirmed for us by the incredible mental genealogy which flows from this Symposium, whose second-last echo I highlighted for you the last time in connection with Kierkegaard's banquet - the last, I already named for you: it is Eros and Agape by Anders Nygren, all this is still dependent on the framework, the structure of the Symposium) well then, this experienced personage can do nothing else.... once it is a question of bringing the other into play, there is not just one of them, there are two others, in other words there are a minimum (2) of three. This, Socrates does not allow to escape in his reply to Alcibiades when, after this extraordinary admission, this public confession, this thing which is somewhere between a declaration of love and almost one might say a malediction, a defamation of Socrates, Socrates replies to him: "It was not for me that you were speaking, it was for Agathon" (222c,d). All of this makes us sense that we are getting into a different register.

The dual relationship of the one who, in the ascent towards love, proceeds by way of identification (if you wish, moreover by the production of what we have indicated in the discourse of Diotima) being helped in it by this marvel of beauty and, coming to see in this beauty itself identified here at the end with the perfection of the work of love, finds in this beauty its very term and identifies it to this perfection.

Something else therefore comes into play here other than this univocal relationship which gives to the term of the work of love this goal, this end of identification to what I put in question here last year, the thematic of the sovereign good, of the supreme good. Here we are shown that something else is suddenly substituted in the triplicity, in the complexity, which shows us, presents itself to reveal to us that in which, as you know, I maintain the essential of the analytic discovery is contained, this topology in which fundamentally there results the relationship of the subject to the symbolic in so far as it is essentially distinct from the imaginary and its capture. This is our term, this is what we will articulate the next time to bring to a close what we will have to say about the Symposium. It is with the help of this that I will make re-emerge old models which I have given you of the intrasubjective topology in so far as this is the way that we should understand the whole of Freud's second topography.

Today therefore, what we are highlighting, is something which is essential in order to rejoin this topology, in the measure that it is on the subject of love that we have to rejoin it. It is about the nature of love that there is question, it is about a position, an essential articulation too often forgotten, elided, and to which we analysts nevertheless have contributed the element, the mainspring which allows its problematic to be defined, it is on this that there should be concentrated what I have to say to you today about agalma.

It is all the more extraordinary, almost scandalous that this should not have been better highlighted up to now, that it is a

properly analytic notion that is in question, is what I hope to be able to make you sense, put your finger on in a little while.

Agalma, here is how it is presented in the text: Alcibiades speaks about Socrates, he says that he going to unmask him - we will not today get to the end of what the discourse of Alcibiades signifies - you know that Alcibiades goes into the greatest detail about his adventure with Socrates. He tried what? To make Socrates, we will say, manifest his desire to him because he knows that Socrates has a desire for him; what he wanted was a sign.

Let us leave this in suspense, it is too soon to ask why. We are only at the beginning of Alcibiades' approach and, at first sight, this approach does not seem to be essentially distinguished from what was said up to then. At the beginning there was question, in the discourse of Pausanias, of what one was going to look for in love and it was said that what each one sought in the other (an exchange of proper procedures) was what he contained in terms of eromenon, of the desirable. It indeed is the same thing that appears ... that seems to be in question now. Alcibiades tells us that Socrates is someone whose "amorous dispositions draw him towards beautiful boys...". - this (3) is a preamble - "he is ignorant of everything and knows nothing, agnoei; that is his pose!" (216d) - and then, he goes into the celebrated comparison with the Silenos which has a double import. I mean first of all that this is what he appears like, namely with nothing beautiful about him and, on the other hand, that this Silenos is not simply the image that is designated by this name, but also something which is its usual aspect: it is a wrapping, a container, a way of presenting something - these things must have existed. These tiny instruments of the industry of the time were little Silenos which served as jewel boxes, as wrapping to offer presents and precisely, this is what is in question.

This topological indication is essential. What is important, is what is inside. Agalma can indeed mean "ornament or adornment", but it is here above all "a precious object, a jewel, something which is inside". And here expressly, Alcibiades tears us away from this dialectic of the beautiful which was up to then the path, the guide, the mode of capture on this path of the desirable and he undeceives us in connection with Socrates himself.

"Iste hoti, you should know," he says, "Socrates apparently loves beautiful boys, oute ei tis kalos esti meleis auto ouden, whether one or other is beautiful, melieis auto ouden, does not matter a straw to him, he does not give a hang, on the contrary he despises it, kataphronei", we are told, "as no one would ever believe, tosouton hoson oud'an eis oietheie you could not even imagine. . .". and that really, the aim that he pursues - I am underlining it because after all it is in the text - it is expressly articulated at this point that it is not alone external goods, riches for example, which everyone up to then (we are delicate souls) has said that it was not what one sought in

others, "nor any of the other advantages which might seem in any way to procure makaria, happiness, felicity, hupo plethous to anyone whatsoever;" one is quite wrong to interpret it here as a sign that it is a question of disdaining goods which are goods "for the mob". What is rejected, is precisely what had been spoken about up to then, good things in general (216e).

"On the other hand", Alcibiades tells us, "do not pause at his strange appearance if, eironeuomenos, he pretends ignorance, he questions, he plays the fool in order to get a response, he really behaves like a child, he spends his time making fun. But spoudasantos de autou" - not as it is translated - "when he decides to be serious" - but - it is - "you, be serious, pay careful attention to it, and open this Silenos, anoichthentos, opened out, I don't know if anyone has ever seen the agalmata which are inside, the jewels" about which right away Alcibiades states that he really doubts whether anyone has ever been able to see what he is talking about.

We know that this is not alone the discourse of passion, but the discourse of passion at its most quaking point, namely the one (4) which is in a way entirely contained in the origin. Even before he explains himself, he is there, charged with the most fundamental aspect of everything that he has to tell us, what is going to begin. Therefore it is indeed the language of passion.

Already this unique, personal relationship: no one has ever seen what is in question, as I once happened to see; and I saw it!" "I found them, these agalmata already so divine, chrusa", c'est chou, "it was golden and all beautiful and wonderful, that there remained only one thing to do, en brachei, as soon as possible, by the quickest means, do whatever Socrates commands, poieteon, what is to be done"; what becomes duty, is whatever Socrates is pleased to command (217a).

I do not think it useless for us to articulate a text like this a step at a time. This is not to be read as one reads France-Soir or an article in the International journal of psychoanalysis. It is indeed something whose effects are surprising. On the one hand we are not told for the present what these agalmata (in the plural) are and, on the other hand, this involves all of a sudden this subversion, this falling under the influence of the commandments of the one who possesses them. You cannot fail to find here all the same something of the magic which I already highlighted for you around the Che vuoi? What do you want? It is indeed this key, this essential cutting edge of the topology of the subject which begins with: what do you want? - In other words: is there a desire which is really your will?

"And" - Alcibiades continues - "as I thought he was in earnest when he spoke about hora, eme hora" - this is translated by - "youthful bloom...", and there begins the whole seduction scene.

But as I told you, we will not go any further today, we will try to make you sense that which renders necessary this passage from the first phase to the other one, namely why it is absolutely

necessary that at any price Socrates should unmask himself. We are only going to stop at these agalmata. I can honestly tell you that it is not - give me credit for this - to this text that there goes back for me the problematic of agalma, not that this would be in the least inappropriate because this text suffices to justify it, but I am going to tell you the story as it is.

I can tell you, without being really able to date it, that my first encounter with agalma is an encounter like every encounter, unexpected. It is in a verse of Euripides' Hecuba that it struck me some years ago and you will easily understand why. It was all the same a little while before the period when I introduced here the function of the phallus, with the essential articulation that analytic experience and Freud's doctrine shows us that it has, between demand and desire; so that in passing, I did not fail to be struck by the use that was given to this term in the mouth of Hecuba. Hecuba says: "Where am I going to be brought, where am I going to be deported?"

As you know, the tragedy of Hecuba takes place at the moment of the capture of Troy and, among all the places that she envisages in her discourse, there is: "Might it be to this at once sacred and plague-stricken place.... Delos?" - As you know no one had the right either to give birth there or to die there. And then, at the description of Delos, she makes an allusion to an object which was celebrated, which was - as the fashion in which she speaks about it indicates - a palm tree of which she says that (5) this palm tree, is odinos agalma dias, namely odinos, of the pain, agalma dias, the term dias designates [Leto], it is a question of the birth of Apollo, it is "the agalma of the pain of the divine one". We rediscover the thematic of giving birth but all the same rather changed because here this trunk, this tree, this magical thing erected, preserved as an object of reference throughout the ages, is something which cannot fail - at least for us analysts - to awaken the whole register that there exists around the thematic of the [female] phallus in so far as its phantasy is, as we know, at the horizon and situates this infantile object [as a fetish].

The fetish that it remains can hardly fail either to be for us the echo of this signification. But in any case, it is quite clear that agalma cannot be translated here in any way by "ornament, adornment", nor even as one often sees it in the texts, "statue" - because often theon agalmata, when one is translating rapidly one thinks that it fits in, that it is a question in the text of "statues of the gods". You see right away, the point I am keeping you at, the reason why I believe that it is a term to highlight in this signification, this hidden accent which presides over what must be done to hold back on this path of banalisation which always tends to efface for us the true sense of texts, the fact is that each time you encounter agalma - pay careful attention - even if it seems to be a question of "statues of the gods", if you look closely at it, you will perceive that it is always a question of something different.

I am giving you already - we are not playing at riddles here -

the key to the question in telling you that it is the fetish-  
 accent of the object in question that is always stressed.  
 Moreover of course, I am not giving here a course of ethnology,  
 nor even of linguistics. And I am not going, in this  
 connection, to link up the function of the fetish nor of those  
 round stones, essentially at the centre of a temple (the temple  
 of Apollo for example). You very often see (this thing is very  
 well known) the god himself represented, a fetish of some people,  
 tribe at the loop of the Niger; it is something unnamable,  
 formless, upon which there can be poured out on occasion an  
 enormous lot of liquids of different origins, more or less  
 stinking and filthy and whose accumulated superimposition, going  
 from blood to shit, constituted the sign that here is something  
 around which all sorts of effects are concentrated making of the  
 fetish in itself something quite different to an image, to an  
 icon, in so far as it might be a reproduction.

But this occult power of the object remains at the basis of the  
 usage whose accent, even for us, is still preserved in the term  
 idol or icon. In the term idol, for example in the use  
 Polyeuctus makes of it, it means: it is nothing at all, it is to  
 be thrown away. But all the same if you say about one or other  
 person: "I have made him my idol", that means all the same that  
 (6) you do not simply make of him the reproduction of yourself or  
 of him but that you make of him something else, around which  
 something happens.

Moreover it is not a question for me here of pursuing the  
 phenomenology of the fetish but of showing the function that this  
 occupies in its place. And in order to do this I can rapidly  
 indicate to you that I tried, as far as my strength allowed me,  
 to make a survey of the passages which remain of Greek literature  
 where the word agalma is employed. And it is only in order to  
 go quickly that I will not read each one to you.

You should simply know for example that it is from the  
 multiplicity of the deployment of significations that I extract  
 for you what is in a way the central function that must be seen  
 at the limit of the usages of this word; because naturally, it is  
 not our idea - I think here along the line of the teaching I give  
 you - that etymology consists in finding the meaning in the root.

The root of agalma is not all that easy. What I want to tell  
 you, is that the authors, in so far as they link it to agauos  
 from this ambiguous word agamai, "I admire" but just as much "I  
 am envious, I am jealous of", which is going to give agazo, "what  
 one tolerates with difficulty", going towards agaiomai which  
 means "to be indignant", from which the authors looking for roots  
 (I mean roots which carry a meaning with them, which is  
 absolutely contrary to the principle of linguistics) separate out  
gal or gel the gel of gelao the gal which is the same in glene,  
 "the pupil", and galene - the other day, I quoted it for you in  
 passing - "it is the sea which shines because it is perfectly  
 unified": in short, that it is an idea of eclat which is hidden  
 here in the root. Moreover aglaos, Aglae, the Brilliant is  
 there to provide us with a familiar echo. As you see, this does

not go against what we have to say about it. I only put it here in parentheses, because also this is rather only an occasion to show you the ambiguities of this idea that etymology is something which carries us not towards a signifier but toward a central signification.

Because one could just as well interest oneself not in gal, but in the first part of the phonematic articulation, namely aga which is properly the reason why agalma interests us with respect to agathos. And along this path, you know that if I do not jib at the import of the discourse of Agathon, I prefer to go frankly to the great phantasy of the Cratylus you will see that the etymology of Agathon is agastos, admirable, therefore God knows why one should go looking for agaston, the admirable that there is in thoon, rapid! This moreover is the way in which everything is interpreted in the Cratylus, there are some rather fine things; in the etymology of anthropos there is "articulated language". Plato was really someone very special.

(7) Agalma, in truth, it is not to that aspect that we have to turn to give it its value; agalma, as one can see, had always referred to images on condition that you see clearly that, as in every context, it is always a very special type of image. I have to choose among the references. There are some in Empedocles, in Heraclitus, in Democritus. I am going to take the most popular, the poetic, the ones that everybody knew by heart in antiquity. I am going to look for them in an interlined edition of the Iliad and of the Odyssey. In the Odyssey for example there are two places where one finds agalma.

It is first of all in Book III in the Telemachus section and it is a question of sacrifices which are being made for the arrival of Telemachus. The pretenders, as usual, make their contribution and there is sacrificed to the god a boos which is translated by "a heifer", which is a specimen of the bovine species. And it is said that there was specially invoked someone called Laerkes who is a goldsmith, like [Hephaistos] and who is charged with making "a golden ornament", agalma for the horns of the beast. I will spare you all the practicalities of the ceremony. But what is important, is not what happens afterwards, whether it is a question of a voodoo-type sacrifice, what is important is what it is said they expect from agalma; agalma in effect is involved in this, we are expressly told it. The agalma, is precisely this golden ornament, and it is as an offering to the goddess Athena that this is sacrificed, so that having seen it, she may be kecharoito, "gratified" - let us use this word, because it is a word from our own language. In other words, the agalma appears indeed as a kind of trap for the gods; the gods, these real beings, there are contraptions which catch their eye.

You must not believe that this is the only example that I would have to give you of the use of agalma, for example when, in Book VIII of the same Odyssey, we are told what happened at the fall of Troy, namely the famous history of the big horse which contained in its belly the enemies and all the misfortunes. [The horse] who



was pregnant with the ruin of Troy, the Trojans who had dragged it inside the walls question themselves and ask themselves what they are going to do with it. They hesitate and we have to think that this hesitation was what was fatal for them, because there were two things to do - either, to open the belly of the hollow wood to see what is inside - or, having dragged it to the summit of the citadel, to leave it there to be what? Mega agalma. It is the same idea, it is the charm. It is something which is here as embarrassing for them as for the Greeks. To tell the truth it is an unusual object, it is this famous extraordinary object which is so much at the centre of a whole series of preoccupations which are still contemporaneous - I do not need to evoke here the surrealist horizon.

What is certain is that, for the ancients also, the agalma is something in terms of which one can in short capture divine attention. There are a thousand examples of it that I could give you. In the story of Hecuba (again in Euripides), in another place, there is recounted the sacrifice to Achilles' manes, of her daughter Polyxenes. And it is very well done: we (8) have there the exception which is the occasion for evoking in us erotic mirages: it is the moment that the heroine herself offers her admirable breast which is we are told "like an agalma, hos agalmatos". Now it is not sure.... there is nothing to indicate that we should be satisfied here with what that evokes, namely the perfection of the mammary organs in Greek statuary. I indeed rather believe that what is in question, given that at the epoch it was not about objects in a museum, is indeed rather about something the signs of which we see everywhere moreover in the use that is made of the word when it is said that in the sanctuaries, in temples, in ceremonies people "hang up anapto, agalmata". The magical value of objects which are evoked here is indeed linked rather to the evocation of these objects which we well know which are called ex voto. In a word, for people much closer than we are to the differentiation of objects at the origin, it is as beautiful as ex voto breasts; and in effect ex voto breasts are always perfect, they are machine-turned, moulded. Other examples are not lacking, but we can stay with that.

What is in question, is the brilliant sense, the gallant sense, because the word galant comes from galer in old French; it is indeed, it should be said, the function of this that we analysts have discovered under the name of partial object. One of the greatest discoveries of analytic investigation is this function of the partial object. The thing which on this occasion should astonish us most, us analysts, is that having discovered such remarkable things our whole effort should always be to efface their originality.

It is said somewhere, in Pausanias, also in connection with a usage of agalma, that the agalmata which referred in such and such a sanctuary to sorceresses who were there expressly to hold back, to prevent Alcmenes from giving birth were amudroteros amudrota, "a little bit effaced". Well, that's it!

We ourselves have also effaced, as far as we were able, what is meant by the partial object; namely that our first effort was to interpret what had been a marvellous discovery, namely this fundamentally partial aspect of the object in so far as it is pivot, centre, key of human desire, this would have been worth (9) dwelling on for a moment.... But no, not at all! This was directed towards a dialectic of totalisation, namely the only one worthy of us, the flat object, the round object, the total object, the spherical object without feet or paws, the whole of the other, the perfect genital object at which, as everyone knows, our love irresistibly comes to term! We did not say to ourselves in connection with all of this that - even by taking things in this way - perhaps that qua object of desire, this other is the addition of a whole lot of partial objects (which is not at all the same as a total object), that what we ourselves perhaps, in what we elaborate, have to handle in this foundation which is called our Id, is perhaps a question of a vast trophy of all these partial objects.

At the horizon of our ascesis, of our model of love, we have placed the other.... which is not altogether wrong, but of this other, we have made the other to whom there is addressed this bizare function which we call oblativity: we love the other for himself - at least when one has arrived at the goal and at perfection, at the genital stage which blesses all of this!

We have certainly gained something by opening up a certain topology of relationships to the other which moreover, as you know, is not simply our privilege because a whole contemporary speculation which is personalist in different ways turns around it. But it is funny all the same that there is something that we have left completely to one side in this affair - it has to be left to one side when one approaches things from this particularly simplified perspective - and which supposes, that with the idea of pre-established harmony, the problem is resolved: that in short it is enough to love genitally to love the other for himself.

I did not bring - because I dealt with it elsewhere and you will see it coming out soon - the incredible passage which, on this, is developed on the subject of the characterology of the genital person, in this volume which is called La Psychanalyse d'Aujourd'hui. The sort of sermonising which takes place around this terminal idealness is something whose ridiculousness I have, I believe, for a long time made you sense. There is no need for us to dwell on it today. But in any case, it is quite clear that to come back to the starting point and to sources, there is at least one question to pose on this subject. If this oblativity love is truly only in a way the homologue, the development, the flowering of the genital act in itself (which would be enough, as I would say, to give its secret, its pitch, its measure), it is clear that the ambiguity persists as regards whether our oblativity is what we dedicate to this other in this love which is all-loving, all for the other, whether what we are seeking is his jouissance (as seems self-evident from the fact that it is a question of genital union) or indeed his perfection.

When one evokes such high-flown moral ideas as that of oblativity, the least that can be said about it, which is something that reawakens old questions, is all the same to evoke the duplicity of these terms. After all these terms, in such a worn down, simplified form can only be sustained by what is underlying, namely the altogether modern supposition of the subject and the object. Moreover once an author who is a little bit careful to write in a style which is permeable to the (10) contemporary audience develops these terms, it will always be around the notion of the subject and the object that he will comment on this analytic theme: we take the other as a subject and not at all purely and simply as our object. The object being situated here in the context of a value of pleasure, of enjoyment, of jouissance, the object being supposed to reduce this uniqueness of the other (in so far as he should be for us the subject) to this omnivalent function (if we make of him only an object) of being after all any object whatsoever, an object like others, to be an object which may be rejected, changed, in short to be profoundly devalued.

Such is the thematic which underlies this ideal of oblativity, as it is articulated, when it is made for us into a type of ethical correlative necessary for acceding to a true love which is supposed to be sufficiently connoted by being genital.

You should note that today I am less in the process of criticising - this is also why I dispense myself with recalling the texts - this analytic foolishness, than of putting in question that on which it reposes, namely that there is supposed to be some superiority or other in favour of the beloved, of the love partner in the fact that he is thus, in our existential-analytic vocabulary, considered as a subject. Because I do not know whether after having accorded a pejorative connotation to the fact of considering the other as an object, anyone has ever made the remark that to consider him as a subject is no better. Because if one object is as good as another according to its thinking, on condition that we give to the word object its initial meaning (that there are objects in so far as we distinguish them and can communicate them), if it is deplorable therefore that the beloved should ever become an object, is it any better that he should be a subject?

To respond to this it is enough to make the remark that if one object is as good as another, for the subject it is still worse, because it is not simply another subject that he is as good as. A subject strictly speaking is another! The strict subject, is someone to whom we can impute what? Nothing other than being like us this being who enarthron echein epos, "who expresses himself in articulated language", who possesses the combination and who therefore can respond to our combination by his own combinations, whom we can bring into our calculations as someone who combines like us.

I think that those who are formed according to the method that we have introduced, inaugurated here are not going to contradict me on this, it is the only sound definition of the subject, in any

case the only sound one for us - the one which permits there to be introduced how a subject obligatorily enters into the Spaltung determined by his submission to this language. Namely that starting from these terms we can see how it is strictly necessary that something happens, which is that in the subject there is a part where it (fa) speaks all by itself, this thing from which nevertheless the subject remains suspended. Moreover - it is precisely what it is a question of knowing and how is it possible to forget it - what function there can be occupied in this rightly elective, privileged relationship that the love relationship is by the fact that this subject with whom among all others we have this bond of love.... the way precisely this question has a relationship with the fact that he is the object of our desire. Because if one suspends this mooring point, this turning point, this centre of gravity, of hooking-on of the love (11) relationship, if one highlights it and if, in doing so, one does not do it in a distinctive way, it is really impossible to say anything at all that is not a conjuring trick as regards the love relationship. It is precisely by that, by this necessity of accentuating the correlative object of desire in so far as this is the object, not the object of equivalence, of the transitivity of goods, of the transaction about things that are coveted, but this something which is the aim of desire as such, that which accentuates one object among all as being without equivalence to the others. It is with this function of the object, it is to this accentuating of the object that there responds the introduction into analysis of the function of the partial object.

And moreover in fact everything which gives, as you know, its weight, its resonance, its accent to metaphysical discourse, always reposes on some ambiguity. In other words, if all the terms you make use of when you are doing metaphysics, were strictly defined, had each only a univocal signification, if the dictionary of philosophy triumphed in any way (the eternal goal of professors!) you would no longer have to do metaphysics at all, because you would no longer have anything to say. I mean that you perceive that as regards mathematics, it is much better there, one can move about signs that have a univocal sense because they do not have any.

In any case, when you speak in a more or less passionate way about the relationships of the subject and the object, it is because under subject you put something other than this strict subject that I spoke to you about above and, under object, something other than the object which I have just defined as something which, at the limit, is confined to the strict equivalence of an unequivocal communication of a scientific object. In a word, if this object impassions you it is because within, hidden in it there is the object of desire, agalma (the weight, the thing that makes it interesting to know where this famous object is, to know its function and to know where it operates just as much in inter- as in intrasubjectivity) and in so far as this privileged object of desire, is something which, for each person, culminates at this frontier, at this limiting point which I have taught you to consider as the metonymy of the

unconscious discourse where it plays a role that I tried to formalise - I will come back to it the next time - in the phantasy.

And it is always this object which, however you have to speak about it in analytic experience - whether you call it breast, phallus, or shit -, is a partial object. This is what there is question of in so far as analysis is a method, a technique which advanced into this abandoned field, into this discredited field, into this field excluded by philosophy (because it is not managable, not accessible to its dialectic and for the same reasons) which is called desire. If we are not able to highlight, highlight in a strict topology, the function of what there is signified by - this object at once so limited and so fleeting in its shape, which is called the partial object, if therefore you do not see the interest of what I am introducing today under the name of agalma (it is the major point of analytic experience) and I cannot believe it for an instant given that, however misunderstood this is, the force of things brings it about that the most modern things that are done, said in the analytic dialectic turn around this fundamental, radical function, the Kleinian reference of the object qua good or bad, which indeed is considered in this dialectic as a primordial given. It is indeed on this that I would ask you to allow your minds to dwell for an instant.

We bring into play a lot of things, a lot of functions of identification: identification to the one from whom we demand something in the appeal of love and, if this appeal is rejected, (12) identification to the very one to whom we address ourselves as the object of our love (this very tangible passage from love to identification) and then, in a third sort of identification (you should read a little Freud: the Essais de psychanalyse), the function of third which this certain characteristic object takes on in so far as it may be the object of the desire of the other to whom we identify ourselves. In short, our subjectivity is something we entirely construct in plurality, in the pluralism of these levels of identification which we will call the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, which we will also call the desiring Ego.

But it is all the same necessary to know where in this articulation there functions, there is situated the partial object. And there you can simply remark, with the present development of analytic discourse, that this object, agalma, little o, object of desire, when we search for it according to the Kleinian method, is there from the beginning before any development of the dialectic, it is already there as object of desire. The weight, the intercentral kernel of the good or the bad object (in every psychology which tends to develop itself and explain itself in Freudian terms) is this good object or this bad object that Melanie Klein situates somewhere in this origin, this beginning of beginnings which is even before the depressive phase. Is there not something there in our experience, which by itself alone is already sufficiently descriptive?

I think that I have done enough today in saying that it is around

this that concretely, in analysis or outside analysis, there can and there should be made the division between a perspective on love which, it, in a way, drowns, diverts, masks, elides, sublimates everything that is concrete in experience (this famous ascent towards a supreme Good whose cheapened vague reflections it is astonishing to see being still kept in analysis by us, under the name of oblativity, this sort of loving in God, as I might say, which is supposed to be at the basis of every loving relationship), or whether, as experience shows, everything turns around this privilege, around this unique point constituted somewhere by what we only find in a being when we really love. But what is that.... precisely agalma, this object which we have learned to circumscribe, to distinguish in analytic experience and around which, the~next time, we will try to reconstruct, in its triple topology (of the subject, of the small other and of the big Other), at what point it comes into play and how it is only through the Other and for the Other that Alcibiades, like each and every person, wants to make his love known to Socrates.

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There are therefore agalmata in Socrates and this is what has provoked Alcibiades' love. We are now going to return to the scene in so far as it puts on stage precisely Alcibiades with the discourse he addressed to Socrates and to which Socrates - as you know - is going to respond by giving to it what is properly speaking an interpretation. We shall see how this appraisal can be touched up, but one can say that structurally, at first sight, the intervention of Socrates is going to have all the characteristics of an interpretation, namely: "All the extraordinary, extravagant, impudent things that you have said there, everything that you have unveiled in speaking about me, was said for Agathon" (222c,d)

In order to understand the meaning of the scene which unfolds between one and the other of these end points (from the eulogy that Alcibiades gives about Socrates to this interpretation by Socrates and to what will follow) we have to take things up from a higher viewpoint and in detail, namely we have to see the meaning of what is happening starting with the entry of Alcibiades, between Alcibiades and Socrates.

I told you, from that moment on there has taken place this change which means that it is no longer a question of praising love but an other designated in order, and the important thing is precisely the following, it is that it is going to be a question of praising the other, epainos. And it is precisely in this, as regards the dialogue, that the passage of the metaphor resides. Praise of the other is substituted not for praise of love but for love itself, and this from the start. Namely that Socrates addressing himself to Agathon, says to him: "...the love of this person" - Alcibiades - "has become quite a serious thing for me!" - Everyone knows that Alcibiades was Socrates' great love - "From the time I fell in love with him" - we will see the meaning that must be given to these terms, he was erastes of him - "I am no longer allowed to look at or talk with a handsome person, not even one, or this jealous and envious creature treats me outrageously, and abuses me and hardly keeps his hands off me. If he uses force, defend me," he says to Agathon "for I'm fairly terrified at his madness and passion, philerastian" (213d).

It is after this that there takes place the dialogue with

Eryximachos from which there is going to result the new order of things. Namely that it is agreed that each one in turn will praise the person to his right. This is established during the dialogue between Alcibiades and Eryximachos. The epainos, the eulogy of which there is then going to be question has - as I (2) told you - this metaphorical, symbolic function of expressing something which from one to the other (the one about whom one is speaking) has a certain function as metaphor of love; epainein, "to praise" has here a ritual function which is something that can be translated in these terms: "to speak well of someone". And even though one cannot make the most of this text at the time of the Symposium, because it is much later, Aristotle in his Rhetoric, Book I, Chapter 9, distinguishes epainos from encomion. I told you that up to the present I did not want to get into this difference between the epainos and the encomion, however we will come back to it nevertheless drawn along by the force of things.

The difference to epainos is very precisely in the fashion in which Agathon had introduced his discourse. He speaks about the object starting from its nature, from its essence in order subsequently to develop its qualities, it is a deployment as one might say of the object in its essence, while the encomion - which we have difficulty in translating, it appears, and the term komos which is implied in it is of course responsible for some of that - encomion - if this is to be translated by something equivalent in our tongue - is something like "panegyric" and, if we follow Aristotle, it would be a question then of weaving together a wreath of the acts, of the great deeds of the object, a point of view which extends beyond, which is eccentric with respect to envisaging his essence which is that of epainos.

But the epainos is not something which presents itself without ambiguity from the beginning. First of all it is at the moment when it is decided that it is going to be a question of epainos, that Alcibiades begins to retort that the remark Socrates made about what we can call his ferocious jealousy, does not contain a word of truth.

"Don't you know that the truth is exactly the opposite of what he stated? For if I praise anybody in his presence, god or man other than himself, this man will not keep his two hands off me" - and he takes up the same metaphor that was used above - "to cheire, with great violence (a bras raccourcis)!" (214d). There is then a tone, a style, a sort of discontent, of complication, a kind of embarrassed response, an almost panicky "shut up" from Socrates. Shut up: "won't you hold your tongue?" - as it has been rather well translated" - "By Poseidon!", replies Alcibiades - which is quite something - "you need not make any objection, I forbid you to do so! You know that I would not praise a single other person in your presence!" - "Very well", says Eryximachos, "do this if you like, praise Socrates." And what then happens is that, in praising Socrates, "Am I to have at the man and punish him before your faces..." in praising him must I unmask him? This is how his development will subsequently proceed. And in effect it is not at all without unease, as if it were at once required by the situation and also an implication of the



style: that the praise might in its terms go so far as to make people laugh at the person in question.

Moreover Alcibiades proposes a gentleman's agreement: "Must I tell the truth?" Which Socrates does not refuse: "I invite you to tell it". Very well, says Alcibiades, I leave you free, if I go beyond the bounds of the truth in what I say, to say: "You are lying... But if I speak higgledy-piggledy trying to remember, don't be surprised for it is not easy to set out all your (3) absurdities" - we find here again the term atopia, "unclassifiable" - "nicely in order, katarithmein" (215a). And then the eulogy begins.

The last time I indicated to you the structure and theme of the eulogy. Alcibiades in effect says that he is of course going to get into the gelos, geloios more exactly, into the "laughable" and .... undoubtedly by beginning to present things by the comparison which - I note this for you - will return in short three times in his discourse, every time with a quasi-repetitive insistence, in which Socrates is compared to this crude and derisory envelope which is constituted by the satyr. It must in a way be opened in order to see inside what he calls the first time agalmata theon, "the statues of the gods" (215b). And then subsequently he takes up in the terms that I told you about the last time, by calling them once again agalmata theia, "divine", thaumasta, "admirable" (216e). The third time, we will see him employing further on the term aretas, agalmata aretes, "the finest images of virtue", the marvel of marvels (222a).

On the way, what we see, is this comparison which, at the moment that it is established, is pushed very far forward at that moment, when he is compared to the satyr Marsyas.... and despite his protestations - eh, he is undoubtedly not a piper! - Alcibiades comes back, gives another push and here compares Socrates to a satyr not simply in the form of a box, of a more or less derisory object, but specifically to the satyr Marsyas, in so far as when he gets into action every one knows from the legend that the charm of his song emerges. The charm is such that this Marsyas made Apollo jealous. Apollo flayed him alive for having dared to rival the supreme music, the divine music. The only difference, he says, between Socrates and him, is that in effect Socrates is not a piper; it is not through music that he works and nevertheless the result is exactly of the same order. And here we should refer to what Plato explains in the Phaedo concerning what we may call the superior states of inspiration such as they are produced by going beyond the boundaries of beauty. Among the diverse forms of this going beyond which I am not going to take up here, there are those which are deomenous which "have need" of gods and initiations; for those, the journey, the path consists in means among which that of intoxication produced by a certain music producing in them this state described as possession. It is to neither more nor less than this state that Alcibiades refers when he says that this is what he, Socrates, produces by words, "by words" which are, for their part, "unaccompanied, without instruments"; he produces exactly the same effect by his words. "When we hear an

orator", he says, "speaking about such subjects, even quite a good orator, nobody cares a jot. But when one hears you, or your words recited by another, even a very poor speaker, panu phaulos, "a worthless man", let a woman hear, or a man hear, or a boy hear, we are overwhelmed and enraptured - and properly speaking katechometha, we are possessed by them!" (215c).

Here is the determination of the point of experience which makes Alcibiades consider that in Socrates there is this treasure, this altogether undefinable and precious object which is going to fix, (4) as one might say, his resolve after having unleashed his desire. It is at the source of everything that is going to be subsequently developed in his terms, his resolution, then his business with Socrates-. And it is on this point that we should dwell.

Here in effect is what he is going to describe for us. He has had an adventure with Socrates which is far from banal. The fact is that having made up his mind, knowing that he was getting onto a terrain that was in a way rather safe (he knows the attention that for a long time Socrates has paid to what he calls his hora people translate it as they can - really his sex-appeal ), it seems to him that it would be enough that Socrates should declare himself in order to obtain from him precisely everything that is in question, namely what he defines himself as: "everything he knows, pant akousai hosaper houtos edei" (217a). And then we have the narrative of the steps he took.

But after all can we not already pause here? Because Alcibiades already knows that he has Socrates' desire, why can he not better and more easily presume his complicity? What is meant by this fact that as regards in a way on what he, Alcibiades already knows, namely that for Socrates he is a beloved, an eromenos, why does he need to have Socrates give a sign of desire on this subject? Because this desire is in a way recognised (Socrates has never made a mystery of it in the past) recognised and because of this fact known and therefore one might think already avowed, what is meant by these seductive manoeuvres developed with a detail, an art and at the same time an impudence, a challenge to the hearers? - moreover so clearly felt as something which goes beyond the limits that what introduces it is nothing less than the phrase which is used at the origin of the mysteries: "You others who are there, clap strong doors on your ears!" (218b). It is a question of those who have no right to hear, and still less to repeat, the servants, the uninitiated, those who cannot hear what is going to be said as it is going to be said; it is better for them not to hear anything.

And in effect, to the mystery of this exigency of Alcibiades, to this mystery there responds, corresponds after all Socrates' behaviour. Because if Socrates has always shown himself to be the erastes of Alcibiades, of course it would seem to us (in a post-Socratic perspective we would say: in another register) that there is great merit in what he shows, in what the translator of the Symposium highlights in the margin under the term of "his temperance". But this temperance is not at all in this context

something which is indicated as necessary. That Socrates here is showing his virtue.... perhaps! But what relationship is there with the subject in question, if it is true that what we are shown at this level is something about the mystery of love.

In other words, you see what I am trying to encompass (this situation, this game that develops before us in the actuality of the Symposium) in order to grasp properly speaking the structure. Let us say right away that everything in Socrates' behaviour indicates that the fact that Socrates in short refuses to enter himself into this game of love is closely linked to the fact, which is posed at the origin as the terms of debate, which is that he knows, it is even, he says, the only thing he knows; "Love is the only thing I profess to know about." And we will say that it is because Socrates knows, that he does not love.

(5) And moreover with this key we give their full meaning to the words with which, in Alcibiades' narrative, he welcomes him, after three of four scenes in which the growth of Alcibiades' attacks is put before us in an ascending rhythm. The ambiguity of the situation is always close to what is properly speaking the geloios, "the laughable, the comic". In effect, these dinner invitations are a really farcical scene which end with a gentleman who leaves very early, very politely, having come late, who returns a second time and who escapes again, and with whom it is under the sheets that there occurs the dialogue: "Asleep, Socrates?" - "Not at all!" (218c).

There is here something which, in order to come to its final terms, makes us take paths well designed to put us at a certain level. When Socrates responds to him at the end, after Alcibiades has really explained his position, had gone so far as to say to him: "This is what I desire and I would certainly be ashamed in front of people who did not understand; I am explaining to you what I want", Socrates replies to him: "My dearest Alcibiades, you are really and truly no bad hand at a bargain, if what you say is really true about me, and if there is in me some power which can make you better; you must see some inconceivable beauty in me" - a different quality of beauty, something different - "If then you spy it there and if you are trying to do a deal and exchange beauty for beauty, and at the same time" - here in the Socratic perspective of science against illusion - "instead of an opinion of beauty" - the doxa which does not know its function, the deception of beauty - "you want to exchange the truth", and in fact, God knows, "that would mean nothing other than exchanging bronze for gold. But!", says Socrates - and here we should take things as they are said -, "don't be deceiving yourself, examine things more carefully ameinon skopei so as not to deceive yourself, and you will see that I" - properly speaking - "am nothing. Because obviously", he says, "the eye of the mind begins to see sharp when the sight of the eyes is losing its keenness, and you are far from that still" (219a). But be careful, at the place where you see something, I am nothing.

What Socrates refuses at that moment, if it is definable in the

terms that I told you about with regard to the metaphor of love, what Socrates refuses (in order to show himself what he had already shown himself to be, I would say, almost officially in all the outbursts of Alcibiades, in order that everyone would know that Alcibiades in other words had been his first love) what Socrates refuses to show to Alcibiades is something which takes on a different meaning, which would be properly the metaphor of love in so far as Socrates would admit himself as loved and I would say further, would admit himself as loved, unconsciously. (6) It is precisely because Socrates knows, that he sets his face against having been, in any justified or justifiable way whatsoever, eromenos, the desirable, what is worthy of being loved.

The reason why he does not love, why the metaphor of love cannot be produced, is because the substitution of the erastes for the eromenos (the fact that he manifests himself as erastes at the place where there was eromenos) is what he must set his face against, because, for him, there is nothing in him which is lovable, because his essence is this ouden, this vacuum, this hollow (to use a term which was later used in the Neo-Platonic and Augustinian meditation) this kenosis which represents the central position of Socrates. This term kenosis is so true, emptiness opposed to the fullness - of whom? Precisely of Agathon! - is right at the origin of the dialogue when Socrates, after his long meditation in the porch of the house next door, finally arrives at the banquet and sits next to Agathon. He begins to speak, people think that he is joking, that he is poking fun, but in a dialogue as rigorous and also as austere in its unfolding can we believe that there is nothing there in the state of being refilled. He says: "You Agathon are full and as there is conveyed from a full vessel to an empty vessel something, a liquid, with the help of a piece of wool along which the liquid flows, in the same way I am going to....." (175d) Irony no doubt but which is directed at something, which intends to express something, which is precisely also what Socrates - I repeated it for you on several occasions and it is in the mouth of Alcibiades - presents as constitutive of his position which is the following: the principal thing is that he knows nothing, except about the affairs of love, amathia, inscientia, as Cicero translated by forcing the Latin tongue a little. Inscitia is brute ignorance, while inscientia, is this not knowing constituted as such, as emptiness, as appeal of the emptiness at the centre of knowledge.

Therefore you can well grasp, I think, what I mean to say here; it is that the structure constituted by the substitution, the realised metaphor constituting what I called the miracle of the apparition of the erastes at the very place where there was the eromenos, it is this whose lack ensures that Socrates cannot but set his face against giving to it, as I might say, a simulacrum. Namely that he poses himself before Alcibiades as not then being able to show him the signs of his desire in so far as he takes exception to having been himself, in any way, an object worthy of the desire of Alcibiades, or indeed of anybody's desire.

So that you should observe that the Socratic message, even though it involves something which refers to love, is certainly not in itself fundamentally something which begins, as one might say, from a centre of love.

Socrates is represented to us as an erastes, as a desirer, but nothing is further from the image of Socrates than the radiation of love which emanates, for example, from the message of Christ. Neither effusion, nor gift, nor mysticism, nor ecstasy, nor simply commandment flow from it. Nothing is further from the message of Socrates than "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", a formula which is remarkably absent from the dimension of what Socrates says. And this indeed is what has always struck the exegetes who, when all is said and done, in their objections to the asceticism (ascese) proper to eros, say that what is commanded is: "Thou shalt love above all in thy soul what is most essential to you."

(7) Naturally this is only an appearance, I mean that the Socratic message as it is transmitted to us by Plato is not making an error there because the structure, as you are going to see, is preserved. And it is even because it is preserved that it allows us also to glimpse in a more correct way the mystery hidden beneath the Christian commandment. And moreover, even though it is possible to give a general theory of love under every manifestation which is a manifestation of love even if this may appear surprising to you at first sight, you can assure yourselves that once you have its key - I am speaking about what I call the metaphor of love - you find it absolutely everywhere.

I have spoken to you through Victor Hugo. There is also the original book of the story of Ruth and Booz. If this story maintains itself in front of us in a fashion that inspires us differently (except for the bad minds who make of this story a story of a libidinous old man and a little servant girl) it is because moreover we suppose here this lack of knowledge:

"Booz did not know that there was a woman there"

already unconsciously Ruth is for Booz the object he loves. And we also suppose, and this in a formal fashion:

"And Ruth did not know what God wanted of her;"

that this third, that this divine locus of the Other in so far as it is there that there is inscribed the fatality of Ruth's desire is what gives to her nocturnal vigil at the feet of Booz its sacred character. The underlay of this lack of knowledge in which already there is situated, in an anteriority veiled as such, the dignity of the eromenos is here for each one of the partners the reason for the whole mystery of the signification of love in the proper sense which the revelation of their desire takes on.

Here then is how things happen. Alcibiades does not understand. After having heard Socrates he says to him: "Listen, I have said

all that I have to say, it's up to you to decide what you should do." He confronts him, as they say, with his responsibilities. At which Socrates says to him: "We will talk about all of that... until tomorrow, we still have a lot of things to say about it!" (219a). In short, he places things within the continuation of a dialogue, he engages him on his own paths. It is in so far as Socrates absents himself at the point marked by the covetous desire of Alcibiades... and this covetousness, can we not say that it is precisely a covetousness for what is best? But it is precisely the fact that it is expressed in these terms of object - namely that Alcibiades does not say: "It is under the rubric of my good or of my harm that I want this thing to which nothing can be compared and which in you is agalma", but "I want it because I want it, - whether it is for my good or whether it is for my harm" - it is precisely in this that Alcibiades reveals the central function .... in the articulation of the love relationship, and it is precisely in this also that Socrates sets his face against responding to him himself on this plane.

I mean that by his attitude of refusal, by his severity, by his austerity, by his noli me tangere he implicates Alcibiades on the path to his good. The commandment of Socrates is: "Look after your soul, seek your perfection." But is it even sure that we should not allow some ambiguity around this "his good". Because after all, precisely what is put in question ever since this dialogue of Plato has been having an effect, is the identity of this object of desire with "his good". Should we not translate "his good" by the good as Socrates conceives it, traces out its path for those who follow him, he who brings into the world a new discourse?

Let us observe that in the attitude of Alcibiades there is something, I was going to say sublime, in any case absolute and passionate which is close to something of a different nature, of (8) another message, the one where in the gospel we are told that the one who knows that there is a treasure in a field - it is not said what this treasure is - is capable of selling everything he has in order to buy this field and enjoy this treasure. It is here that there is situated the margin of the position of Socrates with respect to that of Alcibiades. Alcibiades is the man of desire. But then you will tell me: why does he want to be loved? In fact, he already is, and he knows it. The miracle of love is realised in him in so far as he becomes the desirer. And when Alcibiades manifests himself as loving, as someone who would say that it is not rubbish! Namely that precisely because he is Alcibiades, the one whose desires know no limits, this preferential field in which he engages himself which is properly speaking for him the field of love is something in which he displays what I would call a very remarkable case of the absence of castration fear - in other words a total lack of this famous Ablehnung der Weiblichkeit. Everyone knows that the most extreme types of virility of the ancient model are always accompanied with a perfect disdain for the eventual risk of being treated, even if only by their soldiers, as a woman, as happened, as you know to Caesar.

Alcibiades here puts on a feminine scene in front of Socrates. He remains nonetheless Alcibiades at his own level. This is why we should attach all its importance in going beyond the complement that he gave to the eulogy of Socrates, namely this astonishing portrait destined to complete the impassive figure of Socrates - and impassive means that he cannot even tolerate being taken in the passive sense, loved, eromenos. The attitude of Socrates (or what is unfolded before us as his courage at war) is caused by a profound indifference to everything that is happening around him, even what is most dramatic.

Thus, once there has been gone through the whole end of this development in which in short there culminates the demonstration of Socrates as a being- without equal, here is how Socrates responds to Alcibiades: I think you have all your wits about you!.... And in effect, it was under the shelter of a "I don't know what I'm saying" that Alcibiades had expressed himself. Socrates, who knows, says to him: "You seem to me to have all your wits about you! Nephein moi dokeis" (222c), namely that even though you are drunk I read something in you, and what? It is Socrates who knows it, it is not Alcibiades.

Socrates highlights what is in question, he is going to speak about Agathon. At the end of the discourse of Alcibiades in effect, Alcibiades had turned towards Agathon in order to say to him, "that is a warning to you, not to be deceived by this man. You see how he is capable of treating me. Don't get into it!" (222b) "And it is as a postscript..." - because in truth the intervention of Socrates would have no meaning if it was not on this postscript that the intervention was brought to bear in so far as I called it an interpretation - .... What he tells us, is that Agathon was being aimed at throughout all the circumlocutions of the discourse, that it was around him that the whole of his discourse was entwined.... "as if your whole discourse" - it should be translated and not language - "had no (9) other goal" but what? To enunciate that "I am obliged to be your lover and love no one else, and Agathon should be your beloved and loved by no one else!" And this, he says, is quite transparent, katadelon, in your discourse. Socrates says indeed that "he reads through the apparent" discourse. And very precisely, it is this business of "the drama of your invention", as he calls it, this metaphor, here is where it is altogether transparent. "To saturikon sou drama touto kai silenikon, your satyric and silenic drama has been shown up" (222d), this is where things can be seen.

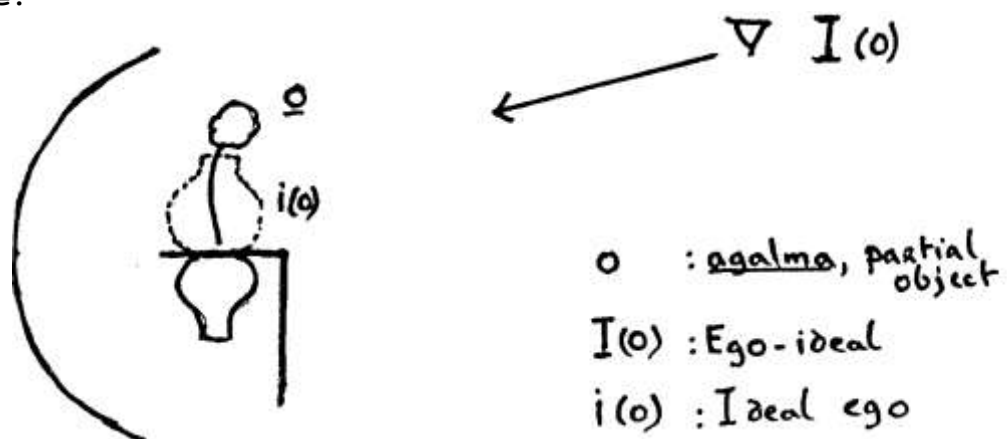
Well let us try in effect to recognise its structure. Socrates says to Alcibiades: "If what you want when all is said and done is for you to be loved by me and for Agathon to be your object.... - because otherwise there is no other meaning to be given to this discourse except the most superficial of psychological meanings, the vague stirring up of jealousy in the other - there is no question of it!" The fact is that effectively this is what is in question. Alcibiades, Socrates admits it, manifesting his desire to Agathon and demanding in short from Agathon that which first of all Alcibiades himself

demanded from Socrates. The proof is that, if we consider all the parts of the dialogue as a long epithalamium and if what all this dialectic culminates in has a meaning, what happens at the end, is that Socrates eulogises Agathon.

That Socrates should sing the praises of Agathon is the response not to the past but the present demand of Alcibiades. When Socrates eulogises Agathon, he gives satisfaction to Alcibiades. He gives him satisfaction for his present act of public declaration, of putting on the plane of the universal Other what had happened between them behind the veils of modesty. The response of Socrates is: "You can love the one I am going to praise because, by praising him, I Socrates would be able to get across the image of you loving qua the image of you loving; it is through this that you are going to enter upon the path of superior identifications which the path of beauty traces out."

But it would be well not to overlook the fact that here Socrates, precisely because he knows, substitutes something for something else. It is not beauty, nor ascesis, nor the identification to God that Alcibiades desires, but this unique object, this something which he saw in Socrates and from which Socrates diverts him because Socrates knows that he does not have it. But Alcibiades, for his part, always desires the same thing and, what Alcibiades is seeking in Agathon, you can be sure, is this same supreme point where the subject is abolished in the phantasy, his agalmata♦ Here Socrates, in substituting his lure for what I would call the lure of the gods, does so quite authentically in the measure that precisely he knows what love is and it is precisely because he knows that he is destined to deceive himself about it, namely to overlook the essential function of the object aimed at, constituted by the agalma.

He were told last night about a model, a theoretical model. I would say that it is not possible not to evoke in this connection even if it is only as support for our thought, the intrasubjective dialectic of the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, and precisely the partial object. .... the little schema which I formerly gave you of the spherical mirror, in so far as it is in front of it that there is created this phantasy of the real image of the vase as it emerges hidden in the apparatus and that this (10) illusory image can be supported, perceived by the eye as real in so far as the eye accommodates itself with respect to that around which it has been realised, namely the flower that we have placed there.





I taught you to note in these three terms (the Ego-Ideal, the Ideal Ego, and little o, the agalma of the partial object) the something denoting the supports, the reciprocal relationships of the three terms that are in question every time there is constituted what? Precisely what is in question at the end of the Socratic dialectic, something which is destined to give consistency to what Freud - and it is in this connection that I introduced this schema - enounced to us as being the essential of being in love, Verliebtheit, namely the recognition of the foundation of the narcissistic image in so far as it is what gives its substance to the Ideal Ego.

The imaginary incarnation of the subject, this is what is in question in this triple reference. And you will allow me to finally come to what I mean: Socrates' demon is Alcibiades. It is Alcibiades, exactly as we are told in the discourse of Diotima that love is not a god, but a demon, namely the one who sends to mortals the message which the gods have to give him and this is why we could not fail in connection with this dialogue to evoke the nature of gods.

(11) I am going to leave you for two weeks and I am going to give you some reading: De natura deorum by Cicero. Reading this did me a lot of damage a very long time ago with a celebrated pedant who, having seen me plunged in this, thought that it augured very badly as regards the focussing of my professional occupations. Read this De natura deorum in order to bring yourselves up to date. You will see in it first of all sorts of extremely droll things and you will see that this Mr. Cicero, who is not the nit-picker that people try to depict for you by telling you that the Romans were people who simply followed, is someone who articulates things which go straight to your heart. You will also see in it some amusing things. Namely that, in his time, people went to Athens to look in a way for the shades of the great pin-ups of the time of Socrates. People went there saying: I am going to meet Charmides there on every street corner. You will see that our Brigitte Bardot can align herself with the effects that these Charmides had! They were even goggle-eyed at the little street urchins! And in Cicero you see funny things. And specifically a passage which I cannot give you, which goes something like this: "It must be admitted that beautiful lads, those whom all the same the philosophers taught us that it was very good to love, are not easy to find! Of course here and there you can find one who is beautiful." What does that mean? Does the loss of political independence have as an irremediable effect some racial decadence, or simply the disappearance of this mysterious eclat, this himeros enarges, this brilliance of desire that Plato speaks about in Phaedo? We will never know anything about it.... But you will learn still more things in it. You will learn that it is a serious question to know where the gods are localised. And it is a question which has not lost for us, believe me, its importance. If what I am telling you here may one day when, with a tangible slipping of certitude, you find yourself between two stools.... if it is of use to you in any way, one of the things will have been to recall to you the real existence of gods.

So then why should we also not dwell on this scandalous object which the gods of antique mythology were and, without trying to reduce them to packets of filing cards or to groupings of themes, but by asking ourselves what could be meant by the fact that after all these gods behaved in the way you know, and of whom stealing, cheating, adultery - I won't talk about impiety, that was their affair - was all the same the most characteristic style. In other words, the question of what a love of god is is something which is frankly actualised by the scandalous character of antique mythology. And I ought to tell you that all the same the high point is there at the origin, at the level of Homer. There is no way of behaving oneself in a more arbitrary, more unjustifiable, more incoherent, more derisory fashion than these gods. And read the *Iliad*; there they are all the time mixed up in, ceaselessly intervening in the affairs of men. And one cannot all the same help thinking that the stories which, when all is said and done might in a certain perspective.... but we do not take it - nobody can take it, not even the thickest of the *Homeridae* - and say that they are tall stories. No, they are there and well and truly there! What could it mean that the (12) gods in short only manifest themselves to men in that way?

It must all the same be seen what happens when they are seized by the love of a mortal for example. There is no stopping them, even if the mortal, in despair, transforms herself into a laurel tree or a frog. There is no way of stopping them. There is nothing all the same which is further removed from these sorts of tremors of being confronted with love than the desire of a god - or moreover a goddess - I do not see why I should not bring them into it also.

It needed Giraudoux to restore for us the dimensions, the resonance of this prodigious myth of *Amphitryon*. This great poet could not but allow there to radiate onto Jupiter himself something which may resemble a sort of respect for the sentiments of *Alcmene*, but it is indeed in order to make the thing possible for us. It is quite clear that for the one who knows how to understand, this myth remains in a way a sort of high point of blasphemy, one might say, and nevertheless it was not at all like that that the ancients understood it. Because there things go further than ever. It is divine debauchery which is disguised as human virtue. In other words, when I say that nothing stops them, they are going to practice deception even in what is the best of things and it is here indeed that there lies the whole key to the affair. The fact is that the best, the real gods, push impassivity to a point of which I spoke to you above as not even tolerating the qualification of passive.

To be loved is necessarily to enter onto this ladder of the desirable from which the theologians of Christianity had great trouble as we know extricating themselves. Because if God is desirable, he can be more or less so; henceforth there is a whole ladder of desire and, what do we desire in God if not the desirable but.... plus God - so that it is at the moment when an effort was being made to give to God his most absolute value that people found themselves trapped in a vertigo from which they

emerged only with difficulty to preserve the dignity of the supreme object.

The gods of antiquity did not shilly-shally about it: they knew that they could only reveal themselves to men in the rock of scandal, in the agalma of something which violates all the rules as pure manifestation of an essence which, it, remained completely hidden, the enigma of which was entirely behind, hence the demonic incarnation of their scandalous exploits. And it is in this sense that I say that Alcibiades is the demon of Socrates.

Alcibiades gives the true representation, without knowing it, of what is implicated in—the Socratic ascesis. He shows what is there which is not absent, believe me, from the dialectic of love as it was later developed in Christianity.

It is indeed around this that there comes to grief this crisis, which in the XVIth century, overbalances the whole long synthesis which had been sustained and, I would say, the long equivocation concerning the nature of love which had caused it to unfold, to develop in the whole of the Middle Ages in such a post-Socratic perspective. I mean that for example the God of Scotus Erigena does not differ from the God of Aristotle, in so far as he dies as eromenon, they are consistent: it is by his beauty that God makes the world go around. What a distance there is between this perspective and the one which opposes it! But it is not opposed to it — this is the sense of what I am trying to articulate — this is articulated on the opposite side as agape in so far as agape expressly teaches us that God loves us as (13) sinners: he loves us just as much for our evil as for our good. This is the meaning of the overbalancing which took place in the history of the feelings of love, and curiously, at the precise moment where there reappears for us, in its authentic texts, the Platonic message: the divine agape qua addressing itself to the sinner as such, here is the centre, the heart of the Lutheran position.

But you must not believe that this is something which was reserved to a heresy, to a local insurrection in Catholicism, because it is enough to glance even superficially at what followed the counter-reformation, namely the eruption of what has been called Baroque art, to perceive that this signifies exactly nothing other than the proclaiming, the erection as such of the power of the image properly speaking in its seduction, and, after the long misunderstanding which had sustained in the divinity the trinitarian relationship of the knower to the known and remounting from the known to the knower through knowledge, we see here the approach of this revelation which is ours, which is that things go from the unconscious towards the subject which is constituted in its dependency, and remount towards this core-object which we call here agalma.

Such is the structure which regulates the dance between

Alcibiades and Socrates. Alcibiades shows the presence of love but only shows it in so far as Socrates who knows, can be deceived by it and only accompany him by being deceived about it. The lure is reciprocal. It is just as true for Socrates, if it is a lure and if it is true that he is lured, as it is true for Alcibiades that he is caught in the lure. But who is the most authentically lured if not the one who follows, firmly and not allowing himself to drift, what is traced out for him by a love which I would call terrifying.

You must not believe that the one who is placed at the origin of this discourse, Aphrodite, is a goddess who smiles. A pre-Socratic, who is I believe Democritus says, that she was there all alone at the origin. And it is even in this connection that for the first time there appears in the Greek texts the term agalma. Venus, to call her by her name, is born every day. The birth of Aphrodite is every day and, to take up from Plato himself an equivocation which, I believe, is a veritable etymology, I would conclude this discourse by these words: Kalemera, "good day", kalimeros, "good day and beautiful desire"! About the reflection on what I have brought you here concerning the relationship of love to something which has always been called eternal love.... may it not be too difficult for you to think about, if you remember that this term of eternal love is put by Dante expressly at the gates of Hell!

Seminar 12:            Wednesday 1 March 1961

As I think most of you will still remember, we have arrived then at the end of the commentary on the Symposium, in other words the Platonic dialogue which, as I have if not explained at least indicated on several occasions, happens to be historically at the start of what one can call more than one explanation in our cultural era, of love, at the start of what one can call a development of, in short, the most profound, the most radical, the most mysterious function of relationships between subjects. At the horizon of what I pursued before you as a commentary, there was all the development of antique philosophy (an antique philosophy, as you know, is not simply a speculative position, entire zones of society were oriented in their practical action by the speculation of Socrates).... it is important to see that it is not at all in an artificial, fictitious fashion that in some way Hegel made of positions like the Stoic, Epicurean positions the antecedents of Christianity.

Effectively these positions were lived by a large group of subjects as something which guided their life in a fashion that one could say was effectively equivalent, antecedent, preparatory with respect to what was brought to them subsequently by the Christian position. To perceive that the very text of the Symposium continued to mark profoundly something which in the Christian position also extends beyond speculation, because one cannot say that the fundamental theological positions taught by Christianity failed to have an effect, to profoundly influence everyone's problematic, and specifically that of those who found themselves in this historical development to be in the lead by the position of example that they assumed under different headings (either by their remarks, or by their directive action) of what is called sanctity, this could naturally only be indicated at the horizon and, in a word, that is enough for us.

That is enough for us, because if it was from this starting point that we had ourselves wished to expedite what we have to say, we would have taken it at a subsequent level. It is precisely in the measure that this initial point which the Symposium is can conceal in itself something altogether radical in this mainspring of love whose title it bears, which it indicates as being its purpose, it is for this reason that we have carried out this

commentary on the Symposium.

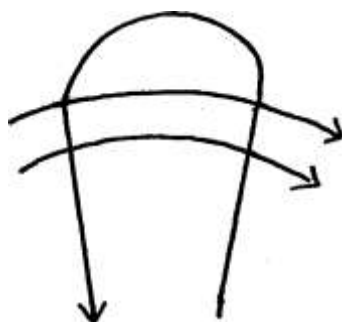
We concluded it the last time by showing that something - I do not believe that I am exaggerating in saying this - had been neglected up to now by all the commentators of the Symposium, and that in this respect our commentary constitutes (in the sequence of the history of the development of indications, of virtualities that there are in this dialogue) an epoch. If, in so far as we (2) believe we have seen in the very scenario of what happens between Alcibiades and Socrates the last word of what Plato wants to tell us concerning the nature of love, it is certain that this supposes that Plato had deliberately, in the presentation of what one could call his thought, made a place for enigma, in other words that his thought, is not entirely open, betrayed, developed in this dialogue.

Now I believe that there is nothing excessive in asking you to admit this for the simple reason that, in the opinion of all the commentators, ancient and especially modern, of Plato - the case is not a unique one - an attentive examination of the dialogues shows very evidently that in this dialogue there is an exoteric and esoteric element, a closed-off element, and that the most singular modes of this closing-off - up to an including the most characteristic traps which can go so far as to be lures - touch on the difficulty produced as such so that those who are not supposed to understand do not understand and this is really structuring, fundamental in everything that has remained to us from Plato's expositions. Obviously to admit such a thing is also to admit how risky it always is for us to advance, to go further, to try to pierce, to guess in its final principle what Plato indicates to us.

It appears that as regards this thematic of love to which we have limited ourselves, as it is developed in the Symposium, it would be difficult, for us analysts, not to recognise the bridge, the hand that is stretched out to us in this articulation of the last scenario of the scene of the Symposium, namely what happens between Alcibiades and Socrates.

I articulated and made you sense this in two moments by showing you the importance of the declaration of Alcibiades, in showing you what we cannot but recognise in what Alcibiades articulates around the theme of the agalma, the theme of the object hidden within the subject Socrates. It would be very difficult for us not to take seriously that in the form, in the articulation that this is presented to us, these are not metaphorical remarks, pretty images to say that in general he expects a lot from Socrates ..... there is revealed there a structure in which we can rediscover what we ourselves are capable of articulating as altogether fundamental in what I would call the position of desire.

Here of course - and I excuse myself to the newcomers here - I can suppose known by my audience in its general characteristics the elaborations which I already gave of this position of the subject, those which are indicated in this topological summary



constituted by what we call here conventionally the graph. Its general form is given by the splitting, by the fundamental reduplication of two signifying chains in which the subject is constituted, in so far as we admit that it has already been demonstrated that this reduplication of itself required by the logical, initial, inaugural relationship of the subject of the signifier as such, from the existence of an unconscious signifying chain, flows from the sole position of the term (3) subject as a being determined as subject by the fact that it is the support of the signifier.

No doubt....let those for whom this is only an affirmation, a proposition that still has not been demonstrated reassure themselves, we will have to come back to it. But we have to announce this morning that this has been previously articulated. Desire as such presents itself in a position (with respect to the unconscious signifying chain as constitutive of the subject who speaks), in the position of what cannot be conceived of except on the basis of metonymy, determined by the existence of the signifying chain by this something, this phenomenon which is produced in the support of the subject of the signifying chain which is called metonymy and which means that, from the fact that the subject undergoes the mark of the signifying chain, something is possible, something is fundamentally established in him which we call metonymy - which is nothing other than the possibility of the indefinite sliding of significations under the continuity of the signifying chain.

Everything that happens to be associated at one time by the signifying chain (the circumstantial element with the element of activity and the element of the beyond of the term at which this activity ends up), all of this is in the position of finding itself in appropriate conditions as being able to be taken as equivalent one for the other - a circumstantial element being able to take on the representative value of the term of the subjective enunciating of the object to which it is directed, or moreover, of the action itself of the subject.

It is in the measure that something presents itself as revalorizing the sort of infinite slipping, the dissolving element that the signifying fragmentation brings of its own accord into the subject, that something takes on the value of privileged object and stops this infinite slipping. It is in the measure that an object *o* takes on with respect to the subject this essential value which constitutes the fundamental phantasy,  $\$*o$ , in which the subject himself recognises himself as arrested, what we call in analysis - to remind you of more familiar notions - fixated with respect to the object in this privileged function, and which we call *o*.

Therefore it is in the measure in which the subject identifies himself to the fundamental phantasy that desire as such takes on

consistency and can be designated, that the desire we are dealing with is rooted by its very position in the unconscious, namely also, to rejoin our terminology, that it is posed in the subject as desire of the Other, the big O - O being defined for us as the locus of the word, this locus always evoked once there is a word, this third locus which always exists in relationships to the other, small o, once there is signifying articulation. This big O is not an absolute other, an other who would be the other of what we call in our moral verbosity the other respected qua subject, in so far as he is morally our equal. No, this Other, as I teach you here to articulate it, at once necessitated and necessary as locus but at the same time perpetually submitted to the question of what guarantees it, is a perpetually vanishing Other and, by this very fact, one which puts us ourselves in a perpetually vanishing position.

Now, it is to the question posed to the Other of what he can give us, of what he has to respond to us, it is to this question that there is attached love as such; not that love is identical to each one of the demands with which we assail him, but that love is situated in the beyond of this demand in so far as the Other can respond to us or not as final presence. And the whole question is to take note of the relationship which links this Other to whom there is addressed the demand for love with the apparition of this term of desire in so far as it is no longer (4) this Other, our equal, this Other to whom we aspire, this Other of love, but that it is something which, with respect to that, represents properly speaking a falling away from it - I mean something which is of the nature of object.

What we are dealing with in desire is an object, not a subject. It is precisely here that there lies what one can call this terrifying commandment of the god of love which is precisely to make of the object that he designates for us something which, firstly is an object and secondly that before which we falter, we vacillate, we disappear as subject. Because this collapse, this depreciation that is in question, it is we as subject who have to assume it. And what happens to the object is precisely the contrary, namely - I am using terms here in order to make myself understood, they are not the most appropriate, but it does not matter, it is a question of getting it across and making myself understood - this object, for its part, is overvalued and it is in so far as it is overvalued that it has this function of saving our dignity as subject, namely of making of us something other than this subject submitted to the infinite slipping of the signifier, to make of us something other than subjects of the word, this something unique, inestimable, irreplaceable when all is said and done which is the true point at which we can designate what I have called the dignity of the subject.

The equivocation, if you wish, that there is in the term individuality, is not that we are something unique as body which is this one and not another, individuality consists entirely in this privileged relationship at which we culminate as subject in desire.



All I am doing here after all is giving an account once more of this merry-go-round of truth on which we are turning since the origin of this seminar. It is a question this year, with transference, of showing what are its consequences at the most intimate level of our practice. How does it happen that we are coming so late to this transference, you will ask me.... Of course, the fact is that the property of truths is never to show themselves entirely, in a word, that truths are solids of a rather perfidious opacity. They do not even have, it seems, this property that we are capable of producing in solids, of being transparent, and of showing us at the same time their anterior and posterior bone structure; it is necessary to go right around them and even I would say, to do some conjuring tricks with them.

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For transference then, as we are tackling it this year, you have seen that whatever the charm with which I may have succeeded in leading you on for a certain time by making you pay attention with me to love, you must all the same have perceived that I approached it from an angle, a pitch which not only is not the classical angle, or pitch, but is moreover not the one by which up to the present I have even approached this question of transference before you. I mean that, up to the present, I always reserved what I advanced on this theme by telling you that one had to be terribly mistrustful of what is the appearance, the phenomenon most habitually connoted under the terms for example of positive or negative transference, of the order of the collection of terms in which not only a more or less well informed public, but even ourselves, in this daily discourse, connote transference.

I always reminded you that one must start from the fact that transference, in the final analysis, is the automatism of repetition. Now it is clear that if since the beginning of the year I have done nothing other than make you pursue the details, the movement of Plato's Symposium, On Love, love is the only thing that is dealt with, it is quite obviously to introduce you into transference from another angle. It is a question therefore of joining up these two methods of approach.

(5) So legitimate is this distinction that one reads very singular things in the authors, and that precisely for want of the lines, the guidelines which I provide for you here, people arrive at quite astonishing things. It would not displease me at all if some lively person gave us here a brief report so that we could really discuss it - and I even wish it for reasons that are quite local, precise at this turning point of our seminar of this year, on which I do not want to spend too much time and to which I will return - it is certainly necessary that some people should be able to mediate between this rather heterogeneous assembly that you compose and what I am in the process of trying to articulate before you, should be able to mediate in so far as it is obviously very difficult for me to advance very far into this mediation, in a subject matter which is going to do nothing less than put right at the point of what we are articulating this year the function as such of desire not only in the analysand,

but essentially in the analyst. One asks oneself for whom this involves the greater risk: for those who for some reason know something about it or for those who are still not in a position to know anything about it. In any case, there ought to be all the same a method of approaching this subject before a sufficiently prepared audience, even if it does not have the experience of analysis.

This having been said, in 1951, an article by Hermann Nunberg which is called "Transference and reality" is something quite exemplary (as moreover is everything which has been written on transference) of the difficulties, the avoidances which are produced for want of an approach which is sufficiently illuminated, sufficiently oriented, sufficiently methodical of the phenomenon of transference, because it is not difficult to find in this short article of exactly nine pages, that the author goes so far as to distinguish as being essentially different transference and the automatism of repetition. They are, he says, two different things. This is going a bit far all the same. And it is certainly not what I am telling you. I will ask someone then for the next time to give a report in ten minutes of what there seems to him to emerge from the structure of the enunciation of this article and the fashion in which it can be corrected.

For the moment let us carefully mark what is in question. At the origin transference is discovered by Freud as a process which, I underline, is spontaneous, a spontaneous process certainly disturbing enough (since we are in history at the beginning of the appearance of this phenomenon) to divert from the first analytic investigation one of the most eminent pioneers: Breuer. And very quickly it is referred, linked to what is most essential in this presence of the past in so far as it is discovered by analysis. These terms are all carefully weighed. I would ask you to record what I am retaining to fix the principle points of the dialectic that is in question. Very quickly also it is admitted first of all in a tentative way, then confirmed by experience, that this phenomenon, qua linked to what is most essential in the presence of the past discovered by analysis, can be handled by interpretation.

Interpretation already exists at this moment, in so far as it has manifested itself as one of the mainsprings necessary for the realisation, for the completion of remembering in the subject. It is seen that there is something other than this tendency to remember, without really knowing yet what it is, in any case, it is the same thing. And this transference is admitted immediately as manageable by interpretation therefore, if you (6) wish, permeable to the action of the word, which immediately introduces the question which will remain, which still remains open for us, which is the following: this phenomenon of transference is itself placed in the position of a support for this action of the word. At the same time as transference is discovered it is discovered that, if the word has an effect as it had an effect up to then before it was perceived, it is because transference exists.

So that up to the present, in the final analysis - and the subject was treated and re-treated at length by the most qualified authors in analysis - I signal very particularly the article by Jones, in his Papers on psychoanalysis; "The action of suggestion in psychotherapy", but there are innumerable others. The question remaining on the agenda is that of the ambiguity which still remains, which in the present state of things nothing can reduce. This is that transference, however interpreted it may be, preserves in itself as a kind of irreducible limit, the following, the fact is that in the central, normal conditions of analysis, in neuroses, it will be interpreted on the basis and with the instrument of transference itself, which could not be done except with that accent; it is from the position that transference gives him that the analyst analyses, interprets and intervenes on the transference itself.

What must be called an irreducible margin of suggestion remains from outside as an always suspect element not of what happens from outside - one cannot know that - but of what the theory is capable of producing. In fact, as they say, these difficulties do not prevent us from advancing. It nevertheless remains that one must fix the limits of the theoretical aporia and perhaps this introduces us to a certain possibility of subsequently going further.

Let us carefully observe all the same what is involved in it, I mean as regards what is happening, and perhaps we will be able to perceive already the ways in which one can go beyond it.

The presence of the past therefore, such is the reality of transference. Is there not already something which imposes itself, which allows us to formulate it in a more complete fashion? It is a presence, a little more than a presence, it is a presence in act and, as the German and French terms indicate, a reproduction. I mean that what is not sufficiently articulated, not sufficiently highlighted in what is ordinarily said, is the way in which this reproduction is distinguished from a simple passivity of the subject.

If it is a reproduction, if it is something in act, there is in the manifestation of transference something creative. It appears to me to be absolutely essential to articulate this element and, as always, if I highlight it, this is not to say that its indications are not already noticeable in a more or less obscure fashion in what the authors have already articulated.

Because if you refer to an epoch-making report by Daniel Lagache, you will see that this is what constitutes the core, the point of this distinction that he introduced - which to my mind remains a little vacillating and unclear because it does not see the final point.... - of the distinction that he introduced of the opposition around which he wanted to make there turn his distinction of transference between repetition of need and need of repetition. Because however didactic may be this opposition which in reality is not included, is not even for a single (7) instant really in question in what we experience of

transference - there is no doubt that it is question of the need for repetition - we are not able to formulate otherwise the phenomena of transference than in this enigmatic form: why is it necessary for the subject to repeat perpetually this signification, in the positive sense of the term, which he signifies to us by his behaviour. To call that need, is already to inflect in a certain direction what is in question and in this respect one understands in effect that the reference to an opaque psychological datum like the one connoted purely and simply by Daniel Lagache in his report, the Zeigarnik effect, after all better respects what is to be preserved in what constitutes the strict originality of what is in question in transference.

For it is clear that everything on the other hand indicates to us that if what we do in so far as transference is the repetition of a need (of a need which may manifest itself at one or other moment to manifest the transference) is something which could manifest itself there as need, we arrive at an impasse - because in other respects we spend our time saying that it is a shadow of a need, a need which has for a long time been superseded, and that it is for that reason that its repetition is possible.

And moreover we arrive here at the point where transference appears as properly speaking a source of fiction. The subject in transference pretends, fabricates, constructs something and it then seems that it is not possible not to integrate immediately into the function of transference this term which is first of all: what is the nature of this fiction, what on the one hand is its source, and on the other hand its object? And if it is a question of fiction, what is being pretended and, because it is a question of feigning, for whom? It is quite clear that if one does not respond immediately: "For the person to whom one is addressing oneself", it is because one cannot add "...knowingly". It is because one is already greatly distanced by this phenomenon from any hypothesis even of what one can call massively by its name: simulation.

Therefore it is not for the person to whom one addresses oneself in so far as one knows it. But it is not because it is the contrary, namely that it is in so far as one does not know it, that it must be believed for all that that the person to whom one is addressing oneself is here all of a sudden volatilized, vanished. Because everything that we know about the unconscious from the very start, from dreams, indicates to us and experience shows us that there are psychic phenomena which are produced, are developed, are constructed to be understood, therefore precisely for this other who is there even when one does not know it, even if one does not know that they are there to be understood; they are there to be understood, and to be understood by another.

In other words, it seems to me impossible to eliminate from the phenomenon of transference the fact that it manifests itself in the relationship to someone to whom one is speaking. This is constitutive of it, constitutes a frontier and indicates to us at the same time that we should not swamp this phenomenon in the

general possibility of repetition which the existence of the unconscious constitutes. Outside analysis there are repetitions linked of course to the constancy of the unconscious signifying chain in the subject. These repetitions, even if they can in certain cases have homologous effects, are to be strictly distinguished from what we call transference and, in this sense, justify the distinction into which - as you will see - the very remarkable personage that Herman Nunberg is allows himself to slip into from a quite different angle, but from an erroneous angle.

(8) Here I am going for a moment to slip in again, in order to show you its invigorating character, a piece, a segment of our exploration of the Symposium.

Remember the extraordinary scene - and try to situate it in our terms - constituted by the public confession of Alcibiades. You should indeed sense the quite remarkable weight that is attached to this action. You should properly sense that there is something here which goes well beyond a pure and simple account of what happened between him and Socrates, it is not neutral, and the proof, is that, even before beginning, he himself puts himself under the protection of some invocation of the secret which is not simply aimed at protecting himself. He says: "Let those who are not capable or worthy of hearing, the slaves who are there, block up their ears!" because there are things which it is better not to hear when one is not in a position to understand them.

He makes his confession before whom? The others, all the others, those who, by their agreement, their body, their council, their plurality, seem to constitute, to give the greatest possible weight to what one can call the tribunal of the Other. And what gives the confession of Alcibiades its value before this tribunal is a report in which precisely he tried to make of Socrates something completely subordinated, submitted to a value other than that of the relationship of subject to subject, where he had, vis-a-vis Socrates, manifested an attempt at seduction, in which what he wanted to make of Socrates, and in a fashion openly avowed, is someone instrumental, subordinated to what? To the object of his desire, to that of Alcibiades, which is agalma, the good object. And I would say further, how can we analysts fail to recognise what is in question because it is said clearly: it is the good object that he has in his belly.

Socrates is no longer there anything but the envelope of what is the object of desire. And it is indeed to mark clearly that he is nothing more than this envelope, it is for this reason that he wanted to show that Socrates is with respect to him the slave of desire, that Socrates is subjected to him by desire, and that even though he knew it he wanted to see Socrates' desire manifesting itself as a sign in order to know that the other object, agalma, was at his mercy.

Now for Alcibiades it is precisely the fact of having failed in this enterprise that covers him with shame and makes of his

confession something so heavily charged. The fact is that the demon of Aidos, of Shame, of which I gave an account before you at one time in this connection is what intervenes here, this is what is violated. It is that before everybody there is unveiled in its most shocking trait, secret, the final mainspring of desire, this something which forces it to be always more or less dissimulated in love, the fact is that its aim is this collapse of the Other, capital O into the other, little o, and that, in addition on this occasion, it appears that Alcibiades failed in his enterprise, in so far as this enterprise was specifically to knock Socrates off his perch.

What could be closer in appearance to what one could call, to what one could believe, to be the final term of a seeking for the truth, not at all in its function of blueprint, of abstraction, of neutralisation of all the elements, but on the contrary in what it brings in terms of a resolution, of an absolution of everything that is in question and which you clearly see is (9) something quite different from the simple phenomenon of an incomplete task, as people say it is, it is something different.

Public confession with all the religious weight that we attach to it, rightly or wrongly, is indeed what seems to be in question here. As it is constructed up to its final term, does it not also seem that on this striking testimony given about the superiority of Socrates there should be completed the homage rendered to the master, and perhaps that which certain people have designated as being the apologetic value of the Symposium? Given the accusations with which Socrates remained charged even after his death, because the pamphlet by someone called Polycrates again accuses him at the time - and everyone knows that the Symposium was constructed in part in relation to this libel, we have some quotations from other authors - of having as one might say - led astray Alcibiades and many others also, of having indicated to them that the way to the satisfaction of all their desires was clear, while what is it we see? It is that, paradoxically, before this revelation of a truth which seems in a way to be sufficient in itself, but about which each and every person senses that there is still a question.... why all of this, to whom is it addressed, who is it a question of instructing at the moment that the confession is produced (it is certainly not Socrates' accusers), what is the desire that pushes Alcibiades to undress himself in this way in public? Is there not here a paradox which it is worth highlighting and which as you will see is not so simple if you look closely at it.

The fact is that what everyone perceives as an interpretation by Socrates is in fact such. Socrates retorts to him: "Everything that you have just done here, and God knows it is not obvious, is for Agathon. Your desire is more secret than all the unveiling which you have given yourself over to and is now aimed at still another: small o - and this other - I designate him for you, is Agathon."

Paradoxically, in this situation, it is thus not something phantastical, something which comes from the depths of the past

and which no longer has any existence that is here by this interpretation of Socrates put in the place of what is manifested, here, it is well and truly the reality - if we listen to Socrates - which would serve as what we would call a transference in the process of the search for the truth.

In other words, so that you may well understand me, it is as if someone were to say during the trial of Oedipus: "Oedipus only pursues in such a breathless fashion this search for the truth which must lead him to his death because he has only a single goal, it is to go away, to escape, to flee with Antigone..." This is the paradoxical situation before which Socrates' interpretation places us. It is quite clear that all the shimmering of details., the angle through which this may serve to dazzle the groundlings by performing such a brilliant act, by showing what one is capable of, nothing of all of this, when all is said and done nothing holds up. There is well and truly a question of something about which one asks oneself then up to what point Socrates knew what he was doing. Because Socrates replying to Alcibiades seems to fall under the accusations of Polycrates because Socrates himself, learned in the matters of love, designates to him where his desire is and does much more than designating it because he is in a way going to play the game of this desire by procuration and he Socrates, immediately afterwards will lend himself to singing the praises of Agathon who all of a sudden as the camera stops is whisked away - we are completely hoodwinked by it - by a new entry of revellers. Thanks to this the question remains enigmatic.

(10) The dialogue can turn back on itself indefinitely and we will not know what Socrates knows about what he is doing or indeed whether it is Plato who at that moment is substituted for him (no doubt, because he is the one who wrote the dialogue, he knows a little more about it) namely allowing the centuries to go astray about what he, Plato, designates for us as the true reason for love which is to lead the subject towards what? The rungs which indicate to him the ascent towards a beauty more and more confused with supreme Beauty.... that's the real Plato.

This having been said it is not at all towards this, in following the text, that we sense ourselves forced. At most, as analysts, we might be able to say that if the desire of Socrates, as seems to be indicated in his remarks, is nothing other than to lead his interlocutors towards gnoti seauton (which is translated in another register by look after your soul) at the limit, we may think that all of this is to be taken seriously. That, on the one hand, and I will explain by what mechanism, Socrates is one of those to whom we owe the fact of having a soul, I mean of having given consistency to a certain point designated by Socratic interrogation with, as you will see, all that this engenders in terms of transference and qualities. But if it is true that what Socrates designates in this way is, without knowing it, the desire of the subject as I define it and as effectively it is manifested before us.... making of itself what must really be called its accomplice, if that is it and he does it without knowing it, then Socrates has a place that we can

completely understand and understand at the same time how when all is said and done he inflamed Alcibiades.

Because if desire at its root, in its essence is the desire of the Other, it is here properly speaking that there lies the mainspring of the birth of love, if love is what happens in this object towards whom we stretch out our hands by our own desire and who, at the moment that it breaks into flame, allows there to appear for an instant this response, this other hand, the one which stretches out towards you as his desire. If this desire always manifests itself in so far as we do not know - "And Ruth did not know what God wanted of her...." because she did not know what God wanted of her, it was necessary all the same that there should be a question of God wanting something of her and if she knows nothing about it this is not because it is not known "what God wanted of her" but because by reason of this mystery God is eclipsed but always there.

It is in the measure that Socrates does not know what he desires and that it is the desire of the Other, it is in this measure that Alcibiades is obsessed by what? By a love of which one can say that Socrates' only merit is to designate it as transference love, to refer it back to his true desire.

These are the points that I wanted to refix, replace today in order to pursue the next time what I think I can clearly show, which is the degree to which this apologue, this final articulation, this almost mythical scenario of the final term of the Symposium allows us to structure, to articulate this situation around the position of two desires. We will then be able to really restore the one-to-one situation to its true sense, to two reals, the situation of the analysand in the presence of the analyst and at the same time put exactly in their place the sometimes ultra-precocious phenomena of love, which are so upsetting for those who approach these phenomena, precocious, then progressively more complex in the measure that they constitute later on in the analysis, in short, the whole content of what happens on the plane of what is called the imaginary for (11) which the whole development of modern theories of analysis believed it necessary to construct, and not without good reason, the whole theory of object-relations, the whole theory of projection in so far as this term is effectively far from being sufficient in itself, the whole theory when all is said and done of what the analyst is during the analysis for the analysand - which cannot be conceived of without a correct positioning of the position the analyst himself occupies with respect to the desire constitutive of analysis and that with which the subject starts into analysis: what does he want?



Seminar 13:            Wednesday 8 March 1961

I ended the last time, to your satisfaction it seems, on the point of what constituted one of the elements, perhaps the fundamental element of the position of the subject in analysis. It was this question which for us crosschecked with the definition of desire as the desire of the Other, this question which is in short the one which is marginal, but in this way is indicated as fundamental in the position of the analysand with respect to the analyst even if he does not formulate it: what does he want?

Today we are again going to take a step backwards after having advanced to this point and propose to ourselves to centre on the one hand what we had announced at the beginning in our remarks last time, to advance in the examination of the modes in which theoreticians other than ourselves, from what can be clearly seen of their praxis, manifest in short the same topology as I am in the process of deploying, of trying to establish before you, a topology in so far as it makes transference possible.

It is not necessary, in effect, that they should formulate it like us in order to bear witness to it - this seems obvious to me - in their own way. As I wrote somewhere, one does not need to know the plan of an apartment in order to knock one's head against the walls. I would even go further, for this operation one can rather easily do without the plan, normally. On the contrary, the reciprocal is not true in this sense that contrary to a primitive schema of reality testing, it is not enough to knock one's head against the walls in order to reconstruct the plan of an apartment, especially if one carries out this experiment in the dark. You have an example which I like, Theodore cherche des allumettes, which illustrates it for you in Courteline's work. This having been said, it is perhaps a rather forced metaphor, perhaps not either as forced as it may appear to you, and this is what we are going to see by putting it to the test, to the test of what is currently happening, in our own day, when analysts speak about what? We are going I believe straight to the most current aspect of this question as it poses itself for them, and .... the same place as you can clearly sense I am centring it this year, from the side of the analyst. And in a word, it is properly speaking that which they best articulate when they - the theoreticians and the most advanced, the most lucid theoreticians - tackle what is called the

question of counter-transference.

(2) On this I would like to remind you of some primary truths. It is not because they are primary that they are always expressed and if they go without saying, they go even better when they are said.

For the question of counter-transference, there is first of all the common opinion, that of anyone who has approached the problem a little, where he first situates it, namely the first idea that was had of it; I would also say the first, the most common that has been given of it but also the oldest approach to this question.

There was always present in analysis this notion of counter-transference. I mean very early, at the beginning of the elaboration of this notion of transference, everything that in the analyst represents his unconscious qua unanalysed, let us say, is dangerous for his function, for his operation as analyst in so far as starting from there we have the source of unmastered responses - and especially in the opinion that was had of them - of blind responses from which, in the whole measure that something has remained in the shadows (and this is why people insisted on the necessity of a complete didactic analysis, one pushed very far.... we are beginning with vague terms to begin with) as has been written somewhere, there will result from this neglect of one or other corner of the analyst's unconscious veritable blind spots. From which there is supposed to result - and I put it in the conditional, it is a discourse which is effectively maintained that I put in inverted commas, with reservations, to which I do not right away subscribe but which is admitted - eventually one or other more or less grave, more or less unfortunate occurrence in the practice of analysis, in terms of non-recognition, of a missed intervention, of the inopportuneness of some other intervention, even indeed of error.

But on the other hand one cannot fail to relate to this proposition the following, that it is said that it is on the communication of unconscious's that when all is said and done one must best depend for there to be produced in the analyst the most decisive perceptions, the best insights. It is not so much from a long experience, from an extensive knowledge of what he can encounter in the structure that we should expect the greatest relevance - this lion's spring that Freud tells us about somewhere and which in the best of cases only happens once. He are told that it is with the communication of unconscious's that there emerges that which, in concrete, existential analysis goes furthest, to the deepest level, has the greatest effect and that no analysis ought to lack one or other such moment. It is in short directly that the analyst is informed about what is happening in the unconscious of his patient, by means of a transmission path which remains rather problematic in the tradition. How ought we to conceive of this communication of unconscious's?

I am not here in order, even from an eristic, even critical point

of view, to sharpen antinomies and to fabricate impasses which would be artificial. I am not saying that there is here something unthinkable, namely that it is supposed to be at once in so far as at the limit there would remain nothing of the unconscious in the analyst and at the same time in so far as he is supposed still to preserve a good deal of it, that he would (3) be, that he ought to be the ideal analyst. This would really be to make oppositions, I repeat, which would not be founded.

Even to push things to the extreme one can glimpse, conceive of an unconscious "reservation" and it must indeed be conceived, there is no exhaustive elucidation in anybody of the unconscious. However far an analysis may be pushed, one can very well conceive, once this reservation of the unconscious is admitted, that the subject whom we know to have been alerted precisely by the experience of didactic analysis should know in a way how to play on it like an instrument, like the drum of a violin of which moreover he knows the chords. It is not after all a raw unconscious, it is a flexible unconscious, an unconscious plus the experience of this unconscious.

Subject to these reservations, it remains all the same legitimate for us to feel the necessity of elucidating the point of passage at which this qualification is acquired. That which is fundamentally affirmed by the doctrine as being inaccessible to consciousness (because it is as such that we ought always to pose the foundation, the nature of the unconscious) it is not a question of it being accessible to men of good will, it is not, it remains within strictly limited conditions ..... it is under strictly limited conditions that we can get at it, by a detour and by this detour of the Other which makes analysis necessary, which limits, reduces in an unbreakable way the possibilities of self-analysis. And the definition of the point of passage where what is thus defined can nevertheless be utilised as a source of information, included in a directive praxis, to pose the question of this is not to construct a useless antimony.

What tells us that this is the way that the problem is posed in a valid fashion, I mean that it is soluble, is that it is natural that things should be presented in this way. In any case for you who have the keys there is something which immediately gives you the recognisable access to it, it is this thing which is implied in the discourse that you hear, that logically - there is a logical priority for this - it is first of all as unconscious of the other than every experience of the unconscious is had. It is first of all in his patients that Freud encountered the unconscious.

And for each one of us, even if this is elided, it is first of all as unconscious of the other that there opens out for us the idea that such a contraption can exist. Every discovery of one's own unconscious presents itself as a stage of this ongoing translation of an unconscious that is first of all the unconscious of the other. So that there is no need to be very astonished that one can admit that, even for the analyst who has

pushed very far this stage of the translation, the translation can always be taken up again at the level of the Other. Which obviously removes much of the import from the antinomy which I evoked above as being able to be constructed, by indicating immediately that it can only be constructed in an improper manner.

Only then, if we start from there, something immediately appears. It is that in short in this relationship to the other which is going to remove, as you see, a part, which is going to exorcise in part this fear which we may experience of not knowing enough about ourselves - we will come back to it, I am not claiming to urge you to dispense yourselves entirely from any worry in this regard. This is very far from my thought - once this is admitted, it remains that we are going to encounter here the second obstacle that we encounter with ourselves in our analysis when it is a question of the unconscious, namely what? The positive power of miscognition - an essential, not to say (4) historically original feature of my teaching - there is in the prestige of the ego or, in the largest sense, in the capture of the imaginary.

What it is important to note here is precisely that this domain, which in our experience of personal analysis is completely intermingled with the deciphering of the unconscious .... when it is a question of our relationship as psychoanalyst to the other has a position which must indeed be described as different. In other words, there appears here what I would call the Stoical ideal which is constructed about the apathy of the analyst.

As you know, people first of all identified feelings, which we can describe in general as negative or positive, that the analyst may have vis-a-vis his patient, with the effects in him of an incomplete reduction of the thematic of his own unconscious. But if this is true for himself, in his relationship of self-love, in his relationship to the small other in himself, inside himself, I mean that by which he sees himself as other than he is (which had been discovered, glimpsed, well before analysis), this consideration does not at all exhaust the question of what legitimately happens when he is dealing with this small other, with the other of the imaginary, outside.

Let us dot the i's. The path of Stoical apathy, the fact that he remains indifferent to the seductions as well as to the eventual brutality of this little other outside in so far this little other outside always has some power, small or great, over him even if it is only the power of burdening him with his presence, does this mean that this can all by itself be imputed to some inadequacy in the preparation of the analyst as such? In principle absolutely not.

Accept this stage of my progress. That does not mean that I am going to end with it, but I simply propose this remark to you. From the recognition of the unconscious, we have no reason to say, to pose that it by itself puts the analyst beyond the reach of his passions. This would be to imply that it is always and

essentially from the unconscious that there comes the total, global effect, the whole efficiency of a sexual object or of some other object capable of producing some physical aversion or other. Why should this be required, I ask, except for those who commit the gross confusion of identifying the unconscious as such with the sum of vital powers? This is what radically differentiates the import of the doctrine that I am trying to articulate before you. There is of course a relationship between the two. There is even question of elucidating how this relationship can be made, why it is the tendencies of the life instinct which are presented in this way - but not just any of them, especially among those which Freud always and tenaciously circumscribed as sexual tendencies. There is a reason why these are particularly privileged, captivated, captured by the mainspring of the signifying chain in so far as it is what constitutes the subject of the unconscious.

But this having been said, why - at this stage of our interrogation the question must be asked - why an analyst, under the pretext that he is well analysed, should be insensible to the fact that this or that person provokes in him reactions of hostile thinking, that he sees this presence - it must be tolerated of course in order that something of this order may be produced - as a presence which is evidently not like the presence of a patient but the presence of a being who takes up room... and the more precisely we suppose him to be imposing, full, normal, the more legitimately may there be produced in his (5) presence all possible kinds of reactions. And likewise, on the intrasexual plane for example, why in itself should the movement of love or of hatred be excluded, why should it disqualify the analyst from his function?

At this stage, in this way of posing the question there is no other response than the following: in effect why not! I would even go further, the better he is analysed, the more it will be possible for him to be frankly in love or frankly in a state of aversion, of repulsion with regard to the most elementary modes of relationships of bodies between one another, with respect to his partner.

If we consider all the same that what I am saying there is a bit strong, in this sense that it embarrasses us, that it does not settle things, that there must be all the same something well founded in this exigency for analytic apathy, it is because it must be necessary for it to be rooted elsewhere. But in that case, it must be said, and we are, ourselves, in a position to say it. If I could say it to you immediately and easily, I mean if I could immediately make you understand it after the journey that we have already taken, of course I would say it to you. It is precisely because there is a journey that I still want you to take that I cannot formulate it in a completely strict fashion. But already there is something which can be said about it up to a certain point which may satisfy us; the only thing that I ask of you, is precisely not to be too satisfied with it before giving it its formula and its precise formula. It is that if the analyst realises, as the popular image or also as the

deontological image conceives of it, this apathy, it is precisely in the measure that he is possessed by a desire stronger than the one that is in question, namely to get to the heart of the matter with his patient, to take him in his arms, or to throw him out the window.... that happens.... I would even dare to say that it would augur badly for someone who never felt something like that.

But after all it is a fact that except for the possibility of the thing, this should not happen in the typical case. This ought not to happen, not from the negative point of view of a kind of total imaginary discharge of the analyst - which is a hypothesis we do not need to pursue any further even though this hypothesis would be interesting - but because of something which is what I am posing the question about here this year. The analyst says: "I am possessed by a stronger desire". He is established qua analyst, in so far as there has been produced in a word a mutation in the economy of his desire.

It is here that Plato's texts can be evoked. From time to time something encouraging happens to me. This year I carried out for you this long discourse, this commentary on the Symposium with which I must say I am not dissatisfied. I had a surprise.... someone in my circle surprised me - you should understand this surprise in the sense that this term has in analysis, it is something which is more or less related to the unconscious - by pointing out to me somewhere, in a note at the end of a page, the quotation by Freud of a part of the discourse of Alcibiades to Socrates, regarding which it must indeed be said that Freud could have sought out a thousand other examples to illustrate what he is trying to illustrate at that moment, namely the desire for death mingled with love. You only have to bend (6) down, as I might say, to gather them up by the shovelful. And I communicate to you here a testimony, it is the example of someone who, in a cry from the heart, flung at me one day this ejaculation: "Oh! How I wish that you were dead for two years". There is no need to go looking for that in the Symposium. But I consider that it is not indifferent that at the level of the Ratman, namely at an essential moment in the discovery of the ambivalence of love, that it should be to Plato's Symposium that Freud should have referred. It is not all the same a bad sign, it is not a sign that we are wrong in going there ourselves to seek our references....

Well then, in Plato, in the Philebus, Socrates expresses somewhere this thought that among all the desires the strongest desire must be the desire for death, because the souls which are in the Erebe remain in it. It is an argument which is worth what it is worth, but which here takes on value illustrative of the direction in which I already indicated to you that there could be conceived this reorganisation, this restructuring of desire in the analyst. It is at least one of the mooring, fixation, attachment points of the question with which we surely will not be satisfied.

Nevertheless we can further say that, in this detachment from the automatism of repetition which would constitute a good personal

analysis in the analyst, there is something which ought to go beyond what I would call the particularity of its detour, go a little bit beyond, engage upon the detour, which I would call > specific, upon what Freud envisages, what he articulates when he poses the fundamental repetition of the development of life as conceivable as being only the detour, the derivative of a compact, abyssal drive, which is the one which is called at this level the death drive where there no longer remains anything but this ananke, this necessity for the return to zero, to the inanimate.

A metaphor no doubt, and a metaphor which is only expressed by this sort of extrapolation, before which certain people retreat, from what is brought by our experience, namely the action of the unconscious signifying chain in so far as it imposes its mark on all the manifestations of life in the subject who speaks. But indeed an extrapolation, a metaphor which is not all the same constructed by Freud for absolutely no reason, in any case which permits us to conceive that something may be possible and that effectively there can be some relationship of the analyst - as one of my pupils wrote in our first number, in a beautifully highflown tone - with Hades, with death.

whether he plays or not with death (la mort) in any case - I wrote somewhere else that, in this game of analysis which is certainly not analysable uniquely in terms of a game for two - the analyst plays with a dummy (un mort) and there, we rediscover this trait of the common exigency that there must be something capable of playing dead (jouer le mort) in this small other which is in him.

(7) In the position of the game of bridge, the S, which he is has opposite him his own small other, that with which he is in this specular relationship with himself in so far as he is, constituted as Ego. If we put here the designated place of this Other who speaks, the one he is going to hear, the patient, we see that this patient in so far as he is represented by the barred subject, by the subject qua unknown to himself, is going

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to be found to have here the image place of his own little o - let us call the whole thing "the image of little o two", and is

going to have here the image of the big Other, the place, the position of the big Other in so far as it is the analyst who occupies it. That is to say that the patient, the analysand has, for his part, a partner. And there is no need for you to be astonished at finding conjoined at the same place the analysand's own Ego and this Other; he must find his truth which is the big Other of the analyst.

The paradox of the analytic bridge game, is this abnegation which brings it about that, contrary to what happens in a normal game of bridge, the analyst must help the subject to find out what is in his partner's hand. And to conduct this game of "the loser wins" at bridge the analyst, for his part, does not require, should not in principle complicate his life with a partner. And this is why it is said that the i(o) of the analyst should behave like a dead person. That means that the analyst should always know what has been dealt there.

But behold, this kind of solution to the problem whose relative simplicity you are able to appreciate, at the level of commonplace, exoteric explanation, for those outside because it is simply a way of talking about what everyone believes - someone who might have dropped in here for the first time might find in it all sorts of reasons for satisfaction when all it said and done and go back to sleep, namely in the fact that he had always heard it said that the analyst is a superior being for example.... - unfortunately this does not fit together! This does not fit together and the testimony for that is given to us by the analysts themselves. Not simply in the form of a tearful lamentation: "We are never equal to our function". Thank God, even though this sort of declaration still exists we have been spared it for a certain time, it is a fact, a fact for which I am not responsible here, which I have only to register.

(8) The fact is that for some time what is effectively admitted in analytic practice, I am speaking about the best circles, I am alluding specifically for example to the Kleinian circle, I mean to what Melanie Klein has written on this subject, to what Paula Heimann wrote in an article, "On counter-transference", and which you will easily find.... it is not in one or other article that you have to search for it, today everyone considers as accepted, as admitted what I am going to say (it is more or less frankly articulated and above all people understand more or less well what is being articulated, that is the only thing, but it is admitted), it is that the analyst must take into account, in his investigation and in his manoeuvring, not of the feelings that he inspires but that he experiences in analysis.

Counter-transference is no longer considered in our day as being in its essence an imperfection, which does not mean that it cannot be of course, but if it does not remain an imperfection, it nevertheless remains something which makes it deserve the name counter-transference. You are going to see it again, in so far as it is apparently of the same nature as the other aspect of transference which last time I opposed to transference conceived of as automatism of repetition, namely that on which I intended



to centre the question, the transference in so far as it is called positive or negative, in so far as everyone understands it as the feelings experienced by the analysand with respect to the analyst.

Well the counter-transference that is in question, which it is admitted we must take into account - if there remains disagreement about what we should make of it and you are going to see at what level - it is indeed counter-transference that is in question, namely feelings experienced by the analyst in analysis, determined at every instant by his relations to the analysand.

We are told.... I am choosing a reference almost at random but it is a good article all the same (one never chooses something completely at random), among all those that I have read, there is probably a reason why I feel inclined to communicate to you the title of this one; this is called precisely - it is in short the subject that we are treating today - "Normal counter-transference and some of its deviations" by Roger Money-Kyrle, who obviously belongs to the Kleinian circle and is linked to Melanie Klein through the intermediary of Paula Heimann.

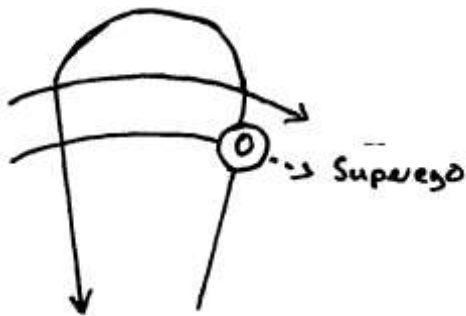
You will see in it that the state of dissatisfaction, the state of preoccupation that Paula Heimann writes about is even a presentiment .... In her article she gives an account of the fact that she found herself confronted with something which it is not necessary to be an old analyst in order to experience, confronted with a situation which is too frequent namely that the analyst may be confronted in the first phases of an analysis with a patient who precipitates himself in a fashion manifestly determined by the analysis itself, even if he himself is not aware of it, into premature decisions, into a long-term liaison, even a marriage. She knows that this is something to analyse, to interpret, to counter in a certain measure. She notes at that moment a quite uncomfortable feeling that she experiences in this particular case. She notes it as something which, all by (9) itself, is the sign that she is right to be particularly worried about it. She shows how it is precisely what allows her to better understand, to go further.

But there are many other feelings which may arise and the article for example of which I am speaking really takes into account feelings of depression, of a general fall-off in interest for things, of disaffection, of disaffection that the analyst may even experience with respect to everything that he touches.

It is a nice article to read because the analyst does not simply describe for us what results from the beyond of a particular session in which it seems to him that he had not been able to respond sufficiently to what himself calls a demanding patient. It is not because you see here an echo of la demande that you can consider that you understand the accent in English. Demanding, is more, it is a pressing exigency. And he notes in this connection the role of the analytic superego in a fashion which undoubtedly, if you read this article, will appear to you to present indeed some gap, I mean would not really find its true

import unless you refer to what is given you in the graph and in so far as the graph (in so far as you introduce the dotted lines) is presented in such a way that, on the lower line, it is beyond the locus of the Other that the dotted line represents the Superego for you.

I am putting in the rest of the graph for you so that you may be able to take into account in this connection how it can be of use



to you. It is to understand that it is not always because of this when all is said and done opaque element (with this severity of the superego) that one or other demand may produce these depressive effects or even worse in the analyst; it is precisely in the measure that there continuity between the demand of the other and the structure that is called the

superego. You should understand that it is when the demand of the subject has been introjected, has passed as an articulated demand into the one who is its recipient, in such a fashion that it represents his own demand in an inverted form (for example, when a demand for love coming from the mother happens to encounter in the who has to respond his own demand for love going to the mother) that we find the strongest effects which are called hypersevere effects of the superego.

I am only indicating it to you here because this is not where our path goes, it is a lateral remark. What is important, is that an analyst who appears to be someone particularly agile and gifted in recognising his own experience goes so far as to note, to present to us as an example something which worked, and in a fashion which appeared to him to merit a communication not as a blunder nor as an accidental effect more or less well corrected, but as a procedure that can be integrated into the doctrine of analytic operations.

He says that he himself had noted the feeling that he had located as being related to the difficulties that the analysis of one of his patients presented to him; he says that he himself had, and during a period connoted by what is picturesquely permitted in (10) English life, had himself during his weekend been able to note after a rather agitated period concerned with the problematic, unsatisfying things that had been left to him from what he had been able to do that week with his patient.... he had undergone without at all having seen the link, himself, a kind of bout of exhaustion - let us call things by their name - which made him during the second half of his weekend find himself in a state which he cannot recognise except by formulating it himself in the same terms as his patient had done as a state of disgust at the limits of depersonalisation, from which there had begun the whole dialectic of the week - and to which precisely (it was moreover accompanied by a dream from which the analyst had drawn clarification in order to respond to him) he had the feeling of

not having given the right response, rightly or wrongly, but in any case based on the fact that his response had really made the patient fume, and that from that moment on he had become extremely nasty with him.

And behold, he, the analyst, discovers himself recognising that when all said and done what he is experiencing, is exactly what at the beginning the patient described to him about one of his states. It was not, for the patient himself, very new, nor new for the analyst to perceive that the patient could be subject to these phases at the limit of depression with slight paranoid effects.

Here is what is reported to us and what the analyst in question (here again with a whole circle, his own, the one which I am calling on this occasion a Kleinian circle) right away conceives as representing the effect of the bad object projected into the analyst in so far as the subject, whether in analysis or not, is liable to project it into the other. It does not seem to be a problem in a certain analytic field - with respect to which we must after all admit that there must all the same be a reason why one slips so easily into the degree of quasi-magical belief that this supposes - that this bad projected object is to be understood as having quite naturally its effect, at least in the case of the person who is coupled with the subject in such a close, such a consistent relationship as the one which is created by an analysis which has already gone on for some time. As having all its effect in what measure? The article also tells you, in the measure that this effect proceeds from an incomprehension on the part of the analyst, of the patient. The effect in question is presented to us as the possible utilisation of deviations from the normal counter-transference. Because as the beginning of the article articulates it, this normal counter-transference is already produced by the to-and-fro rhythm of the introjection of the discourse of the analysand and of something which admits as normal the possible projection - you can see how far he goes - onto the analysand of something which is produced as an imaginary effect in response to this introjection of his discourse.

This counter-transference effect is said to be normal in so far as the introjected demand is perfectly understood. The analyst has no trouble locating himself in what is then produced in such a clear fashion in his own introjection; he only sees the consequences of it and he does not even have to make use of it. What is produced is really there at the level of  $i(o)$  and completely mastered. And as regards what is produced on the side of the patient, the analyst has no reason to be surprised that it is produced; he is not affected by what the patient projects onto him.

It is in so far as he does not understand that he is affected by it, that it is a deviation from normal counter-transference, that things can reach a stage that he becomes effectively the bearer of this bad object projected into him by his partner. I mean (11) that he experiences in himself the effect of something quite

unexpected in which only the reflection carried out elsewhere allowed him, and again perhaps only because the occasion was favourable, to recognise the very state that his patient had described for him.

I repeat, I am not taking responsibility for the explanation in question, I am not rejecting it either. I am putting it provisionally in suspense in order to go a step at a time, in order to lead you to the precise angle that I must lead you to in order to articulate something. I am simply saying that if the analyst does not understand it himself, he nevertheless becomes, according to the remarks of the experienced analyst, effectively the receptacle of the projection that is in question and feels in himself these projections as a foreign object; which evidently puts the analyst in a singular position as refuse dump. Because.... if this happens with a lot of patients like that you see where that may lead to, when one is not in a position to decide with regard to which of them are produced these happenings which present themselves in the description that Money-Kyrle gives of them as disconnected. That may pose some problems.

In any case I am taking the following step. I am taking it with the author who tells us, if we go in this direction which does not date from yesterday or today (already Ferenczi had put in question the point up to which the analyst should share with his patient what he, the analyst, himself was experiencing in reality, in certain cases as a means of giving to the patient access to this reality), nobody in our day dares to go that far and specifically not in the school to which I am alluding. I mean, for example, Paula Heimann will say that the analyst ought to be very severe as regards his log-book, his daily hygiene, to be always to be in a position to analyse what he himself may experience of this order, but it is his own affair with himself, and with the intention of trying to race against time, namely to overcome the delay he may have undergone in the comprehension, the understanding of his patient.

Money-Kyrle, without being Ferenczi nor as reserved as that, goes further on this particular point of the identity of the state experienced by him with the one his patient had brought along to him at the beginning of the week. He is all the same going, on the particular point, to communicate it to him and to note, this is the object of his article - or more exactly of the communication he gave in 1955 at the Geneva Congress which this article reproduces - to note the effect (he does not tell us about the long-term effect but about the immediate effect) on his patient, which is one of obvious jubilation, namely that the patient deduces nothing other than the following: "Well, is that so? I am very glad to hear it because the other day when you gave an interpretation about this state," says the patient - and in effect he had made one which he recognises was a bit wooly, a bit vague - "I thought that what you were saying referred to yourself and not at all to me."

We have here then, if you wish, a full-scale misunderstanding and I would say that we are satisfied with it. At least the author

is satisfied with it because he leaves things there, then he tells us, starting from there the analysis restarts and presents him, we can only believe him, with all sorts of possibilities for further interpretations.

(12) The fact that what is presented to us as a deviation of counter-transference is here posed as an instrumental means to be codified which, in such cases, is to strive to retrieve the situation as quickly as possible (at least by the recognition of its effects on the analyst and by means of modified communications proposing to the patient something which, undoubtedly on this occasion, has the character of a certain unveiling of the analytic situation in its totality), to expect from it something like a restart which unknots that which apparently presented itself as an impasse in the analytic situation - I am not in the process of approving the appropriateness of this way of proceeding - simply I am remarking that if something of this order may be produced in this fashion it is certainly not linked to a privileged point .

What I can say, is that in the whole measure that there is a legitimacy in proceeding in this fashion, in any case it is our categories which allow us to understand it. My opinion is that it is not possible to understand it outside the register of what I have highlighted as being the place of *o*, the partial object, the agalma in the desire relationship in so far as it itself is determined within a larger relationship, that of the exigency for love. It is only here, it is only in this topology that we can understand such a way of proceeding, in a topology which allows us to say that, even if the subject does not know it, by the simple objective supposition of the analytic situation, it is already in the Other that small *o*, the agalma functions. And what is presented to us on this occasion as normal counter-transference or not, has really no special reason to be qualified as counter-transference, I mean that all that is in question there is an irreducible effect of the transference situation simply by itself.

The fact that there is transference is enough for us to be implicated in this position of being the one who contains the agalma, the fundamental object that is in question in the analysis of the subject as bound, conditioned by this relationship of vacillation of the subject that we characterise as constituting the fundamental phantasy, as establishing the locus in which the subject can fix himself as desire.

It is a legitimate effect of transference. There is no need here for all that to introduce counter-transference as if it were a question of something which was his own personal part, and much more again the faulty part of the analyst. Only I believe that in order to recognise it it is necessary that the analyst should know certain things, it is necessary that he should know in particular that the criterion of his correct position is not that he understands or does not understand. It is not absolutely essential that he should not understand but I would say that up to a certain point this may be preferable to a too great

confidence in one's understanding. In other words, he should put in doubt what he understands and tell himself that what he is trying to reach, is precisely that which in principle is what he does not understand. It is in so far certainly as he knows what desire is, but that he does not know what this subject with whom he is embarked on the analytic adventure desires, that he is in a position to have in himself the object of this desire. Because only this explains certain of these effects which are still so particularly frightening, it appears.

I read an article that I will designate more precisely for you the next time, where a gentleman, who nevertheless is very experienced, asks himself what one ought to do when from the first dreams, sometimes before the analysis begins, the (13) analysand is put forward to the analyst himself as an object characterised by love. The reply of the author is a little more reserved than that of another author who for his part says: when things begin like that it is useless to continue further. There are too many relationships to reality.

So, is it even in this way that we should say things when for us, if we allow ourselves to be guided by the categories that we have produced, we can say that the principle of the situation is that the subject is introduced as worthy of interest, worthy of love, as eromenos. It is for him that one is there but that is what one can call the manifest effect. If we admit that the latent effect is linked to his not knowing, to his unknowing, his unknowing is an unknowing of what? Something which is precisely the object of his desire in a latent, I mean objective, structural fashion. This object is already in the Other and it is in so far as things are that way that, whether he knows it or not, virtually, he is constituted as erastes, fulfilling because of this single fact this condition of metaphor, of substitution of the erastes for the eromenos which we have said constitutes by itself the phenomenon of love - and whose inflaming effects it is no surprise for us to see in transference love from the beginnings of analysis. There is no need for all that to see here a contra-indication for analysis.

And it is indeed here that there is posed the question of the desire of the analyst and up to a certain point of his responsibility for, to tell the truth, it is enough to suppose one thing for the situation to be - as the notaries express it in connection with contracts - perfect. It is enough that the analyst, without knowing it, for an instant, places his own partial object, his agalma in the patient with whom he is dealing, it is here indeed that one can speak about a contra-indication. But as you see, nothing less than localizable, nothing less than localizable in the whole measure that the situation of the desire of the analyst is not specified.

And it will be enough for you to read the author I am indicating to you in order to see that of course he is obliged by the necessity of his discourse to pose the question of what interests the analyst. And what does he tell us? That two things are important in the analyst when he is carrying out an analysis, two

basic drives. And you are going to see that it is quite strange to see qualified as passive drives the two that I am going to tell you: the reparative, he tells us textually, which goes against the latent destructiveness of each one of us and, on the other hand the parental drive.

Here is how an analyst from a school certainly as advanced, as elaborated as the Kleinian school has formulated the position that an analyst as such must take up. After all I am not going to cover my face nor shout aloud about it. I think that, for those who are familiar with my seminar, you see the scandal of it clearly enough. But after all, it is a scandal in which we participate more or less because we ceaselessly talk as if this were what was in question - even if we know well that we do not know that we should not be the parents of the analysand - we will say in a thinking about the field of psychoses.

And the reparative drive, what does that mean? That means an enormous number of things, that has all sorts of implications of course in all our experience. But perhaps, is it not worth the trouble in this connection to articulate how this reparative ought to be distinguished from the abuses of therapeutic ambition for example? In short, the putting into question not of the absurdity of such a thematic but on the contrary what justifies it. Because of course I credit the author and the whole school (14) that he represents with aiming at something which has effectively its place in the topology. But it must be articulated, said, situated where it is, explained differently.

It is for that reason that the next time I will rapidly summarise what I happen in an apologetic fashion to have done in the interval between these two seminars, before a philosophy group, an exposition of the "Position of desire". It is necessary that once and for all there should be situated the reason why an experienced author can talk about this parental drive, this parental and reparative drive in connection with the analyst and say at the same time something which must on the one hand have a justification, but which, on the other hand urgently requires it.

Seminar 14:            Wednesday 15 March 1961

For those who as one might say fall among us today from the moon I give a brief set of reference points. After having tried to pose again before you in more rigorous terms than has been done up to the present what one can call the theory of love, this on the basis of Plato's Symposium, it is within what we succeeded in situating in this commentary that I am beginning to articulate the position of transference in the sense that I announced it this year, namely in what I called above all "its subjective disparity". I mean by that that the position of the two subjects present is not equivalent in any way. And it is for this reason that one can speak, not about situation, but of an analytic pseudo-situation, of "a so-called situation".

Approaching therefore on these last two occasions the question of transference, I did it from the side of the analyst. This is not to say that I am giving to the term counter-transference the sense in which it is currently received of a sort of imperfection of the purification of the analyst in relation to the analysand. Quite the contrary, I intend to say that the counter-transference, namely the necessary implication of the analyst in the transference situation means that in short we should beware of this incorrect term. The existence of counter-transference is a necessary consequence purely and simply of the phenomenon of transference itself if one analyses it correctly.

I introduced this problem by the current fact in analytic practice that it is accepted in a rather widespread fashion that what we may call a certain number of affects, in so far as the analyst is touched by them in analysis, constitute if not a normal at least a normative mode of mapping out the analytic situation. And even I am saying, not alone of the analyst's investigation in the analytic situation, but even a possible element of his intervention by the communication that he may eventually make of it to the analysand.

And, I repeat, I am not lending my authority to the legitimacy of this method. I note that it was able to be introduced and promoted, that it was admitted, accepted among a very large field of the analytic community and that this just by itself is sufficiently indicative of our path, for the moment, which is to analyse how the theoreticians who understand in this way the



usage of counter-transference legitimate it. They legitimate it in so far as they link it to moments of incomprehension on the part of the analyst, as if this incomprehension in itself were the criterion, the dividing point, the aspect on which something (2) is defined which obliges the analyst to pass to a different mode of communication, to a different instrument in his way of locating himself in what is in question, namely the analysis of the subject.

It is therefore around this term comprehension that there is going to pivot what I intend to show you today in order to allow there to be circumscribed more closely what one may call, according to our terms, the relationship of the demand of the subject to his desire, \_ it being understood that we have put at the origin the way in which we have shown that the return is necessary, it is to put in the foreground that what is in question in analysis is nothing other than the bringing to light of the manifestation of the desire of the subject.

Where is understanding when we understand? When we think we understand, what does that mean? I affirm that this means in its most certain form, I would say in its primary form, that the understanding of anything at all that the subject articulates before us is something that we can define in this way at the level of consciousness, that in short we know what to answer to what the other demands. It is in the measure that we believe we can answer the demand that we have the feeling of understanding.

Nevertheless we know a little bit more about the demand than this immediate approach, precisely from the fact that we know that the demand is not explicit, that it is even much more than implicit, that it is hidden for the subject, that it needs to be interpreted. And it is here there lies the ambiguity in so far as we who will interpret it answer the unconscious demand on the plane of a discourse which for us is a conscious discourse. It is here indeed there is the bias, the trap so that always we tend to slide towards this supposition, this capture that our answer. . . . The subject in a way should be content because we bring to light by our answer something with which he should be satisfied. We know that it is here that there is always produced nevertheless some resistance.

It is from the situation of this resistance, from the fashion in which we can qualify the agencies to which we have to refer it, that there have flowed all the stages, all the steps of the analytic theory of the subject - namely the different agencies with which we have to deal in him.

Nevertheless is it not possible to go to a more radical point, without of course denying the part that these different agencies have in resistance, to see, to grasp that the difficulty of the relationships of the demand of the subject to the answer which is given him is situated further on, is situated at an altogether original point. To this point, I tried to bring you by showing you what there results in the subject who speaks, from the fact, as I thus expressed myself, that his needs must pass through the

defiles of the demand - that from this very fact, at this altogether original point, there results precisely this something in which there is founded the fact that everything which is natural tendency, in the subject who speaks, has to situate itself in a beyond and in a hither of demand. In a beyond it is the demand for love, in a hither it is what we call desire, with what characterises it as condition, as what we call its absolute condition in the specificity of the object which concerns it, little o, this partial object, (this something which I tried to show you as being included from the beginning in this fundamental text about the theory of love, this text of the Symposium as agalma) in so far as I also identified it to the partial object of analytic theory.

(3) It is this that today, by briefly going through again what is most original in analytic theory, the Triebe, "the drives and their vicissitudes", I intend to make you put your finger on, before we are able to deduce from it what flows from it as regards what is important to us, namely the point on which I left you the last time of the drive involved in the position of the analyst. You remember that it is on this problematic point that I left you in so far as an author, the one precisely who expresses himself on the subject of counter-transference, designates in what he was calling the parental drive, this need to be a parent, or the reparative drive, this need to go against the supposedly natural destructiveness in every subject qua analysable analysand.

You have immediately grasped the boldness, the daring, the paradox of advancing things like that because moreover it is enough to dwell on it for a moment to perceive, as regards this parental drive, if it is indeed what should be present in the analytic situation, that how then would we dare even to speak about the transference situation, if it is really a parent that the subject in analysis is faced with? What is more legitimate than that he should fall again in this situation into the same position that he had throughout his whole formation with respect to subjects around whom there were constituted for him the fundamental passive situations which constitute in the signifying chain the automatisms of repetition. In other words, how can we not perceive that we have here a direct contradiction, that we are going straight onto the reef which allows us to affirm it? Who will contradict us by saying that the transference situation, as it is established in analysis, is discordant with the reality of this situation - which some people imprudently express as being such a simple situation, that of the situation in analysis, in the hie et nunc of the relationship to the doctor? How can we not see that if the doctor is armed here with the parental drive, however elaborated we may suppose it to be in terms of an educative position, there will be absolutely nothing which distances the normal response of the subject to this situation from everything that can be enounced in it as the repetition of a past situation.

It must indeed be said that there is no means of even articulating the analytic situation without at least posing

somewhere the contrary exigency.

And for example in chapter III of Beyond the pleasure principle, when effectively Freud, taking up again the articulation that we are dealing with in analysis, discriminates between remembering and the reproduction of the automatism of repetition, Wiederholungszwang, in so far as he considers it as a semi-failure of the remembering aims of analysis, as a necessary failure going so far as to attribute to the structure of the ego (in so far as he sees the necessity at this stage of his elaboration of establishing its agency as being in great part unconscious) to attribute and to assign, not the whole (because of course the whole article is written to show that there is a margin) but the most important part of the function of repetition, to the ego's defence against the repressed memory, considered as the true term, the final term, even though perhaps at this moment considered as impossible, of the analytic operation.

It is therefore by following the path of something which is the resistance to this final aim, the resistance situated in the unconscious function of the ego, that Freud tells us that we must pass this way that "the physician cannot as a rule spare his patient this phase of the treatment. He must get him to re-experience some portion of his forgotten life, but must see to (4) it, on the other hand, that there is maintained some degree von Überlegenheit, of aloofness, so that it can be recognised, in spite of everything, that what appears to be reality, die auscheinende Realität, is in fact only a reflection of a forgotten past". God knows the abuses of interpretation to which this highlighting of this Überlegenheit has lent itself. It is around this that the whole theory of alliance with what is called the healthy part of the ego was able to be constructed. There is nevertheless in such a passage nothing of the kind and I cannot sufficiently underline what must have appeared to you in passing, it is in a way the neutral character, ne-uter, neither on one side or the other, of this Überlegenheit. Where is this aloofness? Is it on the side of the doctor who, let us hope, keeps his wits about him? Is this what is to be understood on this occasion or is it something on the side of the patient?

A curious thing, in the French translation - which, with respect to others, is as bad as those which have been made under different other patronages - the thing is translated: et doit seulement veiller a ce que le malade conserve un certain degre de sereine superiority - there is nothing like this in the text - qui lui permette de constater, malgre tout, que la realite de ce qu'il reproduit n'est qu'apparente. So that indeed must we not situate the question of the situation of this Überlegenheit which is no doubt required, which we are dealing with, in a fashion which, I believe, can be infinitely more precise than everything that is elaborated, in these so-called comparisons by the current aberration of what is being repeated in the treatment with a situation which would be presented as perfectly known.

Let us rebegin then from the examination of the phases and the

demand, from the exigencies of the subject as we approach them in our interpretations, and let us simply begin in accordance with this chronology, in accordance with this diachrony called the phases of the libido, with the most simple demand, the one to which we refer so frequently, let us say that it is a question of an oral demand. What is an oral demand? It is the demand to be fed which is addressed to whom, to what? It is addressed to this Other who hears and who, at this primary level of the enunciating of the demand, can really be designated as what we call the locus of the Other, the Other.... on, the Autron I would (5) say in order to make our designations rhyme with the familiar designations of physics. Here then to this abstract, impersonal Autron there is addressed by the subject, more or less without his knowing it, this demand to be fed.

As we have said, every demand, from the fact that it is word, tends to structure itself in the fact that it summons from the Other its inverse response, that it evokes because of its structure its own form transposed according to a certain inversion. To the demand to be fed there responds, because of the signifying structure, at the locus of the Other, in a fashion that one may say to be logically contemporaneous with this demand, at the level of the Autron, the demand to allow oneself to be fed (de se laisser nourrir).

And we know well, in experience this is not the refined elaboration of a fictitious dialogue. We know well that this is what is in question between the child and the mother every time there breaks out in this relationship the slightest conflict in what seems to be constructed to meet, to fit together in a strictly complementary fashion. What in appearance better responds to the demand to be fed than that of allowing oneself to be fed? We know nevertheless that it is in this very mode of confrontation of two the demands that the lies this tiny gap, this beance, this slit in which there can insinuate itself, in which there is normally insinuated the discordance, the preformed failure of this meeting consisting in the very fact that precisely it is not the meeting of tendencies but the meeting of demands. It is into this meeting of the demand to be fed and of the other demand to allow oneself to be fed that there slips the fact, manifested at the first conflict breaking out in the feeding relationship, that a desire overflows this demand and that it cannot be satisfied without this desire being extinguished there. It is in order that this desire which overflows this demand should not be extinguished that even the subject who is hungry (from the fact that to his demand to be fed there responds the demand to allow oneself to be fed) does not allow himself to be fed, refuses in a way to disappear as desire by being satisfied as demand because the extinction or the crushing of the demand in satisfaction cannot happen without killing desire. It is from here that there emerged these discordances of which the most vivid is that of the refusal to allow oneself to feed, of the anorexia more or less correctly described as nervosa (mentale).

We find here this situation which I cannot better express than by

playing on the equivocation of the sonorities of French phonematics, the fact is that one cannot avow the following to the most primordial Other: "tu es le desir", you are the desire", without at the same time saying to her: "tuer le desir", kill the desire" without conceding to her that she kills the desire, without abandoning to her desire as such. And the first ambivalence proper to every demand is that in every demand there is also implied that the subject does not want it to be satisfied, aims in itself at the safeguarding of desire, testifies to the blind presence of the unnamed, blind desire.

What is this desire? We know it in the most classical and most original fashion, it is in so far as the oral demand has another meaning than that of the satisfaction of hunger that it is a sexual demand, that it is fundamentally, Freud tells us since the Three essays on the theory of sexuality, cannibalistic and that cannibalism has a sexual sense (he reminds us that here is what (6) is masked in the first Freudian formulation) that to feed himself is for man linked to the goodwill of the other. Linked to this fact by a polar relationship, there exists also this term that it is not only from the bread of her goodwill that the primitive subject has to feed himself, but well and truly from the body of the one who feeds him. Because things must be called by their name, what we call sexual relationship, is that by which the relationship to the other leads on to a union of bodies. And the most radical union is that of the original absorption to which there points, there is aimed the horizon of cannibalism and which characterises the oral phase for what it is in analytic theory.

Let us carefully observe here what is in question. I took things from the most difficult end by beginning at the origin, even though it is always retroactively, by going backwards that we ought to discover how things are constructed in real development.

There is a theory of libido against which as you know I rebel even though it is one put forward by one of our friends, Alexander, the theory of libido as a surplus of energy which manifests itself in the living being when the satisfaction of needs linked to preservation has been obtained. It is very convenient but it is false because sexual libido is not that. Sexual libido is indeed in effect a surplus but it is this surplus which renders vain any satisfaction of need there where it is placed and, if necessary - it must be said - refuses this satisfaction to preserve the function of desire.

And moreover all of this is only something evident which is everywhere confirmed, as you will see by going back and starting again from the demand to be fed; as you will immediately put your finger on it in the fact that from the simple fact that the tendency of this mouth which is hungry, through this same mouth expressing a signifying chain.... well then, it is in this way that there enters into it the possibility of designating the food that it desires. What food? The first thing which results from it, is that this mouth can say: "Not that!" Negation, the pushing aside, the "I like that and not anything else" of desire

already enters there where there explodes the specificity of the dimension of desire. Hence the extreme prudence that we should have concerning our interventions, our interpretations, at the level of this oral register. Because as I said, this demand is formed at the same point, at the level of the same organ where the tendency emerges. And it is indeed here that there lies the confusion, the possibility of producing all sorts of equivocations by responding to him. Of course, from the fact that he is responded to there results all the same the preservation of this field of the word and the possibility therefore of always discovering in it the place of desire - but also the possibility of all the suggestions of those who try to impose on the subject that since his need is satisfied he should be content with it, from which there results compensated frustration and the end of analytic intervention.

I want to go further and today I really have, as you are going to see, my reasons for doing so. I want to pass on to what is called the stage of anal libido. Because moreover it is here that I believe I can encounter, get to and refute a certain (7) number of confusions which are introduced in the most common fashion in analytic interpretation.

By tackling this term by way of what is the demand at this anal stage, you all have I think enough experience for me not to illustrate any more what I would call the demand to retain excrement, founding no doubt something which is a desire to expel. But here it is not so simple because also this expulsion is also required by the educating parent at a certain moment. Here it is demanded of the subject to give something which would satisfy the expectation of the educator, the maternal one on this occasion.

The elaboration which results from the complexity of the demand is worth our while dwelling on because it is essential. Observe that here is no longer a question of the simple relationship of a need with the liaison to its demanded form but of the sexual surplus. It is something else, it is a disciplining of need that is in question and sexualisation is only produced in the movement of return to need which, as I might say legitimates this need as gift to the mother who is waiting for the child to satisfy his functions which are going to make emerge, make appear something which is worthy of general approbation. Moreover this gift-character of excrement is well known from experience and was spotted from the beginning of analytic experience. To such an extent is an object experienced here in this register that the child, in the excess of his occasional outbursts uses it, one might say, naturally, as a means of expression. The excremental gift forms part of the most antique thematic of analysis.

I would like in this connection to give in a way its final term to this extermination - for which I have always been striving - to the myth of oblativity by showing you here what it really refers to. Because from the moment that you have once seen it, you will no longer be able to recognise otherwise this field of anal dialectic which is the real field of oblativity.

For a long time in different forms I have tried to introduce you to this mapping out and specifically by having always pointed out to you that the very term oblativity is an obsessional phantasy. "Everything for the other" says the obsessional and this indeed is what he does. Because the obsessional being in the perpetual vertigo of the destruction of the Other, can never do enough to allow the other to maintain himself in existence. But here we see its root, the anal stage is characterised by the fact that the subject satisfies a need uniquely for the satisfaction of an other. He has been taught to retain this need uniquely in order that it should be founded, established as the occasion of the satisfaction of the other who is the educator. The satisfaction of babyhood of which wiping the bottom forms a part is first of all that o\_f the other.

And it is properly in so far as something that the subject has is demanded from him as a gift, that one can say that oblativity is linked to the sphere of relationships at the anal stage. And note the consequence of this, which is that here the margin of the place which remains to the subject as such, in other words desire comes to be symbolised in this situation by what is carried away in the operation: desire literally goes down the toilet. The symbolisation of the subject as that which goes into the pot or into the hole on occasion is properly what we encounter in experience as most profoundly linked to the position of anal desire. It is indeed what makes of it both the ..... and also in many cases the avoidance, I mean that we do not always succeed in bringing the insight of the patient to this (8) term. Nevertheless you can assure yourselves each time, in so far as the anal stage is involved, that you would be mistaken not to mistrust the relevance of your analysis if you have not encountered this term.

For that matter moreover, I assure you that from the moment that you have touched on what must be called this precise, neuralgic point, which is just as valuable because of the importance that it has in experience as all the remarks about the good or bad primitive oral objects, as long as you have not located at this point the fundamental, deep-seated relationship of the subject as desire with the most disagreeable object, you will not have taken any great step in the analysis of the conditions of desire. And nevertheless you cannot deny that this reminder is given at every instant in the analytic tradition.

I think that you would not have been able to remain deaf to it for so long except for the fact that things have not been highlighted in their fundamental topology as I am trying to do it for you here.

But then, you will say to me, what about the sexual here and the famous sadistic drive that is conjugated - with the help of a hyphen - to the term anal as if that went simply without saying? It is quite clear that here some effort is necessary of what we cannot call understanding except in so far as it is a question of understanding at the limit. The sexual can only enter in here in a violent fashion. This indeed is what happens here in

effect because moreover it is a sadistic violence that is in question. This still preserves in itself more than one enigma and it would be well for us to dwell on it.

It is precisely in the measure that the other here as such, fully takes over dominance in the anal relationship that the sexual is going to manifest itself in the register which is proper to this stage. We can approach it, we can glimpse it by recalling its antecedent qualified as oral-sadistic (a reminder that in short life fundamentally is devouring assimilation as such) and moreover that this theme of devouring was what was situated at the preceding stage in the margin of desire, this presence of the open maw of life is moreover what is going to appear to you here as a sort of reflection, of phantasy, the fact that when the other is posed as the second term, he must appear as an existence offered up to this gap. Will we go so far as to say that suffering is implied in it? It is a very particular suffering. To evoke a sort of fundamental schema which, I believe, is the one which will best give you the structure of the sado-masochistic phantasy as such, I would say that it is a suffering expected by the other, that it is this suspension of the imaginary other as such above the gulf of suffering which forms the point, the axis of sado-masochistic eroticisation as such, that it is in this relationship that what is no longer the sexual pole but what is going to be the sexual partner is established at the level of the anal stage and that therefore, we can say that it is already a sort of reappearance of the sexual.

What in the anal stage is constituted as sadistic or sado-masochistic structure is, starting from a point of maximum eclipse of the sexual, from a point of pure anal oblativity, the re-ascent towards that which is going to be realised at the genital stage. The preparation of the genital, of human eros, of desire emitted in normal fullness (in order that it may be able to situate itself not as tendency, need, not as pure and simple copulation but as desire) takes its beginnings, finds its starting point, finds its point of reemergence in relationship to the other as undergoing the expectation of this suspended threat, of this virtual attack which founds, which characterises, which (9) justifies for us what is called the sadistic theory of sexuality whose primitive character we know in the great majority of individual cases.

What is more, it is in this situational feature that there is founded the fact that in the origin of this sexualisation of the other that we are dealing with, he must as such be delivered to a third in order to be constituted in this first mode of his apperception as sexual and it is here there lies the origin of this ambiguity, which we know, which ensures that the sexual as such remains, in the original experience which the most recent theoreticians of psychoanalysis were the discoverers of, indeterminate between this third and this other. In the first form of libidinal perception of the other, at the level of this point of re-ascent from a certain punctiforme eclipse of the libido as such, the subject does not know what he most desires, from this other or from the third who intervenes, and this is



essential for the whole structure of sado-masochistic phantasies.

Because the one who constructs this phantasy, let us not forget it, if we have given here a correct analysis of the anal stage, this subject-witness to this pivotal point of the anal stage is indeed what he is, I have just said it: he is shit! And what is more he is demand, he is shit which only demands to be eliminated. This is the true foundation of a whole radical structure that you will find, especially in the phantasies, in the fundamental phantasy of the obsessional in so far as he devalues himself, in so far as he puts outside himself the whole game of the erotic dialectic, that he pretends, as someone has said, to be its organiser. It is on the foundation of his own elimination that he grounds the whole of this phantasy. And things here are rooted in something which, once they are recognised, allow you to elucidate quite commonplace points.

Because if things are really fixed at this point of the identification of the subject to the excremental little o, what are we going to see? Let us not forget that here it is no longer to the organ itself involved in the dramatic knot of need to demand that there is entrusted, at least in principle, the task of articulating this demand. In other words, except in the paintings of Jerome Bosch, one does not speak with one's behind. And nevertheless, we have curious phenomena of cutting, followed by explosions of something which make us glimpse the symbolic function of the excremental ribbon in the very articulation of the word.

Once upon a time, it is a very long time ago and I think there is nobody here who would remember it, there was a sort of little personage.... - there have always been little significant personages in infantile mythology which in reality is of parental origin, in our own day people talk a lot about Pinocchio - at a time which I am old enough to remember there existed Bout de Zan. The phenomenology of the child as precious excremental object is entirely in this designation where the child is identified with the sweetish substance of what is called liquorice, glukurrhiza "the sweet root", which it appears is its Greek origin.

And no doubt it is not in vain that it should be in connection with this word liquorice that we are able to find one of the really - it must be admitted - sugary examples, of the perfect ambiguity of signifying transcriptions. Allow me this little parenthesis. This pearl which I found for your use along my path, this did not happen yesterday, I have kept this for you for a long time but because I meet it in connection with Bout de Zan I am going to give it to you; liquorice (reglisse) then, we are told, is originally glukurrhiza. Of course, this does not come directly from the Greek, but when the Latins heard that, they made of it liquiritia by making use of liqueur whence, in old French, this became licorice, then ricolice by metathesis. Ricolice met up with regle, regula is thus what gives us (10) réglisse. You must admit this encounter of licorice with la regie is really superb. But this is not all, because the conscious etymology at which all of this culminated, on which the

last generations finally came to rest indeed, is that réglisse should be written reygalisse, because réglisse is made from a sweet root which is only found in Galicia, the rai [radix] of Galicia, here is what we get back to after having started - and there is no mistake about it - from the Greek root.

I think that this little demonstration of signifying ambiguities will have convinced you that we are on a solid ground in giving all its importance to it.

When all is said and done, as we have seen, we should more than elsewhere be reserved at the anal level as regards the understanding of the other, precisely because any formulation of his demand implicates Jiim so profoundly that we should look at it twice before going to meet it. And what am I telling you there, if not something which rejoins what you all know, at least those of you who have done a little bit of therapeutic work, namely that with obsessionals you must not give them the least bit of encouragement, of déculpabilisation indeed even of interpretative commentary which goes a little bit too far because then you have to go much further and that, what you would find yourself coming to and conceding to your own great disadvantage, is precisely to this mechanism through which he wants to make you eat, as I might say, his own being as a shit. You are well taught by experience that this is not a process in which you will be of any use to him, quite the contrary.

It is elsewhere that in placing symbolic introjection for oneself in so far as it has to restore the place of desire in him and moreover because - to anticipate what is going to be the next stage - what the neurotic most usually wants to be is the phallus, it is certainly to shortcircuit inappropriately the satisfactions to be given to him to offer him this phallic communion against which as you know that, in my seminar on Desire and its interpretation, I already brought forward the most precise objections. I mean that the phallic object as imaginary object cannot in any case lend itself to revealing in a complete fashion the fundamental phantasy. To the demand of the neurotic, it can only in fact respond by something which we can call in general an obliteration, in other words a way which is offered to him of forgetting a certain number of the most essential principles which played a part in the accidents of his access to the field of desire.

In order to mark a pause in our journey and what we have put forward today we are saying the following, that if the neurotic is unconscious that is to say repressed desire, it is above all in the measure that his desire undergoes the eclipse of a counter-demand. This locus of the counter-demand is properly speaking the same as the one where there is placed, where there is built up subsequently everything that from the outside may be added on as a supplement to the construction of the super-ego. A certain fashion of satisfying this counter-demand ..... every premature mode of interpretation in so far as it understands too quickly, in so far as it does not perceive that what is most important to understand in the demand of the analysand is what is

beyond this demand - it is the incomprehensible margin which is that of desire - it is in this measure that an analysis stops prematurely and in a word, fails.

(11) Of course the trap is that in interpreting you give the subject something to feed himself on, the word even the book which is behind it, and that the word remains all the same the locus of desire, even if you give it in such a way that this locus is not recognisable, I mean that if this locus remains, for the desire of the subject, uninhabitable.

To respond to the demand for food, to the frustrated demand in a nourishing signifier is something which leaves elided the following, that beyond any food of the word, what the subject really needs is what it signifies metonymically, it is that which is not at any point of this word and therefore that each time you introduce - no doubt you are obliged to do it - the metaphor, you remain on the same path which gives consistency to the symptom, no doubt a more simplified symptom but still a symptom, in any case with respect to the desire that it is a question of separating out.

If the subject is in this singular relationship to the object of desire, it is because he himself was first of all an object of desire which was incarnated. The word as locus of desire, is this Poros in whom there is every resource. And desire - Socrates originally taught you to articulate it - is above all lack of resource, aporia. This absolute aporia approaches the sleeping word and becomes pregnant with its object. What does that mean, if not that the object was there and that it was what demanded to come to light.

The Platonic metaphor of metempsychosis, of the wandering soul which hesitates before knowing where it is going to dwell, finds its support, its truth and its substance in this object of desire which is there before its birth. And Socrates, without knowing it, when he praises, epainei, eulogises Agathon, does what he wants to do, to bring back Alcibiades to his soul by bringing to light this object which is the object of his desire, this object which is the goal and end for each one, limited no doubt because the "all" is beyond, cannot be conceived of except as beyond this end of each.

We are again going to wander, I feel inclined to say, through the labyrinth of the position of desire. A certain returning to, a certain labouring of the subject, a certain Durcharbeitung, as they say, appears necessary to me - I already indicated this the last time and indicated why - for an exact positioning of the function of transference.

This is why I will come back today to underline the meaning of what I told you the last time by bringing you back to the examination of what are called the phases of the migration of the libido in the erogenous zones. It is very important to see the measure in which the naturalist view implied in this definition is resolved, is articulated in our way of enunciating it in so far as it is centred on the relationship of demand and of desire.

From the beginning of this journey I have stressed that desire preserves, maintains its place in the margin of demand as such; that it is this margin of demand which constitutes its locus; that, to highlight what I mean here, it is in a beyond and a hither in this double hollow which is already delineated once the cry of hunger passes to the stage of being articulated; that at the other extreme we see that the object which is called the nipple in English, the tip of the breast, the mamelon, takes on at the term of human eroticism its value as agalma, as marvel, as precious object becoming the support of this pleasurable sensation, of this pleasure of a nibbling in which there is perpetuated what we can truly call a sublimated voracity in so far as it takes this Lust, this pleasure and moreover these Lüste, these desires (you know the equivocation that the German term preserves in itself which is expressed in this sliding of signification produced by the passage from the singular to the plural) therefore this oral object takes its pleasure and its desires, its covetousness, from elsewhere.

This is why, by an inversion of the usage of the term sublimation, I have the right to say that here we see this deviation as regards the goal in the inverse direction to the object of a need. In effect, it is not from primitive hunger that the erotic value of this privileged object here takes its substance, the eros which dwells in it comes nachtraglich, by retroaction and only in a deferred manner, and it is in the

oral demand that the place of this desire has been hollowed out.  
(2) If the demand with the beyond of love that it projects did not exist, there would not be this place hither, of desire, which constitutes itself around a privileged object. The oral phase of sexual libido requires this place hollowed out by demand.

It is important to see whether the fact of presenting things in this way does not involve some specification which one could brand as being too partial. Should we not take literally what Freud presents to us in one or other of his enunciations as the pure and simple migration of an organic, mucous erogeneity as I might call it; and moreover could one not say that I am neglecting natural facts, namely for example instinctual, devouring motions which we find in nature linked to the sexual cycle (cats eating their young); and moreover the great phantastical figure of the praying mantis which haunts the analytical amphitheatre is presented there as a mother-image, as a matrix of the function attributed to what is so boldly, perhaps after all so inappropriately, called the castrating mother.

Yes, of course, I myself in my analytic initiation was happy to take on the support of this image, so richly echoing for us the natural domain, which is presented for us in the unconscious phenomenon. To meet this objection you can suggest to me the necessity of some correction in the theoretical line - I believe I can satisfy you as well as myself.

I dwelt for a moment on what this image represents and asked myself in a certain fashion what in effect a simple glance thrown on the diversity of animal ethology shows us, namely the luxuriant richness of perversions. Someone well-known, my friend Henri Ey, has looked carefully at this subject of animal perversions which go further after all than anything that human imagination has been able to invent: I believe that he even devoted an edition of L'evolution psychiatrique to it. Taking things in this register, do we not see ourselves brought back to the Aristotelian point of view of a sort of field outside the human field as the basis of perverse desires? This is where I would stop you for a moment by asking you to consider what we are doing when we dwell on this phantasy of natural perversion.

I am not overlooking that in asking you to follow me onto this terrain how fastidious, speculative such a reflection may appear to you but I believe that it is necessary in order to decant what is both founded and unfounded in this reference. And moreover through this we are going - you are going to see it right away - to find ourselves rejoining what I designate as fundamental in subjectivication, as the essential moment in the whole establishment of the dialectic of desire.

To subjectivise the praying mantis on this occasion, is to suppose for it, which is not excessive, a sexual jouissance. And after all we do not know anything about it, the praying mantis is perhaps, as Descartes did not hesitate to say, a pure and simple machine - a machine, in his language, which precisely supposes the elimination of all subjectivity. We have no need,

for our part, to limit ourselves to these minimal positions, we grant it this jouissance..... this jouissance, this is the next stop, is it a jouissance of something in so far as it destroys it? Because it is only starting from there that it can indicate for us the intentions of nature.

(3) In order to highlight immediately what is essential, in order that it should be for us some sort of model of what is in question, namely oral cannibalism, or primordial eroticism, I designate this right away, it is necessary properly speaking that we should imagine here this jouissance correlative to the decapitation of the partner which it is supposed in some degree to recognise as such. I do not disdain this because in truth it is animal ethology which for us is the major reference for maintaining this dimension of knowing that all the progress of our knowledge nevertheless renders for us, in the human world, so vascillating as to be identified properly speaking to the dimension of miscognition, of Verkennung as Freud says; a simple remark, the observation elsewhere in the field of living things of this imaginary Erkennung, of this privilege of the counterpart which goes so far in certain species as to reveal itself for us in its organogenic effects. I will not return to this old example around which I oriented for you my exploration of the imaginary at the time when I was beginning to articulate something of what is coming, after years, to maturity - to maturity before you, my doctrine of analysis - the female pigeon in so far as she does not reach completion as a pigeon except by seeing her pigeon image for which a little mirror in the cage may suffice, and also the cricket who does not go through his stages unless he has encountered another cricket.

There is no doubt that not only in what fascinates us, but in what fascinates the male of the praying mantis, there is this erection of a fascinating form, this deployment, this attitude from which for us it draws its name, the praying mantis, it is singularly from this position (not of course without opening the way for us to some vacillating reversal or other) which presents itself to our eyes as that of prayer. We notice that it is before this phantasy, this incarnated phantasy, that the male yields, that he is taken, summoned, aspirated, captivated in the embrace which for him is going to be fatal.

It is clear that the image of the imaginary other as such is here present in the phenomenon, that it is not excessive to suppose that something is revealed here about this image of the other. But does it mean for all that that there is already some préfiguration, a sort of inverse blue-print of what would therefore be presented in man as a sort of remainder, of sequel, of defined possibility of variations in the operation of natural tendencies? And if we ought to accord some value to this properly speaking monstrous example, we cannot all the same do other than remark the difference to what is presented in human phantasy (that from which we can begin with certainty from the subject, there alone where we are assured of it, namely in so far as it is the support of the signifying chain), we cannot therefore fail to remark that in what nature presents us with

there is, from the act to its excess, to that which overflows and accompanies it, to this devouring surplus which signals it for us as the example of another instinctual structure, the fact is that there is synchrony here: the fact is that it is at the moment of the act that there is exercised this complement exemplifying for us the paradoxical form of instinct. Henceforward, is there not outlined here a limit which allows us to define strictly the way in which what is exemplified is of service to us, but is only of service to us in order to give us the form of what we mean when we talk about a desire.

If we talk about the jouissance of this other who is the praying (4) mantis, if it interests us on this occasion, it is because, either it enjoys (jouit) there where the male organ is, and also it enjoys elsewhere, but wherever it enjoys - something we will never know anything about, but it does not matter - that it should enjoy elsewhere only takes on its meaning from the fact that it enjoys - or it does not enjoy, it does not matter - there. Let her enjoy where she likes, this has no meaning, in the value that this image takes on, except from the relationship to a there of virtual enjoying. But when all is said and done in synchrony (whatever may be in question), it will never after all be, even in a deviant way, anything but a copulatory jouissance. I mean that, in the infinite diversity of instinctual mechanisms in nature, we can easily discover all the possible forms, including the one in which the organ of copulation is lost in loco in the consummation itself. We can moreover consider that the act of devouring is there one of the numerous forms of the bonus which is given to the individual partner of copulation in so far as it is ordered to its specific end in order to keep him in the act which it is a question of allowing.

The exemplary character therefore of the image that is proposed to us only begins at the precise point that we have no right to go to, namely that this devouring of the cephalic extremity of the partner by the praying mantis is something which is marked by the fact that this is accomplished by the mandibles of the female partner which participate as such in the properties which constitute, in living nature, the cephalic extremity, namely a certain collection of the individual tendency as such, namely the possibility in some register that it exercises a discernment, a choice. In other words, the praying mantis likes the head of her partner better than anything else, there is here a preference, malle, mavult, that is what she likes. And it is in so far as she likes that that for us, in the image, she shows herself as enjoying (jouissant) at the expense of the other, and in a word, that we begin to put into natural functions what is in question, namely some moral sense, in other words, that we enter into the Sadian dialectic as such.

This preference for jouissance to any reference to the other is revealed as the dimension of essential polarity in nature. It is only too clear that it is we who contribute this moral sense, but that we contribute it in the measure that we discover the meaning of desire as this relationship to something which, in

the other, chooses this partial object. Here again let us pay a little more attention. Is this example fully valid as a way of illustrating for us this preference for the part rather than the whole, precisely illustratable in the erotic value of the extremity of the nipple of which I spoke above? I am not so sure, in so far as it is less, in this image of the praying mantis, the part which would be preferred to the whole in the most horrible fashion allowing us already to short-circuit the function of metonymy, than rather the whole which is preferred to the part.

Let us not in effect omit that, even in an animal structure so distant from us in appearance as that of the insect, the value of concentration, of reflection, of totality represented somewhere in the cephalic extremity undoubtedly functions and, that in any case, in phantasy, in the image which attracts us, there operates with its particular accentuation this acephalisation of the partner as it is presented to us here. And, in a word, the value of the praying mantis as a fable (the one which underlies what it represents effectively in a certain mythology or simply a folklore) in everything that Caillouis put the accent on under the (5) register of the myth and the sacred, which is his first work.... it does not appear that he sufficiently highlighted that we are here in poetry, in something whose accent does not depend simply on a reference to the relationship to the oral object as it is delineated in the koine of the unconscious, the common tongue, but in something more accentuated, in something which designates for us a certain link of acephalousness with the transmission of life as such.

In designating the fact that there is, in this passing of the flame from one individual to another, in a signified eternity of the species, that the telos is not passed on by the head, this is what gives to the image of the mantis its tragic sense which, as you see, has nothing to do with the preference for what is called an oral object which, does not on any occasion, in human phantasy in any case, refer to the head.

It is something quite different that is in question in the liaison with the oral phase of human desire. That which is outlined as a reciprocal identification of the subject to the object of oral desire, is something which is on the way - experience shows it to us immediately - to a constitutive fragmentation, to these fragmentary images which were recently evoked during our journées provinciales as being linked to some primitive terror or other which seemed, I do not know why for the authors, to take on some value as a disturbing designation, even though it is indeed the most fundamental, the most widespread, the most common phantasy at the origin of all the relationships of man to his somatic existence. The fragments from the anatomy building which people the celebrated image of St. George de Carpaccio in the little church of Sainte-Marie-des-Anges in Venice are indeed that which, I believe, with or without analysis, never fail to present themselves at the level of the dream in every individual experience, and moreover in this register, the head which walks around all by itself continues



very well, as in Cazotte, to tell its little stories.

This is not what is important. And the discovery of analysis, is that the subject, in the field of the Other, encounters not simply the images of his own fragmentation but, already from the beginning, the objects of the desire of the Other, namely of the mother, not just in their fragmented state but with the privileges that the desire of the mother accords them. In others words, that there is one of these objects that he encounters, and which is the paternal phallus already encountered with the first phantasies of the subject, Melanie Klein tells us, at the origin of the fandum, he must speak, he is going to speak. Already in the inner empire, in this interior of the body of the mother where there are projected the first imaginary formations, something is perceived which distinguishes itself as more specially accentuated, even dangerous: the paternal phallus. On the field of the desire of the Other, the subjective object already encounters identifiable occupants at whose ell, as I might say, at whose rate he has already to value himself and to weigh himself, and pose these differently modelled little weights which are in use in primitive tribes of Africa where you see a little twisted-up animal, or even indeed some phalloform object as such.

(6) At this phantastical level therefore, the privilege of the image of the mantis is uniquely the fact - which is not after all so certain - that the mantis is supposed to eat her males one after another, and that this passage to the plural is the essential dimension through which it takes on for us a phantastical value.

Here then there is defined this oral phase. It is only within the demand that the Other is constituted as the reflection of the hunger of the subject. The Other therefore is not at all simply hunger, but articulated hunger, hunger which demands. And the subject by this is open to becoming object, but, as I might say, of a hunger which chooses. The transition is made from hunger to eroticism along the path of what I called above a preference. She likes something, that especially, in what one might call a gluttonous way.... here we find ourselves reintroduced into the register of original sins. The subject has placed himself on the a la carte menu of cannibalism which everyone knows is never absent from any communion phantasy.

Read this author whom I speak to you about throughout the years returning in a sort of periodical way, Baltasar Gracian. Obviously only those of you who understand Spanish will be able to find in it, unless they have it translated, their complete satisfaction. Translated very early, as people translated at the time, almost instantaneously throughout Europe - all the same some things remain untranslated. It is a treatise about communion, el Comulgatorio, which is a good text in this sense there is revealed there something which is rarely admitted, the pleasures of consuming the Corpus Christi, the body of Christ, are detailed there. And we are asked to dwell on this exquisite cheek, on this delicious arm, I will spare you the rest in which

spiritual concupiscence is satisfied, lingers on, revealing to us in this way what always remains implied in even the most elaborated forms of oral identification.

In opposition to this thematic in which you see there being deployed by the virtue of the signifier in a whole field already created to be inhabited secondarily, the most original tendency, it is really in opposition to this that the last time I wanted to show you a meaning of the anal demand ordinarily little or badly articulated, by showing you that it is characterised by a complete reversal of the initiative for the benefit of the other. It is properly here that there lies - namely at a stage not so obviously advanced or certain in our normative ideology - the source of the discipline - I have not said the duty - the discipline, as people say, of cleanliness (proprete\*) in which the French tongue so nicely marks the oscillation with proprietorship (propriete), with that which properly belongs, education, good manners as I might say. Here the demand is exterior, and at the level of the other, and is posed, articulated as such.

The strange thing is that we have to see and recognise here, in what has always been said and which it seems no one has really dealt with, that here there properly comes to birth the gift-object as such, and that what the subject can give in this metaphor is exactly linked to what he can retain, namely his own waste, his excrement.

It is impossible not to see something exemplary, something which it is properly speaking indispensable to designate as the radical point at which there is decided the projection of the desire of the subject into the other. There is a point of the phase at which desire is articulated and is constituted, at which the other is properly speaking its rubbish dump. And one is not surprised to see that the idealists of the theme of a "hominisation" of the cosmos - or as they are forced to express it in our day, of the planet.... one of the phases of the (7) "hominisation" of the planet, is that the man-animal makes of it properly speaking a refuse dump, a rubbish dump. The most ancient testimonies that we have of human agglomerations as such, are enormous pyramids of broken shells, which has a name in Scandanavian. It is not for nothing that things are so. What is more it seems that if it is necessary some day to reconstruct the mode by which man has introduced himself to the field of the signifier, it is in these first heaps that it will have to be designated.

Here the subject designates himself in the evacuated object as such. Here is, as I might say, the zero point of desire. It reposes entirely on the effect of the demand of the Other. The Other decides about it, and indeed it is here that we find the root of this dependency of the neurotic. Here is the tangible point, the tangible note through which the desire of the neurotic is characterised as pregenital. It is in so far as he depends to such a degree on the demand of the Other that what the neurotic demands from the Other in his neurotic demand for love, is that he should be allowed to do something from this place of

desire, that it is this place of desire which manifestly remains to a certain degree dependent on the demand of the Other. Because the only sense that we could give to the genital stage in so far as at this place of desire there might reappear something which would have the right to call itself a natural desire - even though given its noble antecedents it can never be it - the fact is that desire must indeed one day appear as that which is not demanded, as aiming at what one does not demand. And then do not rush to say that it is what one takes for example, because anything you say will never do anything except make you fall again into the little machinery of demand.

Natural desire has, properly speaking, this dimension of never being able to be said in any way, and this indeed is the reason why you will never have any natural desire, because the Other is already installed at the place, the Other with a big O, as the one where there reposes the sign. And the sign is enough to set up the question: Che vuoi? What do you want? To which at first the subject can respond nothing, always delayed by the question in the response that it solicits. A sign represents something for someone and, for want of knowing what the sign represents, the subject becomes that question, when sexual desire appears, loses the someone to whom the question is addressed namely himself - and gives birth to the anxiety of little Hans.

Here there is delineated this something which, prepared by the furrow of the fracture of the subject by the demand, is set up in the relationship that for an instant we are going to consider as it is often considered, isolated, of the child and the mother. The mother of little Hans - and moreover all mothers, "I am calling on all mothers", as someone once said - distinguishes her position in the fact that she marks, for that which begins to appear as a little wagging, as a little trembling not to be doubted in the first wakening of sexual genitality as such in Hans: "That's really dirty", desire is disgusting, this desire that he cannot describe. But this is strictly correlative to an interest which is no less doubtful in something which is here the object, the one to which we have learned to give all its importance, namely the phallus.

In what is no doubt an allusive but not ambiguous fashion, how many mothers, all mothers, confronted with little Hans' little tap, or something else, however it is called, will have thoughts like: (8) "My little son is very well endowed", or indeed: "You will have lots of children". In short, the appreciation qua brought to bear on the object, it well and truly partial, again here is something which contrasts with the refusal of desire. Here, at the very moment of the encounter with what solicits the subject in the mystery of desire, the division is established between this object which becomes the mark of a privileged interest, this object which becomes the agalma, the pearl at the heart of the individual (who here trembles around the pivotal point of his advent to living plenitude) and at the same time of a debasement of the subject. He is appreciated as object, he is depreciated as desire.

And it is around this that there is going to turn this establishment of the register of having, that the affair is going to be played out. The matter is important enough for us to dwell on it, I will go into further detail.

The thematic of having I have been announcing to you for a long time by formulae such as the following, love is giving what one does not have, of course, because you see clearly that, when the child gives what he has, it is at the preceding stage. What does he not have, and in what sense? It is not towards the phallus (even though one could make the dialectic of being and having revolve around it) that you ought to direct your gaze to understand properly what is the new dimension that the entry into the phallic drama introduces. What he does not have, what he does not dispose of at this point of birth, of revelation of genital desire, is nothing other than his act. He has nothing but a draft on the future. He establishes the act in the field of project.

I would ask you to notice here the force of linguistic determinants through which, just as desire took on in the conjunction of Romance languages this connotation of desiderium, of mourning and of regret, it is not nothing that the primitive forms of the future should have been abandoned in favour of a reference to having. Je chanterai, is exactly what you see written: je chanter-ai, effectively this comes from cantare habeo. The decadent Romance tongue found the surest path the true sense of the future: I shall make love later, I have making love as a draft on the future, je desirer'ai. And moreover this habeo leads on to the debeo of the symbolic debt, to a habeo that is deprived. And it is in the future that this debt is conjugated when it takes the form of commandment: "Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother", etc.

But - and it is here that I want today only to keep you on the verge of what results from this articulation, which no doubt is slow, but done precisely so that you will not rush too quickly into it - the object in question, separated from desire, the object phallus, it is not the simple specification, the homologue, the homonym of the imaginary little o into which there collapses the fullness of the Other, of the big O. It is not a specification which has finally come to light of what had previously been the oral object, the anal object. It is something - as I indicated to you from the start, at the beginning of this discourse today, when I marked out for you the first encounter of the subject with the phallus - it is a privileged object in the field of the Other. It is an object which comes by way of deduction from the status of the Other, of the big Other as such. In other words, the little o, at the level of genital desire and of the castration phase, whose precise articulation all of this as you clearly perceive is constructed in order to introduce you to, the little o is the  $0$  minus phi,  $o = 0 - \phi$ . In others words it is from this angle that the © (phi) comes to symbolise what is lacking to the  $0$  in order to be the noetic  $0$ , the  $0$  in full exercise, the Other in so far as one can trust its response to the demand. The desire of

this noetic Other is an enigma, and this enigma is tied into the (9) structural foundation of its castration. It is here that there is going to be inaugurated the whole dialectic of castration.

Pay attention now not to confuse either this phallic object with this same sign which would be the sign at the level of the Other of its lack of response, the lack of which there is question here is the lack of the desire of the Other. The function that this phallus is going to take on in so far as it is encountered in the field of the imaginary, is not to be identical to the Other, as designated by the lack of a signifier, but to be the root of this lack. It is the Other who is constituted in what is certainly a privileged relationship to this object ( $\phi$ ), but a complex relationship. It is here that we are going to find the point of what constituted the impasse and the problem of love which is that the subject cannot satisfy the demand of the Other except by lowering it again, by making of him, this other, the object of his desire.



Seminary 16;      Wednesday 12 April 1961

It is not because one" may seem to have diverted from what is at the centre of your preoccupations that one does not rediscover it at the extreme periphery. This is what, I believe, happened to me almost without my noticing it in the Borghese Gallery in the most unexpected place. My experience has always taught me to look at what is near the lift, which is often significant and which people never look at. The experience transferred to the museum of the Borghese Gallery (which is quite applicable to a museum) made me turn my head on leaving the lift thanks to which I saw something - at which people really never stop, I have never heard anyone ever speak about it - a picture by someone called Zucchi.

He is not a very well known painter, even though he has not completely escaped from the meshes of the critical net. He is what is called a Mannerist from the first period of Mannerism, in the XVIth century. His dates are approximately 1547-1590, and what is in question is a painting called "Psyche surprises Amore", namely Eros.

It is the classical scene of Psyche raising her little lamp on Eros who for some time has been her never glimpsed nightly lover. You have of course, I think, some idea of this classical drama. Psyche favoured by this extraordinary love, that of Eros himself, enjoys a happiness which could have been perfect if she had not been overtaken with curiosity to see who was involved. It is not that she had not been warned by her lover himself never to try, under any circumstances, to throw light on him, without him being able to say what sanction would result from it, but the insistence is extreme. Nevertheless Psyche cannot do otherwise than end up doing it and, at that moment, the misfortunes of Psyche begin. I cannot tell you them all. I would like first of all to show you what is in question, because moreover this is what is important in my discovery. I obtained two copies of it and I am going to pass them round. I reduplicated these two reproductions with a sketch done by a painter who even those who do not know my family relationships will I hope recognise, and who was kind enough this morning, because of a wish to please me, to make for you this sketch which will allow me to highlight what is in question in the demonstration. You see that the sketch corresponds in its significant lines at least to what I am in the process of circulating.

(2) I thought I should see this place on the Palatine that Commandant Boni, about fifty years ago I think, thought he could identify with what the Latin authors call the Mundus■ I managed to go down into it, but I'm afraid that it is nothing more than a cistern, and I managed to get a sore throat there....

I do not know if you have already seen the subject of Eros and Psyche treated in this fashion. For my part what struck me (this has been treated in innumerable ways, both in sculpture and in painting) .... I never saw Psyche appearing armed in a work of art, as she is in this picture, with what is represented there very vividly as a little cutting instrument and which is precisely a scimitar in this picture. On the other hand, you will notice that what is here significantly projected in the form of the flower, and of the bouquet of which it forms a part and of the vase also in which it is inserted, you will see in the picture in a very intense, very marked fashion, that this flower is properly speaking the visual mental centre of the picture. It is so in the following fashion, this bouquet and this flower are put in the foreground and are seen, as they say, against the light, namely that this looks here like a black mass; it is this which is treated in a fashion that gives to this picture the character that one can call Mannerist. It is drawn in an extremely refined way. There would certainly be things to say about the flowers which are chosen in this bouquet.

But around the bouquet, coming from behind the bouquet, there radiates an intense light which falls on the elongated thighs and the stomach of the personage who symbolises Eros. And it is really impossible not to see here, designated in the most precise fashion and as it were by the most solidly supported index, the organ which must anatomically be concealed behind this mass of flowers, namely very precisely the phallus of Eros. This is seen in the very manner of the picture, accentuated in such a fashion that it cannot be a question here of an analytic interpretation, that there cannot fail to be presented in the representation the thread which unites this menace of the cutting instrument to what is properly speaking designated for us here. In a word, it is worthwhile designating the thing precisely because of the fact that it is not frequent in art. Judith and Holofernes have been frequently represented for us, but all the same for Holofernes, it is not what is in question here, it is "off with his head". In such a way that the very gesture, stretching out, of the other arm which holds the lamp is something which is also made in order to evoke for us all the resonances precisely of this type of other picture to which I am alluding. The lamp is there suspended above the head of Eros. You know that in the story it is a drop of oil spilt in a rather sudden movement by a very emotional Psyche, which has woken Eros causing him, the story moreover specifies it for us, a wound from which he suffers for a long time.

Let us observe in order to be scrupulously careful that, in the reproduction that you have before your eyes, you can see that there is something in effect like a luminous trait which starts from the lamp and goes towards the shoulder of Eros.



Nevertheless the obliqueness of this trait does not allow it to be thought that it is a question of this drop of oil, but of a shaft of light. Some people will think that there is here (3) something which is in effect quite remarkable and which represents on the part of the artist an innovation, and therefore an intention which we could unambiguously attribute to him, I mean that of representing the threat of castration applied to the circumstances of loving. I think we would have to beat a hasty retreat if we were to advance in this direction.

We would have to beat a hasty retreat from it because of the fact that I highlighted for you.... a point already highlighted, but which I hope has already struck some of you, it is that this story is only known to us, despite its diffusion in the history of art, through a single text, the text of Apulius, in The golden ass. I hope for your own pleasure that you have read The golden ass, it is, I must say, a very exciting text. If, as has always been said, certain truths are included in this book, I can tell you in a mythical and picturesque form veritable esoteric and initiatory secrets, it is a truth wrapped up in the most shimmering, not to say the most arousing, the most titillating appearances. Because as it first appears, it is in fact something which has not yet been superseded, even by the most recent productions with which we have been regaled in France these last years in the most characteristic erotic genre, with the whole nuance of sadomasochism which constitutes the most common aspect of the erotic novel.

It is in effect in the middle of a horrible story about the kidnapping of a young girl, accompanied by the most terrifying threats to which she finds herself exposed in the company of the ass (the one who speaks in the first person in the novel) it is in an interlude, something included within this very spicy story, that an old woman, in order to distract for a moment the girl in question, the kidnap victim, recounts to her at length the story of Eros and Psyche.

Now what I highlighted for you above, is that it is as a result of the perfidious insistence of her sisters who will not rest until they lead her to fall into the trap, to violate the promises that she had made to her divine lover, that Psyche succumbs. And the final method of her sisters is to suggest that what is in question is a terrifying monster, a serpent of most hideous aspect, that undoubtedly she is in some danger with him. After which the mental short-circuit is produced namely that, noticing the recommendations, the extremely insistent prohibitions to which her nocturnal interlocutor has recourse, imposes on her by enjoining that in no case should she violate his very severe prohibition not to try to see him, she can only too clearly see the coincidence between this recommendation and what her sisters are suggesting to her. And it is then that she takes the fatal step.

In order to take it, given what has been suggested to her, what she thinks she is going to find, she arms herself. And in this sense we can say - despite the fact that the history of art does

not give us any other testimony as far as I know, I would be grateful if someone stimulated now by my remarks brought me proof to the contrary - [that if Psyche] has been represented at this significant moment as armed, it is indeed from the text of Apuleius that the Mannerist in question, Zucchi, has therefore borrowed what constituted the originality of the scene.

What does that mean? Zucchi represents for us this scene the story of which is very widespread. At the time already it is very widespread for all sorts of reasons. If we have only a single literary testimony, we have many in the order of plastic and (4) figurative representations. It is said for example that the group which is in the museum of the Offices in Florence represents an Eros with a Psyche, both winged this time (you can notice that here if Eros has them, Psyche does not). Psyche herself winged with the wings of a butterfly. I have in my possession for example Alexandrian objects in which Psyche is represented under different aspects and frequently furnished with butterfly's wings; the butterfly's wings on this occasion are the sign of the immortality of the soul. The butterfly having been for a very long time (given the phases of the metamorphosis that it undergoes, namely born at first in the shape of a caterpillar of a larva, it envelops itself in this sort of tomb, of sarcophagus, enveloped in a fashion which is even going to recall the mummy where it remains until it reemerges into the light in a glorified form).... the thematic of the butterfly, as signifying the immortality of the soul had already appeared since antiquity, and not only in different peripheral religions, but moreover was even used and still is in the Christian religion as symbolic of the immortality of the soul.

It is in fact very difficult to deny that it is a question of what one can call the misfortunes or the misadventures of the soul in this story of which we have only, as I am telling you, a mythological text as basis, foundation of its transmission in antiquity, the text of Apuleius. In this text of Apuleius, whatever may be thought of it by authors accentuating in different ways the religious and spiritual significations of the thing and who, gladly, would find that in Apuleius we only find what is properly speaking a debased, romantic form which does not permit us to reach the original import of the myth, despite these allegations, I think on the contrary that the text of Apuleius - if you refer to it you will see it - is on the contrary extremely rich. In the sense that this point that is in question, the one that is represented here in this moment by the painting, is only the beginning of the story, despite the fact that already we have the previous phase of what one can call not only the happiness of Psyche, but a first test namely that Psyche is at the beginning considered as being as beautiful as Venus and that it is already through the effects of a first persecution by the gods that she finds herself exposed to the fact from a rock (another form of the myth of Andromeda), to something which is going to seize her, which must be a monster and which is found in fact to be Eros (to whom Venus had given the charge of delivering her over to the one of whom she must be the victim). But he, in short, seduced by the one to whom he has been delegated by the cruel orders of his

mother, takes her away and installs her in this profoundly hidden place where she can enjoy in short the happiness of the gods.

The story would have ended there if poor Psyche did not have a different nature than the divine nature and did not show among other weaknesses the most deplorable family feelings, namely that she will not rest before having obtained from Eros, her unknown spouse, permission to see her sisters again - and you see that here the story takes up again... Therefore, before this moment there is a short period, a short moment previous to the story, but the whole story stretches out afterwards. I am not going to go right through it with you because this goes beyond our subject.

(5) What I want simply to say to you, is that when Jacopo Zucchi produces this little masterpiece for us, it was not unknown, neither more nor less than through the brush of Raphael himself because, for example, you know that it is displayed on the ceiling and on the walls of this charming Farnese palace. They are lovely scenes, almost too lovely. We are no longer, it seems, able to tolerate a sort of prettiness in which for us there seems to be degraded that which ought to have appeared, the first time that the type emerged from the brilliant brush of Raphael, as a surprising beauty. In truth, one must always take into account the fact that, when a certain prototype, a certain form appears, it must make a completely different impression from what it is when it has been not only reproduced thousands of times but imitated thousands of times. In short, these paintings of Raphael at the Farnese give us a development, scrupulously based on the text of Apuleius, of the misadventures of Psyche.

In order that you should not doubt that Psyche is not a woman, but indeed the soul, let it suffice for me to tell you that, for example, she is going to have recourse to Demeter who is presentified here with all the instruments, all the weapons of her mysteries (and in fact here it is a question of the mysteries of Eleusis) and that she is rejected by her. Demeter desires above all not to get into the bad books of her sister-in-law Venus. And all that is in question is the following, it is that in short, the unfortunate soul, because she has fallen and committed at the beginning a faux pas of which she is not even guilty (because at the beginning this jealousy of Venus comes from nothing other than the fact that she is considered by Venus as a rival) finds herself tossed out, repelled from any help, even religious sources of help. And one could even carry out a little phenomenology of the unhappy soul compared to that of the conscience qualified by the same name.

In connection with this very pretty story of Psyche, we must not therefore deceive ourselves in this regard, the thematic of which there is question here is not that of the couple. It is not a question of the relationships of man and woman, it is a question of something which - you really have only to be able to read in order to see that this is only really hidden because it is in the foreground and too obvious, as in "The purloined letter" - is

nothing other than the relationships of the soul to desire.

It is in this that the composition - I do not believe I am forcing things in saying that it is extremely gripping - of this picture, could be said to isolate for us in an exemplary fashion this tangible character imaged by the intensity of the image which is produced here, to isolate what could be a structural analysis of the myth of Apuleius which still remains to be done. You know enough about it, I told you enough about what a structural analysis of a myth is for you to know at least that such a thing exists. In Claude Lévi-Strauss the structural analysis of a certain number of North American myths is carried out, I do not see why one would not give oneself over to the same sort of analysis with regard to the fable of Apuleius.

Naturally we are, it is a curious thing, less well served for the things that are closest to us than for others which appear to us to be more distant as regards sources, namely that we have only one version of this myth, when all is said and done that of Apuleius. But it does not seem to be impossible, within the myth, to operate in a sense which would allow there to be thrown (6) into relief in it a certain number of significant opposing couples. By means of such an analysis, I would say, without the help of the painter, we would perhaps run the risk of allowing there to go unnoticed the really primordial and original character of the moment, of nevertheless the best known moment, moreover everyone knows that what has remained in the collective memory about the meaning of the myth is indeed the following, it is that Eros flees and disappears because little Psyche had been in short too curious and what is more disobedient.

what is in question, what is concealed, what is hidden behind this well-known moment of the myth and of the story, would be if we are to believe what the intuition of the painter reveals to us here, nothing other therefore than this decisive moment. Certainly, it is not the first time that we see it appearing in an antique myth, but whose value as an accent, whose crucial character, whose pivotal character had to wait in short for many long centuries before being, by Freud, put in the centre of the psychical thematic. It is for this reason that it is not a waste of time, having made this discovery, to tell you about it, because in short it happens to designate - in the tiny image which will remain, because of the very time that I am consecrating to it this morning, imprinted in your spirits - it happens to illustrate that which today I can scarcely designate otherwise than the meeting point of two registers, that of the instinctual dynamic in so far as I have taught you to consider it as marked by the effects of the signifier, and to permit therefore to accentuate also at this level how the castration complex ought to be articulated, cannot even be fully articulated except by considering this instinctual dynamic as structured by this mark of the signifier. And at the same time, this is the value of the image, to show us that there is therefore a super-imposition or a super-impression, a common centre, a vertical direction at this point of production of the castration complex into which we are now going to enter. Because you see that it

is here that I left you the last time having taken up the thematic of desire and demand in the chronological order, but in repeating to you at every instant that this divergence, this splitting, this difference between desire and demand which marks with its stroke all the first stages of libidinal evolution, and is determined by the nachtraglich action, by something retroactive coming from a certain point where the paradox of desire and of demand appears with the minimum of eclat, and which is really that of the genital stage, in so far as it appears that the same desire and demand should at least be able to be distinguished there.

They are marked by this stroke of division, of explosion which, for analysts, consider it carefully, must still be, if you read the authors a problem, I mean a question, an enigma more avoided still than resolved and which is called the castration complex.

Thanks to this image, you have to see that the castration complex, in its structure, in its instinctual dynamic is centred in such a way that it overlaps exactly what we could call the point of the birth of the soul.

For when all is said and done if the myth of Psyche has a meaning, it is the fact that Psyche only begins to live as Psyche not simply as provided with an extraordinary initial gift (that of being equal to Venus), nor indeed with a masked and unknown favour (that in short of an infinite and unplumbable happiness) but in so far as Psyche, qua subject of a pathos which is (7) properly speaking that of the soul - at that very moment when precisely the desire which had fulfilled her is going to flee from her, is going to disappear, it is from that moment that the adventures of Psyche begin.

I once told you, Venus is born every day and, as the myth tells us, this time the Platonic one, it is therefore because of this we have also every day the conception of Eros. But the birth of the soul is, in the universal and in the particular, for each and every person, a historic moment. And it is from that moment that there develops in history the drama which we have to deal with in all its consequences.

When all is said and done, one can say that if analysis, with Freud, went straight to this point I would say that, if the Freudian message ended on this articulation - consult Analysis finite and infinite - it is because there is a final term - the thing is properly articulated in this text, at which one arrives when one manages to reduce in the subject all the avenues of his re-emergence, of his reliving, of unconscious repetitions, when we have managed to make them converge towards this rock - the term is in the text - of the castration complex, the castration complex in man as in woman - the term Penisneid is only among others in this text the pinpointing of the castration complex as such. It is around this castration complex and as I might say starting again from this point, that we should put to the test again everything that has in a certain fashion been discovered starting from this stumbling point.

For, whether it is a question of highlighting the quite decisive and primordial effect of what emerges from the agencies of the oral for example, or again of the bringing into play of what is called the aggressivity of primordial sadism, or again of what has been articulated in the different developments which are possible around the notion of the object (of the decomposition and the deepening of this relationship, up to the point of highlighting the notion of good and bad primordial objects), all of this cannot be resituated in a proper perspective unless we regasp in a divergent fashion that from which this effectively diverged, .... from this point unsustainable to a certain degree in its paradox, which is that of the castration complex. An image like the one that I am taking care, today, to produce before you is in a way to incarnate what I mean in speaking about the paradox of the castration complex.

In effect, if the whole divergence which has been able to appear to us up to the present in the different phases that we have studied, motivated by the discordance, the distinction between what constitutes the object of demand (whether it is in the oral stage the demand of the subject as in the anal stage the demand of the other) and that which in the Other is at the place of desire (which would be in the case of Psyche masked, veiled up to a certain point although secretly perceived by the archaic, infantile subject), would it not seem that what one can massively call the third phase - which is currently described under the name of the genital phase - is this conjunction of desire in so far as it may be involved in some demand or other of the subject, is it not properly speaking that which ought to find its reference, its identical in the desire of the Other? If there is a point where desire presents itself as desire, it is indeed there where precisely the first accentuation of Freud was constructed to situate it for us, namely at the level of sexual desire revealed in its real consistency and no longer in a contaminated, displaced, condensed, metaphorical fashion. It is no longer a question of the sexualisation of some other function, we are dealing with the sexual function itself.

(8) To make you measure the paradox that it is a question of pinpointing, I sought this morning an example to incarnate the embarrassment of psychoanalysts in what concerns the phenomenology of this genital stage, I came across an article by Monchy on the castration complex in the International Journal. To what is an analyst who in short interests himself again in our day - because there are not many of them - in the castration complex led in order to explain it? Well, to something that you would never guess. I will summarise it for you very briefly. The paradox naturally cannot fail to strike you that without the revelation of the genital drive it is necessarily marked by this splitting which consists in the castration complex as such, the Trieb is for him something instinctual.

We are dealing with someone who begins with a certain baggage (von Uexkull and Lorenz), he speaks to us at the beginning of his article of what are called congenital reaction schemes, which evokes for us the fact that in the case of little birds who have

never been subjected to any experience it is enough to have a lure projected, the shadow identical to that of a hawk, of a faucon in order to provoke all the reflexes of terror, in short the imagery of the lure as the author of this article - which is written in English - puts it in French l'attrape. Things are very simple: the primitive attrape must be sought for in the oral phase. The biting reflex, namely that because the child may have these famous sadistic phantasies which culminate at a section of the object, more precious than any other, of the mother's nipple, it is here that there is to be sought the origin of that which in the subsequent genital phase is going to manifest itself by the transference of phantasies of fellatio, as this possibility of depriving, of wounding, of mutilating the partner of sexual desire under the form of his organ. And this is why, not that your daughter is mute, but why the genital phase is marked by the possible sign of castration.

The character of such a reference, of such an explanation is obviously significant of this sort of reversal which has been brought about and which has made there be put progressively, under the register of primary drives, drives which become it must be said more and more hypothetical in the measure that one makes them retreat into the original foundation which, when all is said and done, culminate at an accentuation of the constitutional thematic, of something or other innate in primordial aggressivity. It is undoubtedly rather significant of the present orientation of analytic thinking.

Are we not spelling out things correctly in dwelling on something which experience - I mean the problems which experience gives rise to for us - in a way really proposes habitually for us. I already noted before you what is articulated in Jones' writings, in a certain need to explain the castration complex, in the notion of aphanisis, a common Greek term put on the agenda in the articulation of Freud's analytic discourse, and which means disappearance. It is a question of the disappearance of desire and of the fact that what is in question in the castration complex is supposed to be, in the subject, the fear given rise to by the disappearance of desire.

Those who follow my teaching for a long enough time cannot fail, I hope, to remember - in any case those who do not remember it (9) can refer to the excellent summaries made of it by Lefebvre-Pontalis - that I already took it further by saying that if this is a way of looking at things, there is all the same a singular reversal in the articulation of the problem, a reversal which clinical facts allow us to highlight. It is for this reason that I analysed at length for you, carried out a critique of Ella Sharpe's famous dream which is precisely what my seminar analysed the last time. This dream of Ella Sharpe turns entirely around the thematic of the phallus. I would ask you to refer to this summary because I cannot be repeating myself and because the things which are there are absolutely essential. The meaning of what is in question on this occasion is this thing that I highlighted which is that, far from the fear of aphanisis being projected as one might say into the image of the castration

complex, it is on the contrary the necessity, the determination of the signifying mechanism which, in the castration complex in most cases pushes the subject, not at all to fear aphanisis but on the contrary to take refuge in aphanisis, to put his desire in his pocket. Because what analytic experience reveals to us, is that something is more precious than desire itself: to preserve its symbol which is the phallus. This is the problem which is proposed to us.

I hope that you have carefully noted this picture. The flowers which are here in front of the sexual organ of Eros, they are precisely not at all distinguished by such an abundance that one cannot see that precisely there is nothing behind. There is literally no place for the least sexual organ, so that what Psyche is here on the point of cutting literally has already disappeared from the real. And moreover if something strikes us as being opposed to the proper form, to the beautiful human form of this effectively divine woman here in this image, it is the extraordinarily composite character of the image of Eros. This face is one of a child, but the body has something Michaelangellesque about it (its muscles) and already almost which begins to be marked, not to say lose shape.... without mentioning the wings. Everyone knows that people argued for a long time about the sex of angels. If people argued for such a long time, it was probably because they did not know very well where to stop. In any case the apostle tells us that, whatever may be the joys of the resurrection of the body, once the celestial feast has come, there will no longer be anything done in heaven of the sexual order, either active nor passive. So that what is in question, what is concentrated in this image, is indeed this something which is the centre of the paradox of the castration complex.

The fact is that, far from the desire of the Other, in so far as it is approached at the level of the genital phase, being able to be, be in fact ever accepted in what I would call its rhythm which is at the same time its fleetingness (as regards the child, namely that it is still a fragile desire, that it is an uncertain, premature, anticipated desire) this masks from us when all is said and done what is in question, that it is quite simply the reality at whatever level it may be of sexual desire to which, as one might say, the psychical organisation is not adapted in so far as it is psychical; the fact is that the organ (10) is not taken up, brought, approached, except as transformed into a signifier and that, because it is transformed into a signifier, it is in this that it is cut off. And reread everything that I taught you to read at the level of little Hans. You will see that there is question only of that: is it rooted? Can it be taken away? At the end he arranges things, it can be unscrewed, it is unscrewed and one can put others in its place.

This therefore is what is in question. What is striking in it, is that what is shown to us, is the relationship of this elision thanks to which it is no longer here anything but the sign itself that I am saying, the sign of absence. Because what I have taught you is the following: it is that if  $\phi$  (phi), the phallus



as signifier has a place, it is very precisely that of supplying at the point, at this precise level where significance disappears in the Other, where the other is constituted by the fact that there is somewhere a signifier lacking. Hence the privileged value of this signifier which one can of course write, but which one can only write in parenthesis, by saying indeed precisely the following: that it is the signifier of the point where the signifier is lacking  $S(/6)$ . And it is for this reason that it can become identical to the subject himself to the point that we can write him as barred subject, namely at the only point where we analysts can place a subject as such - for us analysts, namely in so far as we are linked to the effects which result from the coherence of the signifier as such when a living being makes himself its agent and its support. We see the following, that from then on the subject has no other possible efficacy (if we admit this determination, this overdetermination, as we call it) than from the signifier which makes him vanish. And that is why the subject is unconscious.

If one can even speak, and even when one is not an analyst, of double symbolisation, it is in this sense that the nature of the symbol is such that two registers necessarily spring from it, the one which is linked to the symbolic chain and the one which is linked to the disturbance, to the disorder that the subject was capable of bringing to it, because it is here that when all is said and done the subject situates himself in the most certain fashion. In other words the subject only affirms the dimension of truth as original at the moment that he makes use of the signifier to lie.

This relationship therefore of the phallus with the effect of the signifier, the fact that the phallus as signifier (and this means therefore transposed to a completely different function than its organic function) is precisely what it is a question of considering as centre of every coherent apprehension of what is in question in the castration complex, it is to this that I wanted this morning to draw your attention. But again to open up, not again in an articulated and rational but in a picturesque fashion, what we will bring forward the next time and which is, as I might say, represented with genius thanks to the very Mannerism of the artist who made this painting. Has it occurred to you that by putting in front of this phallus as lacking and, as such, raised to a major significance this vase of flowers, Zucchi can be seen to have anticipated by three and a half centuries - and I assure you up to the last few days without my knowing it - the very image of which I made use in the form of what I called "the illusion of the inverted vase" in order to articulate the whole dialectic of the relationships of the ideal ego and the ego-ideal. I said this a long time ago, but I entirely redid it in an article which should appear soon. This relationship of the object as object of desire, as partial object (11) with the whole narcissistic accommodation is the thing whose different parts I tried to articulate in this system which I called "the illusion of the inverted vase" in an amusing physics experiment.

The important thing is to project into your spirit this idea that the problem of castration as mark (in so far as it marks, in so far as it is at the centre of the whole economy of desire as an analysis has developed it) is closely linked to this other problem which is that of how the Other in so far as he is the locus of the word, in so far as he is the subject as of right, in so far as he is the one with whom we have at the limit relationships of good or bad faith can and ought to become something exactly analogous to what can be encountered in the most inert object, namely the object of desire, o. It is this tension, it is this levelling down, it is this collapse, collapse at a fundamental level which becomes the essential regulation of everything that in the case of man is the problematic of desire, it is this that is in question in analysis. I hope the next time to be able to articulate it for you in the most exemplary fashion.

I ended what I taught you in connection with the dream of Ella Sharpe with these words: "This phallus" - I said, speaking about a subject caught up in the neurotic situation which is more exemplary for us in so far as it was that of aphanisis determined by the castration complex - "this phallus, is and is not. This interval - to be and not to be - the tongue allows us to perceive in a formula where the verb to be slides: he is not without having it, (il n'est pas sans l'avoir) '. It is around this subjective assumption between being and having that the reality of castration operates. In effect, the phallus" - I then wrote - "has a function of equivalence in the relationship to the object: It is in proportion to a certain renunciation of the phallus that the subject enters into possession of the plurality of objects which characterise the human world. In an analogous formula, one could say that the woman 'is without having it, (est sans l'avoir)<sup>1</sup>, which can be experienced very painfully in the form of Penisneid" - but which, I am adding this to the text, is also a great force. "This is what Ella Sharpe's patient does not consent to see: he 'shelters' the signifier phallus...." and I concluded: "No doubt there is something more neurotogenic than the fear of losing the phallus, it is not to wish that the Other should be castrated."

But today, after we have gone through the dialectic of transference in the Symposium, I am going to propose to you another formula, which is the following, this desire of the Other essentially separated from us by this mark of the signifier, do you not now understand what Alcibiades, having perceived that there is in Socrates the secret of desire, demands, in an almost impulsive fashion, with an impulse which is at the origin of all the wrong paths of neurosis or of perversion, this desire of Socrates, which he knows to exist in another connection because it is on this that he bases himself, to see it as sign. It is moreover why Socrates refuses. Because this is of course only a short-circuit.

To see desire produced as a sign is not for all that to be able to enter on the path through which desire is caught up in a certain dependency which is what it is a question of knowing.

So that you see being initiated here what I am trying to show you and to trace as a path towards that which ought to be the desire (12) of the analyst. In order that the analyst should have what the other lacks he must have nescience qua nescience, he must be in the mode of having, that he must also be also without having it, that he must be lacking in nothing for him to be as nescient as his subject. In fact, he also is not without having an unconscious. No doubt it is always beyond anything the subject knows, without being able to say it to him. He can only give him a sign, to be that which represents something for someone is the definition of the sign. Having here in short nothing other which prevents him from being this desire of the subject, except precisely knowledge, the analyst is condemned to a false surprise. But you can be sure that he is only efficacious by offering himself to the true which is untransmissible, of which he can only give a sign. To represent something for someone, is precisely here what is to be stopped, because the sign that is to be given is the sign of the lack of the signifier. It is, as you know, the only sign which is not tolerated because it is the one which provokes the most unspeakable anguish. It is nevertheless the only one which can allow the other to gain access to what is the nature of the unconscious, this "knowledge without consciousness" which you will understand perhaps today before this image in what sense, not negative but positive, Rabelais says that it is "the ruin of the soul".

Seminar 17:            Wednesday 19 April 1961

I take up again before you my difficult discourse, more and more difficult because of the aims of this discourse. To say for example that I am leading you today onto unknown terrain would be inappropriate because, if I begin today to lead you onto a terrain, it is necessarily because from the beginning I already began. Moreover to speak about unknown terrain when it is a question of our own, of the one which is called the unconscious, is still more inappropriate because what is in question, and what constitutes the difficulty of this discourse, is that I can say nothing about it which does not take on all its weight precisely from what I do not say about it.

It is not that one should not say everything, the fact is that in order to speak with precision we cannot say everything, even about what we can formulate, because there is already something in the formula which - as you will see, we grasp it at every instant - precipitates what is in question into the imaginary, which is essentially what happens because of the fact that the human subject as such is prey to the symbol. At the point that we have got to in it, this "to the symbol", be careful, should it be put in the singular or the plural? Undoubtedly in the singular in so far as the one which I introduced the last time is properly speaking as such the unnamable symbol - we are going to see why and how - the symbol  $\phi$  (big phi), precisely this point at which I must today take up my discourse again in order to show you how it is indispensable for us in order to understand the incidence of the castration complex on the mainspring of transference. There is a fundamental ambiguity between symbolic phallus and imaginary phallus, concretely involved in the psychical economy. The place where we encounter it, where we first encountered it, particularly where the neurotic lives it out in a fashion which represents his particular mode of manoeuvring, of operating with this radical, fundamental difficulty that I am trying to articulate before you through the usage that I give to this symbol  $\phi$  (big phi) which the last time and many times previously, I briefly designated, I mean in a rapid, abbreviated fashion as the symbol which corresponds to the place where there is produced the lack of signifier.

If I have unveiled anew from the beginning of this session this image which served us the last time as a support to introduce the

paradoxes and the antinomies linked to these diverse slippages, so subtle, so difficult to retain in their different moments and nevertheless indispensable to sustain, if we want to understand what is in question in the castration complex (and which are the displacements and the absences, and the levels and the substitutions where there intervenes what analytic experience shows us more and more), this phallus in its multiple, quasi-ubiquitous formulae, you see it in experience, if not re-emerging, at least you cannot deny that it is re-evoked at every instant in theoretical writings under the most diverse forms and even up to the final term of the most primitive investigations on what happens in the first pulsations of the (2) soul - the phallus which you see at the final term identified, for example, with the force of primitive aggressivity in so far as it is the worst object encountered at the end in the mother's womb and that it is moreover the most dangerous object.

Why this ubiquity? I am not the one who introduces it here, who suggests it, it is everywhere manifest in the writings of any attempt pursued to formulate on an old plane as well as on a new, renovated one of analytic technique. Well, let us try to put some order in it and to see why it is necessary for me to insist on this ambiguity, or on this polarity if you wish, polarity with two extreme terms, the symbolic and the imaginary, concerning the function of the signifier phallus. I say signifier in so far as it is used as such but when I speak about it, when I introduced it above, I said the symbol phallus and, as you will see, it is perhaps in effect the only signifier which merits, in our register and in an absolute fashion, the title of symbol.

I have therefore unveiled again this image (which undoubtedly is not the simple reproduction of the original one of the artist) of the painting from which I began as the properly speaking exemplary image, which appeared to me to be charged in its composition with all the sorts of riches that a certain art of painting can produce and whose Mannerist principle I examined. I am going to pass it around again rapidly, if only for those who were not able to see it. I wish simply, and by way I could say of a complement, to clearly mark, for those who perhaps were not able to understand in a precise fashion, what I intend to underline about the importance here of what I would call the Mannerist application. You are going to see that the application must be employed moreover in the proper sense as well as in the figurative sense. It is not I but studies which already exist which have made the rapprochement in this painting between the use that is given by the presence of the bouquet of flowers here in the foreground.... it covers what is to be covered which I told you was less again the threatened phallus than Eros surprised and uncovered here through an initiative of the question of Psyche: "What is there to be said about him? De lui qu'en est-il?" Here this bouquet covers the precise point of an absent presence, of a presentified absence.

The technical history of the painting of the epoch invites us, not by my voice but by the voice of critics who started from

premises quite different to those which on this occasion guide me here. They have underlined the kinship there is because of the very fact of the probable collaborator who is the one who especially made the flowers. Certain things indicate to us that it is not, probably, the same artist who at work in the two parts of the painting and that it is a different person, Francesco, a brother or cousin of the artist, instead of Jacopo who, by reason of his technical skill, was asked to be the one to produce this piece of bravura of the flowers in their vase at the appropriate place. This is related by the critics to something which I hope a certain number of you know, namely the technique of Arcimboldo which, a few months ago, was brought to the knowledge of those who inform themselves a little about the different returns to the present of aspects which are sometimes elided, veiled or forgotten in the history of art.

This Arcimboldo is distinguished by this singular technique which produced its latest off-shoot in the work for example of my old friend Salvador Dali, which consists in what Dali has called paranoiac drawing. In the case of Arcimboldo, it is to represent the face for example of the librarian (he worked mainly at the court of the famous Rudolph II of Bohemia who also left many other traces in the tradition of the rare object) of Rudolph II by a clever putting together of the primary implements of the librarian's function, namely a certain fashion of (3) arranging books in such a way that the image of a face, of a visage is here much more than suggested, really imposes itself. In the same way the symbolic theme of a season incarnated in the form of a human face will be materialised by all the fruits of this season whose assemblage will itself be realised so that the suggestion of a face also imposes itself in the form produced. In short this production of that which in its essential shape presents itself as the human image, the image of another, will be realised in the Mannerist method by the coalescence, combination, the accumulation of a pile of objects the total of which will be charged with representing what henceforth manifests itself at once as substance and illusion because, at the same time as the appearance of the human image is sustained, something is suggested which can be imagined in the disaggregation of objects which, by presenting in a way the function of the mask, show at the same time the problematic of this mask. That with which in short we always have to deal every time we see coming into play this so essential function of the person, in so far as we see it all the time in the foreground in the economy of human presence, is the following: if there is a need for a persona it is because behind, perhaps, every form slips away and vanishes.

And undoubtedly, if it is from a complex assemblage that the persona results, it is indeed in effect here that there lies at once the lure and the fragility of its subsistence and that, behind, we know nothing about what can be sustained, because a reduplicated appearance is imposed on us or suggests itself essentially as reduplicated appearance, namely something which when questioned leaves a vacuum, the question of knowing what there is behind in the final analysis.

It is indeed therefore in this register that there is affirmed, in the composition of the painting, the maintaining of the question of knowing (because this is what we should now maintain, sustain essentially before our minds) what is happening in the act of Psyche. The fulfilled Psyche questions herself about what she is dealing with and it is this moment, this precise, privileged instant that Zucchi has held onto, perhaps well beyond what he himself could, would have been able to articulate about it in a discourse - there is a discourse on the antique gods by this personage, I was careful to consult it, without any great illusion, there is nothing much to be drawn from this discourse - but the work speaks sufficiently for itself. And the artist has in this image grasped this something instantaneous which I called the last time this moment of the apparition, of the birth of Psyche, this sort of exchange of powers which ensures that she becomes embodied, and with all this cortege of misfortunes which will be her's in order that she should loop a loop, in order that she should rediscover in this instant this something which, for her, is going to disappear the instant after, precisely what she had wanted to grasp, what she had wanted to unveil: the face of desire.

What justifies the introduction of the symbol  $\phi$  (phi) as such, since I put it forward as that which comes in place of the missing signifier? What does it mean that a signifier should be lacking? How many times have I told you that once given the battery of signifiers beyond a certain minimum which remains to be determined - regarding which I told you that at the limit four should be enough for all significations - there is no tongue, however primitive it may be, where finally everything cannot be expressed, except of course for the fact that, as the Vaudois proverb puts it: "Everything is possible for man, what he cannot do he leaves undone", that what cannot be expressed in the aforesaid tongue, well quite simply it will not be felt. It will not be felt, subjectivated, if to subjectivate is to take up a place in a subject that is valid for another subject, namely to pass to this most radical point where the very idea of (4) communication is not possible. Every signifying battery can always say everything because what it cannot say will signify nothing at the locus of the Other and because everything that signifies for us always happens at the locus of the Other. In order that something should signify, it is necessary that it should be translatable at the locus of the Other.

Imagine a tongue, as I already pointed out to you, which has no future, well then it will not express it, but it will signify it all the same, for example by the procedure of ought or to have. And this is moreover what happens in fact, because I do not need to come back on this, I pointed it out to you, this is how in French and in English one expresses the future: cantare habeo, je chanter-ai, tu chanter-as, it is the verb avoir which is declined, I mean originally, in a well attested fashion; I shall sing, is also, in a roundabout way, to express that which English does not have, namely the future.

There is no signifier lacking. At what moment does there

possibly begin to appear the lack of signifier? At that proper dimension which is subjective and which is called the question. I remind you that at one time I took into account sufficiently the fundamental, essential character of the apparition in the child (already well known, picked up of course by the most day-to-day observation) of the question as such, this moment so particularly embarrassing because of the character of these questions which is not an indifferent one, one where the child who knows how to deal with the signifier introduces himself to this dimension which makes him pose to his parents the most importunate questions, the ones that everyone knows provoke the greatest disarray and, in truth, responses that are almost necessarily impotent. What does running mean? What does kicking mean? What is an imbecile?

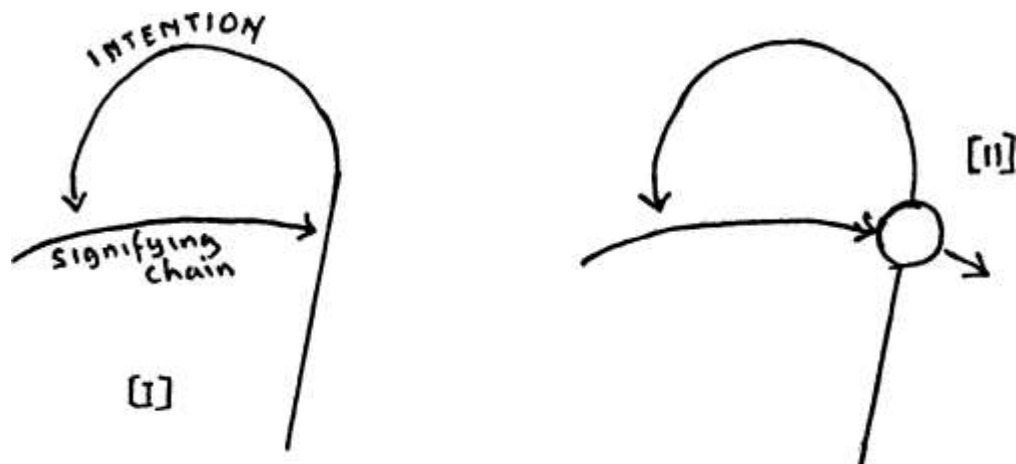
What makes us so incapable of giving a satisfactory answer to these questions, what forces us to respond to them in such a specially inept fashion... as if we did not know ourselves that to run is to walk very quickly - it is really to spoil the work - that to kick, is to be angry - is really to say something absurd. I am not insisting on the definition that we may give of imbecile.

It is quite clear that what is in question at that moment is a standing back of the subject as regards the usage of the signifier itself and that, the passion of what is meant by the fact that there are words, that one speaks and that one designates a thing so close to what one is dealing with by this enigmatic thing which is called a word, a term, a phoneme, this indeed is what is at stake. The incapacity felt at that moment by the child is, formulated in the question, of attacking the signifier as such at the moment when its action is already marked on everything, indelible. Everything that will come as question, in the historical continuation of his pseudo-philosophical meditation, will only when all is said and done collapse because, when he has got to "What am I?" he will not have got much further in it, unless of course he is an analyst. But if he is not - it is not in his power to be one for all that long - [when] he has got to the stage of posing himself the question "What am I?", he cannot see that precisely by putting himself in question in this form, he veils himself, he does not perceive that it is to break through the stage of doubt about being to ask oneself what one is, for by simply formulating the question in this way, he is going headlong (except for the fact that he does not perceive it) into metaphor. And it is all the same the least of the things that we, we analysts, should remember in order to help him to avoid renewing this ancient error always threatening in its innocence under all its forms and to prevent him from answering himself, even with our authority: (5) "I am a child", for example. Because of course this is the new reply that the indoctrination of psychologising repression in its renewed form will give him and with it in the same packet and without him noticing it, the myth of the adult who, for his part, is no longer supposed to be a child, thus making remultiply again this sort of morality about a pretended reality to which, in fact, he allows himself to be led by the nose by all sorts of



social swindles. Moreover, we did not have to wait for analysis, nor for Freudianism, for the formula "I am a child" to introduce itself as a corset designed to make anyone, who in any way finds himself in a slightly irregular position, hold himself straight. If beneath the artist there is a child, it is the rights of the child that he represents among people who of course are considered to be serious, who are not children. As I told you last year in my lessons on The ethics of psychoanalysis, this tradition dates from the beginning of the Romantic period, it begins more or less at the time of Coleridge in England (to situate it in a tradition) and I do not see why we should charge ourselves with taking it on.

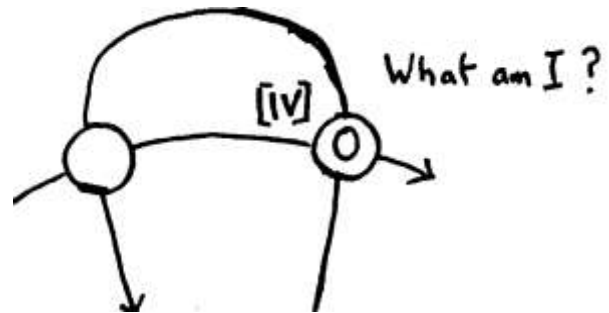
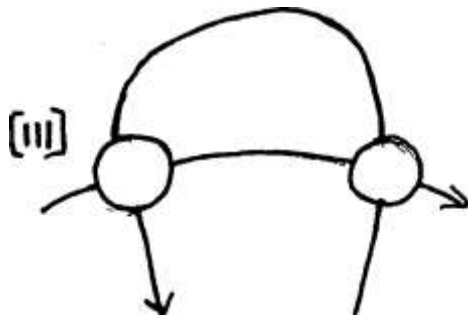
What I want to help you to grasp here, is what happens at the lower level of the graph. That to which I alluded during the journées provinciales when I wanted to draw your attention to the fact that the way in which the double intersection of these two beams, of these two arrows is constructed, is meant to draw our attention to the fact that simultaneity, as I said, is not at all synchrony. Namely that, supposing that there develop correlatively, simultaneously the two tensors, the two vectors in question, that of intention and that of the signifying chain [I],



you see that what is produced here [II] as an inception of this stepping, of this sequence which will consist in the sequence of different phonematic elements for example of the signifier, this develops very far before encountering the line on which that which is summoned to being (namely the intention of signification or even of the need, if you wish, which is concealed there) takes its place. Which means the following, that when this double intersection takes place in the last analysis simultaneously - because if nachträglich signifies something, it is that it is at the same instant, when the sentence is finished, that the meaning emerges - in passing no doubt the choice was already made. But the meaning can only be grasped in the successive piling up of signifiers [which] have come to take their place each one in its (6) turn [III], and which unfold, here if you wish, in the inverse form, "I am a child" appearing on the signifying line in the order that these elements are articulated [IV].

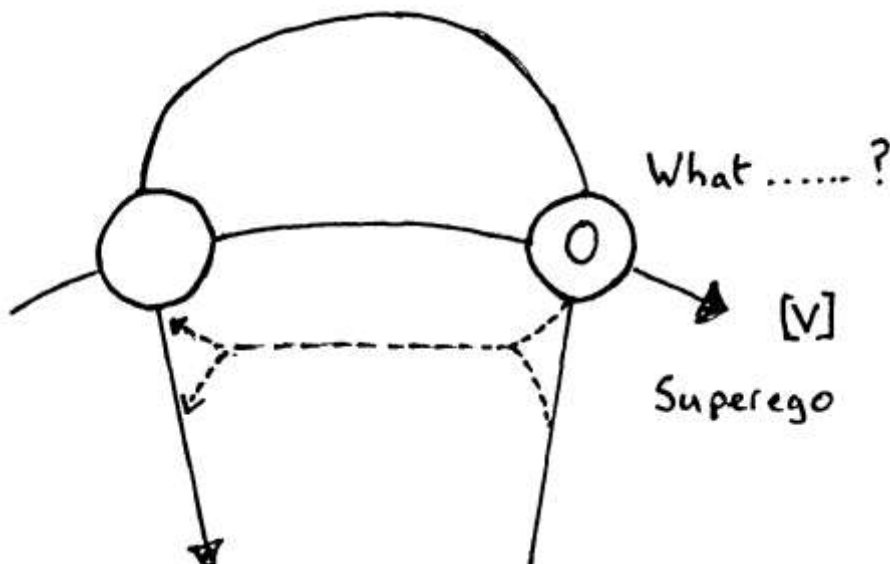
What is happening? What is happening is that, when the meaning

is complete, when that which is always metaphorical in every



attribution: I do not know anything except that, I who am speaking, currently, "I am a child", to say it, to affirm it realises this grasp, this qualification of meaning thanks to which I conceive of myself in a certain relationship with objects which are infantile objects. I make myself other than any way in which I could have at first grasped myself. I incarnate myself, I idealise myself, I make an ideal ego of myself, and in the final analysis very directly, in the sequence, in the process of the simple signifying inception as such, in the fact of having produced signs capable of being referred to the reality of my word. The beginning is in the "I" and the term is in the "child".

What remains here as after-effect, something that I may see or not see, is the enigma of the question itself. It is the "what?" which demands to be taken up here subsequently at the



(7) level of the big O. To see that what follows, the after-effect, "What I am" appears in the form that it remains as question, where it is for me the point aimed at, the correlative point where I ground myself as ego-ideal, namely as a point where the question has an importance for me, where the question summons me in its ethical dimension, where it gives this form which is the very one that Freud conjugates with the superego and from which the name which qualifies it in a varyingly legitimate fashion as being that something which branches directly, as far

as I know, onto my signifying inception namely: a child.

But what is to be said in all of this? It is that this precipitate, premature response, this something which ensures that in short I elude the whole central operation which has been carried out, this something which makes me precipitate myself as a child, is the avoidance of the true response which ought to begin much earlier than any term of the sentence. The response to the "Who am I?" is nothing else that can be articulated, in the same form as I told you that no demand is supported, to the "Who am I?" there is no other response at the level of the Other than "Let yourself be, laisse-toi etre". And the whole precipitation given to this response, whatever it may be in the order of dignity, child or adult, is only the something in which I flee the meaning of this "Let yourself be."

It is clear therefore that it is at the level of the Other and of what is meant by this adventure at the degraded point that we grasp it, it is at the level of this "what?" which is not "What am I?" but which analytic experience allow us to unveil at the level of the Other, in the form of the Other, in the form of the "What do you want?", in the form of that which alone can stop us at the precise point of what is in question in every formulated question, namely what we desire in posing the question, it is here that it ought to be understood; and it is here that there intervenes the lack of signifier that is in question in the  $\phi$  (big phi) of the phallus.

We know, something analysis has shown us, has found, that what the subject has to deal with, is the object of the phantasy in so far as it presents itself as alone being capable of fixing a privileged point - what must be called with the pleasure principle an economy regulated by the level of jpuissance.

What analysis teaches us is, that to refer the question to the level of "What does it want, what does it want here inside?" what we encounter is a world of hallucinated signs, that the testing of reality is presented to us as this kind of way of tasting the reality of these signs which have emerged in us according to a necessary sequence in which there consists precisely the dominance over the unconscious of the pleasure principle. What is in question therefore, let us carefully observe it, is undoubtedly in the testing of reality to verify a real presence, but a presence of signs.

Freud underlines it with the greatest energy. It is not at all a question in the testing of reality of verifying whether our representations correspond indeed to a real (we know for a long time that we do not succeed any better in that than the philosophers) but of verifying that our representations are well and truly represented, Vorstellungsrepresentanz. It is a question of knowing if the signs are indeed there, but qua the signs (because they are signs) of this relationship to something else. And this is all that is meant by what the Freudian articulation contributes to us that the gravitation of our unconscious is referred to a lost object which is only ever

rediscovered, that is to say never re-discovered. It is never anything other than signified and this because indeed of the (8) chain of the pleasure principle. The veritable, authentic object that is in question when we speak about object, is not grasped, transmissible, exchangeable in any way. It is at the horizon of that around which our phantasies gravitate and it is nevertheless with that that we must make objects which, for their part, are exchangeable.

But the affair is very far from being on the way to being settled. I mean that I underlined enough for you last year what was in question in what is called utilitarian morality. It is undoubtedly a question of something quite fundamental in the recognition of objects, that one can describe as constituted by the market of objects: they are objects which can be used by everyone and, in this sense, what is called utilitarian morality is more than founded, there is no other. And it is indeed precisely because there is no other that the so-called difficulties that it is supposed to present are in fact perfectly soluble. It is quite clear that the utilitarians are quite right in saying that, every time we are dealing with something which can be exchanged with our fellows, the rule about it is utility, not ours but the possibility of use: utility for all and for the greatest number. This indeed is what creates the gap between what is in question, in the constitution of this privileged object which emerges in the phantasy, and every kind of object in what is called the socialised world, the world of conformity.

The world of conformity is already consistent with a universal organisation of discourse. There is no utilitarianism without a theory of fictions. To pretend in any way that it is possible to have recourse to a natural object, to pretend even to reduce the distances at which objects are sustained by common accord, is to introduce a confusion, one further myth in the problematic of reality.

The object in question in analytic object-relations is an object which we ought to locate, make emerge, situate at the most radical point at which there is posed the question of the subject as regards his relationship to the signifier. The relationship to the signifier is in effect such that if we are dealing, at the level of the unconscious chain, only with signs, and if it is a question of a chain of signs, the result is that there is no stopping-place in the reference of each of the signs to the one which succeeds it. Because what is proper to communication by signs is to make of this very Other to whom I address myself (in order to urge him to aim in the same way as myself) the object to whom this sign refers. The imposition of the signifier on the subject fixes him in the position proper to the signifier. What is in question, is to find the guarantee of this chain, that which transmits itself from sign to sign and must stop somewhere, which gives us the sign that we have a right to operate with signs. It is here that there emerges the privilege of the phallus in all signifiers. And perhaps it will appear too simple you to underline what is in question on this occasion

about this signifier. This signifier always hidden, always veiled, so that one is astonished to throw into relief the enormous undertaking of having its form represented in art, it is more than unusual to see it brought into play in a hieroglyphic chain or in cave art and nevertheless, this phallus, which plays its role in human imagination well before psychoanalysis, is only all the more frequently elided therefore from our signifying constructions. What does that mean? The fact is that of all (9) possible signs, is it not the one that reunites in itself the sign and the mode of action, and the very presence of desire as such, namely that in not allowing it to come to light in this real presence, precisely what is of a nature, not only to bring to a stop all this referring-on in the chain of signs, but even to make them enter into some shadow or other of nothingness. Of desire, there is doubtless no surer sign, on condition that there is nothing more than desire. Between the signifier of desire and the whole signifying chain there is established an "either... or" relationship.

Psyche was quite happy in this certain relationship with what was not at all a signifier, what was the reality of her love with Eros. But there you are! She is Psyche and she wants to know. She poses herself the question because language exists already and because one does not simply spend one's life making love but also gossiping with one's sisters. By gossiping with her sisters, she wants to possess her happiness. This is not such a simple thing. Once one has entered into the order of language, to possess one's happiness is to be able to show it, it is to be able to give an account of it, it is to arrange one's flowers, it is to be equal to one's sisters in showing that she has something better than they and not simply something different. And this is why Psyche emerges in the night, with her light and also her little cutting instrument. She will have absolutely nothing to cut off, as I told you, because it has already been done. She will have nothing to cut off, as I might say, except (and she would be well advised to do it as soon as possible) the current, namely that she sees nothing other than a great dazzling light and that what is going to be produced is, quite against her will, a prompt return to darkness the initiative for which she would do well to take before her object is definitively lost, before Eros remains sick of it for a long time, and is only to be rediscovered after a long series of trials.

The important thing for us in this painting, what makes it what it is for us, is that Psyche is illuminated and - as I have taught you for a long time now concerning the gracile form of femininity at the limits of puberty and pre-puberty - that it is she who, for us, in the scene, appears as the phallic image. And at the same time there is incarnated the fact that it is not the woman or the man who, in the final analysis, are the support of castrating action, it is this image itself in so far as it is reflected, as it is reflected in the narcissistic form of the body.

It is in so far as this unnamed because unnamable relationship, it is because the unsayable of the subject with the pure

signifier of desire is going to project itself onto the localisable, precise, situatable organ somewhere in the totality of the corporal edifice, is going to enter into the properly imaginary conflict of seeing itself as deprived or not deprived of this appendix, it is in this second imaginary moment that there is going to reside everything around which there is going to be elaborated the symptomatic effects of the castration complex.

I can here only initiate it and indicate it, I mean recall, summarise what I already touched on for you in a more or less developed fashion when I spoke to you on several occasions naturally about what constitutes our object namely neuroses.

What does the hysteric do? What does Dora do at the final term? I have taught you to follow its paths and its detours in the complex identifications, in the labyrinth where she finds herself confronted with that in which Freud himself stumbles and is lost. Because what he calls the object of her desire, you know that he is mistaken there precisely because he looks for the reference of (10) Dora qua hysteric first of all and above all in the choice of her object, of no doubt an object little o. And it is quite true that in a certain fashion Mr. K. is the object little o and after him Freud himself and, that in truth, this is indeed the phantasy in so far as the phantasy is the support of desire. But Dora would not be a hysteric if she were satisfied with this phantasy. She is aiming at something else, she is aiming at something better, she is aiming at the big O. She is aiming at the absolute Other, Mrs. K., I have explained to you a long time ago that Mrs. K. is for her the incarnation of this question: "What is a woman?" And because of this, at the level of the phantasy, it is not  $\diamond$  o, the relationship of fading, of vacillation which characterises the relationship of the subject to this little o which is produced but something else, because she is a hysteric, **Jt** it is a big O as such, O, that she

believes in contrary to a paranoiac.

"What am I?" has for her a meaning which is not that of the moral or philosophical wanderings mentioned above, it has a full and absolute meaning. And she cannot fail to encounter there, without knowing it, the **O** ( $\phi$  > i < J phi) sign perfectly closed, always veiled which responds here. And it is for this reason that she has recourse to all the forms that she can give of the closest substitute, you should carefully note it, of this  $\wedge$  (big phi) sign. Namely that, if you follow the operations of Dora or of any hysteric, you will see that it is never a question for her of anything but a sort of complicated game through which she can, as I might say, subtilize the situation by slipping in where it is necessary the **J>** (small phi) of the imaginary phallus. Namely that her father is impotent with Mrs. K.? Well what does it matter! She will be the copula, she will pay with her own person, she will sustain this relationship. And because this is still not enough, she will bring into play the image substituted for herself - as I showed and demonstrated for you a long time ago - of Mr. K. whom she will cast into the abyss, whom she will

repel into exterior darkness, at the moment that that animal says the only thing that he should not say: "My wife means nothing to me", namely that she does not give me an erection. If she does not give you an erection, then what use are you? Because everything that is in question for Dora, as for every hysteric, is to be the procuress of this sign in the imaginary form. The devotion of the hysteric, her passion for identifying with every sentimental drama, to be there, to support in the wings anything thrilling that may be happening and which nevertheless is not her business, this is the mainspring, this is the principle around which there waxes, proliferates all her behaviour.

If she always exchanges her desire against this sign, do not look elsewhere for the reason for what is called her mythomania. It is that there is something else that she prefers to her desire; she prefers that her desire should be unsatisfied so that the Other should hold the key to her mystery. It is the only thing that is important to her and this is the reason why, in identifying herself with the drama of love, she strives to reanimate this Other, to reassure him, to complete him, to restore him.

When all is said and done this is what we have to be aware of: any reparational ideology in our initiative as therapists, our analytic vocation. It is certainly not the hysteric's path which is the most easily available to us, so that it is not there either that the warning takes on its greatest importance.

There is another, that of the obsessional, who, as everyone knows, is much more intelligent in his way of operating. If the formula of the hysterical phantasy can be written thus:  $Q \gg I$ .

o, the substitutive or metaphorical object, over something which is hidden, namely-d) (minus phi), his own imaginary castration in his relationship with the Other, today I will only introduce and (11) begin for you the different formula of the obsessional phantasy.

But before writing it I must give you a certain number of touches, of points, of indications which will put you on the path. We know the difficulty of handling the (phi) symbol in its unveiled form. It is, as I told you above, what is intolerable in it which is nothing other than the following: it is that it is not simply sign and signifier, but presence of desire. It is the real presence of desire. I am asking you to grasp this thread, this indication that I am giving you - and which, given the time, I can only leave here as an indication in order to take it up the next time - it is that at the basis of phantasies, of symptoms, of these points of emergence where we might see the hysterical labyrinth in a way lowering its mask, we will encounter something which I would call the insult to the real presence. The obsessional, for his part also has to deal with the  $G \gg$  (big phi) mystery of the signifier phallus and for him also it is a question of making it manageable. Somewhere an author, about whom I must speak the next time, who has approached in a fashion that is certainly instructive and fruitful for us,

if we know how to criticise it, the function of the phallus in obsessional neurosis, somewhere for the first time has gone into this relationship in connection with a female obsessional neurosis. He underlines certain sacrilegious phantasies, the figure of Christ, even his phallus itself walked on, from which there arises for her an erotic aura which is perceived and admitted. This author immediately rushes into the thematic of aggressivity, of penis envy, and this despite the protestations of the patient.

Do not a thousand other facts which I could multiply here before you show us that we ought to dwell much more on the phenomenology, which is not an indifferent one, of this phantasizing that we too briefly call sacrilegious. We will remember the phantasy of the Ratman, imagining in the middle of the night his dead father resurrected, coming to knock on his door, and that he shows himself to him while he is masturbating: an insult here also to the real presence.

What we will call aggressivity in the obsession is always present as an aggression precisely against this form of apparition of the Other which I called at another time phallophanie - the Other in so far precisely as he may present himself as phallus. To hit out at the phallus in the Other in order to cure symbolic castration, to hit out at it on the imaginary plane, is the path the obsessional chooses in order to abolish the difficulty that I designate under the name of the parasitism of the signifier in the subject, to restore, for him, its primacy to desire but at the price of a degradation of the Other which makes him essentially a function of something which is the imaginary elision of the phallus. It is in so far as the obsessional is at this precise point of the Other where he is in a state of doubt, of suspension, of loss, of ambivalence, of fundamental ambiguity that his correlation to the object, to an always metonymical object (because for him it is true the other is essentially interchangeable), that his relationship to the other object is essentially governed by something which has a relationship to castration which here takes a directly aggressive form: absence, depreciation, rejection, refusal of the sign of the desire of the Other as such, not abolition or destruction of the desire of the Other, but rejection of its signs. And it is (12) from this that there emerges and is determined this very particular impossibility which hits at the manifestation of his own desire.

Undoubtedly to show him, as the analyst to whom I alluded above insistently did, this relationship with the imaginary phallus in order, as I might say, to familiarise himself with his impasse, is something which we cannot say is not on the path to the solution of the difficulty of the obsessional. But how can we not further retain in passing this remark that after one moment, one stage of the working through of imaginary castration, the subject, this author tells us, was not at all freed from her obsessions but only of the guilt that pertained to them.

Of course, we can tell ourselves that nevertheless the question



of this method of therapy is judged by that. What does this introduce us to? To the  $\hat{\phi}$  (big phi) function of the signifier phallus as signifier in the transference itself. If the question of "how the analyst himself situates himself with respect to this signifier?" is here essential it is, here and now, because it is illustrated by the forms and the impasses that a certain therapy oriented in this sense demonstrates to us. This is what I will try to tackle for you the next time.

Seminar 18 ;            Wednesday 26 April 1961

I found myself on Saturday and Sunday opening for the first time for me the notes taken at different points of my seminar these last years, to see if the reference points that I gave you under the rubric of Object-relations and then of Desire and its interpretation converged without too much uncertainty towards what I am trying this year to articulate before you under the term of transference. I realised that in effect in all that I put before you and which is there, it seems, somewhere in one of the presses of the Society, there are a lot of things that you might find, I think, sometime when we have the time to get it out again, which at that time will make you say to yourselves that in 1961 there was someone who taught you something.

It will not be said that in this teaching there was no allusion to the context of what we are living through at the present time. I think that there would be something excessive in that. And also in order to accompany it I will read for you a little fragment of what I encountered the same Sunday last in Dean Swift whom I had only too little time to speak to you about when already I approached the question of the symbolic function of the phallus, even though in his work the question is in a way so omnipresent that one could say that to take his work as a whole it is articulated there as such. Swift and Lewis Carroll are two authors to whom, without my having the time to give a running commentary on them, I believe that you would do well to refer to in order to find there a good deal of the material which refers very closely, as closely as possible, as closely as it is possible in literary works, to the thematic which I am closest to at the moment.

And in Gulliver's Travels which I was looking at in a charming little edition from the middle of the last century, illustrated by Grandville, I found in "A voyage to Laputa" which is the third part, which has the characteristic of not being limited to "A voyage to Laputa".... It is in Laputa, an incredible anticipation of the space station, that Gulliver takes a journey in a certain number of kingdoms in connection with which he communicates to us a certain number of significant views which preserve for us all their riches, and specifically in one of these kingdoms, when he comes there from another one, he speaks (2) to an académicien and tells him that: "...in the kingdom of

Tribnia, by the natives called Langden, where I had long sojourned, the bulk of the people consisted wholly of discoverers, witnesses, informers, accusers, prosecutors, evidences, swearers, together with their several subservient and subaltern instruments, all under the colours, the conduct, and pay of ministers and their deputies" - let us pass over this thematic; but the way in which the informers operate is explained to us - "...effectual care is taken to secure all their letters and other papers, and put the owners in chains. These papers are delivered to a set of artists very dexterous in finding out the mysterious meanings of words, syllables and letters" - it is here that there begins the point at which Swift goes at it with a joyous heart, and as you are going to see it is rather fine as regards the marrow of its substance. - "For instance, they can decipher a close-stool to signify a Privy Council,

A flock of geese a senate,  
 A lame dog an invader,  
 A cod's-head a -,  
 The plague a standing army,  
 A buzzard a prime minister,  
 The gout a high priest,  
 A gibbet a secretary of state,  
 A chamber pot a committee of grandees,  
 A sieve a court lady,  
 A broom a revolution,  
 A mousetrap an employment,  
 A bottomless pit, the Treasury,  
 A sink the Court,  
 A cap and bells a favourite,  
 A broken reed a court of justice.  
 An empty tun a general,  
 A running sore the administration.

When this method fails, they have two others more effectual, which the learned among them call acrostics and anagrams. First they can decipher all initial letters into political meanings.

Thus N. shall signify a plot.  
 B. a regiment of horse,  
 L. a fleet at sea.

Or secondly by transposing the letters of the alphabet in any suspected paper, they can lay open the deepest designs of a discontented party. So, for example, if I should say in a letter to a friend, Our brother Tom has just got the piles, a man of skill in this art would discover how the same letters which compose that sentence may be analysed into the following words; Resist; a plot is brought home, the tour" - all is in readiness for sedition.

I think it is not a bad way to resituate at their paradoxical foundation, so manifest in all sorts of features, contemporary things using a text which is not all that old. Because in truth, since I was woken up last night in an untimely way by someone who communicated to me something that you all have more or less seen, a false report, my sleep was for a moment disturbed

(3) by the following question: I asked myself if I were not overlooking in connection with these contemporary events the dimension of tragedy. In truth this constituted a problem for me after what I explained to you last year about tragedy. I did not see appearing anywhere in it what I described for you as the reflection of beauty.

This effectively prevented me from getting back to sleep for some time. I then fell asleep again leaving the question in suspense. This morning on awaking the question had lost a little bit of its pregnancy. It appeared that we were still on the level of farce and, as regards the questions I was posing myself, the problem vanished at the same time.

This having been said, we are going to take things up at the point at which we left them the last time, namely the formula  $(o, o', o'^1, o''')$  which I gave you as being that of the phantasy of the obsessional. It is quite clear that presented in this way and in this algebraic form, it must be quite opaque for those who have not followed our preceding elaboration. I am going to try however, in speaking about it, to restore its dimensions to it.

You know that it is opposed to that of the hysteric as I wrote for you the last time.  $j\phi$   $Q$ , namely:  $Jf^{\wedge}$  in the relationship which can be read in several ways, desire for, is a way of saying it, big  $O$ . It is a question therefore for us of specifying what are the respective functions attributed in our symbolisation to  $^{\wedge}(\text{big } \phi)$  and to  $\phi(\text{little } \phi)$ .

I strongly urge you to make the effort not to precipitate yourselves onto analogical slopes to which it is always easy, tempting to yield and to tell yourselves for example that  $\phi(\text{big } \phi)$ , is the symbolic phallus,  $\phi(\text{little } \phi)$ , is the imaginary phallus. It is perhaps true in a certain sense, but to remain there would be completely to expose yourselves to overlooking the interest of these symbolisations which we take no pleasure, believe me, in multiplying in vain and simply for the pleasure of superficial analogies and mental facilitations, which is not properly speaking what teaching aims at. It is a question of what the two symbols represent. It is a question of knowing what they represent in our intention. And you can already foresee, estimate their importance and utility by all sorts of indices. The year for example began with a very interesting lecture by our friend M. Georges Favez who, speaking to you about what the analyst was and at the same time his function for the analysand, gave you a conclusion like the following: that when all is said and done the analyst, for the analysand, the patient, takes on the function of his fetish. Such is the formula, in a certain respect around which he had grouped all sorts of convergent facts, at which his lecture culminated.

It is certain that this was here a very subjective view and one which, moreover does not leave it completely isolated as a formulation. It was a formulation prepared by all sorts of

other things that are found in diverse articles on transference but which one cannot say is not presented in a somewhat astonishing and paradoxical form. I told him moreover that the things that we were going to articulate this year would respond in some way to the question that he had posed here.

When we read on the other hand, in a body of work which has now come to an end, an author who tried to articulate the special function of transference in obsessional neurosis, and who in short bequeaths us a body of work which, beginning from a first (4) consideration of "Therapeutic incidences of the conscious awareness of penis envy in feminine obsessional neurosis, Incidences thérapeutiques de la prise de conscience de l'envie du pénis dans la névrose obsessionnelle féminine", culminates in an action, a quite generalised theory of the function of distance from the object in the handling of transference, this function of distance quite especially elaborated around an experience which is expressed in the progress of analyses (and especially the analyses of obsessionals) as being something whose principal, active efficacious mainspring in the subject's retaking possession of the meaning of the symptom (especially when he is obsessional), of the imaginary introjection of the phallus, is very precisely incarnated in the imaginary phantasy of the analyst's phallus, I mean that there is here a question which presents itself. Already, especially in connection with the works of this author and especially, I would say, in connection with his technique, I began before you the positioning and the critique which today, in a way that is closer to the question of transference, we are going to be able to circumscribe still further.

This, it is incontestable, demands that we should enter into a quite precise articulation of what the function of the phallus is, and specifically in the transference. It is this that we are trying to articulate with the help of terms symbolised here,  $\Phi$  (big phi) and  $\phi$  (little phi). And because we well understand that it is never a question in the articulation of analytic theory of proceeding in a deductive fashion - from high to low as I might say, because there is nothing which begins more from the particular than analytic experience, something remains valid in an articulation like that of the author, to which I alluded above. It is indeed because his theory of transference, the function of the phallic image in transference begins from a quite localised experience which, one could say, may in certain aspects limit its import, but exactly in the same measure gives it its weight, it is because he began from the experience of obsessionals, and in a quite sharp and accentuated fashion, that we have to consider and discuss what he concluded from it.

It is moreover from the obsessional that we will begin today and it is for this reason that I have produced, at the beginning of what I wanted to say to you, the formula in which I try to articulate his phantasy.

I have already told you a lot of things about the obsessional, it is not a question of repeating them. It is not a question of

simply repeating the fundamentally substitutive, the perpetually avoided, this sort of Hey presto! which characterises the whole way in which the obsessional proceeds in his way of situating himself with respect to the Other, more exactly of never being at the place where for the moment he seems to designate himself.

That to which there very precisely alludes the formulating of the second term of the phantasy of the obsessional,  $\phi(o, o', o'', o''')$ ....), is the fact that objects, for him, qua objects of desire, are in a way expressed as a function of certain erotic equivalences, that which is precisely in this something that we usually articulate in speaking about the eroticisation of his (5) world, and especially his intellectual world, that to which there tends precisely this fashion of noting this expressing as a function by  $\phi$  (small phi) which designates this something. It is enough to have recourse to an analytic observation, when it is well done by an analyst, in order to perceive that  $\phi$  (small phi) - we will see little by little what that means - is precisely what underlies this equivalence established between objects on the erotic plane. The  $\phi$  (small phi) is in a way the unit of measurement to which the subject accommodates the small o function, the function of the objects of his desire.

To illustrate this, I have really to do nothing other than to look at the prime observation on obsessional neurosis, but you will find it moreover in all the others provided they are valid observations. Remember this feature of the thematic of the Rattenmann, of the Ratman. Why moreover is he called the rats\* man, in the plural, by Freud even though in the phantasy where Freud approaches for the first time this kind of internal view of the structure of his desire, in this sort of horror seen on his face of a jpuissance he was unaware of, there are no rats, there is only one rat in the famous Turkish torture to which I will have to return later.

If one speaks about the rats' man, it is indeed because the rat makes his way in a multiplied form into the whole economy of these singular exchanges, the substitutions, this permanent metonymy of which the symptoms of the obsessional are the incarnated example. The formula, which comes from him, "so many rats, so many florins", this in connection with the payment of fees in the analysis, is here only one of the particular illustrations of this sort of permanent equivalence of all objects grasped one after another in this sort of negotiation. This metabolism of objects in the symptoms is inscribed in a more or less latent fashion in a sort of common unit, of gold unit, of standard unit, that the rat symbolises here, holding properly speaking the place of this something that I am calling  $\phi$  (small phi), in so far as it is a certain state, a certain level, a certain form of reducing, of degrading in a certain fashion - we will see why we can call it degradation - the function of a signifier:  $\phi$  (big phi).

It is a question of knowing what  $\phi$  (big phi) represents, namely the function of the phallus in its generality, namely in all the subjects who speak and who because of this fact have an

unconscious, in order to grasp it starting from the point of view that we are given in the symptomatology of obsessional neurosis. Here we can say that we see it emerging in these forms that I am calling degraded, emerging, you should carefully note in a fashion which we describe - in conformity with what we know and with what experience shows us in a very manifest fashion in the structure of the obsessional - as being at the conscious level. This expressing as a function of the phallus is not repressed, namely profoundly hidden, as it is in the hysteric. The  $\phi$  (phi), which is there in the position of expressing as a function all the objects instead of the little  $f$  of a mathematical formula, is perceptible, avowed in the symptom, conscious, really perfectly visible. Conscious, conscius, that means fundamentally, originally, the possibility of complicity of the subject with himself and therefore also of a complicity with the other who observes him. The observer has almost no trouble being complicitous in it.

(6) The sign of the phallic function emerges everywhere at the level of the articulation of the symptoms. It is indeed in this connection that there can be posed the question of what Freud tries, not without difficulty, to depict for us when he articulates the function of the Verneinung. How can things be at once both said and so overlooked! Because when all is said and done, if the subject were nothing other than what is wanted by a certain psychologism which, as you know, even at the heart of our Societies always maintains its rights, if the subject were seeing the other seeing you, if it were only that, how could we say that the function of the phallus is in the position of being overlooked in the obsessional? Because it is perfectly obvious and nevertheless one can say that even in this obvious form it participates in what we call repression in the sense that, however avowed it may be, it is not, without the help of the analyst, and without the help of the Freudian register, recognised or even recognisable by the subject. It is here indeed that we put our fingers on the fact that to be a subject is something other than to be a gaze before another gaze, according to the formula which I called above psychologicistic, and which goes so far as to include in its characteristics moreover the existing Sartrian theory.

To be a subject is to have one's place in the big  $O$ , at the locus of the word. And here it is to allow there to be seen this possible accident that at the level of the big  $O$  there is exercised this function which is designated by the bar in the big  $O$ , namely that there is produced this lack of the word of the Other as such at the precise moment specifically where the subject here manifests himself as the function of  $\phi$  (phi) with respect to the object. The subject vanishes at this precise point, does not recognise himself, and this is precisely as such through a failure to recognise that the méconnaissance is automatically produced, at this point of lack where there is found covered, unterdrückt, this function of phallicism. There is produced instead this mirage of narcissism which I would really call frenetic in the obsessional subject, this sort of alienation of phallicism which manifests itself so visibly in the

obsessional in phenomena which can be expressed, for example in what one calls difficulties of thinking in the obsessional neurotic, in a fashion that is particularly clear, articulated, avowed by the subject, experienced as such: "What I am thinking", the subject tells you, in an implicit fashion in his discourse very sufficiently articulated for the hyphen to be inserted and the addition be made in his declaration, "it is not so much because it is guilty that it is difficult for me to sustain it, to make progress in it, it is because it is absolutely necessary that what I am thinking should come from me, and never from my neighbour, from another." How often do we hear that! Not alone in the typical situations of the obsessional, in what I would call the obsessionalised relationships that we in a way produce artificially in a relationship as specific as that precisely of analytic teaching as such.

I spoke somewhere, specifically in my Rome report, about what I designated as being backed up against the wall of language. Nothing is more difficult than to bring the obsessional to the point of being backed up against the wall of his desire. Because there is something which I do not know whether it has really been highlighted and which nevertheless is a very illuminating point, I will take it up in order to illuminate the term of which you know I have already made one use, the term introduced by Jones in a fashion whose ambiguities I have marked, aphanisis, disappearance - as you know this is the meaning of the word in Greek - disappearance of desire.

People have never it seems to me highlighted this thing which is so simple, and so tangible in the stories of the obsessional, especially in his efforts when he is on a certain path of autonomous research, of self-analysis if you wish, when he situates himself somewhere on the path of his research which is (7) called the realisation of his phantasy in some form or other, it seems that people have never dwelt on the function which is quite impossible to avoid of the term aphanisis. If it is employed, it is because there is a quite natural and ordinary aphanisis which is limited by the power that the subject has of what can be called holding, holding an erection. Desire has a natural rhythm and, before even evoking the extremes of the incapacity of holding, the most disturbing forms of the brevity of the act, one can remark the following: what the subject has to deal with as an obstacle, as a reef where literally something which is profoundly fundamental about his relationship to his phantasy is shipwrecked, is properly speaking what there is when all is said and done in him about always terminating, the fact is that, as regards the erection then the collapse of desire, there is a moment when the erection vanishes.

Very exactly, precisely this moment signals that, God knows, in general he is not provided with neither more nor less than what we will call a very ordinary genitality - rather even a fairly soft one I thought I could remark - and that in a word, if it were something that was situated at this level that was in question in the avatars and the torments that the hidden mainsprings of his desire inflict on the obsessional, we would



have to bring our effort to bear elsewhere. I mean that I am always evoking as a counterpoint that which precisely is absolutely not our business, but which astonishes people - why do people not ask themselves why we do not make it our business - the perfecting of palaestras for sexual intercourse, to bring the body to life in the dimension of nudity and guts. I am not aware that apart from a few exceptions, one of which as you know well was very much reproved, namely that of Reich, I am not aware that this is a field to which analysts have directed their attention. As regards what he is dealing with the obsessional can expect more or less this support, this handling of his desire. It is a question in short of morals in an affair where things, in analysis or not, are kept in the domain of the clandestine, and where- consequently cultural variations do not matter very much. What is in question is situated therefore quite elsewhere, is situated at the level of the discordance between this phantasy (in so far precisely as it is linked to this function of phallicism) and the act in which he aspires to incarnate it, which with respect to this always falls short, . And naturally it is on the side of the effects of the phantasy, this phantasy which is entirely phallicism, that there develop all the symptomatic consequences which are designed to lend to it, and for which precisely he includes everything that lends itself to it in this form of isolation so typical, so characteristic as a mechanism, and which had been highlighted as a mechanism at the birth of the symptom.

If therefore there is in the obsessional this fear of aphanisis that Jones underlines, it is precisely in the measure and uniquely in the measure that it is the testing, which always turns into a defeat, of this  $\phi$  (big phi) function of the phallus as we are trying for the moment to approach it. In a word, the result is that the obsessional when all is said and done dreads nothing more than that to which he imagines he aspires, the liberty of his acts and his deeds, and the natural state if I can express myself in this way. The tasks of nature are not his strong point, nor indeed anything that leaves him sole master on (8) board, if I may express myself in this way, with God, namely the extreme functions of responsibility, pure responsibility, what one has vis-a-vis this Other in whom there is inscribed what we are articulating.

And, I am mentioning it in passing, this point which I am designating is nowhere better illustrated than in the function of the analyst, and very properly at the moment when he articulates the interpretation. You see that in the course of my remarks today that I am ceaselessly inscribing, correlatively to the field of experience of the neurotic, the one that analytic action very specially uncovers for us, in so far as necessarily it is the same because this is where "you have to go at it".

At the horizon of the experience of the obsessional, there is what I would call a certain fear of being deflated which is properly speaking related to something that we could call phallic inflation in so far as in a certain fashion the function in him of the phallus  $\phi$  (big phi) could not be better illustrated than

by that of the fable of The frog who wanted to make himself as big as an ox: "The miserable creature," as you know, "puffed himself up until he burst." It is a moment in experience that is ceaselessly renewed in the real stumbling point to which the obsessional is brought at the limits of his desire. And it seems to me that there is a value in underlining it, not simply in the sense of accentuating a derisory phenomenology, but moreover in order to allow you to articulate what is in question  $\psi$  this  $\Phi$  function of the phallus in so far as it is the one which is hidden behind his cashing-in at the level of the  $\phi$  ( $\phi$ ) function.

I already began to articulate the last time this  $\wedge$  ( $\Phi$ ) function of the phallus by formulating a term which is that of the real presence. This term, I think your ear is sensitive enough for you to see that I am putting quotation marks around it. Moreover I did not introduce it by itself, and I spoke about "the insult to the real presence" so that already no one could be mistaken, and we are not at all dealing here with a neutral reality.

It would be quite strange that if this real presence fulfilled the function which is the radical one that I am trying here to make you approach, had not already been located somewhere. And naturally I think that you have already perceived its homonymy, its identity with what religious dogma (the one to which we have access, I mean from our birth, in our cultural context) calls by this name. The real presence, this couple of words in so far as it constitutes a signifier, we are habituated, in a near or distant way, to hear it being murmured for a long time into our ears in connection with the Roman Catholic and Apostolic dogma of the Eucharist.

I assure you that there is no need to search very far in order to perceive that this is really on the same level as in the phenomenology of the obsessional. I assure you that it is not my fault.... I spoke above about the work of someone who busied himself with focussing the research of the obsessional structure on the phallus, I am taking his principal article, the one whose title I gave above: "Therapeutic incidences of the conscious awareness of penis envy in feminine obsessional neurosis". I begin to read it, and naturally, from the first pages, there arise for me all the possibilities of critical commentary concerning for example specifically that: "like the masculine obsessional, the woman needs to identify herself in a regressive way to the man in order to liberate herself from the anxieties of early childhood; but while the former will base himself on this (9) identification, in order to transform the infantile love object into a genital love object, she, the woman, basing herself first of all on this same identification, tends to abandon this first object and to orientate herself towards a heterosexual fixation, as if she could proceed to a new feminine identification, this time to the person of the analyst." - And further on that - "a short time after the desire for phallic possession, and correlatively for the castration of the analyst,

is revealed, and because of this fact, the aforementioned effects of relaxation were obtained, this personality of the male analyst was assimilated to that of a benevolent mother." - Three lines further on, we again come on this famous "initial destructive drive of which the mother is the object", namely on the major coordinates of the analysis of the imaginary in the analysis at present being conducted.

I have only punctuated in passing in this thematic, simply the difficulties at the leaps that are supposed to have been overcome by this initial interpretation which in a way summarises here as an exordium everything that subsequently is supposedly going to be illustrated. But I do not need to go beyond a half page to enter into the phenomenology of what is in question and into what this author (whose first writing it was and who was a clinician) finds to tell us, to recount to us in the phantasies of his patient who is situated in this way as obsessional. And there is really nothing else before. The first thing which comes before our eyes is the following: "She pictured for herself in imagination masculine genital organs," it is specified, "without it being a question of hallucinatory phenomena". We are quite sure of it. In effect, everything that we see accustoms us in this material to know well that it is a question of something quite different to hallucinatory phenomena.... "she pictured for herself in imagination masculine genital organs, in place of the host." It is in the same observation that, further on, we borrowed the last time the sacrilegious phantasies which consist precisely, not simply in superimposing in such a clear fashion the masculine genital organs - here it is specified for us "without there being a question of hallucinatory phenomena", namely well and truly as such in a signifying form - to superimpose them for that which is also for us, in the most precise symbolic fashion, identifiable to the real presence. .... what it is a question of is to reduce in a way this real presence, to break it, to pulverise it in the mechanism of desire, this is what the subsequent phantasies, those that I already quoted the last time, will be enough to underline.

I am sure that you do not imagine that this observation is unique. I will quote for you among tens of others, because the experience of an analyst never goes much beyond a hundred in a domain, the following fantasy which occurred in an obsessional at a point of his experience - these attempts at incarnating desire can in their case reach an extreme erotic pitch, in the circumstances when they can encounter in the partner some deliberate or fortuitous complaisance with what is involved precisely in this thematic of the degradation of the big Other into the small other in the field of which there is situated the development of their desire. At the very moment that the subject believed he would be able to limit himself to this sort of relationship which in their case is always accompanied with all the correlatives of an extremely threatening culpability, and which can be in a way balanced by the intensity of desire, the subject fomented the following fantasy with a partner who represented for him, at least momentarily, this very satisfying complementarity: to make the sacred host play a role so that,

placed in the vagina of the woman, it found itself capping the (10) penis of the subject, his own, at the moment of penetration. You must not believe that what we have here is one of these refinements that one only finds in a specialised literature, it is really common currency in its register. This is the way it is in fantasy, especially obsessional fantasy.

So how can this not be remembered.... to precipitate all of this into the register of a canalization such as that of a supposed distance from the object in so far as the object in question is supposed to be the objectivity (this indeed is what is described for us, the objectivity of the world as it is recorded by the more or less harmonious combination of spoken enumeration with common imaginary relationships, the objectivity of the form as it is specified by human dimensions) and to speak to us about the frontiers of the apprehension of the external world as threatened by a disturbance which is supposed to be that of the delimitation of the ego from what one can call the objects of common communication.... how can it not be remembered that there is here something of another dimension: it is a question of situating the real presence somewhere and in a different register to that of the imaginary.

Let us say that it is in so far as I teach you to situate the place of desire with respect to the function of man qua subject who speaks, that we glimpse, we can designate, describe this fact that in man desire comes to inhabit the place of this real presence as such and to people it with its ghosts.

But then what does this ^ (big phi) mean? Am I summing it up by designating this place of the real presence in so far as it can only appear in the intervals of what the signifier covers, that from these intervals, if I may thus express myself, it is from there that the real presence threatens the whole signifying system? It is true, there is truth in that, and the obsessional shows it to you at every point in what you call the mechanisms of projection or of defence, or more precisely phenomenologically of incantation - this fashion that he has of filling in everything that may present itself as interspace in the signifier, this fashion that Freud's obsessional, the Rattenmann, has of obliging himself to count up to so many between the flash of lightning and the sound of thunder. Here there is designated in its true structure what is meant by this need to fill in the signifying interval as such, in this way there can be introduced everything that is going to dissolve the whole phantasmagoria.

Apply this key to twenty-five or thirty of the symptoms with which the Rattenmann and all the observations of obsessionals literally swarm, and you put your finger on the truth that is in question, and what is more at the same time, you situate the function of the phobic object which is nothing other than the simplest form of this filling in.

Here, what I reminded you about the other time in connection with little Hans, the universal signifier that the phobic object realises is that, and nothing else. Here it is is at an advance

post as I told you, well before one approaches the hole, the gap realised in the interval where the real presence threatens that a unique sign prevents the subject from approaching. This is why the role, the mainspring and the reason for the phobia is not, as people who have nothing but the word fear on their lips believe, a vital danger or even a narcissistic one. It is very precisely, according to certain privileged developments of the position of the subject with respect to the big Other (in the case of little Hans, to his mother) this point where what the subject dreads meeting is a certain sort of desire of a nature to make return into the previous nothingness the whole of creation the whole signifying system.

(11) But then, why the phallus, at that place and in that role? It is here that I want today to advance far enough to make you sense what I would call its suitability, not the deduction because it is the experience, the empirical discovery which assures us that it is there, something that makes us see that it is not irrational as an experience. The phallus therefore, it is experience which shows it to us, but this suitability that I want to highlight, I want to put the accent on this fact that it is properly speaking determined in so far as the phallus, as I said, in so far as experience reveals it to us is not simply the organ of copulation but is taken up into the perverse mechanism as such.

Understand carefully what I mean. What it is a question now of accentuating is that, from the point which as structural  $\Phi$  presents the accents of the signifier, something, the phallus, (big phi), can function as the signifier. What does that mean? What defines as signifier something of which we have just said that by hypothesis, definition and from the start, it is the signifier excluded from the signifier, therefore which cannot enter into it except by artifice, contraband and degradation and this indeed is why we never see it except in function of the imaginary  $\phi$  (small phi). What is it then that allows us to speak about it as signifier and to isolate  $\Phi$  (big phi)? It is the perverse mechanism.

If we make of the phallus the following natural schema, what is the phallus? The phallus, under the organic form of the penis, is not a universal organ in the animal kingdom. The insects have other ways of clinging onto one another and, without going that far, the relationships between fish are not phallic relationships. The phallus presents itself at the human level among others as the sign of desire, it is also its instrument, and also its presence. But I hold onto this sign to make you pause at an element of articulation essential to hold onto: is it simply through that that it is a signifier? It would be to go beyond a limit a little bit too rapidly to say that everything can be resumed in that because there are all the same other signs of desire. It must not even be believed that what we note in the phenomenology, namely the easier projection of the phallus because of its more pregnant form onto the object of desire, onto the feminine object for example, which made us articulate several times in perverse phenomenology the famous equivalence of a girl

in the simplest form, in the setting up of the phallus, in the erect form of the phallus.... that is not enough, even though we might conceive of this sort of profound choice whose consequences we encounter everywhere as sufficiently motivated.

A signifier, is it simply to represent something for someone, which is the definition of the sign? It is that but not simply that, because I added something else the last time when I recalled for you the function of the signifier, which is that this signifier is not simply, as I might say, to make a sign to someone, but in the same moment of the signifying principle, of the signifying agency, to make a sign of someone. To ensure that the someone for whom the sign designates something assimilates this someone to himself, that this someone himself also becomes this signifier. And it is in this moment that I designate as such, expressly as perverse, that we put our finger on the agency of the phallus. Because, if the phallus which shows itself has as an effect to produce in the subject to whom it is shown the erection of the phallus also, this is not a (12) condition which satisfies in any way a natural exigency.

It is here that there is designated that which we call in a more or less confused fashion the homosexual agency. And it is not for nothing that at this etiological level it is always at the level of the male sex that we highlight it. It is in so far as the result, the fact is that the phallus as sign of desire manifests itself in short as object of desire, as object of attraction for desire, it is in this mainspring that there lies its signifying function because of which it is capable of operating at this level in this zone, in this sector where we ought both to identify it as signifier and understand what it is thus led to designate. It is nothing which is directly signifiable, it is what is beyond any possible signification - and specifically this real presence onto which today I wished to draw your thoughts to make of it the continuation of our articulation.

Seminar 19:            Wednesday 3 May 1961

As you know, I am trying this year to put back in its place the fundamental question that is posed to us in our experience by transference by orienting our thinking towards what should be, in order to respond to this phenomenon, the position of the analyst in this affair. I am striving to highlight it at the most essential level, at the point of what I am designating before this appeal of the patient's most profound being at the moment that he comes to ask for our aid and our help, that which in order to be rigorous, correct, impartial, in order also to be as open as is indicated by the nature of the question which is posed to us: what the desire of the analyst should be. It is certainly not adequate in any way to satisfy ourselves with thinking that the analyst through his experience and his science, through the doctrine that he represents, is someone who would be in a way the modern equivalent, the authorised representative through the power of a research, of a doctrine and of a community, of what one could call the law of nature - someone who would redesignate for us anew the path of a natural harmony, accessible through the detours of a renewed experience.

If this year I began again before you from the Socratic experience, it is essentially in order to centre you, from the start, around this point through which we are interrogated qua "knowing", even the bearers of a secret, which is not the secret of everything, which is a unique secret and which nevertheless is worth more than everything one is ignorant of and that one may continue to be ignorant of. This is given from the start, from the condition, from the setting up of the analytic experience. However obscurely, those who come to find us already know, and if they do not know, they will be rapidly oriented by our experience towards this notion that the secret, that we are supposed to possess, is precisely as I say more precious than everything that one is ignorant of and that one will continue to be ignorant of, precisely because of the fact that this secret has to answer for the partiality of what one knows. Is it true, is it not true? It is not at this point that I have to settle it.

It is in this way that analytic experience proposes itself, offers itself, that it is approached. It is in this way that there can, in a certain respect, be defined what it introduces anew into the horizon of a man, the one that we are along with

our contemporaries. In the depths of each and every one among us who tries out this experience, from whatever aspect we tackle it, analysand or analyst, there is this supposition that at least at a level that is really central, more, essential for our conduct, there is this supposition - when I say supposition I can even leave it marked with a dubitative accent, it is as an attempt that the experience can be taken on, that it most usually is taken on by those who come to us - the supposition that the impasses due to our ignorance are perhaps only determined in fact because we deceive ourselves about what one can call the power relationships of our knowledge, that in short we are posing ourselves false problems. And this supposition, this hope - I would say, with what it involves in terms of optimism - is favoured by the fact - that it has become part of common consciousness that desire does not present itself with its face uncovered, that it is not even simply at the place that the secular experience of philosophy, to call it by its name, has designated in order to contain it, to exclude it in a certain fashion from the right to domineer over us.

Very far from it, desires are everywhere and at the very heart of our efforts to make ourselves master of them; very far from it, that even in combatting them we are scarcely doing anything more than satisfying there (y satisfaire) - I say there and not them because to satisfy them would still be to consider them too much as graspable, being able to say where they are - to satisfy there is said here as one says, in the opposite sense, to get out of something or not to get out of it (y couper ou de n'y pas couper), in the very measure of a fundamental plan precisely to get out of it. Well there is no getting out of it and so little indeed that it is not enough to avoid them in order not to find ourselves feeling more or less guilty about them. In any case, whatever we may be able to testify as regards our project, that which analytic experience teaches us in the first place, is that man is marked, disturbed and disturbed by anything that we can called a symptom in so far as the symptom is that, it is, with regard to these desires whose limits or whose place we cannot define, to satisfy there always in some respect and, what is more, without pleasure.

It seems that such a bitter doctrine ought to imply that the analyst is the possessor, at some level, of the strangest measure. Because, if the accent is put on such a great extension of fundamental méconnaissance (and not at all as was done up to then in a speculative form from which it might arise in a way in the question of knowing) and in a form - that I believe that I cannot do better than describe at least for the moment as it comes to me - a textual form in the sense that it is really a méconnaissance woven into the personal construction in the broadest sense, it is clear that in making this supposition the analyst ought . . . , and for many is supposed if not to have, at least to have the duty of overcoming the mainspring of this méconnaissance, to have destroyed in himself this stopping point that I designated for you as that of the Che vuoi? What do you want? There where there is supposed to come to a halt the limit of all self-knowledge.



At the very least this path of what I would call the proper good, in so far as it is the accord of self to self on the plane of the authentic, should be open to the analyst for himself and, that at least on this point of particular experience, something could be grasped about this nature, about this natural, about this something which is supposed to be sustained by its own naivete - this something about which as you know elsewhere other than in analytic experience some scepticism or other, not to say some disgust, some nihilism or other, to use the word by which the moralists of our epoch have designated it, has seized the totality of our culture as regards what one can designate as the measure of man. There is nothing further from modern, contemporary thought precisely, than this natural idea so familiar throughout so many centuries to all those who, in any way, tended to direct themselves towards a just measure of (3) conduct, to whom it did not even seem that this notion could be argued.

What is supposed about the analyst at this level should not even be limited to the field of his action, have a local import in so far as he practices, as he is here hie et nunc as they say, but be attributed to him as habitual if you give to this word its full meaning - the one which refers more to the habitus in the scholastic sense, to this integration of oneself to the consistency of act and of form in one's own life, to that which constitutes the foundation of all virtue - more than to habit in so far as it is oriented towards the simple notion of imprinting and of passivity.

Do I need to discuss this ideal before we put a cross on it. Not of course indeed that one could not evoke examples of a kind of purity of heart in the analyst. Do people think then that it is thinkable that this ideal should be required at the beginning in the analyst, could be in any way delineated and, if one bore witness to it, let us say that it is neither the usual thing, nor the reputation of the analyst. Moreover we could easily designate the reasons for our disappointment with these weak-minded formulae which escape us at every moment whenever we try to formulate in our magisterium something which reaches the value of an ethic.

It is not for pleasure, you may well believe me, that I pause at one or other formula of a supposedly analytic characterology in order to show their weaknesses, the character of blind window, of puerile opposition, when I am trying to make shine out before you recent efforts, which are always meritorious, of mapping out the ideals of our doctrine. I see indeed one or other formulation of the genital character as an end, as an identification of our goals with the pure and simple lifting of the impasses identified at the pregenital ..... sufficient to resolve all its antinomies, but I would ask you to see what is supposed, involved in the consequences of such a display of impotence at thinking out the truth of our experience.

It is in a quite other relativity that there is situated the problem of human desire. And if we ought to be, in the

patient's search, something more than simple companions of this search, that at the very least we should never lose sight of this measure which makes of the desire of the subject essentially, as I teach it to you, the desire of the other with a big O.

Desire is such that it cannot be situated, be put in its place and at the same time be understood except in this fundamental alienation which is not simply linked to the battle of man with man, but to the relationship with language. This desire of the Other, this genitive is at once subjective and objective, desire at the place where the Other is, in order to be able to be this place, the desire of some otherness and, in order to satisfy this search for the objective (namely what is this desire this other which comes to find us\_), it is necessary that we should lend ourselves here to this function of the subjective, that in some way we should be able for a time to represent not at all the object as is believed - well you must admit how derisory it would be and how simplistic also that we should be it - not at all the object that the desire is aiming at but the signifier. It is at once much less but also much more to think that it is necessary for us to hold this empty place where there is summoned this signifier which can only be by cancelling out all the others, this  $\phi$  whose position, whose central condition in our experience I am trying to show you.

Our function, our power, our duty is certain and all the (4) difficulties are resumed in this: it is necessary to know how to occupy one's place in so far as the subject ought to be able to locate in it the missing signifier. And therefore through an antinomy, through a paradox which is that of our function, it is at the very place that we are supposed to know that we are called to be and to be nothing more, nothing other than the real presence and precisely in so far as it is unconscious. At the final term, I am saying at the final term of course, at the horizon of what our function is in analysis, we are there as that, that precisely which remains silent and remains silent in that he wants-to-be. We are at the final term in our presence our own subject at the point where it vanishes, where it is barred. It is for that reason that we can occupy the same place where the subject as subject effaces himself, subordinates himself and subordinates himself to all the signifiers of his own demand, \$ O D.

This is not produced simply at the level of regression, at the level of the signifying treasures of the unconscious, at the level of the vocabulary of the Wunsch in so far as we decipher it in the course of the analytic experience, but at the final term at the level of the phantasy. I say at the final term in so far as the phantasy is the only equivalent of the instinctual (pulsionnelle) discovery through which it may be possible for the subject to designate the place of the response.... it is a question of knowing whether, in order that in the transference we should ourselves enter for the passive subject into this phantasy at the level of this supposes that in a certain fashion we should really be this  $j\phi$ , that we should be in the final term the ones who see little o, the object of the phantasy, that we should

be able in any experience whatsoever, even the experience most foreign to us, to be when all is said and done this seer, the one who can see the object of desire of the other, however distant this other may be from himself.

It is indeed because this is the way things are that you see me, throughout this teaching, interrogating, surveying all the aspects in which not only experience but tradition can be of use to us, as regards this question of what the desire of man is. And in the course of this path which we have taken together, alternate from the scientific definition - I mean in the widest sense of this term science - which has been attempted of it since Socrates, to something quite opposite (in so far as it is graspable in monuments of human memory), to its tragic experience, whether it is a question like two years ago of the journey that I made you take around the original drama of modern man, Hamlet or, like last year, this glimpse that I tried to give you of what is meant in this respect by antique tragedy.

It seemed to me because of an encounter that I had, it must be said, by chance, with one of these formulations which are neither more nor less good than those that we habitually see in our circle about what phantasy is, because of having encountered in the last Bulletin de Psychologie an articulation, which I may say once again startled me by its mediocrity, of this function of the phantasy.... But after all the author, because he is the very person who wished, at one time, to form a great number of mediocre psychoanalysts, will not I think take too much offence at this evaluation. It is indeed that which gave me again - I cannot say the courage, something more is necessary - a type of (5) rage, to go once again through one of these detours whose circuit I hope you will have the patience to follow, and to seek out whether there is not in our contemporary experience something on which there could be hung what I am trying to show you, which must always be there and I would say more than ever at the time of analytic experience which is not after all conceivable as having been simply a miracle which emerged because of some individual accident or other which might be called the Viennese petit bourgeois Freud.

Naturally of course in a whole group, there are in our epoch all the elements of this theatrical art which ought to allow us to put at its own level the drama of those with whom we have to deal, when it is a question of desire and not to be satisfied with true-life stories, the stories you hear from medical students. One can gather here in passing this theme that I cited for you above of phantasy identified with the fact, certainly a lying one moreover, because one sees it clearly in the text, this is not even a case which has been analysed. It is the story of a stall-keeper who, all of a sudden, from the day that he was told that he only had twelve months to live was freed from what is called in this text his phantasy, namely the fear of venereal diseases and who, from that moment on - as the author puts it, although one has to ask oneself where he got this vocabulary because it is difficult to imagine it on the lips of the subject who is being quoted - from that moment on the one

whose story is being told is supposed to have had his money's worth. Such is the uncriticised level, to a degree which is enough to make it more than suspect for you, to which there is brought the level of human desire and of its obstacles.

There is another thing which has decided me to make you take a tour, once again around tragedy in so far as it touches us and I am going to tell you immediately which one, because I will also tell you what chance leads me to refer to it. In truth modern tragedy, this time I mean contemporary, exists in more than one example, but it is not all that common. And if my intention is to bring you through a trilogy by Claudel, I will tell you what decided me on it.

It is a long time since I reread this trilogy, the one composed of The hostage, Hard bread, and The humiliated father, (L'otage, Le pain dur, Le pere humilié). I was led to it a few weeks ago by a chance whose accidental side I will tell you about - because after all it is amusing at least for the personal use that I make of my own criteria. And because moreover I told you in a formula, the value of formulae is that one can take them (6) literally, namely as stupidly as possible and that they ought to lead you somewhere, this is true for mine as well as for the others; what is called the operational aspect of formulae, is that and and it is just as true for mine, I do not pretend that only the others are operational. So that in reading the correspondence between Andre Gide and Paul Claudel, which between ourselves is a very powerful one, I recommend it to you, but what I am going to say to you has no relation to the object of this correspondence from which Claudel does not emerge with any greater stature, which does not prevent me here from putting Claudel in the first rank that he deserves, namely as one of the greatest poets who have existed.... It happens that in this correspondence where Andre Gide plays his role as director of the Nouvelle Revue Française - I mean not only of the Revue but of the books that it edits at that epoch, at an epoch which is before 1914 - it is a question precisely of the publication of The hostage. And pay careful attention, not so much as regards the content but as regards the role and the function that I have given to it - because this indeed is the efficient cause of the fact that you are going to hear me talking for one or two sessions about this trilogy which is like no other - it is that one of the problems in question for two or three letters (and this in order to print The hostage) is that it is going to be necessary to cast a character that does not exist, not simply in the printing press of the Nouvelle Revue Française, but in any other: the U with a circumflex accent. Because never at any point of the French tongue was there need for a U with a circumflex accent. It is Paul Claudel who, by calling his heroine Sygne de Coufontaine and at the same time in virtue of his own discretionary power, with an accent on the u of Coufontaine, proposes this little difficulty to typographers for introducing the replies into a correct, readable edition of what is a play. As the names of the characters are printed in capital letters, that which at the limit would not cause a problem at the level of the lower case u, causes one at the level

of the capital.

At this sign of the missing signifier I said to myself that there must be something in the wind and that to reread The hostage would at the very least take me a good deal further.

This led me to reread a considerable part of Claudel's theatre. I was, as you might well expect, rewarded for it.

I would like to draw your attention to the following. The hostage, to begin with this play is a work of which Claudel himself, at the time he wrote it and when he was as you know an official in foreign relations, representing France in some capacity or other, let us say something like a counsellor, probably more than an attache\* - anyway it does not matter he was an official of the Republic at a time when that still had a meaning - wrote to Andre Gide: it would be better all the same, given the very reactionary style - it is he who expresses himself (7) in this way - of the thing, that it should not be signed Claudel. Let us not smile at this prudence, prudence has always been considered a moral virtue. And believe me we would be wrong to think that because it is no longer in season perhaps, that we should for all that despise the last people who gave proof of it.

It is certain that to read The hostage I would say that the values which are debated there, which we would call faith values.... I remind you that it deals with a sombre story which is supposed to happen at the time of the emperor Napoleon I. A lady who begins to become the tiniest little bit of an old maid, do not forget it, since the time that she has devoted herself to a heroic work which is that.... let us say that it has lasted for ten years because the story is supposed to happen at the acme of Napoleonic power, that what is in question - it is naturally arranged, transformed for the needs of the drama - is the story of the constraint exercised by the Emperor on the person of the Pope. This puts us then a little more than ten years from the time when the trials of Sygne de Coufontaine began. You have already perceived, given the resonance of her name that she forms part of the ci-devants, of those who were, among other things, dispossessed of their privileges and their goods by the Revolution. And therefore since that time, Sygne de Coufontaine who remained in France, while her cousin has emigrated, has given herself over to the patient task of reassembling the elements of the Coufontaine domain. This in the text is not simply the result of a greedy tenacity, this is represented for us as consubstantial, codimensional with this pact with the land which, for the two personages, for the author also who makes them speak, is identical to the constancy, to the value of nobility itself. I would ask you to refer to the text, we will continue to speak about it. You will see the terms, which are moreover admirable, in which there is expressed this bond to the land as such, which is not simply a bond of fact, but a mystic bond, which is also the one around which is defined a whole order of allegiance which is properly speaking the feudal order, which unites in a single cluster this bond which one can call the bond of kinship with a

local bond around which there is ordered everything that defines lords and vassals, birthright, the bond of patronage. I can only indicate all these themes to you in a few words. This is not the object of our research. I think moreover that you will have plenty of it if you refer to the text.

It is in the course of this enterprise therefore, founded on the dramatic, poetic, exaltation created before us of certain values which are values ordered according to a certain form of the word, that there comes to interfere the vicissitude constituted by the fact that the emigrant, absent cousin, who moreover in the course of the preceding years had on several occasions made an appearance clandestinely to Sygne de Co&fontaine, once more reappears accompanied by a personage whose identity is not (8) unveiled to us and who is none other than the Supreme Father, the Pope, whose whole presence in the drama will be defined for us as that to be taken literally as the representative on earth of the Celestial Father. It is around this fugitive, escaped person, because it is with the help of Sygne de Coufontaine that he finds himself here beyond the power of the oppressor, it is around this person that there is going to be played out the drama, because here there emerges a third personage, the one described as Baron Turelure, Toussaint Turelure, whose image is going to dominate the whole trilogy.

The whole figure of this Toussaint is delineated in a way to make us regard him with horror, as if it were not already sufficiently villainous and evil to come to torment such a charming woman, but what is more to come to blackmail her: "Mademoiselle I have desired you and have loved you for a long time but today because you have this old eternal daddy in your house, I will trap him and I will wring his neck if you do not yield to my demands...." It is not unintentionally, as you can clearly see that I connote with a touch of Punch and Judy this core of the drama. As if he were not evil enough, villainous enough, old Turelure is presented to us with all the attributes not alone of cynicism but of ugliness. It is not enough that he should be evil, he is shown to us also as lame, a bit twisted, hideous. What is more he is the one who had the head cut off all the people in the family of Sygne de Coufontaine in the good old days of ninety three, and this in the most open fashion, so that he has still to make the lady go through that. What is more he is the son of a sorcerer and of a woman who was the nurse, and then the servant of Sygne de Coufontaine who therefore, when she marries him, will marry the son of the sorcerer and of her servant.

Are you not going to say that what we have here is something which goes a little bit too far in a certain sense to touch the heart of an audience for whom these old stories have all the same taken on a rather different relief, namely that the French Revolution has all the same shown by its consequences that it is not uniquely to be judged by the measure of the martyrdom undergone by the aristocracy. It is quite clear that it is not in effect from this angle that it can in any way be received as I believe The hostage is received by an audience. I still cannot say that this audience extends very far in our nation but one

cannot say either that those who attended the production, rather late moreover in the history of this play, were uniquely composed of - I cannot say the partisans of the comte de Paris, because as everyone knows the comte de Paris is very progressive - let us say those who regret the time of the comte de Chambord. It is rather an advanced, cultivated, educated audience which before The hostage of Claudel, experiences the shock, which we can describe as tragic on this occasion, that is involved in the sequence of events. But to understand what this emotion means (namely that not only does the public go along with it, but moreover, I promise you, in reading it you will have no doubt that we are dealing here with a work which has in the tradition of theatre all the rights and all the merits assignable to the greatest thing that could be presented to you), what can be the secret of what makes us experience it through a story which is presented with this aspect of a wager pushed, I insist, to the extremes of a sort of caricature, let us go further. You must not stop here at the idea that it is a question here of what the suggestion of religious values always evokes in us, because moreover it is on this that we must now dwell.

(9) The mainspring, the major scene, the centre accentuated in the drama is that the one who is the vehicle of the request to which Sygne de Coufontaine is going to yield is not the horrible and you are going to see not only horrible personage, so important for all the rest of the trilogy, Toussaint ^Turelure. It is her confessor, namely a sort of saint, the cure Badilon.

It is at the moment when Sygne de Coufontaine is not simply there as the one who has carried out through all sorts of difficulties her work of maintenance but who what is more, at the moment when her cousin has come to find her, has learnt at the same time from him that he has just experienced in his own life, in his person, the most bitter betrayal. He has realised after many years that the woman he loved was simply the occasion for him of being duped for many years, he himself being the only one not to know it; that she had been, in other words, the mistress of the one who in Paul Claudel's text is called the Dauphin - there never was an emigre Dauphin but this is not something that should worry us.

What is in question, is to show in their disappointment, their really tragic isolation, the major personages, Sygne de Coufontaine and her cousin. Some measles or whooping cough had swept away not simply the interesting personage of the cousin's wife, but the young children, his descendants. And he arrives there therefore, deprived by destiny of everything, deprived of everything except his steadfastness to the royal cause. And, in a dialogue which is in short the tragic point of departure of what is going to happen, Sygne and her cousin had become engaged to one another before God. Nothing, either in the present or in the future, will permit them to make this engagement take effect. But they have pledged their word to one another beyond everything that is possible and impossible. They are consecrated to one another.

When the cure Badilon comes to demand of Sygne de Coufontaine not

something indifferent but that she should consider the following, that by refusing what the evil Turelure has proposed to her already, she would find herself in short the key to this historical moment when the Father of all the faithful is to be delivered over to his enemies or not, undoubtedly the holy Badilon does not properly speaking impose any duty on her. He goes further, it is not at all to her strength that he appeals - he says and Claudel writes - but to her weakness. He shows her, open before her, the abyss of this acceptance through which she will become the agent of a sublime act of deliverance, but where, you should carefully note, everything is done to show us that in doing this she must renounce in herself something which goes much further of course than any attraction, than any possible pleasure, even any duty, but what is her very being, the pact which has always bound her to her fidelity to her own family. She must marry the exterminator of her family, [renounce] the sacred engagement that she had just made with the one whom she loves, something which carries her properly speaking, not to the limits because we know that she is a woman who would willingly, as she has shown in her past, sacrifice her life, but that which for her as for every being is worth more than her life, not simply her reasons for living but the thing in which she recognises her very being.

(10) And we find ourselves, through what I am provisionally calling this contemporary tragedy, carried properly speaking to the limits which are the ones I taught you last year to approach with Antigone to the limits of the second death, except that here it is demanded of the hero, of the heroine to go beyond them.

Because if I showed you last year what is signified by tragic destiny; if I was able to manage I believe to locate it for you in a topology that we called Sadian, namely in this place which was baptised here, I mean by my listeners, as l'entre-deux-morts; if I showed that this place is superseded by going not as people say in a sort of ritual formula beyond good and evil (which is a nice phrase for obscuring what is in question), but beyond the Beautiful properly speaking; if the second death is this limit which is designated and which is also veiled by what I called the phenomenon of beauty, the one that explodes in the text of Sophocles at the moment when Antigone having passed beyond the limit of her condemnation - not simply accepted but provoked - by Creon, the choir bursts into the song "Eros anikate machan, Eros invincible in combat..." . I remind you of these terms in order to show you that here, after twenty centuries of the Christian era\_, it is beyond this limit that the drama of Sygne de Coufontaine carries us. There where the antique heroine is identical to her destiny, Ate, to this law for her divine law which carries her towards the test, it is against her will, against everything that determines her, not simply in her life but in her being, that the other heroine by an act of liberty must go against everything that belongs to her being even down to its most intimate roots.

Life is left far behind here because, you must not forget, there is something different, which is accentuated by the dramatist in



all its force: it is that given what she is (her faith-relationship with human things), accepting to marry Turelure could not simply be to yield to a constraint. Marriage, even the most execrable one, is an indissoluble marriage, which again is not nothing.... involves adhering to the duty of marriage in so far as it is the duty of love. When I say, life is left far behind, we will have the proof of this at the point of the denouement to which the play leads us. Things consist in the following, Synge therefore has yielded, she has become the baronne de Turelure. It is on the day of the birth of the little Turelure - whose destiny as you will see will occupy us the next time - that there is going to occur the vicissitude, the acme and the end of the drama. It is in occupied Paris that the baron Turelure who has come here to occupy the centre, to be the historic figure of this whole great Punch and Judy show of the Maréchaux whose faithful and unfaithful oscillations around the great disaster we know about from history, it is that day that Turelure must on certain conditions give the keys of the great city to King Louis XVIII.

The one who is the ambassador for this negotiation will be, as you might expect, as is necessary for the beauty of the drama, none other than Sygne's cousin in person. Naturally, all the most odious things that could be in the circumstances of the encounter do not fail to be added to it. Namely that among the conditions for example that Turelure puts on his good and profitable betrayal - the thing is not presented to us in any other way - there will be in particular that the prerogatives of Coufontaine, I mean the shadow of things but also what is (11) essential to it, namely the name de Coufontaine will pass to the descendants of this improper alliance.

Things of course having been brought to this degree, you will not be at all astonished that they end with a little assassination attempt with a pistol. Namely that once the conditions have been accepted the cousin (who himself moreover is far from being without beauty) prepares himself and decides to finish off, as they say, the aforementioned Turelure; who of course, having all the traits of trickery and malignity, has foreseen this and also has a little revolver in his pocket; in the time it takes the clock to strike three times, the two revolvers go off, and it is naturally not the villain who is left for dead. But the essential is that Sygne de Coufontaine throws herself in front of the bullet which is going to strike her husband and that she is going to die, in the moments that follow, through in short preventing his death.

Suicide, we would say, and not without justification, because moreover everything in her attitude shows us that she has drunk the chalice without finding in it anything other than it is, absolute dereliction, the abandonment experienced by divine powers, the determination to push to the end that which, to this degree, scarcely deserves any more the name of sacrifice. In short, in the last scene, before the gesture in which she is killed, she is presented to us as agitated by a facial tic and, in a way, showing in this way the intention of the poet to show

us that this term, that last year I designated for you as respected by Sade himself (that beauty is insensible to outrage), here finds itself in a way superseded, and that this grimace of life which suffers is in a way more of an attack on the status of beauty than the grimace of death and the protruding tongue that we can evoke on the face of the hanged Antigone when Hemon discovers her.

So what happens right at the end? On what does the poet leave us in suspense as the end of this tragedy? There are two endings and this is what I would ask you to retain.

One of these endings consists in- the entrance of the King. A clownish entrance where Toussaint Turelure naturally receives the just recompense for his services and where the restored order takes on the aspects of this sort of caricatural affair, all too easy to make acceptable to the French public after what history has taught us about the effects of the Restoration. In short a sort of really derisory holy picture, which moreover does not leave us in any doubt on the judgement the poet makes with respect to any return of what can be called the Ancien Regime....

The interest lies precisely in the second ending, which is, linked by an intimate equivalence to what the poet is capable of leaving us in this image, the death of Sygne de Coufontaine, not that of course it is evaded in the first ending.

Just before the figure of the King, it is Badilon who reappears to exhort Sygne, and is not able up to the end to obtain from her anything but a "no", an absolute refusal of peace, of abandonment, of the offering of herself to God who is going to receive her soul. All the exhortations of the saint, himself torn apart by the final consequences of what he was the craftsman of, fail before the final negation of one who cannot find, from any angle, anything whatsoever which reconciles her with a fatality which I would ask you to notice goes beyond everything that one can call ananke in antique tragedy, what Mr. Ricoeur, whom I noticed was studying the same things as I in Antigone more or less at the same time, calls the function of the evil god. The evil god of antique tragedy is still something which is linked to man through the intermediary of ananke, of this named, (12) articulated aberration of which it is the orderer, which is linked to something, to this Ate of the other as Antigone says properly speaking, and as Creon says in Sophocles tragedy even though neither one or other of them came to the seminar. This Ate of the other has a meaning in which the destiny of Antigone is inscribed.

Here we are beyond all meaning. The sacrifice of Sygne de Coufontaine only culminates in an absolute mockery of her goals. The old man whom it was a question of snatching from the claws of Turelure, will only be pictured for us up to the end of the trilogy, even though he is the Supreme Father of the faithful, as an impotent father who, faced with the ideals that are coming to the fore, has nothing to offer them except the empty repetition of traditional words without their force. The so-called

restored legitimacy is nothing but a lure, a fiction, a caricature and, in reality, a prolongation of the subverted order.

What the poet adds to this in the second ending is this twist in which there intersects again as one might say his challenge of having Sygne de Coufontaine exhorted with the very words of her coat of arms, her motto, which is for her the meaning of her life: Coufontaine Adsum, Cofifontaine here I am, by Turelure himself who, before his wife who is unable to speak or is refusing to speak, tries at least to obtain some sign or other, even if it were only her consent to the arrival of the new being, of recognition of the fact that the gesture she had made was to protect him, Turelure. To all of this the martyr makes no reply, until she dies, except a "no".

What does it mean for the poet to have brought us to this extreme of the default, of the mockery of the signifier itself as such? What does it mean that such a thing should be presented to us? Because it seems to me that I have sufficiently brought you through the degrees of what I would call this enormity. You will tell me that we have thick skins, namely that after all you are sufficiently confronted with all sorts of things not to be surprised by anything, but all the same..... I know that there is something in common between the measure of Claudel's poetry and that of the Surrealists [but] what we cannot doubt in any case is that Claudel, at least, imagined that he knew what he was writing. In any case it is written, such a thing was able to be born of human imagination. For us, the listeners, we know well that if it were only a question here of representing for us in a picturesque way a thematic which moreover our ears have been deafened with about the sentimental conflicts of XIXth century France.... We know well that it is something else that is in question, that this is not what touches us, grips us, leaves us in suspense, attaches us, projects us on from The hostage to the subsequent sequence of the trilogy. There is something else in this image before which words fail us. What is presented to us here according to the formula that I gave you last year di eleou kai phobou to employ Aristotle's terms, namely, not "by terror and by pity" but through all the terror and all the pity that have been superseded puts us here further on again. It is an image of a desire with regard to which again only the Sadian reference seems to have validity.

This substitution of the image of the woman for the Christian sign of the cross, does it not seem to you that it is not simply designated there - you will see it, in the most express fashion in the text because the image of the crucifix is on the horizon from the beginning of the play and we will rediscover it in the following play - but again are you not struck by the coincidence of this theme qua properly erotic with what is here specifically (and without there being something else, another thread) another reference point which allows us to transfix the whole plot and the whole scenario, that of the superseding, of the breach made beyond any value of the faith. This play in appearance by a believer and from which the believers - and the most eminent of

them, Bernanos himself - turn away as if from a blasphemy, is it not for us the index of a new meaning to be given to the human tragedy? This is what the next time with the two other terms of the trilogy, I will try to show you.

Seminar 20;                    Wednesday 10 May 1961

Please excuse me if, in this place which is open to all, I ask those who are united by the same friendship to direct their thoughts for a moment towards a man who was their friend, my friend, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who was taken away from us last Wednesday, the evening of my last seminar, in an instant, and whose death I heard about a few hours after this instant. It went straight to my heart. Maurice Merleau-Ponty followed his path, pursued his research which was not the same as mine. We began from different points, we had different aims and I would even say that from quite opposite aims that we both found ourselves in a position to teach. He always wished and desired - and I can say indeed that it was despite me - that I should occupy this chair. I can also say that we did not have enough time, because of this mortal fatality, to bring closer together our formulae and our enunciations. His position, with respect to what I am teaching you was one of sympathy. And I believe after the past eight days, when, you may believe me, the effect of this profound mourning that I experienced about it made me question myself about the level at which I can occupy this place, and in such a way that I can put myself in question before myself, at least, it seemed to me that from him, by his response, by his attitude, by his friendly remarks every time he came here, I draw this aid, this comfort that I believe that we had in common this idea about teaching which eliminates as far as possible every principle of infatuation, and in a word, all pedantry.

You will excuse me therefore also if today what I was going to tell you and with which I had counted on finishing this detour the reasons for which I gave you the last time, this detour through a contemporary tragedy by Claudel, you will excuse me therefore if today I do not push things further than I manage to push them. In effect, you will forgive me by reason of the fact that I had of course to forego the preparation that I usually devote to you.

We had left things, the last time, at the end of The hostage and at the emergence of an image: the image of Sygne de Cofifontaine who says "No". Having said this, this "no" at the very place to which a tragedy, that I would provisionally call a "Christian tragedy", pushes its heroine... one needs to dwell on each of these words.

I spoke to you enough about tragedy for you to know that for Hegel when he situated it in the Phenomenology of the spirit, it may be thought that these words of Christian tragedy are in a way (2) linked to reconciliation, the Versöhnung that the redemption implies being in the eyes of Hegel that which at the same time resolves the conflict of tragedy or the fundamental impasse of Greek tragedy and, in consequence, does not allow it to establish it on its proper plane, at the very most it establishes the level of what one can call a "divine comedy", the one in which the threads are in the final analysis all held by the One in whom all Good, even though it is beyond our knowledge, is reconciled. No doubt, experience goes against this noetic grasp where no doubt the Hegelian perspective fails through a certain partiality, because moreover there is reborn afterwards this human voice, that of Kierkegaard, "which comes to contradict it.

And moreover the testimony of Shakespeare's Hamlet, on which as you know we dwelt for a long time two years ago, is there to show us something else, another dimension which subsists which, at the very least, does not allow us to say that the Christian era brings to an end the dimension of tragedy. Is Hamlet a tragedy? Certainly. I think I showed you that. Is it a Christian tragedy? It is here indeed that Hegel's interrogation would catch up with us again because, in truth, as you know, in this Hamlet there does not appear the slightest trace of a reconciliation. Despite the presence on the horizon of the dogma of Christian faith, there is not in Hamlet, at any moment a recourse to the mediation of any redemption whatsoever. The sacrifice of the son in Hamlet remains pure tragedy. Nevertheless, we can absolutely not eliminate something which is no less present in this strange tragedy, what I called above the dimension of the dogma of Christian faith, namely that the father, the ghost, the one who beyond death reveals to the son both the fact that he had been killed and how and by whom, is a damned father. Strange, I have said of this tragedy all of whose resources I undoubtedly did not exhaust in my commentary before you, strange therefore this further contradiction on which we did not dwell, which is that it is not put in doubt that it is the flames of hell, of eternal damnation, that the father bears witness to. Nevertheless, it is as a sceptic, as a pupil of Montaigne, it has been said that this Hamlet questions himself: "To be or not to be, to sleep, perchance to dream", does the beyond of life deliver us from this cursed life, from this ocean of humiliation and of servitude which is life?

And moreover, we cannot avoid outlining the progression which is established of this range which, from antique tragedy to Claudelian drama, could be formulated in this way: at the level of the Oedipus complex, the father already killed without the hero even knowing it, "he did not know" not alone that it was through him that the father had died but even that he was dead and nevertheless the basis, the texture of the tragedy implies that he already is, at the level of Hamlet, this damned father, what can that mean for us beyond the phantasy of eternal damnation? Is this damnation not linked for us, to the emergence of the fact that here the father begins to know?

Undoubtedly he does not know the whole scope, but he knows more about it than is believed, he knows in any case who killed him and how he died. I left open for you in my commentary this mystery left gaping by Shakespeare, by the dramatist, of what is signified by this orchard in which death surprised him, the text (3) tells us "in the blossom of my sin" and this other enigma that it was through the ear that the poison was poured into him. What enters through the ear if not a word and what is, behind this word, this mystery of sensual pleasure?

Does not, responding to the strange iniquity of maternal jpuissance, some hubris respond here, which betrays the form that to the eyes of Hamlet the ideal of the father has, this father in connection with whom, in Hamlet, nothing is said except that he was what we could call the ideal of the knight of Courtly Love - this man who carpeted with flowers the path the queen would walk on, this man who would not allow, the text tells us, "the winds to visit her face too roughly." Such is the strange dimension in which there rests, and uniquely for Hamlet, the eminent dignity, the ever-boiling source of indignation in the heart of Hamlet. On the one hand, nowhere is he evoked as king, nowhere is he discussed, one could say, as authority. The father is there a sort of ideal of man and this deserves no less to remain a question for us, because at each of these stages we can only hope for the truth from a further revelation. And moreover - in the light of what appears, to us analysts, natural to project through the story as the question repeated from age to age about the father - you should pause for a moment to observe the degree to which, before us, this function of the father was never questioned in a way at its core.

The very figure of the father of antiquity, in so far as we have invoked him in our imagery, is the figure of a king. The figure of the divine father poses, throughout all the biblical texts, the question of a whole research: at what point does the god of the Jews become a father, at what point in history, at what point in the prophetic elaboration? All these things stir up such profound thematic, historical, exegetical questions that to evoke them here is not even to pose them. It is simply to remark that it was necessary that at some moment the theme of the problem of the father, of the "What is a father?" of Freud, must have been singularly narrowed for it to have taken on for us the obscure form of the not simply mortal but murderous knot, in which it is fixed for us under the form of the Oedipus complex. God, Creator, Providence, this is not what is involved for us in the question of the father, even though all these harmonics form the basis for it. If they form the basis of it, what we have questioned is whether this basis, through what we have articulated, is going to be illuminated retrospectively..

Henceforth is it not opportune, necessary, whatever may be our tastes, our preferences and what the work of Claudel may represent for each of us, is it not imposed on us to ask ourselves what the thematic of the father may be in a tragedy, when it is a tragedy which has appeared at the epoch when, because of Freud, the question of the father has profoundly

changed?

And moreover we cannot believe that it is by chance that in Claudel's tragedy there is question only of the father. The last part of this trilogy is called The humiliated father (Le pere humilie), completing our series, a little while ago the father already killed, the father in the damnation of his death (4) .... the humiliated father, what does that mean, what does Claudel mean by the term humiliated father? And first of all the question could be posed in Claudel's thematic: where is this humiliated father? "Find the humiliated father", as they say on postcard riddles "find the robber" or indeed the policeman. Who is the humiliated father? Is it the Pope in so far as, even though he remains Pius, there are two of them in the play, in the space of the trilogy. The first, a fugitive, even less than a fugitive, kidnapped, to the point that here also with the ambiguity bearing always on the terms of the titles one can ask oneself if he is not The hostage, and then the Pius at the end, of the third drama, the Pius who goes to confession, an extremely touching scene and well made to exploit the whole thematic of a properly Christian and Catholic feeling, that of the Servant of the servants, the one who makes himself smaller than the smallest, in short this scene which you can read in the The humiliated father, where he goes to confession to a little monk who himself is only a goose-herd or a pig-herd it does not matter and, of course, carries within himself the ministry of the most profound and the most simple wisdom.

Let us not dwell too much on these beautiful images where it seems Claudel conforms rather to what is infinitely more exploited in an English dandyism in which catholicity and Catholicism are for the English authors, from a certain date which goes back almost two hundred years now, the acme of distinction. The problem is quite elsewhere. The humiliated father, I do not believe that it is this Pope, there are many other fathers, there is nothing but that in question throughout these three dramas. And moreover, the father one sees most of, the father in a stature which verges on a sort of obscenity, the father of a properly speaking impudent stature, the father in connection with whom we cannot avoid noting precisely some echoes of the gorilla-like form where the myth of Freud makes him appear to us right at the horizon, the father is indeed here, Toussaint Turelure, whose drama and whose murder will constitute not simply the pivot but the object, properly speaking, of the central play Hard bread (Le pain dur).

Is the humiliation of the father which is shown to us in this figure which is not simply impulsive or simply depreciated - I will come back to it and show it to you - which will go to the most extreme form of derision, a derision which even verges on the abject? Is this what we can expect from an author professing to be Catholic and to be reviving, reincarnating before us traditional values? Is it not even strange that more scandal was not aroused by a play which, when it comes out all by itself three or four years after The Hostage, pretends to hold, to captivate our attention by this episode in which I found a



sort of sordidness with Balzacian echoes only emerges from an extreme, from a paroxysm, from a breaking through here also of every limit?

I do not know whether I should ask those who have not read Hard bread since the last time to raise their hands. I think that it is not enough for me to put you on a trail for you to rush onto it right away. I believe myself to be obliged, briefly, to summarise, to remind you of what is in question.

Hard bread opens with the dialogue of two women. More than twenty years have certainly passed since the death of Sygne, on the day of the baptism of the son that she gave to Toussaint Turelure. The man, who was already not very fresh at that time, has become a rather sinister old man. We do not see him, he is hidden in the wings but what we see are two women, one of whom, (5) Sichel, had been his mistress and the other Lumir, his son's mistress. The latter has come back from a land which has since taken on a certain current interest, Algeria, where she has left Louis de Coufontaine - because of course he is called Louis, in honour of the restored sovereign.

Let me not lose the opportunity of slipping in here for you a little amusing story, a little remark which it may be that someone here has already made. The origin of the word Louis, is Ludovicus, Ludovic, Lodovic, Clodovic of the Merovingians and it is nothing other - when it is written one sees it better - than Clovis with the C removed, which makes of Clovis the first Louis. One could ask oneself if everything would not have been changed if Louis XIV had known that he was Louis XV! Perhaps his reign would have changed style, and indefinitely.... anyway, with this little amusing story which is meant to cheer you up, let us pass on.

Louis de Coufontaine is still, at least people believe, on Algerian soil, and the woman who comes back to the house of Toussaint, his father, comes to reclaim from him some money that had been lent by her. It is this story which gave such great entertainment to two authors of books of celebrated parodies; parodying Claudel, it is this scene of claiming back from the old Toussaint which served as the theme for the celebrated A la manière de.... It is in this connection that a commentary is given for the generations that follow of the famous reply well worthy, truer than Claudel himself, imputed to the parodied personage when he is asked to hand back this sum which he is supposed to have robbed from an unfortunate woman: Il n'y a pas des petites économies. Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves". The savings (économies) in question, are not at all the savings of the girl who has come to demand them back from Toussaint Turelure, they are nothing less than the fruit of the sacrifices of Polish emigrants.

The sum of ten thousand francs (it is even more than ten thousand francs) which was loaned by the young woman - regarding whom you are going to see in what follows the role and the function it is appropriate to give her - is what is the object of her request.

Lumir comes to claim back from the old Toussaint, not that it was to the old Toussaint that she had made the renunciation of it or the loan but to his son - the son is now insolvent not alone for these ten thousand francs but for another ten thousand. It is a question of obtaining from the father the sum of twenty thousand of these francs in the middle of the last century, namely at a time when a franc was a franc, believe me, and it was not earned in a second.

The young woman who is there encounters another one, Sichel. Sichel is the titular mistress of old Toussaint and the titular mistress of old Toussaint is someone rather thorny. It is a position which presents some coarseness, but the person who occupies it is up to it. In short, what is in question very quickly between these two women, is how to have the old man's skin. If it were not a question, before having his skin, of having something else, it seems that the question would be resolved still more quickly. Which means in short that the style is absolutely not that of tenderness, nor of the highest idealism. These two women, each one in her own way as you will see, I will come back to it, might easily be qualified as "ideals"; for us, spectators, they do not fail to depict one of the singular forms of seduction.

(6) It is necessary that I indicate to you everything that is woven in terms of calculations and of extreme calculations into the position of these two women, in the face of avarice, "this avarice which is only equalled by his licentiousness, the which is only exceeded by his dishonesty", as the aforementioned Sichel expresses herself textually speaking about Turelure. The Polish woman Lumir - pronounce it Loumyir as Claudel explicitly tells us her name is to be pronounced - is ready to go, to reconquer what she considers as a good, as a sacred law for which she is responsible, which she has alienated but which she must absolutely restore to those to whom she feels a faithful and unique allegiance (all the emigrants, all the martyrs, even the dead of this extremely passionate, emotional, thrilling cause which is the cause of Poland divided, of Poland parcelled out).... the young woman is determined to go as far as one can go, to the extent of offering herself, to the extent of yielding to what she knows to be the desire of old Turelure. Old Turelure, [she] knows in advance what can be expected of him, it is enough that a woman should be his son's wife for it to be already sure that she is not, far from it, for him, a forbidden object.

We rediscover again another trait which only very recently has been introduced into what I could call the common thematic of certain functions of the father. The other, the partner in the dialogue, Sichel - I named her above - a smart lady, knows well the components of the situation. Moreover here we have a novelty, I mean something which, in the operation of this singular game which we call the Oedipus complex, is added in Claudel. Sichel is not the mother, you should notice. The mother is dead, outside the game, and no doubt this arrangement of Claudel's drama is here something perhaps in the nature of a

favour, to bring out the elements liable to interest us in this frame, in this topology, in this fundamental theatrical art, in so far as something common at the same epoch links it from one creator to another: a reflective thinking to a creative thinking. She is not the mother, she is not even the wife of the father, she is the object of a tyrannical, ambiguous desire. It is sufficiently underlined by Sichel that if there is something which attached the father to her, it is something which is a desire quite close to the desire to destroy her, because moreover he has made of her his slave and he is capable of speaking of the attachment that he bears her as having taken its origin in some charm that emerged from her talent as a pianist and from a little finger which played so well the notes of the keyboard. This piano, moreover, she has been no longer able to open since she started keeping old Toussaint's accounts.

This Sichel has therefore her own idea. This idea, we will see it flowering in the form of the sudden arrival of the aforementioned Louis de Coufontaine at the point when the drama comes to a head. Because this arrival is not without provoking a real upset, a real weakening of abject fear in the old father: "Is he really coming?" he suddenly cries, forgetting the beautiful language which a minute before, he had been using to describe the poetic sentiments that united him to Sichel, to the young woman of whom I have just spoken, "Is he really coming?" He does indeed come, and he comes because of a behind-the-scenes operation, summoned by a little warning letter from the aforementioned Sichel.

He comes to the centre and the play will culminate in a sort of singular four-sided game, as one might say, if there were not added to it the character of Sichel's father, the old Ali Habenichts (nicht, habenicht having nothing, is a play on words), (7) the old usurer who is a sort of double of Toussaint Turelure, who is the one through whom he negotiates this complicated operation which consists in taking back piece by piece and bit by bit from his own son, the goods of Coufontaine which Louis had made the mistake of claiming from him on stamped paper as an inheritance, when he reached his majority. You see how everything ends up. It is not for nothing that I evoked the Balzacien thematic. The circulation, the metabolism, the conflict on the plane of money well reduplicates affective rivalry. Old Turelure sees in his son this something precisely to which the Freudian experience has drawn our attention, this other himself, this repetition of himself, this reborn figure of himself, in whom he can only see a rival. And when his son tenderly tries at a moment to say to him: "Am I not a true Turelure?" he roughly replies to him: "Yes no doubt, but there is already one, and that's enough. As regards Turelure I am well able to fill his role".

Another thematic where we can recognise this something introduced by the Freudian discovery. Moreover this is not all, and I will say what comes to a head after a dialogue where it was necessary for Lumir, the mistress of Louis de Coufontaine, to straighten him out by all sorts of whiplash insults directly

addressed to his self-love, to his narcissistic virility as we would say, to unveil before the son the propositions that she was object of on the part of the father, of this father who by his plots, wants to push him to this term of bankruptcy that he finds himself reduced to when the drama begins and who is not only going to steal away from him his land that he is going to buy cheaply thanks to his usurious intermediaries but moreover is going to ravish his wife from him, in short, to arm Louis de Coufontaine's hand against his father. And we witness on the stage this murder so well prepared by the urgings of the woman herself, who finds herself here not alone the temptress but the one who plots, who constructs the whole artifice of the crime around which there is going to occur the advent of Louis de Cofifontaine himself to the function of father.

And this murder that we see unfolding on the stage, the other stage of the murder of the father, we are going to see it taking place in the following fashion in which the two women are found in short to have collaborated. Because as Lumir says somewhere, "It is Sichel who gave me this idea". And in effect, it is during their first conversation that Sichel gives rise in the imagination of Lumir to this dimension, namely that the old man who is here animated by a desire which, for the personage that Claudel puts before us of this father who is jeered at - as I might say of this father - who is made game of; this father who is made game of in a sense which is the fundamental theme of classical comedy, but here you must understand making game of which goes further again than the lure and derision, he is made game of, as one might say, with dice, he is made game of because he is when all is said and done a passive element in the game. As is expressly evoked in this text in connection with the replies which end the dialogue of the two women, having fundamentally and mutually opened their thinking to one another, one says to the other: "Each one of us is now playing her game against death". It is precisely at this moment that Toussaint Turelure re-enters: "What were you talking about? - We were (8) talking about the game of whist last evening, the game where we were discussing strong and weak hands." And at this old Toussaint, who moreover is unaware of what is in question replies, with this very French elegance which is all the same alluded to ("He is a real French man" Sichel had said to Lumir, "oh! he is incapable of refusing a woman anything, he is an authentic French man, except for money, as regards money forget it!") by making some jests about what he was left with in this game, namely naturally the honours.

This image of the four-handed game, in another sense, which is that of whist, the one to which I alluded on several occasions myself to designate the structure of the analytic position, is it not striking to see it reemerging? The father, before the scene of the drama happens, is already dead, or almost. You only need to puff on him. And it is indeed in effect what we are going to see after a dialogue in which the codimensionality of the tragic and the clownish would make it worth our while for us to read it together. For, in truth, it is a scene which deserves to be retained in universal literature as after all rather unique in

this genre, and the vicissitudes also would merit our dwelling on them, if all we had to do here was literary analysis, unfortunately I have to go a bit more quickly than I would wish if I were to make you savour all these detours.

In any case, it is really beautiful to see one of these detours. The son adjures the father to give him this famous twenty thousand francs which he knows (and with good reason because he worked out the whole affair a long time ago through the intermediary of Sichel) he has in his pocket, that they give him a hump, to leave them to him, to give them over to him in order to permit him in short, not only to honour his engagements, not simply to reconstitute a sacred debt: [he envisages] not only losing what he the son possesses, but seeing himself reduced to being no more than a slave on the very land to which he had committed all his passion. Because this land near Algiers that is in question, it is there that Louis de Coufontaine had gone to seek the shoot - in the sense of something which has sprung up again and which sprouts again - of the offspring of his being, the shoot of his solitude, of this dereliction in which he has always experienced himself, he who knows that his mother never wanted him, that his father had never, he says, seen him grow up except with uneasiness; it is to the passion for a land, it is by returning towards this something from which he finds himself hunted from any recourse to nature, this is what is in question.

And in truth, there is here a theme which would be well worth looking at again in the very historical genesis of what is called colonialism. It takes its root in an emigration which not only opened up colonised countries but also virgin lands; the source provided by all these lost children of Christian culture is indeed something which would be worth isolating as an ethical principle which one would be wrong to neglect at the moment when one is measuring its consequences.

It is at the moment therefore that this Louis sees himself at the point when this trial of strength between his father and himself (9) .... that he draws his pistols, the pistols with which he has been armed, and he had been armed with them by Lumir. There are two pistols. I would also ask you to dwell for a moment on this refinement. It is the artifice of dramatic art properly speaking, it is the cleverness of this refinement thanks to which that with which he has been armed are two pistols. Two pistols, I will tell you right away, which will not go off even though they are loaded.

It is the contrary of what happens in a celebrated passage by the sapper Camember. A letter from the general is given to Private Pidou. "Look," he says, "this letter is not loaded...." It is not that the general does not have the means, but it is not loaded, well "that will not prevent it from going off all the same!" Here it is the contrary. Despite the fact that they are both loaded with care by Lumir, these pistols do not go off. That does not prevent the father from dying, he dies of fright, the poor man, and it is indeed what was always expected, because moreover it is expressly for this reason that Lumir had entrusted

to the hero, Louis de CoGfontaine, one of the pistols, the little one, saying to him: "This one is loaded but with a blank, it will only make a noise and it is possible that this will be enough to kill this fellow; if it is not enough then, you can use the big one which has a bullet in it".

Louis had learnt his lessons on the soil of a land which one reclaims but also which one does not acquire - this is very well indicated in the text - without some manoeuvres involving rather crude dispossession and undoubtedly, for the second shot, there is no need to fear that the hand of the one pulling the trigger wi^ll tremble any more than the first one. As Louis de Coufontaine will say later he does not like postponements. It is not with a light heart that he will go that far, "but because one is in the middle of it", he says, the two pistols will be drawn at the same time. Now, as I told you, whether one or both are loaded or not neither of them goes off. There is only a noise but this noise is enough as the indication of the scenario in the text describes very nicely: the old man stops with eyes popping out of his head, his jaw sunken. It is very pretty. We spoke about some kind of grimace of life the last time, here the grimace of death is not elegant and, my goodness, the business is finished.

I told you, and you see it, that all the refinements, as regards the imaginary dimension of the father, are here very well articulated in this sense that even in the order of efficaciousness the imaginary is enough. It is demonstrated to us by the image. But in order that things should be still more beautiful, the aforementioned Lumir reenters at that very moment.

Naturally the lad is not completely calm. There is absolutely no doubt that he is indeed a parricide, because first of all he had really wanted to kill his father and because, in fact, he has done it. The terms and the style of the concluding remarks which are exchanged at this level are worth dwelling on - I would ask you to refer to them - they do not lack a certain crudeness, a great pungency. I was able to observe that to certain ears and not the least, and who are not without merit, Hard bread, like The hostage may appear to be a little boring as plays. I (10) admit that for my part I do not find all these detours at all boring. It is rather sombre, which upsets us, the fact is that this sombreness operates exactly at the same time as a sort of comicality whose quality it must be said may appear a little bit too acid for us. But nevertheless these are no small merits. The only question is all the same where he intends to lead us. What thrills us in all of that? I am quite sure after all that this kind of Punch and Judy demolition of a father slaughtered in a clownish style is not something which is of a nature to give rise in us to feelings which are clearly localised, localisable.

What is rather nice all the same, is to see what this little scene ends on, namely that Louis de Coufontaine says stop, halt. Once the act has been done, while the girl steals the wallet from the father's pocket: "One minute, a detail, allow me to verify

something". He reverses the little pistol, he fiddles inside it with things that were used at that time to load these weapons and he sees that the little pistol was also loaded, which he points out to the delightful person who had armed him. She looks at him and she has no other response than a gentle little laugh.

Is this also not of a nature to give rise to some problems for us? What does the poet mean? We will learn it undoubtedly in the third act when we see being admitted the true nature of this Lumir whom we have only seen here after all in traits that were neither sombre nor fanatical. We will see what is the nature of the desire of this Lumir. That this desire can go for her (who considers herself as destined and in a fashion that is certain) as far as the supreme-sacrifice (to be hanged which is the way she will certainly end up and which the remainder of the story indicates us as the way which she in effect ends up) does not exclude that her passion for her lover, the one who is really for her her lover, Louis de Coufontaine, goes as far as to wish for him a tragic ending, for example on the scaffold.

This thematic of love linked to death and, properly speaking, of the sacrificed lover, is something which, at the horizon of the story of de La Mole, of the decapitated de La Mole whose wife is supposed to have collected his head and that of Julien Sorel whose remains a Mademoiselle de La Mole this one imaginary is also going to rejoin, is there to illuminate for us in a literary way this thematic.

The extreme nature of the desire of Lumir is indeed what should be remembered here. It is on the path of this desire, of this love which aims at nothing other than to consume itself in an extreme instant, it is towards this horizon that Lumir summons Louis de Coufontaine.

And Louis de Coufontaine, a parricide in so far as he has entered into his inheritance by murdering his father, in a different dimension to the one he had known up to then, is going to become henceforth another Turelure, another sinister personage whose (11) caricature Claudel will not spare us either in what follows - and notice carefully that he becomes an ambassador. You would be wrong to believe that all these reflections are lavishly dispensed by Claudel without one being able to say that he is involved at his own foundations in some ambivalence. Louis refuses therefore to follow Lumir and it is because he does not follow Lumir that he will marry his father's mistress, Sichel.

I will not tell you the end of the play. It is namely how there takes place this sort of resumption, of transmutation which makes him not alone put on the dead man's shoes, but also go into the same bed as him. It is a matter of sombre stories of acknowledging debts, of a whole trafficking, of a whole insurance that the father, always astute, had made or taken before his death to ensure that those who would bind themselves to him, and specifically if it were Lumir, would not have too much of an interest in his death. He arranged things in order that his wealth might appear to be owed, to be written in the book of

debts of his obscure associate, Ali Habenichts. It is in the measure that Sichel will restore this debt to him that she will acquire for him this really abnegatory title. He abnegates (as Paul Valéry said) his title by marrying her. And it is on this that the play ends: the engagement of Louis de Coufontaine and of Sichel Habenichts, the daughter of his father's companion in usury.

One can question oneself still more after this ending, about what the poet means - and specifically at the point that he himself and his own thinking are involved - when he forges for us what can well be called, properly speaking, now that I have recounted it to you in the way I have, this strange comedy. At the heart of Claudel's trilogy just as at the beginning there was a tragedy which split the canvas, which went beyond anything thought possible, in terms of the exigency imposed on the heroine (and on the place that her image occupies at the end of the first play) at the end of the second, there can be nothing but the total obscurity of a radical derision - going as far as something of which certain echoes may after all appear rather antipathetic to us in so far as for example the Jewish position finds itself, one really cannot say why, involved.

Because the accent is put there on Sichel's feelings. Sichel articulates what her position in life is. We must advance without any more reluctance into this element of Claudel's thematic, because moreover I am not aware that anyone whatsoever has ever imputed to Claudel feelings about this that we might qualify in any way as suspect. I mean that the exalted grandeur of the Old Law, more than respected by him, never ceased to dwell in the least personages who may be attached to it in his dramatic work. And every Jew, essentially, for him is attached to it, even if he is a Jew who precisely finds himself rejecting this Old Law and saying that it is the end of all these old laws that he wishes for and aspires to, that what he is going towards, is the sharing by all of this something which alone is real and which is jouissance. This indeed in effect is the language of Sichel and this is how she presents herself to us before the murder, much more again after, when she offers to Louis de Coufontaine the love which it is revealed had always animated her in his regard.

Is there not here again a further problem which is proposed to us in this strange arrangement? I see that in letting myself be drawn into, and it was necessary that I should do so, telling you the central story of Hard bread (today I will scarcely do more (12) than in short propose this to you) a play that perhaps will be produced again, which has been put on a number of times, and of which one cannot say either that it is badly constructed, nor that it does not hold our attention.... Does it not seem to you that to see it closing after this strange vicissitude that you find yourself here before the figure - as one speaks of a figure in ballet, in a scenario - of a cipher which essentially proposes itself to you in a really unprecedented way through its opacity, by the fact that it only appeals to your interest on the plane of the most total enigma.



Time does not permit me, in any way, even to approach what would allow us to resolve it, but understand that if I propose it to you, or if simply I remark that it is not possible not to take notice of such a construction in - I would not say the century - in the decade of the bringing to birth of our thinking about the Oedipus complex . . . . . You should understand why I am bringing it forward here and that which, with the solution that I think that I am going to contribute to it, justifies my sustaining it for such a long time, in such a detailed fashion, before your attention: the father.

If the father came at the beginning of analytic thinking in this form all of whose scandalous traits precisely comedy is well made to bring out for us; \_if Freud had to articulate as being at the origin of the law a drama and a figure the problem of which it would be enough for you to see brought onto the contemporary stage in order to measure, not simply the criminal character, but the possibility of caricatural, even abject deconstruction as I said above, this is why this was required by the only thing which justifies us, ourselves, in our research, and which is moreover our object. What makes it necessary that this image should have emerged at the horizon of humanity if not its consubstantiality with the highlighting, the bringing into operation of the dimension of desire, in other words, the following which we tend to reject always more from our horizon, indeed to deny in our experience, paradoxically more and more, we analysts, the place of the father. Why? Simply because it is effaced in the whole measure that we lose the sense and the direction of desire, where our action with regard to those who entrust themselves to us would tend to put on this desire some gentle halter or other, some soporific or other, some fashion or other of suggesting which brings it back to need.

And this indeed is why we always see more, and more and more, at the foundation of this Other that we evoke in our patients, only the mother, there is unfortunately something that resists, it is that we call this mother castrating. And why, thanks to what is she that? We know it well in experience and this is the cord which keeps us in contact with this dimension that must not be lost. It is this, from the point that we are at and from the point of the reduced perspective which we have by the same token, it is that the mother is all the more castrating in that she is no longer occupied with castrating the father. It is in the measure - and I would ask you to refer to your clinical experience - [that] the mother entirely occupied with castrating the father, that exists but we see it or not or indeed there is nothing to be castrated, but from that moment on there would be no reason to bring into play the mother as castrating if there were not this neglected or absent possibility, the maintenance of the dimension of the father, of the drama of the father, of this function of the father around which as you clearly see there is debated for us, for the moment, what interests us in the position of transference.

(13) We know well that we cannot operate either in our position as analysts the way Freud, who took on in analysis the position

of the father, operated - and this is what stupefies us in his way of intervening. And it is for this reason that we no longer know where to hide ourselves because we have not learned to rearticulate, henceforth, what our own position should be. The result, is that we spend our time telling our patients: "You are taking me for a bad mother" which is not all the same the position that we should adopt either.

What I am searching for before you and the path which (with the help of Claudel's drama as you will see) I am trying to put you back on, is to resituate at the heart of the problem of castration, because castration and its problem are identical with what I would call the constitution of the subject of desire as such - not the subject of need, not the frustrated subject, the subject of desire. Because, as I have stressed it enough before you, castration is identical to this phenomenon which means that the object of its lack, for desire, because desire is lack, is in our experience identical to the very instrument of desire, the phallus. I am indeed saying that the object of its lack, for desire, whatever it may be, even on a different plane to the genital one, because it is characterised as object of desire and not of one or other frustrated need, must necessarily come to the same symbolic place that has been occupied by the very instrument of desire, the phallus, namely this instrument in so far as it is raised to the function of signifier.

This is what I will show you the next time to have been articulated by the poet, by Claudel, even though he had, even though of course he had absolutely no suspicion of the formulation into which his creation might one day be put. It is only more convincing. Just as it is altogether convincing to see Freud, in The interpretation of dreams, enunciate in advance the laws of metaphor and metonymy.

And why is this instrument raised to the function of signifier? Precisely to occupy this place which I have just spoken about, a symbolic one. What is this place? Well! Precisely it is the place of the dead point occupied by the father qua already dead. I mean that from the simple fact that he is the one who articulated the law his voice behind cannot but lose its strength. Because moreover either he is lacking as a presence, or as a presence he is only too much there. It is this point where everything that is enunciated repasses through zero between the yes and the no. I am not the one who invented this radical ambivalence of being neither fish nor fowl, and in order not to be speaking Chinese, between love and hatred, between complicity and alienation.

The law, in a word, in order to establish itself as law requires as an antecedent the death of the one who supports it; that there should be produced at this level the phenomenon of desire, is what it is not simply enough to say. This is the reason why I force myself before you to foment these topological schemas which allow us to locate this radical gap. It develops itself and completed desire is not simply this point, it is what one can call a totality in the subject, this totality of which I am

trying to mark for you not simply the topology in a paraspatial sense (the thing which is illustrated) but also the three moments of this explosion at the end of which there is realised the configuration of desire, an appeal to the first, and you can see it marked in the generations. And it is for this reason that (14) there is no need, in order to situate the composition of desire in a subject to go back in a perpetual recurrence to our father Adam. Three generations suffice.

In the first, the mark of the signifier, this is what is illustrated in an extreme and tragic way in Claudel's composition by the image of Sygne de Coufontaine, carried to the destruction of her being by having been totally torn away from all her attachments of word and faith.

In the second moment, what results from it, because even on the poetic plane things do not stop at poetry, even the personages created by Claudel's imagination, this culminates with the apparition of a child. Those who speak and who are marked by the word engender, there slips into the interval something which is first of all infans. And this, is Louis de Coufontaine, in the second generation the totally rejected object, the undesired object, the object qua not desired.

How is there composed, is there delineated before our eyes, in this poetic creation, what is going to result from it in the third generation, I mean at the only real one, I mean that it is there also at the level of all the others, the others are artificial deconstructions of it naturally, they are the antecedents of the only one that is in question. How desire composes itself between the mark of the signifier and the passion for the partial object, this is what I hope to articulate for you the next time.

Seminar 21:            Wednesday 17 May 1961

"Cofontaine, I am yours!            Take and make of me what you will.

Whether I am wife, or already beyond life, where the body no longer serves,

Our souls are welded together without alloy!"

I wanted to indicate to you, throughout the text of the Trilogy, the recurrence of a term which is the one which articulates love in it. It is to these words of Sygne, in The hostage, that Cofontaine is going to respond immediately:

"Sygne, last to be found, do not deceive me like the rest.            Is there therefore to be at the end for me Something solid for me outside my own will?"

And everything is there in effect.            This man that everything has betrayed, that everything has abandoned, who leads, he says: "this life of a hunted animal, without a safe hiding place," remembers what the Indian monks say, "that this whole evil life

Is vain appearance, and only remains with us because we move along with it,  
And that it would be enough simply for us to sit and be still  
For it to pass from us.  
But these are vile temptations; I at least in this collapse of all  
Remain the same, with the same honour and duty.  
But you, Sygne, think of what you say. Do not grow weak like the rest, at this hour when I am reaching my end.  
Never deceive me...."

Such is the beginning which gives its weight to the tragedy. Sygne finds herself betraying the very person to whom she has committed herself with all her soul.            We rediscover this theme of the exchange of souls - and of the exchange of souls (2) concentrated into an instant, later on, in Hard bread - in the dialogue between Louis and Lumir - Loum-yir as Claudel expressly indicates to us the name of the Polish woman should be pronounced - when, the parricide accomplished, the dialogue is engaged between her and him, in which she tells him that she will

not follow him, that she will not return with him to Algeria, but that she invites him to come and consummate with her the mortal adventure which awaits her. Louis who, at that moment had just undergone precisely the metamorphosis which is consummated in him by the parricide, refuses her. There is nevertheless still a moment of oscillation in the course of which he addresses Lumir passionately, telling her that he loves her as she is, that there is only one woman for him, to which Lumir herself, captivated by this appeal of death which gives the meaning of her desire, responds to him:

"Is it true that there is only one woman for you? Ah, I know it is true! Ah, say what you will! There is still in you something which understands me and which is my brother!

A rupture, a weariness, an emptiness which cannot be filled.

You are no longer the same as any other. You are alone. You will never be able to cease to have done what you have done, (softly) parricide!

We two are alone in this horrible desert.

Two human souls in the nothingness who are capable of giving themselves to one another,

And in a single second, like the explosion of all time annihilating itself, to replace everything with one another!

Is it not good to be without any prospects? Ah, if life were long.

It would be worthwhile being happy. But it is short and there are ways of making it still shorter.

So short that eternity is held within it!"

Louis: "I have only to create eternity."

Lumir: "So short that eternity is held within it! So short that this world which we want nothing of and this happiness that people make so much of is contained in it!

So small, so straitened, so strict, so shortened, that nothing other than we two is contained in it!"

And she goes on later:

"And I, I shall be the Homeland between your arms, the Sweetness once abandoned, the land of Ur, the antique Consolation!

There is only you and I in the world, there is only this single moment indeed when we will have seen one another face to face!

Accessible to the end to this mystery we enclose.

There is a way of drawing one's soul from one's body like a sword, loyal and full of honour, there is a way of breaking the wall.

There is way of making an oath and of giving oneself entirely to this other who alone exists.

Despite the horrible night and the rain, despite that

which surrounds us like nothingness.  
 Like honest men!  
 To give oneself and to believe entirely in the other!  
 To give oneself and to believe in a single lightning  
 flash!  
 - Each of us for the other and for that alone!"

Such is the desire expressed by the one who, after the parricide, is put aside by Louis in order to marry, as it is said: "the mistress of his father". This is the turning point of the transformation of Louis, and it is this which is going, today, to allow us to question ourselves about the meaning of what is going to be born of him, this Pensée de Coufontaine, a feminine figure who, at the dawn of the third phase of the Trilogy, corresponds to the figure of Sygne and by means of whom we are going to question ourselves about what Claudel meant to say here.

Because indeed, if it is easy and customary to rid oneself of any word that is articulated outside the paths of routine by saying: "That's by so-and-so" - and you know that people do not fail to say it about the person who is now speaking to you - it seems that no one even dreams of being astonished at the poet whom here (4) people are content to accept in his singularity. And before the strange things in a theatre like that of Claudel, no one dreams of questioning any more the improbabilities, the scandalous features into which he draws us, that which, after all, emerges from the contrast between what may well be his Christian vision and his design.

In the third play, The humiliated father, what is the meaning of Pensée de Coufontaine? We are going to question ourselves about the meaning of Pensée de Coufontaine as we would a living personage. It is a question of Pensee's desire - thought's desire - and in Pensee's desire, we are going to find, of course, the very thought of desire. Naturally, you must not believe that this is, at the level that Claudel's tragedy is maintained, an allegorical interpretation. These personages are symbols only in so far as they operate at the same level, at the heart of the incidence of the symbolic on a person. And this ambiguity of the names, which are conferred, given them by the poet, is there to indicate to us the legitimacy of interpreting them as moments of this incidence of the symbolic on flesh itself.

It would be quite easy to amuse ourselves by reading into the very orthography given by Claudel to this singular name of Sygne, which begins with an S which is really there as an invitation to recognise it as sign, with in addition precisely, in this imperceptible change in the word, this substitution of the y for the i, what that means, this superimposition of the mark, and to recognise in it, through some convergence or other a cabalistic mater lectionis, something which comes to meet our S by means of which I showed you that this imposition of the signifier on man is at once both what marks him and what disfigures him.

At the other end, Pensée. Here the word is left intact. And in order to see what is meant by this thought of desire, we must

Indeed begin again from what is signified, in The hostage, by the passion Sygne undergoes. That on which the first play of the Trilogy left us gasping, this figure of the sacrificed woman who makes the sign "no", is indeed the mark of the signifier raised to its supreme degree, the refusal raised to a radical position that we must investigate.

In investigating this position, we rediscover a term which is one which belongs to us, through our experience, to the highest degree if we know how to question it, because if you remember (5) what I taught you at one time, here and elsewhere, in the Seminar and at the Society and, on several occasions if I asked you to revise the usage which is made today in our experience of the term frustration, it is to encourage you to come back to what is meant, in Freud's text where this term frustration is never employed, by the original term of Versagung, in so far as its accent can be placed well beyond, at a far deeper level than any conceivable frustration.

The term Versagung in so far as it implies the failure to keep a promise, and the failure to keep a promise for which already everything had been renounced, this is the exemplary value of the personage and of the drama of Sygne. What she is asked to renounce, is that to which she has already committed all her energy, to which she has already bound her whole life, to what was already marked with the sign of sacrifice. This second-degree, most profound dimension of refusal, which, through the operation of the word, can at once be required, can be opened out to an abyssal realisation, this is what is proposed to us at the origin of Claudel's tragedy, and it is moreover something to which we cannot remain indifferent. It is something which we cannot simply consider as extreme, excessive, paradoxical in a sort of religious folly, because quite the contrary, as I am going to show you, it is there precisely that we have placed ourselves, we, men of our time, in the very measure that this religious folly is absent for us.

Let us carefully observe what is in question for Sygne de Coufontaine. What is imposed on her is not simply order and constraint. What is imposed on her is to engage herself, and freely, in the path of marriage with the one whom she calls the son of her servant and of the sorcerer Quiriace. As regards what is imposed on her, there is nothing which is not linked for her to something accursed. Thus the Versagung, the refusal from which she cannot loose herself, becomes indeed what the structure of the word implies: Ver-sagung, the refusal concerning what is said. And if I wanted to equivocate in order to find the best translation: perdition. Here everything which is condition becomes perdition, and this is why the "not to say" becomes the "not-saying" (le dit-non).

We have encountered this extreme point, and what I want to show, is that here it is superseded. We have encountered it at the end of the Oedipal tragedy, in the me phunei of Oedipus at (6) Colonos, this "may I not be" which all the same means not to be born, where, I remind you in passing, we find the true place

of the subject in so far as he is the subject of the unconscious. This place, is the me or this very particular ne of which we only grasp the vestiges in language at the moment of its paradoxical apparition in terms like "je crains qu'il ne vienne" or "avant qu'il n'apparaisse", where it appears to grammarians as an expletive, even though it is precisely there that there is shown the point where there is designated, not the subject of the enunciated which is the I, the one who is actually speaking, but the subject in which there originates the enunciating, this "ne sois-je", or this "ne fus-je", "ne fiam", or to be closer this "n'etre" which so curiously equivocates in French with the verb of being born (naitre), here is where we have got to with Oedipus. And what is designated there, if not that, because of the imposition on man of a destiny, of a burden of parental structures, something has covered him which already makes of his entry into the world the entry into the implacable operation of a debt. When all is said and done, it is simply this burden, that he receives, from the debt, from the Ate, which precedes him, that he is guilty of.

Something else has happened since, the Word has become incarnate for us, he has come into the world and, against the word of the Gospel, it is not true that we have not recognised him. We have recognised him and we are living out the consequences of this recognition. We are at one of the terms of one of the phases of the consequences of this recognition. Here is what I would like to articulate for you. It is that for us the word is not at all simply the path we insert ourselves into in order each one of us to carry our burden of this debt which is our destiny, but that it opens up for us the possibility of a temptation from which it is possible for us to curse ourselves, not at all simply as a particular destiny, as a life, but as the very way on which the Word engages us, and as encounter with the truth, as moment (heure, heurt) of truth.

We are no longer simply within the range of guilt because of the symbolic debt, it is for having the debt to our charge that we can be - in the closest (proche) sense that the word indicates - reproached. In short, it is because the debt itself where we have our place can be taken away from us, that we can experience ourselves as totally alienated from ourselves. The antique Ate, no doubt, rendered us guilty of this debt, of yielding to it, but (7) by renouncing it, as we are now able to do, we are burdened with an unhappiness which is still greater because this destiny is no longer anything. In short, what we know, what we touch in our everyday experience, is the guilt that remains with us, what we put our finger on in the neurotic. It is what must be paid precisely because the God of destiny is dead. That this God is dead is at the heart of what is presented to us in Claudel. This dead God is here represented by this outlawed priest who is no longer made present for us except under the form of what is called The hostage - the hostage, which gives its title to the first play of the Trilogy, a shadowy figure of what the antique faith was is only a hostage in the hands of politics for those who want to use him for the goals of the Restoration.



But the other side of this reduction of the dead God is the fact that it is the faithful soul who becomes the hostage, the hostage of this situation where there is properly reborn, beyond the end of Christian truth, the tragic, namely that everything vanishes from it if the signifier can be captive. The only one who can be hostage, naturally, is the one who believes, Sygne, and, because she believes, must bear witness to what she believes in and precisely by that is caught, captivated in the situation which it is enough to imagine, to forge in order for it to exist. The fact is that by being called to rivet herself to the negation of what she believes, she is held as hostage in the negation, even undergone, of what is best in her. Something is proposed to us which goes much further than the misfortune of Job and his resignation. To Job there is reserved the whole weight of the misfortune that he has not deserved, but the heroine of the modern tragedy is asked to assume as a jpuissance the very injustice which fills her with hcrrpr.

This is what ppens up as a ppssibility before the being who speaks, the fact of being the support of the Word at the moment when she is asked to guarantee this Word. Man has become the hostage of the Word because he has told himself or moreover in order that he should tell himself that God is dead. At that moment, there opens out this gap where nothing more, nothing else can be articulated than what is only the very beginning of the ne fus-je, "may I not have been", which can no longer be anything other than a refusal, a no, a ne, this tic, this grimace, in short, this weakening of the body, this psychosomatic occurrence which is the term at which we have to encounter the mark of the signifier.

(8) The drama, as it is pursued throughout the three moments of the tragedy, is to know how from this radical position a desire can be reborn and which one.

It is here that we are brought to the other end of the Trilogy, to Pensee de Co&fontaine, to this incontestably seductive figure, manifestly proposed to us spectators - and what spectators, we are going to attempt to say - as properly speaking the object of desire. And one only has to read The humiliated father, one only has to listen to those who find this story deadly dull - for what could be more deadly dull! What harder bread could be offered to us than that of this undertaking, this father who is put forward in the figure of an obscene old man and whose murder depicted before us is the only thing which leads to the possibility of a pursuit of something which is transmitted and which is only the most degraded, degenerate face - that of Louis de Covtfontaine - of the figure of the father.

One only has to listen to what has struck everyone, the ingratitude that is represented by the apparition, at a night festival in Rome, at the beginning of The humiliated father, of the figure of Pensee de Coufontaine, in order to understand that it is presented to us here as an object of seduction. And why and how? What is she balancing? What is she compensating for? Is something going to come back to her because of Sygne's

sacrifice? Is it in the name of her grandmother's sacrifice that she, in a word, is going to merit some respect? Certainly not. If, at a moment, an allusion is made to it, it is in a dialogue of two men - who are going to represent for her the approach of love - with the Pope, and an allusion is made to this old family tradition as to an ancient story that is told. It is in the mouth of the Pope himself, addressing himself to Orian, who is the one in question, who is at stake in this love, that there is going to appear in this connection the word superstition: "Are you going to yield, my son, to this superstition!". Is Pensee even going to represent something like an exemplary figure of a renaissance of the Faith eclipsed for an instant? Far from it.

Pensee is a "free thinker", if one can express oneself in this way, with a word which is not here the Claudelian term, but this indeed is what is in question. Pensee is only animated by a single passion that, she says, of a justice which for her goes beyond all the exigencies of beauty itself. What she wants, is Justice, and not just anyone whatsoever, not ancient justice, that of some natural right to a distribution or a retribution. (9) This justice that is in question, absolute justice, justice which animates the movement, the noise, the progress of the Revolution, and which forms the background noise of the third drama, of The humiliated father, this justice is indeed precisely the reverse of all that which, in the real, of all that which, in life, is felt by the Word as offending justice, felt as a horror for justice. It is of a justice which is absolute in all its power to shake the world that there is question in the discourse of Pensee de Coufontaine.

As you see, it is indeed the thing which may appear to us as the furthest thing from the preaching we might expect from Claudel, the man of faith. It is indeed what is going to allow us to give its meaning to the figure towards which converges the whole drama of The humiliated father. In order to understand it, we must dwell for a moment on what Claudel made of Pensee de Coufontaine, represented as the fruit of the marriage of Louis de Coufontaine with the one in short that his father had given him as wife, through the simple fact that this woman, Sichel, had already been his wife, an extreme, one might say, paradoxical, caricatural point of the Oedipus complex.

This obscene old man who is presented to us forces this son.... - this is the limiting point, the frontier of the Freudian myth which is proposed to us - he forces his sons to marry his wives and, in the very measure that he wants to steal their own, another more advanced and here more express way of accentuating what comes to light in the Freudian myth. This does not produce a better quality father, this produces another blackguard and it is indeed in this way that Louis de Coufontaine, is represented to us throughout the drama. He marries whom he wants, for his part, as object of his jouissance. He marries this singular figure of the woman, Sichel, who rejects all the burdens of the law, and specifically of her own, of the Old Law, of the holy spouse, the figure of the woman in so far as it is that of

patience, the one indeed who brings to light her will to encompass the world.

What is going to come to birth from this? What is going to come to birth from this in a singular way, is the renaissance of the very thing which the drama of Hard bread shows us to have been set aside, namely this same desire in its absoluteness which was represented by the figure of Lumir. This Lumir - as singular name, one should dwell on the fact that Claudel, in a little note, indicates to us that it should be pronounced Loum-yir; this must be referred to what Claudel tells us about the fantasies of (10) the old Turelure of always bringing to each name this little derisory modification which means, that he calls Rachel "Sichel", which means, the text tells us, in German: the sickle, this name being the one that the crescent of the moon figures in the heavens, a singular echo of the figure which terminates the Ruth and Booz of Hugo; Claudel carries out unceasingly this same game of altering names, as if he himself here assumed the function of old Turelure - Lumir, this is what we will rediscover later in the dialogue between the Pope and the two personages of Orso and Orian, like the light (lumiere) - "the cruel light!". This cruel light illuminates us about what the figure of Orian represents, because however faithful he may be to the Pope, this cruel light he mentions, makes him, the Pope, start. "Light," the Pope tells him, "is not cruel." But there is no doubt that it is Orian who is right when he says it. The poet is on his side. Now, the one who is going to incarnate the light obscurely sought without knowing it by her mother herself, this light sought with a patience ready to serve everything and accept everything, is Pensee, Pensee her daughter, Pensee who is going to become the incarnated object of the desire of this light. And this flesh and blood Pensee, this living Pensee, the poet can do nothing other than to imagine that she is blind and to represent her to us as such.

I think I should pause for a moment. What does the poet mean by this incarnation of the object, of the partial object, of the object in so far as it is here the reemergence, the effect of the parental constellation, as a blind person? This blind person is going to be paraded before our eyes throughout this third play and, in the most moving fashion, she appears at a masked ball, where there is represented the end of a period of this Rome which is on the eve of its being taken by the Garibaldians. It is a sort of end also which is celebrated in this night festival, that of a noble Pole who, pushed to the limits of his solvency, is going to see the bailiffs entering his property on the following day. This noble Pole is here moreover in order, for a moment, to recall to us, under the form of a figure on a cameo, a person whom we have heard being talked about on many occasions and who died very sadly. Let us mark this with a cross, let us not speak about it any more. All the spectators understand clearly that it is a question of the aforementioned Lumir, and also this noble, completely burdened with the nobility and the romanticism (11) of martyred Poland, is all the same the type of nobleman who always finds himself inexplicably always having a villa to sell off.

It is in this context that we see the blind Pensée walking as if she could see clearly. Because her surprising sensitivity allows her, in a brief preliminary visit, by means of her subtle perception, to be aware of echoes, approaches, movements, once she has taken a few steps.... to map out the whole structure of a place. If we, spectators, know that she is blind, throughout a whole act, those who are with her, the guests at this feast, could be in ignorance of it, and especially the one that her desire is directed towards. This personage, Orian, is worth presenting in a word for those who have not read the play.

Orian, reduplicated by his brother Orso, bears this very Claudelian name, which seems, by its sound and by the same construction, slightly: deformed, accentuated as regards the signifier by a peculiarity which is the same as the one we rediscover in so many of the personages of Claudelian tragedy - remember Sir Thomas Pollock Nageoire - of Homodarmes. That has as nice a sound as the one in the text about the suits of armour, by André Breton, in "Le peu de réalité". These two personages Orian and Orso are at stake. Orso is the honest lad who loves Pensée. Orian, who is not quite a twin, who is the big brother, is the one towards whom Pensée has directed her desire. Why towards him, if not because he is inaccessible. Because, to tell the truth, for this blind person, the Claudelian text and myth indicate to us that she can scarcely distinguish them by voice, to the point that at the end of the drama, Orso, for a moment, will be able to sustain the illusion of being the dead Orian. It is indeed because she sees something different for it to be the voice of Orian, even when it is Orso who is speaking, which can make her fail.

But let us dwell for a moment on this blind girl. What does she mean? Does it not seem to us, in order to see at first what she projects before us, that she is thus protected by a sort of sublime figure of modesty which is based on the fact that, not being able to see herself being seen, she seems to be protected from the only gaze which unveils her?

And I do not think that it is an eccentric remark to bring in this dialectic that I formerly put before you around the theme of the perversions which are called exhibitionistic and voyeuristic, (12) when I pointed out to you that they could not simply be grasped with respect to the one who sees and who shows himself to a partner who is simply other, object or subject, that what is involved in the phantasy of the exhibitionist as in that of the voyeur, is a third element which implies that in the partner there may blossom a complicitous consciousness which receives what he is given to see; that what flowers in her apparently innocent solitude offers itself to a hidden gaze; that thus it is the desire itself which sustains its function in the phantasy which veils from the subject his role in the act; that the exhibitionist and the voyeur in a way themselves enjoy as seeing and as showing, but without knowing what they are seeing and what they are showing.

For Pensée, here she is then, she who cannot be surprised, as I

might say, because she can be shown nothing which submits her to the small other, nor can she be seen without the one who spies being, like Acteon, struck with blindness, beginning to be torn to pieces by the bites of the pack of his own desires.

The mysterious power of the dialogue which takes place between Pensee and Orian - Orian which is only except for a letter precisely the name of one of one of the hunters that Diana metamorphised into a constellation - this mysterious admission with which this dialogue ends: "I am blind" has, just by itself, the force of an "I love you" because it avoids any awareness in the other of the "I love you" being said, in order to go straight and place itself in him as a word- Who could say: "I am blind", except from where the\_jword creates the night? Who, in hearing it, would not feel coming to birth in himself this depth of night?

Because it is there that I want to lead you: it is to the distinction, to the difference there is between the relationship of "seeing oneself" and the relationship of "hearing oneself". Naturally, it is remarked and it has been long remarked that it is proper to phonation to resonate immediately in the subject's own ear according as it is emitted, but this does not mean that the other to whom this word is addressed, has the same place or the same structure as that of visual unveiling, precisely because the word, for its part, does not give rise to sight because it is, itself, blindness. One sees oneself being seen, that is why one escapes from it, but one does not hear oneself being heard. Namely that one does not hear oneself where one is heard, namely in one's head, or more exactly those who are in this situation - there are in effect those who hear (13) themselves being heard and these are the mad, the hallucinators, it is the structure of verbal hallucination - could not hear themselves being heard except at the place of the Other: there where one hears the Other sending back your own message in its inverted form. What Claudel means by the blind Pensee, is that it is enough that the soul, because it is the soul that is in question, should close its eyes to the world - and this is indicated through all the dialogue of the third play - in order to be able to be that which the world lacks, the most desirable object in the world. Psyche who can no longer light the lamp, pumps, as I might say, sucks into her the being of Eros which is lack.

The myth of Poros and of Penia is reborn here under the form of spiritual blindness, because we are told that Pensee here incarnates the figure of the synagogue itself, as it is represented in the porch of the cathedral at Reims: blindfold.

On the other hand, Orian who confronts her is indeed the one whose gift cannot be accepted precisely because it is superabundance. Orian is another form of refusal. If he does not give Pensee his love, it is, he says, because his gifts are owed elsewhere, to everyone, to the divine work. What he overlooks, is precisely what is demanded of him in love: it is not his Poros, his resources, his spiritual riches, his

superabundance, nor even, as he expresses it, his joy, it is precisely what he does not have. He may be a saint of course, but it is rather striking that Claudel shows us here the limits of sanctity. For, desire is stronger here than sanctity itself, because it is a fact that Orian, the saint, in the dialogue with Pensee weakens and yields and loses the game and, in a word, to call things by their name, that he well and truly screws little Pensee. And this is what she wants and right through the drama and the play, she has not lost a half a second, a quarter of a line in order to operate in this direction along paths which we would not call the shortest, but undoubtedly the straightest, the surest ones.

Pensee de Coufontaine is truly being reborn here from all the fatalities which begin with debauchery, continue with the bill drawn on honour, through misalliance, abjuration, Louis (14) Philippism - which someone or other called le second t'en-pire - in order to be reborn as it were before sin, like innocence, but not for all that nature.

This is why there has to be seen the scene on which this whole drama culminates, this scene, the final one, the one where Pensee has confined herself with her mother who stretches over her her protective wing and does so because she has become pregnant through the work of the aforementioned Orian. Pensee receives the visit of the brother Orso, who comes here to bring her, from the one who has died, the final message, but which the logic of the play and the whole previous situation have created, because the whole effort of Orian had been to make both Pensee and Orso accept an enormous thing: that they should marry. Orian, the saint, does not see any obstacle to his good and honest little brother, for his part, finding happiness, it is at his level.

He is brave and courageous. And moreover the declarations of the lad leaves us in no doubt, he is capable of undertaking marriage with a woman he does not love, something can always be worked out. He is courageous, that is his business. He fought first on the left, he was told that he was mistaken, he fights on the right: he was with the Garibaldians, he has rejoined the Pope's zouaves. He is always there, sure-footed and clear-eyed, he is a man you can depend on. Do not laugh too much at this idiot, he is a trap, and we are going to see later for whom and how. Because, in truth, in his dialogue with Pensee, we no longer dream of laughing.

Who is Pensee in this final scene? The sublime object surely, the sublime object in so far as already we have indicated its position, last year, as substitute for the Thing (la Chose). As you heard in passing, the nature of the Thing is not too far from that of the woman, if it were not true that for all the ways that we have to approach this Thing, the woman proves to be quite another thing again - I say the least woman - and, in truth, Claudel does not show us anymore than anybody else that he has the slightest idea of it, far from it. This heroine of Claudel's this woman that he foments for us, is the woman of a certain desire. All the same let us do him this much justice

that elsewhere, in Partage de midi, Claudel has made for us a woman, Yse, who is not so bad, she resembles very much what a woman is.

Here we are in the presence of the object of a desire. And what I want to show you, which is inscribed in its image, is that it is a desire which no longer has at this level of destitution anything other than castration to separate it radically from any (15) natural desire. In truth, if you look at what is happening on the stage, it is rather beautiful, but in order to situate it exactly, I would ask you to remember the anamorphic cylinder which I presented to you well and truly in reality - the tube on this table - namely this cylinder on which there was projected a figure by Rubens, that of "The Crucifixion", by the expedient of a sort of shapeless drawing which was cleverly inscribed on the base of this cylinder. From that, I constructed for you from this mechanism the image of the reflection of this fascinating figure, of this beauty erected in such a way that it projects itself to the limit in order to prevent us from going further to the heart of the Thing.

If it is the case that here the figure of Pensee, and the whole line of this drama, is constructed to bring us to this still further limit - what do we see, if not the figure of a divinised woman because she is again here, this woman, crucified, the gesture is indicated in the text as it recurs with insistence at so many other points of Claudel's work, from the Princess of T&te d'or to Sygne herself, to Yse, to the figure of Dona Prouheze - this figure bears in herself what? A child no doubt, but let us not forget what we are told: it is that for the first time this child has begun to show life in her, to move. This moment is the moment at which she has taken into herself the soul, she says, of the one who has died.

How is this capture of the soul represented, depicted for us? It is a real act of vampirism, she closes herself off, as I might say, with the wings of her coat over the basket of flowers that the brother, Orso, had sent her, these flowers growing in a mould which the dialogue has just revealed to us - a macabre detail - contains the eviscerated heart of her lover, Orian. It is the symbolic essence of this that, when she stands up again, she is supposed to have caused to pass into her, it is this soul that she poses, with her own, she says, on the lips of this brother who has just become engaged to her in order to give a father to the child, while saying that he will never be her spouse. And this transmission, this singular realisation of this fusion of souls is the one which in the two first quotations that I gave you at the beginning of this discourse, from The hostage on the one hand, from Hard bread on the other, is indicated to us as being the supreme aspiration of love, it is from this fusion of souls that in short Orso, whom we know is going to rejoin his (16) brother in death, is here the designated carrier, vehicle, messenger.

What does that mean? I told you above, this poor Orso who makes us smile even in this function that he ends up with, of make-

believe husband, should not deceive us, we should not allow ourselves to be taken in by his ridiculousness. Because the place he occupies is the very one after all in which we are led to be captivated here. It is to our desire, and as a revelation of its structure, that there is proposed this phantasy which reveals to us what this magnificent power is which draws us in the woman, and not necessarily, as it is said, towards higher things, that this power is tertiary and it is the one which cannot be ours except by representing our destruction.

There is always in desire some delight in death, but of a death that we cannot inflict on ourselves. We rediscover here the four terms which are represented,, as I might say, in us as in the two brothers, o - o', and to us the barred subject, ^, in so far as we understand nothing about it, and this figure of the Other incarnated in this woman. Between these four elements, all sorts of varieties of this inflicting of death are possible among which it is possible to enumerate all the most perverse forms of desire.

Here, it is only the most ethical case in so far as it is the true man, the completed man who affirms himself and maintains himself in his virility, Orian, who pays the price for it by his death. This reminds us that, it is true, he always pays this price in every case, even if from the moral point of view, it is the most costly way for his humanity, if he debases this price, to the level of pleasure.

So ends the plan of the poet. What he shows us, is indeed, after the drama of the subject qua pure victim of the logos, of language, what happens here to desire and for that, he makes this desire visible to us. The figure of the woman, of this terrible subject who is Pensee de Coufontaine, is the object of desire. She deserves her name, Pensee: she is thought about desire. The love of the other, this love that she expresses, is the very thing by which by fixating herself on it she becomes the object of desire.

(17) Such is the topology at which the long journey of the tragedy is completed. Like every process, like every progress of human articulation, it is only retrospectively that there is perceived that which converges in the lines traced in the traditional past, that which one day comes to birth when, throughout the tragedy of Euripides, we find as a sort of shoe that pinches, as a .....which exasperates him, the relationship to desire, and more especially to the desire of the woman. What is called the misogyny of Euripides, this sort of aberration, of madness which seems to affect all his poetry, we can only grasp and understand from what it has become, from the fact that it has been elaborated through all the sublimations of the Christian tradition.

These perspectives, these extremes, these quartering points of terms whose crossing for us necessitates effects with which we have to deal, those of neurosis in so far as in Freudian thought they affirm themselves as more original than those of the golden



mean, than those of the normal, it is necessary that we should touch them, that we should explore them, that we should know their extremes, if we want our action to be situated in an oriented fashion, not the captive of some mirage or other, always within our reach, of the good, of mutual aid, but because of what may have to be required in the other, even in the most obscure forms, by the fact that we have the audacity to accompany him in transference.

Extremes touch, someone or other has said. There must be at least an instant that we touch them in order to see what is here my end, to locate exactly what should be our place at the moment when the subject is on the only path that we ought to conduct him to, the one where he must articulate his desire.

Seminar 22:            Wednesday 24 May 1961

What business have we with Claudel in a year when we have no longer enough time to formulate what we have to say about transference? Our remarks, from certain points of view, might give you this feeling, or at least someone who was less well informed. All the same, everything that we have said has a common axis which I think I have articulated sufficiently for you to have seen that it is what is essential in my aims this year.

And to designate this point, I will try to specify it for you as follows. There has been a lot of talk about transference since analysis exists, people are still talking about it. It is clear that it is not simply a theoretical hope, that we should all the same come to know what it is we are ceaselessly moving about in, what it is that enables us to sustain this movement.

I would say to you that the axis of what I am designating for you this year is something which could be expressed as follows: how should we consider ourselves to be concerned by transference? This kind of displacement of the question does not signify for all that that we consider as resolved the question of what transference itself is. But is it precisely because of very profound differences of points of view which manifest themselves in the analytic community, not only today, but in the stages of what has been thought about transference - there appear in this very tangible divergences - that I believe that this displacement is necessary for us to be able to become aware of the cause of these divergences, which allows us by understanding the "for lack of which" they are produced, is what may also allow it to be understood that we always consider it as certain that each of these points of view on transference has its truth, is usable.

(2) The question that I am posing is not that of countertransference. What has been put under the rubric of countertransference is a kind of vast lumber-room of experiences which involves or seems to involve pretty well everything that we are capable of experiencing in our trade. To take things in this way is really to make the notion quite unusable from then on, because it is clear that this brings all sorts of impurities into the situation. It is clear that we are human and, as such, affected in a thousand ways by the presence of the sick person and even the problem of what is to be done in a case defined by

its very particular coordinates. To put all of this under the register of countertransference, to add it to what ought really be considered essentially as our participation in transference, is really to make it impossible to continue.

This participation of ours in transference, how can we conceive it and is this not what is going to allow us to situate very precisely what is at the heart of the phenomenon of transference in the subject, the analysand? There is something which is perhaps suggested as a "perhaps", at least "why not?", if you wish, which is that it may be that the simple necessity of responding to transference is something which involves our being, that it is not simply the definition of a behaviour to be adhered to, of a handling of something outside ourselves, of a how to do?, comment faire?, it may be, and, if you have been listening to me for years, it is certain that all that is implied by what I am leading you towards, is that what we are, what is in question in our implication in the transference, is something which is of the order of what I have just named in saying that it involves our being.

And, after all even, it is so evident that even what may be most opposed to me in analysis - I mean what is least articulated in what reveals itself about the ways to approach the analytic situation, just as much at its starting point as at its end point, in the way that I may have the greatest aversion to - it is all the same from that side that there was one day heard a sort of massive remark - it was not transference that was in question but the action of the analyst - "that the analyst acts less by what he says and by what he does than by what he is". Make no mistake about it, this way of expressing oneself is one I take great offense to, in the measure precisely that it says (3) something correct and that it says it in a way which immediately closes the door, it is well designed precisely to infuriate me.

In fact, from the beginning this is the whole question. What is given when one defines the situation "objectively", is the fact that for the patient the analyst plays his transferential role precisely in the measure that for the patient he is what he is not.... precisely, on the plane of what one could call reality. This allows us to judge the degree, the angle of deviation of the transference, precisely in the measure that the phenomenon of transference is going to help us to make the patient realise, from this angle of deviation, how far he is from the real because of what he produces, in short with the help of the transference, in terms of fictions.

And nevertheless there is some truth in it. It is certain that there is some truth in it in that the analyst intervenes through something which is of the order of his being, it is first of all a fact of experience. Since it is all the same something which is highly probable, why would there be any need for this rectification, for this correction of the subjective position, for this research into the formation of the analyst, of this experience where we try to make him descend or ascend, if it were

not in order that something in his position is called on to function in an efficacious fashion, in a relationship which is in no way described by us as being able to be entirely exhausted in a manipulation, even a reciprocal one?

Moreover everything which has developed since Freud, after Freud, concerning the import of transference brings into play the analyst as an existent. And one could even divide these articulations of the transference in a rather clear fashion which does not exhaust the question, which overlaps rather well the tendencies, if you wish the two tendencies, as people say, of modern psychoanalysis - whose eponyms I have given, but in a fashion which is not exhaustive, it is only to pinpoint them - with Melanie Klein on one side and Anna Freud on the other.

I mean that the Melanie Klein tendency has tended to put the accent on the object-function of the analyst in the transferential relationship. Naturally, this is not where the position begins, but it is in the measure that this tendency remained the most faithful one - you can even say if you wish (4) that it is Melanie Klein who is the most faithful to Freudian thought, to the Freudian tradition - that she was led to articulate the transferential relationship in terms of object-function for the analyst. I will explain. In the measure that, from the beginning of analysis, from the first steps, from the first words, the analytic relationship is thought of by Melanie Klein as dominated by unconscious phantasies which are here immediately what we should aim at, what we have to deal with, what from the beginning I am not saying that we ought, but we could interpret, it is in this measure that Melanie Klein was led to make the analyst, the analytic presence in the analyst, the intention of the analyst function for the subject as good or bad object.

I am not saying that this is a necessary condition, I believe even that it is a consequence which is only necessary in function of the shortcomings of Kleinian thought. It is precisely in the measure that the function of phantasy, even though perceived in a very pregnant fashion, was insufficiently articulated by her - it is the great shortcoming of the Kleinian articulation - the fact is that even among her better acolytes or disciples who certainly have tried to do it a number of times, the theory of phantasy has never really been completed.

And nevertheless there are many extremely usable elements. The primordial function, for example, of symbolisation has been articulated, accentuated here in a fashion which, from certain points of view, goes so far as to be very satisfactory. In fact, the whole key to the correction required by the theory of phantasy in Melanie Klein is entirely in the symbol that I give you of the phantasy  $S \diamond o$ , which can be read as: S barred desire of o. It is a question of knowing what the o is, it is not simply the noetic correlative of the object, it is in the phantasy. Naturally, it is not easy, unless you take the journey that I have made you retake through a thousand ways of approaching, through a thousand ways of exercising this

experience of phantasy. It is in what the approach to this experience necessitates that you will better understand, if already you believe that you have glimpsed something or simply if up to now this appears obscure to you, that you will understand what I am trying to promote with this formalisation.

But let us continue. The other aspect of the theory of transference is the one which puts the accent on the following, which is no less irreducible and is also more evidently true, (5) that the analyst is involved in the transference as subject. It is evidently to this aspect that there refers the accent put, in the other mode of thinking about the transference, on the therapeutic alliance.

There is a real consistency between this and what accompanies it, this correlate of the analyst, in the second mode of conceiving transference, the one for which I pinpointed Anna Freud - which in fact designates it rather well, she is not the only one - who puts the accent on the powers of the ego. It is not simply a question of recognising them objectively, it is a question of the place that is given to them in therapy. And here, what are you going to be told? It is that there is a whole first part of the treatment where there is not even a question of speaking, of thinking of bringing into play what is properly speaking on the plane of the unconscious.

First of all you have only defences, this is the least of what you will be told, this for a good amount of time. This is more nuanced in practice than in the doctrine, it is to be guessed at through the theory that is constructed of it.

It is not altogether the same thing to put in the foreground, as is more than legitimate, the importances of defences and to arrive at theorising things in a way that makes of the ego itself a kind of inertial mass which could be even conceived of - and this is what is proper to the school of Kris, Hartmann and the others - as afterwards involving, let us say, elements which are for us irreducible, uninterpretable when all is said and done.

This is where they end up and things are clear, I am not putting words in their mouths, they say it themselves. And the further step, is that after all it is fine like that and that one should even make it more irreducible, this ego - after all, it is a conceivable mode of conducting an analysis - add defences to it. I am not at all, at this moment, in the process of even giving it the connotation of a rejecting judgement, that is how it is. What one can say in any case, is that, that, compared to what the other trenchant aspect formulates, it does not seem that this side is the more Freudian one, this the least that can be said.

But we have something else to do, do we not, in our remarks today, this year, than to return to this connotation of eccentricity to which we gave, in the first years of our teaching, so much importance. People have seen in it a (6) polemical intention, even though I assure you that this is very far from my mind. But what is in question, is to change

the level of accommodation of thinking - things are not altogether the same now, but these deviations were really taking on in the analytic community a really fascinating value which was getting to the point of removing the feeling that there were questions - to restore a certain perspective. A certain inspiration having been brought to light again thanks to something which is nothing other also than the reestablishing of the analytic tongue, I mean of its structure, of what served to make it emerge at the beginning in Freud, the situation is different. And the simple fact even, for those who may feel themselves a little bit at a loss because of the fact that we were going at full blast at a place in my seminar into Claudel, that they have the feeling all the same that this has the closest relationship with the-question of transference, well proves simply by itself that there is something sufficiently changed, that there is no longer a need to insist on the negative aspect of one or other tendency. It is not the negative aspects that interest us, but the positive aspects, the ones through which they may be of service to us moreover and at the point that we have got to as building blocks.

So then, what service can be rendered us, for example, by what I would call in a short word, this "Claudelian mythology"? It is amusing.... I should tell you that I was surprised myself in rereading these last days a piece that I had never reread because it was published uncorrected. It was Jean Wahl who did it at the time that I was giving little discourses open to all at the College Philosophique. It was something on obsessional neurosis which was entitled I do not remember what - The neurotic's myth, I think, you see that we are already at the heart of the question - The neurotic's myth where in connection with the Ratman I showed the function of mythical structures in the determinism of symptoms. As I had to correct it, I considered the thing to be impossible. With time, bizarrely, I read it without too much dissatisfaction and I was surprised to see in it - if I were to have my head cut off, I would not have said it! - that I spoke in it about The humiliated father. There must be reasons for these things. It is not after all because I had encountered the u with the circumflex accent that I am telling you about it. So let us take it up again.

(7) What does the analysand come looking for? He comes looking for what is to be found or, more exactly, if he is looking, it is because there is something to be found. And the only thing that there is to be found properly speaking, is the trope par excellence, the trope of tropes, what is called his destiny. But if we forget that there is a certain relationship between analysis and this kind of thing which is of the order of the figure, in the sense that the word figure can be employed to say "figure of destiny", as one says moreover "figure of rhetoric" and that it is for this reason that analysis was not even able to take a step without myth emerging, that means that one simply is forgetting one's origins.

There is a piece of luck, which is that parallel.... In the evolution of analysis itself, there is a sort of slippage which

is the result of a practice always more insistent, always more pregnant, exigent about producing of results, so then the evolution of analysis risks making us forget the importance, the weight of this formulation of myths, of the myth at the origin. Luckily, elsewhere people continued to be very interested in it, so that it is a detour, something which comes back to us, perhaps more legitimately than we believe - we perhaps have some responsibility for this interest in the function of the myth.

I made an allusion to it, more than an allusion, I articulated it a long time ago, ever since the first work before the seminar began - the seminar had all the same begun, there were people who came to work with me, in my house - on the Ratman. It is already the functioning, the bringing into play of the structural articulation of the myth as it has been applied since - and in a persistent, systematic, developed fashion by Lévi-Strauss for example in his own seminar - I already tried to show you the value, the functioning of it to explain what was happening in the story of the Ratman.

For those who have left things or who do not know it, the structuralist articulation of the myth, is something that takes a myth in its totality, I mean the epos, the story, the way that this is recounted from one end to the other in order to construct a sort of model which is uniquely constituted by a series of oppositional connotations within the myth, the functions involved in the myth, for example, the father-son relationship, incest, for example, in the Oedipus myth. I am schematising, naturally, I want to reduce things in order to tell you what is in question. (8) One realises that the myth does not stop there, namely that at the following generation - if it is a myth, this term generation cannot be conceived as simply the next phase of the entrance of the actors, there must always be some there: when the old have died, there are little ones who come back in order that things can begin again - there is a signifying consistency in what is produced in the new mythological constellation, and it is this consistency which interests us. Something happens that you can connote as you wish, brother-enemies, then on the other hand the function of a transcendent love which goes against the law, like incest, but manifestly situated opposite it in its function, in any case having relationships that we could define through a certain number of oppositional terms with the figure of incest, in short, what happens at the level of Antigone. It is a game in which there is question precisely of detecting in it the rules which give it its rigour - and remark that there is no other rigour conceivable than precisely the one established in games. In short, what allows us in the function of the myth, in this game in which the transformations operate according to certain rules and which are found because of this fact to have a revelatory value, creating higher configurations, illuminated by cases for example, in short to demonstrate this same sort of fecundity that mathematics has, this is what is in question in the elucidation of myths.

And this involves us in the most direct fashion, because we cannot approach the subject that we have to deal with in analysis

without encountering this function of myth. It is a fact proved by experience. In any case, from the first steps of analysis, Freud was sustained by this reference to myth, from the time of the Traumdeutung and the letters to Fliess: the Oedipus myth. It is not possible either.... the fact that we elide it, that we put it in parenthesis, that we try to express everything, the function for example of the conflict between the primordial tendencies down to the most radical ones and the defences against it, the whole articulation connoted in a topographical way by the accent of the ego, in the thesis on narcissism the function of the ego ideal, of a certain Id as permitting there to be articulated the whole of our experience in an economic mode as it is put, it is not possible that to go in this direction and to lose the other pole of reference should not represent properly speaking what in our experience should be noted as properly speaking, in the positive sense that this has for us, a (9) "forgetting". This does not prevent the experience that continues on from being an analytic experience, it is an analytic experience which forgets its own terms.

You see that I come back, as I often do and I almost always do after all, to articulate alphabetical things. This is not uniquely for the pleasure of spelling them out, even though that exists, but this allows there to be posed in their quite raw character the true questions. The true question which is posed, there where it begins, is not simply the following: is that what analysis is, when all is said and done, an introduction of the subject to his destiny? Of course not. This would be to place us in a demiurgic position which has never been the one occupied by the analyst.

But then, to remain at this level which is simply a general starting point, there is a sort of formula which indeed takes on its value because it is separated out quite naturally from those ways of posing the question which are as good as many others. It is..... Before, that we should have believed ourselves clever enough and strong enough to talk about something or other which is supposed to be "normal" - in fact, we have never believed ourselves to be so strong or so clever not to feel our pen trembling ever so little any time we attacked this subject of what a normal person is. Jones has written an article about it, it must be said that he had a nerve, it must also be said that he managed it rather well, but one sees the difficulty.

In any case, we have to put the accent on this, that it is really only by a piece of trickery that we can even bring into play any notion whatsoever, in analysis, of normalisation. It is a theoretical partiality: it is when we consider things from a certain angle, when we start, for example, talking about instinctual maturation, as if this were all that were in question. We give ourselves over then to these extraordinary ratiocinations bordering on moralising sermons which are so likely to inspire mistrust and withdrawal! To bring in, without anything else, a normal notion of anything at all that has any relationship whatsoever with our praxis, while precisely what we discover in it, is the degree to which the so-called normal



subject is precisely what inspires in us, as regards what permits this appearance, the most radical and the most well founded suspicion. As regards these results.... We must all the same (10) know whether we are able to employ the notion of normal for anything whatsoever within the horizon of our practice.

So let us limit ourselves for the moment to the question: does the effort of deciphering something which maps out the figure of destiny, what destiny is.... can we say that the mastery that we have gained of it allows us to obtain what? Let us say the least possible drama, the inversion of the sign? If the human configuration that we attack is drama, tragic or not, can we be satisfied with aiming at the least drama possible? A well informed subject - a good man well informed is worth two - will manage to get by unscathed. After all, why not? A modest pretension. This has never corresponded either, as you well know, to our experience. This is not it.

But I claim that the door through which we can enter in order to say things which have simply some sense, I mean that we have the feeling of being on the track of what we have to say, is the following which as always is a point closer to us than this point where quite stupidly the supposedly obvious is captured, what is called common sense where quite simply there is initiated the crossroads, namely in the present case of destiny, of the normal. There is all the same something, if we have discovered, if we have learned to see in the figure of symptoms something which has a relationship to this figure of destiny, there is all the same something, which is that we did not know it before and now we know it, this does not therefore come from outside. And, in a way from the fact that we can, through this knowledge, neither allow ourselves, nor allow the subject to put himself to one side and that this continues for those who continue to walk in the same direction, this is an altogether absurd and gross schema for the reason that the fact of knowing or of not knowing is essential to these figures of destiny, that this implication in the language of the developed figures that myths are does not refer to a language, but to the implication. Language being caught up in the operation of the word and, to complicate the affair, in its relationships with some Umwelt or other, there develop figures where there are necessary points, irreducible points, major points, points of intersection which are those that I tried to picture in the graph for example.

(11) An attempt which it is not a question of knowing whether it might not be jimcrack, whether it might not be incomplete, whether it might not be, be perhaps much more harmoniously, adequately constructed or reconstructed by someone else, whose aims I wish simply to evoke here because this aim of a minimal structure of these four, of these eight points of intersection appears to be necessitated by the simple confrontation of the subject and the signifier. And it is already a lot to be able to sustain here the necessity, because of this simple fact, of a Spaltung of the subject.

This figure, this graph, these points mapped out, through the

eyes also, the attention, is what allows us to reconcile with our experience of development the true function of what trauma is. A trauma is not simply that which at a moment has erupted, has cracked somewhere a sort of structure which appears to be imagined as total - because this is what the notion of narcissism was used for by some people - it is that certain events come to be situated at a certain place in this structure, they occupy it, they take on in it the signifying value holding that place in a subject who is determined, this is what gives its traumatic value to an event.

Hence the importance of returning to the experience of myth. You can be sure that, as regards the Greek myths, we are not so well placed because we have many variants, we even have a great number of them, but, as I might say, they are not always good variants. I mean that we cannot guarantee the origin of these variants. In a word, they are not contemporary, nor even co-local variants. They are more or less allegorical, fictional rearrangements and, of course, they are not usable in the same way as one or other variant collected at the same time as what is provided when collecting a myth in a population from North or South America, as for example the material contributed by a Franz Boas or others allows us to do.

And moreover to go looking for the model of what becomes of the oedipal conflict when there enters into it precisely at one or other point knowledge as such within the myth, moreover to go completely elsewhere, in the Shakespearean fabrication of Hamlet, as I did it for you two years ago and as moreover I had every (12) licence to do because, from the beginning, Freud had taken things from that angle. You have seen what we believe we were able to connote in it: it is that something is modified in it at another point of the structure, and in a very exciting fashion, because it is from a quite particular, aporetic (aporique) point of the subject with respect to desire, that Hamlet proposed to reflection, to meditation, to interpretation, to research, the structural puzzle that it represents. We succeeded well enough in bringing to awareness the specificity of this case through this difference that, contrary to the father of oedipal murder, he, the father killed in Hamlet, it is not that "he did not know" that should be said, but he knew. Not alone did he know, but this intervenes in the subjective incidence that interests us, that of the central personage, of the personage of Hamlet alone. It is a drama entirely included in the subject Hamlet. It has been brought clearly to his knowledge that the father was killed, it has been brought to his knowledge sufficiently for him to know a good deal about what what is involved namely by whom. In saying that, I am only repeating what Freud said from the beginning.

Here is the indication of a method through which it is demanded of us to measure what our knowledge about the function of the structure introduces into this structure itself. To say things in a very general way and in a fashion which allows me to locate the root of what is in question, if, at the origin of every neurosis - as Freud said from his first writings - there is, not

what has been since interpreted as a frustration, something like that, an arrears left open in something unformed, but a Versagung, namely something which is much closer to a refusal than to frustration, which is as much internal as external, which is really put by Freud in a position - let us connote it by the term which at the very least has a popular resonance through our contemporary language - in an existential position. This position does not put the normal, always with an original Versagung beyond which there would be a bifurcation, either towards neurosis or towards the normal, one being worth neither more nor less than the other with respect to this beginning of the possibility of the Versagung. And that which the term sagen implied in this untranslatable Versagung is obvious, it is only possible in the register of the sagen, I mean in so far as the sagen is not simply the operation of communication, but the (13) stating (le dire), the emergence as such of the signifier in so far as it allows the subject to refuse himself.

What I can tell you, is that it is not possible to get out of this original, primordial refusal, this power which is prejudicial with respect to all our experience, in other words, we analysts, we only operate - and who does not know this - in the register of Versagung, and this all the time, and it is in so far as we conceal ourselves - who does not know this - that our whole experience, our technique is structured around something which has been expressed in a quite stammering fashion in this idea of non-gratification which is to be found nowhere in Freud. It is a question of deepening the sense of what this Versagung specifies. This Versagung implies a progressive direction which is the one that we bring into play in the analytic experience.

I will recommence by taking up again the terms that I believe to be usable in the Claudelian myth itself in order to allow you to see how in any case it is a spectacular fashion of picturing how we are the messengers, the vehicles of this specific Versagung.

I believe that you no longer doubt any more that what is happening in Hard bread is the Oedipus myth. That you might find in it almost my play on words, that it is precisely at the moment that Louis de Coufontaine and Turelure - it is at the very moment that there is formulated this kind of demand for tenderness, it is the first time that this happens, it is true that it is ten minutes before he kills him - are face to face, where Louis says to him: "All the same you are the father (tu es le pere)", really reduplicating this "kill the father (tuez le pere)" that the desire of the woman, of Lumir, has suggested to him, it is superimposed and literally superimposing in a fashion which, I assure you, is not simply the good fortune of French. So what is meant by what is represented to us here on the stage? What that means in an explicit fashion, is that at that moment, and through that, little Louis becomes a man. Louis de Coufontaine, as he is told, will not have a long enough life to carry this parricide, but also from that moment on he is no longer the couldn't-care-less individual who fails in everything and who allows his land to be taken away from him by a crowd of evil little operators. He will become a very fine ambassador.

capable of all sorts of dirty tricks, there is some correlation here.

(14) He becomes the father. Not only does he become him, but when he speaks about him later, in The humiliated father, in Rome, he will say: "I knew him very well" - he had never wanted to hear a word about him - "he was not the man people think", allowing there to be understood no doubt, the treasures of sensitivity and experience that had accumulated under the skull of this old scoundrel. But he became the father: what is more, it was his only chance to become it and for reasons which are linked to the previous level of the dramatic work, things had not got off to a good start.

But what is made tangible by the construction, the plot, well, is that at the same time and because of this he is castrated. Namely that the desire of the little boy, this desire sustained in such an ambiguous fashion, which binds him to the aforementioned Lumir, well, it will go nowhere - even though this is nevertheless easy, quite simple. He has her within his grasp, he only has to bring her back with him to Mitidga and everything will turn out fine, they would even have lots of children, but something happens. First of all we do not know too well whether he desires it or whether he does not desire it, but there is one thing certain, it is that the lady in question, does not want it. She has said to him: "You shoot Daddy", she goes off towards her own destiny which is the destiny of a desire, of a true desire as befits a Claudelian personage.

Because, let us say it, the importance there is in introducing you into this theatre, even if it has for one or other person, according to his leanings, a smell of the sacristy about it which may please or displease - the question is not there - it is because it is all the same a tragedy. And it is quite droll that this has led this gentleman to positions which are not positions designed to please us, but we must accommodate ourselves to it and if necessary try to understand him. It is all the same from beginning to end, from Tete d'or to Soulier de satin, the tragedy of desire. So the personage who is at this generation its support, the aforementioned Lumir, drops her previous companion, the aforementioned Louis de Coufontaine, and goes off towards her desire which we are quite clearly told is a desire for death. But through this, it is she - it is here that I would ask you to dwell on the variant of the myth - who gives him precisely what? It is not the mother obviously - the mother is Sygne de Coufontaine and she has a place which is obviously not that of the mother when she is called Jocasta. No, there is another one who is the "father's woman", because the father, as I showed you, is always at the horizon of this story in a clearly marked fashion. And this incidence of desire is (15) what has rehabilitated our excluded son, our undesired child, our wandering partial object, what rehabilitates him, reinstates him, recreates with him the ruined father, well, the result, is to give him the father's woman.

You see clearly what I am showing you. There is here an

exemplary deconstruction of the function of that which, in the Freudian, oedipal myth is conjugated under the form of this kind of hollow, of centre of aspiration, of vertiginous point of the libido that the mother represents. There is a structural deconstruction.

It is late, but I would not like all the same to leave you without indicating to you - it is time which forces us to cut off at the point that we are at - that towards which I will leave you. After all, it is not a story designed to astonish us so much, we who are already a little hardened by experience, that castration, in short, should be something fabricated like that: withdraw his desire from someone and, in exchange, it is he who is given to someone else, on this occasion to the social order. It is Sichel who has the fortune: it is quite natural, in short, that she should be the one he marries. What is more, the aforementioned Lumir saw very clearly what was happening, because if you read the text she had very clearly explained to him: "There is only one thing for you to do, it is to marry your father's mistress". But the important thing is this structure. And I am telling you that it looks simple because we know it in a way habitually, but it is rarely expressed like that. You have clearly understood, I think, what I have said: one removes a subject's desire from him and in exchange one sends him into the marketplace where he becomes part of the public auction.

But is it not the case that it is precisely this - and illustrated then in a quite different way, which is designed, this time, to awaken our sleeping sensitivity - is it not this which at the beginning, at the stage above, the one perhaps which can enlighten us more radically about the beginning, is this not what happens at the level of Sygne, and that in a fashion well made to move us a little more? Everything is taken away from her, it would be too much to say that it was for nothing - we will leave that - but it is also quite clear that it is in order to give her, in exchange for what is taken away from her, to what she most abhors.

(16) You will see, I am led to end in a fashion that is almost too spectacular by making of it a game and an enigma, it is much richer than what I am in the process of putting before you as a question mark - you will see it, the next time, articulated in a much deeper fashion, I want to leave you something to dream about - you will see at the third generation, that people want to do the same thing to Pensee, only behold, we do not have the same starting point, we do not have the same origin and this is what will be instructive for us and even what will allow us to pose questions about the analyst. People want to do the same thing to her, naturally there the characters are nicer, they are all excellent people, even the one who wants to do the same thing to her, namely the aforementioned Orian - it is certainly not for her harm, it is not for her good, either - and he wants to give her also to someone else - whom she does not desire, this time the girl does not let herself be had, she catches her Orian in passing, illicitly no doubt, just at the time that he is no longer anything but a soldier of the pope, but.... cold. And

then the other, my word, is a very gallant man.... and so he resists.

What does that mean? I already told you that it was a beautiful phantasy, it had not said its last word. But indeed it is all the same enough for me to leave in suspense a question about what we are going precisely to be able to make of it concerning certain effects which are those which come from the fact that we ourselves, we count for something in the destiny of the subject.

There is all the same something that I must pinpoint before leaving you, that it is not complete to summarise, in a way, in this fashion the effects on man of the fact that he becomes subject of the law. "It is not simply because everything that is at the heart of himself is taken away from him and that he is given in exchange to the daily grind, this web which binds the generations together, the fact is that in order precisely that it should be a web which ties the generations together, once there is closed this operation whose curious conjugation you see of a minus which is not reduplicated by a plus, well, something is still owing, once this operation is closed.

It is there that we will take up the question again the next time.

Seminar 23:            Wednesday 31 May 1961

In order to situate what the place of the analyst should be in the transference, in the double sense that I told you the last time this place must be situated: where is the analysand situated, where should the analyst be in order to respond appropriately to him? It is clear that this relationship - what is frequently called this situation as if the starting situation was constitutive - this relationship or this situation can only be engaged on the basis of a misunderstanding. It is clear that there is no coincidence between what the analyst is for the analysand at the beginning of analysis and what precisely the analysis of the transference is going to allow us to unveil as regards what is implied, not immediately, but what is truly implied, by the fact that a subject engages in this adventure, which he does not know about, which is analysis.

You may have understood, in what I articulated the last time, that it is this "truly" dimension implied by the openness, the possibilities, the richness, the whole future development of the analysis, which poses a question from the side of the analyst. Is it not at least probable, is it not tangible that he ought, for his part, already put himself at the level of this "truly", to be truly at the place that he ought to arrive at at this term of analysis which is precisely the analysis of transference, can the analyst consider himself as in a way indifferent to his veritable position? Let us throw some more light on the matter, this may after all seem to you almost not to be in question, does his science not supply for it, however he may formulate it for himself.

Something, in the facts, that he may know the ways and the paths of analysis is not enough, whether he likes it or not, to put him in this place. But the fact is that divergences in this (2) technical function, once it is theorised, make it nevertheless appear that there is here something which is not sufficient. The analyst is precisely not the only analyst, he forms part of a group, of a crowd (masse), in the proper sense that this term has in Freud's article Ich-Analyse und Massen-psychologie. It is not by pure chance that if this theme is tackled by Freud, it is at the moment that there is already a Society of analysts, it is in function of what is happening at the level of the relationship of the analyst with his own

function that a part of the problems that he has to deal with - everything that is called the second Freudian topography - is articulated. This is an aspect which even though it is not obvious deserves no less to be very specially looked at by us analysts.

I referred to it on several occasions in my writings. We cannot, in any case, go through the historical moment of the emergence of Freud's second topography, whatever degree of internal necessity we may attribute to it, without going into the problems which are posed to Freud. This is attested, you only have to open Jones at the right page in order to see that at the very moment that he brought to light this thematic, and specifically what is contained in this article Ich-Analyse und Massen-psychologie, he was thinking of nothing at that stage except the organisation of the analytic Society.

I made an allusion above to my writings, I highlighted there, in an infinitely sharper fashion perhaps that I am in the process of doing for the moment, all the drama that this problematic gave rise to for him. It is necessary all the same to indicate what emerges, in a clear enough fashion, in certain passages quoted by Jones, about the notion of a sort of Komintern, a secret committee even, which is conceived romantically as such within analysis. The idea of this is something to which he clearly committed himself in one or other of his letters. In fact, it is indeed in this way that he envisages the functioning of the group of seven in which he really placed his trust.

Once there is a crowd or an organised mass, those who are in this analyst-function pose themselves all the problems that Freud effectively raises in this article and which are, as I also, at the proper time, clarified, the problems of the organisation of the mass in its relationship to the existence of a certain discourse. And it would be necessary to take up this article by applying it to the evolution of the analytic function, of the (3) theory that analysts have constructed, have put forward about it, to see the necessity that makes converge - it is almost immediately, intuitively, tangible and comprehensible - the gravity that pulls the function of the analyst towards the image that he may construct of it, in so far as this image is going to situate itself very precisely at the point that Freud has taught us to separate out, whose function Freud brings to its term at this moment of the second topography, and which is that of the Ichideal, translated: ego-ideal.

From then on there is an ambiguity with regard to these terms. Ichideal, for example, in an article to which I will refer later, on "Transference and love", which is very important for us, which was read at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society in 1933 by its authors and which was published in Imago in 1934 - I happen to have it, it is not easy to get copies of Imago, it is easier to get The Psychoanalytic Quarterly of 1939 where it was translated into English under the title of "Transference and love" - l'Ideal du Moi is translated in English by ego-ideal.



This operation of the place in different tongues of the determiner with respect to the determined, in a word, of the order of determination is something which plays a role which is not at all a random one. Someone who does not know German might think that Ichideal means Moi Ideal (ideal ego). I pointed out that in the inaugural article where there is mention of the Ichideal, of the ego-ideal, Einführung zur Narzissmus, there is from time to time Idealich. And God knows that for all of us it is an object of debate, I for my part saying that one cannot even for an instant neglect such a variation from the pen of Freud, who was so precise about the signifier, and others saying that it is impossible from an examination of the context to reach any conclusion about it.

However there is one thing certain, which is that first of all even those who are in the second position will be the first, as you will see in the next number of L'Analyse which is going to appear, to distinguish effectively on the psychological plane the ego-ideal from the ideal ego, I am talking about my friend Lagache, who as you will see, in his article on the "Structure of the personality", makes a distinction which I would say, without at all diminishing it for all that, is descriptive, extremely subtle, elegant and clear. In the phenomenon, this has absolutely not the same function. Simply, you will see in a reply that I have produced quite intentionally for this number, developed around what he gives us as thematic about the structure (4) of the personality, I remarked on a certain number of points, the first of which is that one could object that there is here an abandonment of the method that he himself announced as being the one he proposed to follow in the matter of metapsychology, as regards the elaboration of the structure, namely as a formulation, as he expresses it which is at a distance from experience, namely which is properly speaking metapsychological - the clinical and descriptive difference between the two terms ego-ideal and ideal ego being insufficiently described in the register of the method that he proposed for himself. You will soon see that all of this has its place.

Perhaps I am going to be able to anticipate today already the quite concrete metapsychological fashion in which one can situate, within this big economy, the economic thematic introduced by Freud around the notion of narcissism, to specify quite effectively the function of the one and the other.

But I am not yet at that point. Simply, what I designate for you is the term of Ichideal, or Ideal du moi, in so far indeed as it has been translated in English by ego-ideal - in English this place of the determiner, of the determinant, is much more ambiguous in a group of two terms like ego-ideal - that we already find in it, as one might say the semantic trace of what has happened in terms of a sliding, in terms of an evolution of the function given to this term when people wanted to employ it to mark what the analyst became for the analysand.

Very early on it was said: "The analyst takes for the analysand the place of his ego-ideal". This is true or it is false, it is

true in the sense that it happens, it happens easily, I could even say further, I will give you an example later, how convenient it is, the degree to which in a word a subject can establish there positions which are both strong and comfortable and quite of the nature of what we call resistances, it is perhaps truer still than is marked by the occasional and obvious position that certain analyses run foul of. That does not at all mean that this exhausts the question, nor of course, in a word, that the analyst can in any way be satisfied with it - I mean be satisfied with it within the analysis of the subject - that he can in other words push the analysis to its term without dislodging the subject from this position that the subject takes (5) up in so far as he gives him the position of ego-ideal. Therefore that even poses the question of what this truth shows what should be the case in the future. Namely whether, at the end and after the analysis of the transference, the analyst should be elsewhere, but where? This is what has never been said.

Because, when all is said and done, what is revealed by the article that I spoke to you about above is something which, at the moment that it comes out, is not even that much of a research position - 1933 compared to the 20's which gave rise to the "turning point" of analytic technique, as everyone puts it, they had time all the same to reflect on it and to be clear about it.

There is in this article that I cannot go through in all its details with you, but to which I would ask you to refer - it is moreover something that we will speak about again, we are not going to stop at that - all the more since what I wanted to tell you is the following which refers to the English text and that is why it is that one I have with me here, even though the German text is more lively, but we are not considering the articulations of the German text.... We are at the level of the semantic sliding which expresses what has happened, in effect, at the level of an internal critique addressed to the analyst in so far as he the analyst, sole master on board, is put face to face with his action, namely for him the deepening, the exorcism, the extracting from oneself that is necessary for him to have a correct perception of his own proper relationship to this function of the ego-ideal, of the Ideal du Moi, in so far as for him, as analyst, and consequently in a particularly necessary fashion, it is sustained within what I called the analytic crowd.

Because if he does not do it, what is produced - and what has effectively been produced - namely through a sliding, a sliding of meaning which is not at this level a sliding which can in any way be perceived of as semi-exterior to the subject, in a word as an error, a sliding which implicates him profoundly, subjectively and which is testified to by what happens in the theory. Namely that if, in 1933, an article on "Transference and love" is made to pivot entirely around a thematic which is properly that of the ego-ideal and without any kind of ambiguity, twenty or twenty-five years afterwards, what is in question, in a fashion, I am saying, theorised in articles which say it openly concerning the (6) relationships of the analysand and the analyst, are the

relationships of the analysand in so far as the analyst has an ego which can be called ideal, but in a sense quite different that of the ego-ideal as well as to that of the concrete meaning to which I alluded above and which you can give - I will come back to it and illustrate all of this - to the function of the ideal ego. The ego of the analyst is an ideal ego, as I might say, which is realised, and an ideal ego in the same sense as one says that a car is an ideal car: it is not an ideal of the car, nor the dream of the car when it is all alone in the garage, it is a really good and solid car. This is the meaning that is finally taken by... - if it were only that, of course, a literary thing, a certain fashion of articulating that the analyst has to intervene as someone who knows a little bit more about it than the analysand, it would all be simply of the order of platitude, would perhaps not have such import. But the fact is that it expresses something quite different, it expresses a veritable subjective implication of the analyst in this very sliding of the meaning of this couple of signifiers: ego and ideal. We have no reason at all to be surprised at an effect of this order, it is only a patching together. It is only the final term of something whose source is much more constitutive of this adventure than simply this local, almost caricatural point, which as you know is the one that we confront all the time, that is all we are here for.

Where has all this come from? From the "turning point" of 1920. Around what does the turning point of 1920 turn? Around the fact that - the people of the time said it, the heroes of the first analytic generation - interpretation no longer functioned as it had functioned, the atmosphere no longer allows it to function, to succeed. And why? This did not surprise Freud, he had said it a long time before. One could highlight the one of his texts where he says, very early on, in the Technical papers: "Let us take advantage of the openness of the unconscious because it will soon have found some other trick".

What can that mean for us who want nevertheless to discover from this experience - which has involved a sliding on our part also - some reference points? I mean that the effect of a discourse - I am talking about that of the first analytic generation - which, while dealing with the effect of a discourse, the unconscious, does not know that this is what is in question, because, even though it was there - since the Traumdeutung - as I teach you to (7) recognise, to spell out, to see that what is constantly in question under the term mechanisms of the unconscious is nothing but the effect of discourse.... it is indeed this, the effect of a discourse which, dealing with the effect of a discourse which, the unconscious, does not know it, necessarily culminates at a new crystallisation of the these effects of the unconscious which makes this discourse opaque. A new crystallisation, what does that mean? That means the effects that we note, namely that it no longer has the same effect on patients when they are given certain glimpses, certain keys, when certain signifiers are manipulated before them.

But, pay careful attention to this, the subjective structures

which correspond to this new crystallisation, do not need, for their part, to be new. Namely these registers, these degrees of alienation, as I might say, that we can specify, qualify in the subject under the terms for example of ideal ego, ego-ideal, it is like stationary waves - whatever is happening - these effects which repulse, immunise, mithridatize the subject with respect to a certain discourse, which prevents it from being the one which can continue to function when it is a question of leading him where we ought to lead him, namely to his desire. It changes nothing about the nodal points where he, as subject, is going to recognise himself, establish himself. And this is what Freud notes at this turning point.

If Freud tries to define what these stationary points, these fixed waves are in the subjective constitution, it is because this is what appears very remarkably to him, to be a constant, but it is not in order to consecrate them that he occupies himself with them and articulates them, it is to remove them as obstacles. It is not in order to establish, as a type of irreducible inertia, the supposedly synthesising Ich function of the ego, even when he speaks about it, puts it in the foreground, and it is nevertheless in this way that this was subsequently interpreted. It is to the extent that precisely we have to reconsider that as the artefacts of the self-establishment of the subject in his relationship to the signifier on the one hand, to reality on the other. It is in order to open up a new chapter of analytic action.

It is as a crowd organised by the analytic ego-ideal as it has effectively developed under the form of a certain number of mirages, in the forefront of which is the one for example which is put into the term of strong ego, so often wrongly implied at points where one believes one recognises it... . I am attempting here to do something of which one could say, with all the (8) reservations that this implies, say that it is an effort of analysis in the proper sense of the term, that to reverse the coupling of terms which form the title of Freud's article, to which I referred above, one of the aspects of my seminar could be called Ich-Psychologie und Massenanalyse. It is in so far as there has come, there has been promoted to the forefront of analytic theory the Ich-Psychologie which has acted as a jam, which has acted as a dam, which has created an inertia, for more than a decade, to any restarting of analytic efficacy, it is in so far as things are at that point that it is appropriate to interpellate the analytic community as such by allowing each one to look at what has come to alter the analytic purity of his position vis-a-vis the one for whom he is the guarantor, his analysand, in so far as he himself is inscribed, is determined by the effects which result from the analytic mass, I mean the mass of analysts, in the present state of their constitution and their discourse.

Let no one be in any way deceived about what I am in the process of saying, it is a question here of something which is not of the order of a historical accident, the accent being put on the accident. We are in the presence of a difficulty, of an impasse

which results from what you have heard me earlier putting at the high point of what I was expressing: analytic action.

If there is a place where the term action - for some time, in our modern epoch, put in question by philosophers - can be reinterrogated in a fashion which may perhaps be decisive, it is, however paradoxical this affirmation may appear, at the level of the one who may be thought to be the one who most abstains from it, namely the analyst.

On several occasions, these last years in my seminar, remember, in connection with the obsessional and his style of performance, indeed of exploit - and you will rediscover it in the written form that I gave to my Royaumont report. In its definitive form, I put the accent on what our very particular experience of action as acting out, in the treatment, ought to allow us to introduce as a new, original aspect to all thematic reflection about action. If there is something that the analyst can stand up and say, it is that action as such, human action, if you wish, is always implicated in the attempt, in the temptation to respond to the unconscious. And I propose to whoever is occupied in any way whatsoever with what merits the name of action, to the (9) historian specifically in so far as he does not renounce this thing which many fashions of formulating make it difficult to make up our mind about, namely the meaning of history, I propose to him to take up again in function of such a formulation the question of what we cannot all the same eliminate from the text of history, namely that its meaning does not drag us along purely and simply like the famous dead dog, but that in history there occur actions.

But the action that we have to deal with is analytic action. And as regards it, it cannot all the same be contested that it is an attempt to respond to the unconscious. And it cannot be contested either that in our subject what happens, what our experience habituates us to, this thing that makes an analyst, what ensures that we know what we are saying, even when we do not know very well how to say it, when we say: "That is an acting out...", in a subject in analysis. It is the most general formula that one can give of it and it is important to give the most general formula. Because here, if one gives particular formulae, the meaning of things is obscured, if one says: "It is a relapse of the subject" for example or if one says: "It is an effect of our stupidities" one draws a veil over what is in question, naturally it can be that, to the highest degree, these are particular cases of these definitions that I am proposing concerning acting out. The fact is that, because the analytic action is an attempt, is a temptation also in its way of responding to the unconscious, acting out is this type of action through which at one or other moment of the treatment, no doubt in so far as he is very specially solicited - it is perhaps through our stupidity, it may be through his, but this is secondary, it does not matter - the subject requires a more exact response.

Every action, acting out or not, analytic action or not, has a

certain relationship to the opacity of the repressed and the most original action to the most original repressed, to the Urverdrangt. And then we ought also.... this is the importance of the notion of Urverdrangt - which is in Freud and which can appear there as opaque, that is why I am trying to give it a meaning for you - it depends on something which is the same thing as what, in a certain fashion, I tried the last time to articulate for you when I told you that we cannot help engaging ourselves in the most original Versagung, it is the same thing (10) which is expressed on the theoretical plane in the following formula that, despite all appearances, there is no metalanguage.

There can be a metalanguage on the blackboard, when I am writing little signs,  $a, b, x^{\text{Kappa}}$ , it works, it is all right and it functions, it is mathematics. But as regards what is called the word, namely that a subject engages himself - in language one can no doubt speak about the word, and you see that I am in the process of doing so, but in doing so all the effects of the word are engaged, and this is why you are told that at the level of the word there is no metalanguage or, if you wish, that there is no metadiscourse. There is no action, to conclude, which definitively transcends the effects of the repressed. Perhaps, if there is one in the final analysis, at the very most it is the one in which the subject as such dissolves, is eclipsed, and disappears. It is an action about which nothing can be said. It is, if you wish, the horizon of this action which gives its structure to my notation of the phantasy. And my little notation, this is why it is algebraic, why it can only be written with chalk on the blackboard, that the notation of the phantasy is  $24o$ , which one can read,  $O$ . desire of little  $o$ , the object of desire. You will see that all of this will lead us perhaps all the same to perceive in a more precise fashion the essential necessity there is for us not to forget this place unsayable precisely in as much as the subject disintegrates there, that the algebraic notation alone can preserve in the formula that I give you of phantasy.

In this article, "Transference and love", by the already mentioned Jekels and Bergler, they said then in 1933, while they were still in the Vienna Society.... There is a brilliant clinical intuition which gives, as is usually the case, its weight, its value to this article, this throwing into relief, this tone which ensures that this makes of it an article belonging to what one can call the first generation. So that now still, what pleases us in an article, is when it contributes something like that. This intuition, is that there is a relationship, a close relationship between the term of the present-day romantic ideal love, and guilt (culpa-bilite).

Jekels and Bergler tell us, contrary to the pastoral scenes in which love is bathed in beatitude: "Just observe what you see, it is not simply that love is often guilty, but that one loves in order to escape guilt". That, obviously, is not the sort of (11) thing that is said every day. All the same, it is a little bit embarrassing for people who do not like Claudel, for me it is of the same order when we are told things like that. If one

loves, in short, it is because there is still somewhere the shadow of the one that a very funny woman with whom we were travelling in Italy called il vecchio con la barba, the one you can see everywhere among the primitives. Well then, there is very well sustained this thesis that, at bottom, love is the need to be loved by whoever might make you guilty. And precisely, if one is loved by her or by him, it feels much better.

It is one of these analytic glimpses that I would qualify as being precisely of the order of these truths of good alloy, which are also naturally of bad, because it is an alloy, in other words an alloying that it is not really distinguished, that it is a clinical truth, but it is as such, as I might say, a collaborator-type truth, there is here a kind of collapsing of a certain articulation. It is not a taste for the romantic that makes me want to separate out again these two metals, love and guilt on this occasion, it is that the importance of our discoveries reposes entirely on these piling-up effects of the symbolic in the real, in the reality as they say, with which ceaselessly we have to deal. And it is with this that we progress, that we show the efficacious mainsprings, those with which we have to deal.

And it is quite clear, certain that if guilt is not always and immediately involved in the unleashing, in the origins of a love, in the lightning flash, as I might put it, of falling in love, of love at first sight, it remains no less certain that even in unions inaugurated under such poetic auspices, with time it happens that there comes to be applied, to be centred on the beloved object all the effects of an active censorship. It is not simply that around him there come to be regrouped the whole system of prohibitions, but moreover that it is to him that one comes in this behaviour-function, so constitutive of human behaviour, which is called asking permission.

The role, I am not saying of the ego-ideal, but well and truly of the super-ego, as such and in the most opaque and most upsetting form, the incidence of the superego in very authentic forms, in the best quality forms of what is called the loving relationship, is something which it not at all to be neglected.

(12) And then, there is, on the one hand, this intuition in the article of our friends Jekels and Bergler, and then on the other there is a partial utilisation and truly one that is as brutal as a rhinoceros of what Freud contributed in terms of economic glimpses under the register of narcissism.

The idea that the whole finality of the libidinal equation aims in the last resort at the restoration of a primitive integrity, at the reintegration of all that is, if I remember rightly, Abtrennung, everything that the subject had been led at a certain moment by experience to consider as separated from him, this theoretical notion, itself, is extremely precarious because it is applied in every register and at every level. The question of the function that it plays at the time of "An introduction to narcissism", in the thought of Freud, is a question.... It is a

question of knowing whether we can trust it, of knowing whether, as the authors say in clear terms - because they knew the whole compass of the aporias of a position in that generation when people were not formed on the assembly line - one can formulate this under the name of "The miracle of object cathexis". And, in effect, in such a perspective, it is a miracle. If the subject is truly, at the libidinal level, constituted in such a fashion that his goal and his aim are to be satisfied from an entirely narcissistic position, well then, how does he not manage in general and on the whole to remain in it? In a word, that if anything can make this monad throb to the slightest degree in the sense of a reaction, one can very well conceive theoretically that his whole goal is all the same to return to this starting position. It is very difficult to see what could condition this enormous detour which, at the very least, constitutes all the same a complex and rich structuration which is the one that we have to deal with in the facts.

And this indeed is what is in question and what the authors try to respond to throughout this article. To do that they engage, rather servilely I must say, on the paths opened by Freud, which are the following, that the mainspring of this complexification of this structure of the subject - which you see to be that which today gives its equilibrium, its unique theme to what I am developing for you - this complexification of the subject, namely the coming into play of the ego-ideal, Freud, in the "Introduction to narcissism", indicates to us to be the artifice through which the subject is going to be able to maintain his ideal, let us say to be brief because it is late, of omnipotence.

(13) In this inaugural text of Freud's, especially if one reads it, this comes, this happens and then it already sufficiently illuminates things at that particular moment for us not to demand any more of him. It is quite clear that, since Freud's thought has gone a certain distance since then, our authors find themselves confronted with a rather serious complexification of this first differentiation, that they have to face up to the distance, the difference between it and an ego-ideal which would be when all is said and done entirely constructed precisely to restore to the subject - you see in what sense - the benefits of love. The ego-ideal, is this something which, because it itself originated in the first lesions of narcissism, becomes retained when it is introjected. This moreover is what Freud explains to us. For the super-ego, it will be seen that it is all the same necessary to admit that there must be another mechanism, because even though it is introjected, the super-ego does not become for all that much more *bénéficient*. And I will stop there, I will take it up again.

What the authors are necessarily led to, is to have recourse to a whole dialectic of Eros and Thanatos which is no small thing at that time. They really make a lot of it and it is even rather nicely done, consult this article, you will get your money's worth.

But before leaving you, I would like all the same to suggest to



you something lively and amusing, intended to give you an idea of what a more exact introduction to the function of narcissism allows, I believe, to better articulate in a way that all analytic practice has confirmed ever since these notions were introduced.

Ideal ego and ego-ideal have of course the closest relationship with certain exigencies of the preservation of narcissism. But what I proposed to you subsequently, following on the track of my first approach to a necessary modification of analytic theory as it was engaging itself along the path on which I showed you above the ego was being used, is indeed this approach which is called, in what I teach you or taught you, the mirror stage. What are the its consequences as regards this economy of the ideal ego, of the ego-ideal and of their relationship to the preservation of narcissism.

Well then, because it is late, I will illustrate it for you in a way that I hope you will find amusing. I spoke above about a car, let us try to see what the ideal ego is. The ideal (14) ego, is the son and heir at the wheel of his little sports' car. And with that he is going to show you a bit of the countryside. He is going to play the smart Alec. He is going to indulge his taste for taking risks, which is not a bad thing, his love of sport, as they say. And everything is going to consist in knowing what meaning he gives to this word sport, whether sport cannot also be defying the rules, I am not simply saying the rules of the road, but also those of safety. In any case, this indeed is the register in which he will have to show himself or not show himself and namely how he is going to show himself as being better than the others, even if this consists in saying that they are going a bit far. That is what the ideal ego is.

I am only opening a side door - because what I have to say, is the relationship to the ego-ideal - a side door to the fact that he does not leave the ideal ego alone and without object, because after all if on one or other occasion - not on all - he indulges in these risky exercises, it is for what? To catch a girl. Is it as much in order to catch a girl as for the way of catching a girl? The desire is less important here perhaps than the way of satisfying it. And this indeed is the reason why, as we know, the girl may be quite incidental, or even be absent. In a word, from this angle which is the one at which this ideal ego comes to take its place in the phantasy, we see better, more easily than elsewhere what regulates the pitch of the elements of the phantasy, and that there must be something here, between the two terms, which slides for one of the two to be so easily elided. This term which slides is one we know. No need here to note it with any more commentary, it is the small Q>, the imaginary phallus, and what is in question, is indeed something which is being put to the test.

What is the ego-ideal? The ego-ideal which has the closest relationship with this operation and this function of the ideal ego is well and truly constituted by the fact that at the

beginning as I told you, if he has his little sports' car, it is because he is the son and heir and he is a Daddy's boy and that in order, to change register, if Marie-Chantal, as you know, joins the Communist party, it is to "get up Daddy's nose". As regards whether she does not overlook in this function her own identification to what it is a question of obtaining in "getting up Daddy's nose", is still another side door that we will avoid pushing. But let us say clearly that one and the other, Marie-Chantal and Daddy's boy at the wheel of his little car, (15) would be quite simply enveloped in this organised world like that by the father if there were not precisely the signifier father, which makes it permissible, as I might say, to extricate oneself from it in order to imagine oneself, and even to succeed in getting up his nose. Which is what is expressed by saying that he or she introjects on this occasion the paternal image.

Is this not also to say that it is the instrument thanks to which the two personages, masculine and feminine can extroject themselves for their part from the objective situation? Introjection, in short, is that, to organise oneself subjectively in such a way that the father, in effect, under the form of the not too cross ego-ideal, should be a signifier from which the little person, male or female, comes to contemplate his or herself without too much disadvantage at the wheel of their little car or waving their Communist Party card. In short, if from this introjected signifier the subject falls under a judgement which disapproves of him, he takes on from that the dimension of outcast which, as everyone knows, is not so disadvantageous from a narcissistic point of view.

But then, there results from this that we cannot talk so simply about the function of the ego-ideal as realising in a sort of massive fashion the coalescence of benevolent authority and of what is narcissistic benefit as if it were purely and simply inherent to a single effect at the same point.

And in a word, what I am trying to articulate for you with my little schema from another time - which I will not do again because I do not have the time, but which is still present, I imagine, in a certain number of memories - which is that of the illusion of the inverted vase in so far as it is from one point only that one can see emerging around the flowers of desire this real image, let us notice, of the vase produced through the intermediary of the reflection of a spherical mirror, in other words that the particular structure of the human being in terms of the hypertrophy of his ego seems to be linked to his prematurity.

The necessary distinction between the locus where there is produced the narcissistic benefit and the locus where the ego-ideal functions forces us to interrogate in a different way the relationship of both one and the other to the function of love - this relationship to the function of love which should not be introduced, and less than ever at the level we are at in the analysis of transference, in a confused fashion.

(16) Allow me again, to end, to tell you about the case of a patient. Let us say that she takes more than her freedom with the rights, if not the duties of the conjugal bond and that, by God, when she has a liaison, she knows how to push its consequences up to the most extreme point of what a certain social limit, that of her husband's self-respect, commands her to respect. Let us say that she is someone, in a word, who knows admirably well how to hold and deploy the positions of her desire. And I would prefer to say that with time she has been able, within her family, I mean as regards her husband and her lovable offspring, to maintain quite intact the field of force of exigencies strictly centred on her own libidinal needs. When Fried speak to us somewhere, if I remember rightly about the neue morale, which means the morality of noodles in what concerns women, namely the satisfactions required, you must not believe that this always fails. There are women who succeed extremely well, except for the fact that she, for her part has all the same need of an analysis.

What was it that for a whole period of time I was realising for her? The authors of this article will give us the response. I was indeed her ego-ideal in so far as I was indeed the ideal point where order is maintained, and in a fashion all the more required in that it is starting from there that all the disorder is possible. In short, it was not a question at that epoch of her analyst being an immoral person. If I had been stupid enough to approve one or other of her excesses, one would have had to see what would have resulted from it. Much more, what she was able to glimpse about one or other atypical feature of my own familial structure or about the principles in which I brought up those who were under my control did not pass without opening up for her all the depths of an abyss quickly closed up again.

You must not believe that it is so necessary for the analyst effectively to supply, thank God, all the ideal images that are formed about his person. Simply, she signalled to me on each occasion all the things that, in my regard, she wanted to know nothing about. The only really important thing, is the guarantee that she had, you can certainly believe me, that as regards her own person I would be unbending.

What does all this exigency for moral conformity mean? The mainstream moralists have, as you may well imagine, the reply quite naturally that this person in order to be leading such a full life must not exactly be from a working class environment. (17) And therefore, the political moralist will tell you that what it is a question of preserving, is above all a lid on the questions that one might pose concerning the legitimacy of social privilege. And this all the more because, as you may well imagine, she was the tiniest bit progressive.

Well then, as you see, in considering the true dynamic of forces, it is here that the analyst has his little word to say. The open abysses, one might deal with them as pertaining to what concerns the perfect conformity of ideals and the reality of the analyst. But I think that the true thing, the one which ought

to be maintained in any case beyond any argument, is that she had the prettiest breasts in town, which as you may well imagine, is something that the girls selling brassieres never deny!

Seminar 24: Wednesday 7 June 1961

We are going to continue our account in order to formulate our goal, perhaps a daring one, of this year, to formulate what the analyst should truly be in order to respond to the transference, which also henceforth implies the question of knowing what he ought to be, what he can be, and this is why I have qualified this question as "daring".

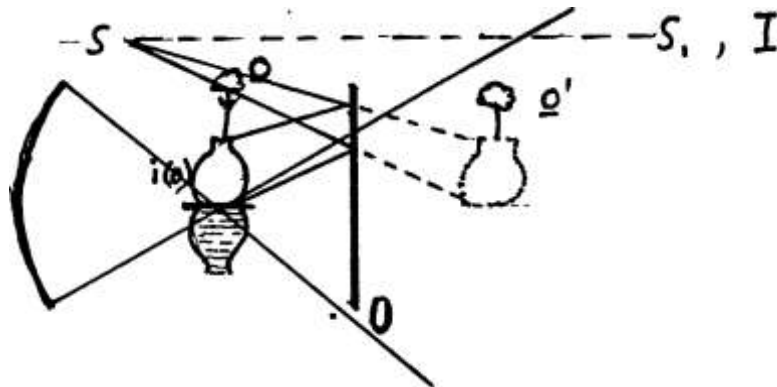
You saw it being delineated the last time, in connection with the reference that I gave you in connection with the article by Jekels and Bergler, in Imago, in 1934, namely a year after they made this communication at the Viennese Society, that we were led to pose the question in terms of the function of narcissism involved in every possible libidinal cathexis. You know on this subject of narcissism what authorises us to consider this domain as already opened up, amply dusted down in a fashion that recalls the specificity of the position which is ours: I mean the one that I have taught you here in so far as it is directly involved and we are going to see the way in which it enlarges, it generalises the one which is habitually given or accepted in analytic writings. I mean moreover that when generalised, it allows there to be perceived certain traps included in the particularity of the position ordinarily put forward, articulated by the analysts.

I indicated to you the last time, in connection with Übertragung und Liebe, that one could find in it what were therefore, if not all, at least certain of the impasses that the theory of narcissism risks bringing for those who articulate them. One could say that the whole work of a Balint turns entirely around the question of the so called primordial autoeroticism and the fashion in which it is compatible both with observed facts and (2) with the necessary development applied to the field of analytic experience.

That is why, as a support, I have just drawn for you on the blackboard this little schema that is not new, that you will in any case find much more carefully done, perfected, in the next number of La Psychanalyse.

I did not want to draw all its details for you here - I mean the details which recall its pertinence in the optical domain - as much because I am not particularly inclined to tire myself as because I believe that on the whole it would have made this schema more confused, simply I remind you of this old business

described as the illusion, in classical experiments of fundamental physics, of the inverted bouquet by means of which there is made to appear, thanks to the operation of the spherical mirror placed behind a certain apparatus, the real, I underline it, image - I mean that it is not a virtual image seen through space, deployed through a mirror - which arises, provided certain lighting conditions are respected, all around, with sufficient precision, above a support, a bouquet which in reality is found hidden in the underpinnings of this support. These are artifices which are moreover employed in all sorts of tricks that conjurers present from time to time. One could present in the same way something quite other than a bouquet.



Here, it is the vase itself, for reasons of presentation and of metaphorical utilisation, that we make use of, a vase which is (3) here, under this flesh and blood support, with its authentic pottery. This vase would appear in the form of a real image, on condition that the observer's eye is sufficiently far away and on the other hand in the field, naturally, of a cone which represents a field determined by the opposition of lines which join the edges of the spherical mirror to the focus of this mirror, the point at which there can be produced this illusion. If the eye is sufficiently far away, it will follow that tiny displacements will not make the image itself noticeably vacillate and will also allow these tiny displacements, to be appreciated as something whose contours, in short, are maintained alone with the possibility of visual projection in space. It will not be a flat image, but one which will give the impression of a certain volume.

This then is used for what? To construct an apparatus which, for its part, has a metaphorical value and which is founded on the fact that, if we suppose that the eye of the observer is linked, through topological, spatial conditions by being in some way included in the spatial field which is around the point that the production of this illusion is possible, if it fulfils these conditions, it will nevertheless perceive this illusion while being at a point which makes it impossible for him to see it. There is an artificial way to arrange that, which is to place somewhere a plane mirror which we call big O - because of the metaphorical utilisation that we will subsequently give it - in which he can see the same illusion being produced in a reflected fashion under the form of a virtual image of this real image. In other words, he sees being produced there something which is,

in short, in the reflected form of a virtual image, the same illusion which would be produced for him if he placed himself in real space, namely at a point symmetrical with respect to the mirror to the one he occupies, and looked at what was happening at the focus of the spherical mirror, namely the point where there is produced the illusion formed by the real image of the vase.

And, in the same way as in the classical experiment, in so far as it is the illusion of the bouquet that is in question - the vase has its usefulness in this sense that it is this which allows the eye to fix itself, to accommodate itself in such a fashion that the real image appears to it in space - inversely we might suppose the existence of a real bouquet that the real image of the vase would come to surround at its base.

(4) We call this mirror 0, we call the real image of the vase  $i(o)$ , we call the flowers  $o$ . And you are going to see the way this is going to be of use to us for the explanations that we have to give concerning the implications of the function of narcissism, in so far as the ego-ideal plays in it the role of a mainspring that Freud's original text on "An introduction to narcissism" introduced and which is the one which was so much taken into account when we were told that the mainspring of the ego-ideal is moreover the pivotal point, the major point of this sort of identification which is supposed to intervene as fundamental in the production of the phenomenon of transference.

This ego-ideal, for example in the article in question, which is really not chosen at random - as I told you, the other day - which is chosen on the contrary as altogether exemplary, significant, well articulated and representing, at the date that it was written, the notion of the ego-ideal as it had been created and generalised in the analytic milieu .... therefore, what idea do the authors form of it when they begin to elaborate this function of the ego-ideal which is a great novelty because of its topographical function in the conception of analysis? Consult in a cursory fashion the clinical works, the therapeutic accounts or the case discussions, that is enough to grasp the idea the authors had of it at that time. One encounters difficulties both in applying it .... And here in part at least is what they elaborate. If one reads them with sufficient attention, it emerges that, in order to see what the efficacy of the ego-ideal is, in so far as it intervenes in the function of transference, they are going to consider this ego-ideal, as a field organised in a certain fashion inside the subject. The notion of inside being an altogether capital topological function in analytic thinking - even indeed introjection which refers to it - it is therefore an organised field which is considered rather naively in a way, in the measure that distinctions are not at all made at that time between the symbolic, the imaginary and the real.

This state of imprecision, of indistinction that is presented in the topological notions, we are indeed forced to say that in general we must represent it in a spatial or quasi-spatial way, let us say - the thing is not highlighted, but it is implied in

the way we are told about it - like a surface or like a volume, in one or other case, as a form of something which, (5) because it is organised in the image of something else, is presented as giving the support, the foundation to the idea of identification. In short, within a certain topographical field, it is a differentiation produced by the particular operation called identification.

It is about functions, identified forms that the authors are going to pose themselves questions. What is to be made of them in order that they should be able in short to fulfil their economic function? We are not required, because it is not our project nor our object today - it would take us too far afield - to give an account of what necessitates for the authors the solution that they are going to adopt which, at the moment that it emerges here, is rather new. It has not yet been - as you will see - completely popularised, it is put forward here perhaps for the first time. In any case, it is naturally only a matter of promoting it in an accentuated fashion, because in effect, in certain remarks of Freud's text to which they refer, lateral remarks in the context from which they are borrowed, there are the beginnings of a solution.

To say what is in question, it is the supposition that the property of this field is to be invested with a neutral energy, which means the introduction into the analytic dynamic of a neutral energy, namely, at the point of the evolution of the theory that we are at, of an energy which distinguishes itself - it cannot mean anything else: as being neither one thing nor the other, which is what neutral means - from properly libidinal energy in so far as Freud's second topography obliged him to introduce the notion of an energy distinct from libido in the Todestrieb, the death instinct and into the function, from then on pinpointed by the analysts under the name of Thanatos - which certainly does not contribute to the clarification of the notion - and, in a contrary manipulation, to couple the terms Eros and Thanatos. It is, in any case, under these terms that the new dialectic of libidinal cathexis is handled by the authors in question. Eros and Thanatos are discussed here as two altogether primordial fates behind the whole mechanics and dialectics of analysis. And the destiny, the purpose, what is at stake in this neutralised field, here is what is going to be developed for us in this article, the vicissitude - das Schicksal, to recall the term used by Freud about the drive and to explain to us how we can imagine it, conceive of it.

(6) In order to conceive of this field, with the economic function that we will be led to reserve for it to render it usable both in its proper function as ego-ideal and in the fact that it is in the place of this ego-ideal that the analyst will be called on to function, this is what the authors are led to imagine. Here we are at the highest, the most developed stage of metapsychology. They are led to conceive the following: that the concrete origins of the ego-ideal and this in so far above all as they are unable to separate them, as it is legitimate to do, from those of the super-ego, which are distinct and nevertheless, in all the theory, linked together - they can only



- and after all we have nothing to envy them, as I might say, with what the developments of Kleinian theory have since brought us - they can only conceive of its origins in the form of a creation of Thanatos.

In effect, it is quite certain that, if one begins from the notion of an original perfect narcissism in what concerns libidinal cathexis, if one conceives that everything which is of the order of the primordial object is primordially included by the subject in this narcissistic sphere, in this primitive monad of jouissance to which the baby is identified in a rather rash way, it is difficult to see what might be involved in a subjective escape from this primitive monadism. The authors, in any case, have no hesitation themselves in considering this deduction to be impossible. Now, if in this monad there is also included the devastating power of Thanatos, it is perhaps here that we can consider there to be the source of something which obliges the subject - if one can express it briefly in this way - to emerge from his self-envelopment.

In short, the authors have no hesitation - I am not taking responsibility for this, I am commenting on them and I would ask you to refer to the text in order to see that it is indeed the way I am presenting it - in attributing to Thanatos as such the creation of the object. They are moreover struck enough by it themselves to introduce, at the end of their explanations, in the last pages of the article, a sort of humorous little question: "However apt it might be, we are not malicious enough to state that object relationship in the service of the discharge of aggression is the most respectable of which the human being is capable."

(7) In truth, even though they question themselves in this way in order to allow a certain tempering, to give a certain touch of humour to what they themselves have developed, there is nothing after all to correct, in effect, this quite necessary framework, this feature, if one has to follow the path of these authors. I am pointing this out to you in passing. For the moment moreover, it is not so much this that creates problems for us, but the following which is conceivable at least in a localised, dynamic way, as marking a significant moment in early infantile experiences: it is in effect, that it is indeed perhaps in a burst, in a moment of aggression that there is situated the differentiation, if not of every object, in any case of a highly significant object. Then this object, once the conflict has broken out, it is the fact that it may afterwards be introjected to a degree that will give it its price and its value. Moreover we rediscover here Freud's classic and original schema. It is from this introjection of an imperative, prohibitive, essentially conflictual object - Freud always tells us - it is in the measure in effect that this object - the father for example, on a particular occasion, in a first summary and rough schématisation of the Oedipus complex - it is in so far as this object has been interiorised that it will constitute this super-ego which constitutes on the whole a progress, a beneficent action from the libidinal point of view because, since it is reintrojected, it reenters - this is a first Freudian thematic - into the sphere

which, in short, if only because it is interior, from this fact alone, is sufficiently narcissised to be for the subject the object of libidinal cathexis.

It is easier to make oneself loved by the ego-ideal than by what was for a moment its original, the object. It remains nonetheless that, however introjected it may be, it continues to constitute an inconvenient agency. And it is indeed this character of ambiguity which leads the authors to introduce this thematic of a neutral field of cathexis, a field of struggle which will in turn be occupied, then evacuated in order to be reoccupied by one of the two terms whose Manicheism we must admit embarrasses us a little, those of Eros and Thanatos.

And it would be in particular in a second moment - or more exactly it is in experiencing the need to punctuate it as a second moment - that the authors are going to realise what Freud had from the first introduced, namely the possible function of the ego-ideal in Verliebtheit, as well as in hypnosis. As you (8) know "Being in love and hypnosis", is the title of one of the articles that Freud wrote in which he analysed Massenpsychologie. It is in so far as this ego-ideal, this Ideal du moi already constituted, introjected, can be reprojected onto an object - reprojected, let us underline here once again how the fact of not distinguishing, in the classical theory, the different registers of the symbolic, the imaginary and real ensures that these comings and goings of introjection and projection, which are after all, not obscure, but arbitrary, suspended, gratuitous, given over to a necessity which can only be explained in terms of the most absolute contingency...it is in so far as this ego-ideal can be reprojected onto an object that, if this object happens to be favourable to you, to regard you propitiously, it will be for you this object of loving cathexis to the highest degree in so far as here the description of the phenomenology of Verliebtheit is introduced by Freud at a level such as to make possible its almost total ambiguity with the effect of hypnosis.

The authors clearly understand that following on this second projection, there is nothing to stop us - in any case nothing stops them - from implying a second reintroduction which means that in certain more or less extreme states, among which they have no hesitation in putting at the limit manic states, the ego-ideal itself, even if it is carried away by the enthusiasm of the outpouring of love implied in the second phase, in the second projection, the ego-ideal can become for the subject completely identical, playing the same function as that established in the relationship of total dependency of Verliebtheit. With respect to an object, the ego-ideal can itself become something equivalent to what is called for in love, to what can give its full satisfaction to the "wanting to be loved", to the geliebt werden wollen.

I think that it is not at all evidence of an exaggerated requirement in conceptual matters to feel that, if these descriptions, especially when they are illustrated, carry with them certain glimmers of perspectives, flashes of which we

rediscover in clinical work, we cannot, in many respects, be completely satisfied with them.

In order to punctuate immediately what I can believe I can say is articulated in a more elaborated fashion by a schema like that of (9) the little montage which has not, like any other description of this kind, like those of the topographical order that Freud himself constructed, of course, any kind, not alone of pretention, but even of possibility of representing anything whatsoever of the organic order, let it be well understood that we are not one of those who, as one nevertheless sees being written, imagine, that with a suitable surgical operation, a lobotomy, one removes part of the super-ego with a little spoon. There are people who believe that, who have written, that one of the effects of lobotomy was, that one removed the super-ego, that one put it to one side on a plate, that is not what is in question. Let us observe what is articulated by the functioning implied in this little apparatus. It is not for nothing that it reintroduces a metaphor of an optical kind, there is certainly a reason for that which is not simply one of convenience: it is structural.

It is indeed in so far as that which is of the order of the mirror goes much further than the model as regards the properly imaginary mainspring, that here the mirror intervenes. But beware, it is obviously a schema a little bit more elaborated than that of the concrete experience which occurs in front of the mirror.

In effect something happens for the child in front of a real surface which effectively plays the role of mirror. This mirror, usually a plane mirror, a polished surface, is not to be confused with what is represented here as a plane mirror. The plane mirror which is here has a different function. This schema has the value of introducing the function of the big Other - whose figure, under the form of 0, is put here at the level of the apparatus of the plane mirror - of introducing the function of the big Other in so far as it must be implicated in these elaborations of narcissism respectively connoted, which must be connoted in a different fashion as ego-ideal and as ideal ego.

In order not to give you a description of this which might in a way be dry, which, at the same time would run the risk of appearing what it is not, namely arbitrary, I will therefore have to give it first of all under the form of a commentary which involves the authors to which we are referring, in so far as they were guided, obligated by the need to face up to a problem of thinking, of mapping out. It is certainly not in this (10) connotation in order to accentuate the negative effects but much more rather - it is always more interesting - what is positive in it.

Let us observe therefore that according to them, the object is supposed to be created by what? Properly speaking by the destructive instinct, Destruktionstrieb, Thanatos, as they call it, let us say, why not, hatred. Let us follow them. If it is true that things are that way, how can we conceive of it? If it

is the need for destruction which creates the object, is it further necessary that there should remain something of the object after the destructive effect, it is not at all unthinkable. Not alone is it not unthinkable, but we indeed rediscover here what we ourselves elaborate in a different manner at the level of what we call the field of the imaginary and the effects of the imaginary. Because, as one might say, what remains, what survives of the object after this libidinal effect, this destructive Trieb, after the properly thanatogenic effect which is thus implied, is precisely what eternalises the object under the aspect of a form, it is what fixes it forever as a type in the imaginary.

In the image, there is precisely something which transcends the movement, the changeable in life, in this sense that it survives it. It is in effect one of the first steps of art, for the antique nous, in so far as in statuary the mortal is eternalised.

It is moreover, as we know in a certain way, in our elaboration of the mirror, the function which is fulfilled by the image of the subject in so far as something is suddenly proposed to him in which he does not simply receive the field of something in which he recognises himself, but of something which already presents itself as an Urbild-Ideal, as something which will always be, something which subsists of itself, as something before which he essentially experiences his own fissures as a premature being, as a being who experiences himself as not yet even - at the moment that the image comes to his perception - sufficiently coordinated to respond to this image in its totality.

It is very striking to see the little child - sometimes still enclosed in one of these little contraptions with which he begins to try to make the first attempts to walk, and where again even the gesture of taking the arm or the hand, things which are marked by a certain assymetrical, inappropriate style - to see this being who is still insufficiently stabilised, even at the level of the cerebellum, nevertheless wave, incline towards, bend, twist himself around with all sorts of expressive babbling (11) in front of his own image provided one has put within his range a low enough mirror and showing, in a way, in a living fashion the contrast between this thing which can be sketched of something which is projected in front of him, which attracts him, with which he persists in playing, and this incomplete thing which is manifested in his own gestures.

And here, my old thematic of the mirror stage, in so far as I suppose in it, as I see in it an exemplary point, a highly significant point which allows us to presentify, to depict for ourselves the key points, the nodal points where there can come to light, be conceived the renewal of this sort of possibility always open to the subject, of a self-breaking, of a self-tearing, of a self-biting before this thing which is both himself and another.

I see in this a certain dimension of conflict in which there is no other solution than that of an: either ... or ... He either has to put up with it as an intolerable image which steals him

from himself, or he has to break it immediately, that is to say to reverse the position, to consider as cancelled, as cancellable, breakable the one he has before him, and to preserve of himself that which is at that moment the centre of his being, the drive of this being through the image, this image of the other whether it is specular or incarnated, which can be evoked in him. The relationship, the bond between the image and aggressivity is here quite articulatable.

Is it conceivable that a development, such a thematic could culminate at a sufficient consistency of the object, at an object which allows us to conceive of the diversity of the objectal phase as it develops in the course of the individual's life, is such a development possible?

In a certain fashion, one could say that it has been tried. In a certain fashion, one could say that the Hegelian dialectic of the conflict of consciences is after all nothing other than this attempt at elaborating the whole world of human knowledge starting from a pure conflict which is radically imaginary and radically destructive in its origin. You know that I have already highlighted its critical points, the points where gaps appear on different occasions and that this is not what I am going to do again today.

(12) For us, I think that there is no possibility, beginning from this radically imaginary starting point, of deducing everything that the Hegelian dialectic believes it can deduce from it. There are implications, unknown to itself, which allow it to function, which can in no way be satisfied with this support.

I would even say that if the hand which stretches out - and it is a hand which can be the hand of a very young subject, believe me, in the most direct, the most common observation - that if the hand which is stretched out towards the figure of its fellow armed with a stone - the child does not need to be very old in order to have, if not the vocation, at least the gestures of Cain - if this hand is stopped, even by another hand, namely of the one who is threatened, and that if, henceforth, they put down this stone together, it will constitute in a certain fashion an object, perhaps an object of accord, of dispute, that it will be in this respect the first stone, if you wish, of an objectal world, but that nothing will go beyond, nothing will be built upon it. This is indeed the case evoked as an echo in a harmonic which is called: the one who must throw the first stone and even in order that something should be constituted and come to a halt there, it is necessary, in effect, first of all that nothing should have been thrown and, not having thrown it the first time, it will not be thrown for any other reason.

It is clear that it is necessary that beyond the register of the Other, of the big O, should intervene for something to establish itself which opens out on a dialectic. This is what is expressed by the schema, in the measure that it means that it is in so far as the third, the big Other, intervenes in this relationship of the ego to the small other, that something can

function which involves the fecundity of the narcissistic relationship itself.

I say, in order to exemplify it again in a gesture of the child before the mirror, this gesture which is well known, quite possible to come across, to find, of the child who, in the arms of the adult, is deliberately confronted with his image - whether the adult understands or not, it is clear that this amuses him. All its importance must be given to this movement of the head of the child who, even after having been captivated, interested by these first outlines of the game that he is playing before his own image, turns back towards the adult who is carrying him, without one being able to say of course what he is expecting from him, whether it is of the order of an accord, of a testifying. But what we mean here, is that this reference to the Other comes (13) to play an essential function in it, and that it is not forcing this function to conceive it, to articulate it, and that we can put in its place what is going to be attached to the ideal ego and to the ego-ideal respectively in the subsequent development of the subject.

From this Other, in so far as the child in front of the mirror turns back towards him, what can come? We advance and we say: there can only come the sign, the image of o, i(o). This specular image, desirable and destructive at the same time, is, or not, effectively desired by the one towards whom he turns back, at the very place where the subject at that moment identifies himself, sustains this identification to this image. From this first original moment on, we find in a tangible way what I would call the antagonistic character of the ideal ego, namely that already, in this specular situation, there are reduplicated, and this time at the level of the Other - for the Other and through the Other, the big Other - the desired ego - I mean desired by him - and the authentic ego, das echte Ich - if you will allow me to introduce this term which has nothing especially new about it in the context in question - except for the fact that you should notice that, in this original situation, it is the ideal which is there - I am talking about the ideal ego, not the ego-ideal - and that it is the authentic ego which, for its part, is to come.

And it will be through the evolution, with all the ambiguities of this word, that the authentic will come to birth, that it will be this time loved in spite of everything, ouk echon, even though it is not perfection itself. This is moreover how there functions in the whole process the function of the ideal ego: with this character of progress, it is against the wind, in risk and defiance that there will be made all its subsequent development.

What is the function here of the ego-ideal? You will tell me that it is the Other, the big O, but you surely sense here that it is originally, structurally, essentially implicated, involved uniquely as the locus from where there can be constituted in its pathetic oscillation this perpetual reference to the ego - of the ego to this image which offers itself, to which it identifies itself, presents itself and sustains itself as problematical, but uniquely starting from the gaze of the big Other. For this gaze

of the big Other to be interiorised in its turn, does not mean that it is going to be confused with the place and the support which here already are constituted as ideal ego, it means something else, which goes very far. Because, this is to suppose an Einfühlung relationship which, by being admitted as (14) having to be necessarily as global as what is involved in the reference to a fully organised being - the real being who supports the child before his mirror - goes very far.

You see clearly that the whole question is here and that already I am highlighting the way in which, let us say, my solution differs from the classical solution, it is simply in something that I am going to say immediately even though it is our goal and the end on this occasion: it is from the first step that Freud takes in the articulation of what is Identifizierung, identification, in the first two forms in which he introduces it.

1 - A primitive identification which is extraordinarily important to remember in the first steps of his article - to which I will come back later, because they constitute all the same something that one cannot avoid - namely that Freud implies, as anterior to the very outline of the Oedipus situation, a first possible identification to the father as such. His head was full of the father. So that one allows him to make a first stage of identification to the father around which he develops a refined set of terms. He calls this identification "typically masculine", exquisit männlich. This takes place in development, I have no doubt about it. It is not a logical stage, it is a stage of development before the Oedipus complex has become engaged, to the point that in short he goes so far as to write that it is starting from this primordial identification that there would arise the desire towards the mother and, from then on, by a reversal, the father would be considered as a rival.

I am not in the process of saying that this stage is clinically grounded. I am saying that the fact that it should have appeared necessary for Freud's thinking should not, for us, at the time that Freud wrote this chapter, be considered as a sort of extravagance, as nonsense. There must have been a reason which necessitated for him this previous stage, and this is what my subsequent discourse will try to show you, I pass on.

2 - He then speaks about regressive identification, the one which results from the love relationship: in the measure that the object refuses love, the subject, by a regressive process - and you see there, it is not the only reason highlighted for which effectively it was necessary for Freud that there should have been this primordial stage of identification - the subject, by a (15) regressive process, is capable of identifying himself to the object which, in his call for love, disappoints him.

3 - Immediately after having given us these two modes of identification in the chapter, Die Identifizierung, it is the good old method that has been known for ages, since the Dora observation, namely the identification which comes from the fact that the subject recognises in the other the total, global situation in which it lives: hysterical identification par

excellence. It is because the young girl has just received that evening, in the room where there are assembled rather neurotic and disturbed subjects, a letter from her lover that our hysteric has an attack. It is clear that it is identification, in our vocabulary, at the level of desire, let us leave it to one side.

Freud deliberately pauses in his text to tell us that, in these two modes of identification, the two first fundamental ones - one being the earliest of all modes of Einfühlungs Bindung - identification always occurs through ein einziger Zug.

Here is something which, both alleviates many difficulties for us in more than one respect, in respect first of all of the conceivability - which, is not something that should be despised - of a single trait. Second point, this thing which for us converges towards a notion that we know well, that of the signifier - that does not mean that this einziger Zug, this single trait, is, by that alone, given as such, as signifier. Not at all. It is rather probable, if we begin from the dialectic that I am trying to outline before you, that it is possibly a sign. In order to say that it is a signifier, more is needed: we require its subsequent utilisation in a signifying battery or as something which is related to a signifying battery. But the pinpoint character of this point of reference to the Other, at the origin, in the narcissistic relationship, this is what is defined by this ein einziger Zug. I mean that it is what gives the response to the question: how is there interiorised, this gaze of the Other which, between the two twin brother enemies, of the ego or of the specular image - of the small other - which can of every instant tip the balance of preference?

This gaze of the Other, should be considered by us as being interiorised through a sign, that is enough, ein einziger Zug. There is no need for a whole field of organisation, for a massive (16) introjection. This point i of the single trait is a sign of the Other's assent, of the love-choice upon which the subject precisely can adjust his setting in the subsequent operation of the mirror, it is there somewhere, it is sufficient that the subject should coincide there in his relationship with the Other in order that this little sign, this einziger Zug, should be at his disposition.

The radical distinction between the ego-ideal - in so far as there is no particular reason to suppose another possible introjection - and the ideal ego, is that one is a symbolic introjection like every introjection: the ego-ideal, while the ideal ego is the source of an imaginary projection. That what happens at the level of the one, that narcissistic satisfaction should develop in the relationship to the ideal ego, depends on the possibility of being referred to this primordial symbolic term which can be monoformal, monosemantic, ein einziger Zug. This is capital for the whole development of what we have to say and, if you will still grant me a little time, I will begin then to recall simply what I can call, what I should consider as taken here from our theory of love.



Love, we have said, can only be conceived of in the perspective of demand. There is no love except for a being who can talk. The dimension, the perspective, the register of love develops, is outlined, is inscribed in what can be called the unconditional of the demand. It is what comes from the very fact of demanding, whatever one demands, simply in so far, not as one demands something, this or that, but in the register and the order of demand qua pure, that it is only a demand to be heard. I would go further, to be heard for what? Well, to be heard for something which could well be called "for nothing". This is not to say that this does not take us very far for all that. Because, implied in this "for nothing", there is already the place of desire.

It is precisely because the demand is unconditional that what is in question is not the desire of this or of that, but is simply desire. And that is the reason why, from the beginning, there is implied the metaphor of the *désirer* as such. And that is why when we began this year, I made you approach it from every angle. (17) The metaphor of the *désirer* in love implies what it is substituted for as metaphor, namely desire.

What is desired, is the *désirer* in the Other, which cannot happen unless the subject is conversed with as desirable, this is what he demands in the demand for love. But what we should see at this level, this point that I cannot omit today because it will be essential in that we will find it in our subsequent remarks, is something which we should not forget, it is that love as such - I always told you this and we will find it again required from every angle - is to give what one does not have. And that one cannot love except by becoming a non-haver, even if one has. That love as response implies the domain of not-having, is something that was invented not by me but by Plato, who discovered that Poverty alone, *Penia*, can conceive Love, could have the idea of becoming pregnant on the evening of a festival. And in effect, to give what one has is a festival, it is not love.

From which it follows - I am leading you on a little quickly, but you will see that we will fall on our feet - from which it follows, for the rich man - that exists and is even thought about - to love, that always requires a refusal. This is even the annoying thing. It is not only those who are refused who are annoyed, those who refuse, the rich, are not any more comfortable. This *Versagung* of the rich man is everywhere, it is not simply the mark of avarice, it is much more constitutive of the position of the rich man, whatever one may think of it.

And the thematic of folklore, of Griselda with all her seduction, even though she is all the same rather revolting - I think you know the story - is there to remind us of it. I would even go further while I am at it, the rich do not have a good press. In other words, we progressives, we do not like them very much. Let us beware, perhaps this hatred for the rich participates, by a secret path, quite simply in a revolt against love, in other words at a negation, at a *Verneinung* of the virtues of poverty which could well be at the origin of a certain méconnaissance of

what love is. The sociological result is moreover rather curious. It is that obviously in that way one facilitates the rich a good deal in their function, their role is made much easier, with that there is tempered in them or more (18) exactly they are given a thousand excuses to avoid their function of festival-givers. That does not mean that they are any the happier for that.

In short, it is quite certain, for an analyst, that it is very difficult for a rich man to love. This is something about which a certain preacher from Galilee has already made a little remark in passing. It would be more appropriate perhaps to pity him on this point, than to hate him, unless after all this hating, which again is quite possible, is a way of loving. What is certain, is that riches tends to render impotent. Long experience as an analyst allows me to tell you that in general I take this fact as given. And this is what explains things all the same, the necessity for example of detours. The rich man is forced to buy because he is rich, and in order to recover himself, in order to rediscover potency, he tries by buying at a discount to devalorize - it is from him that that comes, it is for his convenience - to achieve this, the simplest method for example, is not to pay. In this way sometimes he hopes to provoke what he can never acquire directly, namely the desire of the Other.

But that is enough about the rich. Leon Bloy once wrote La femme pauvre. I am very embarrassed, because for some time I am speaking all the time about Catholic authors, but it is not my fault if I spotted in it a long time ago some very interesting things. I would like if someone, one day, became aware of the awful, the extraordinary things in terms of psychoanalytic benefits, that are hidden in La femme pauvre which is a book that can scarcely be tolerated that only an analyst can understand - I have never yet seen any analyst interest himself in it - but he would have done well also to write: La femme riche. It is certain that only a woman can incarnate in a dignified way the ferocity of riches, but after all that is not enough and that poses, for her and very specially for the one who solicits her love, very particular problems. This would require a return to feminine sexuality. I apologise, I will be forced simply to indicate this to you as a sort of first indication.

I would like all the same because in short we cannot go any further today, to highlight from now, because what is in question when we talk about love is very specifically to describe the (19) field in which we will have to say what our place ought to be in the transference, to highlight before leaving you something which is not at all unconnected with these remarks about riches.

A little word about the saint. It is not completely out of place, because we have not finished with our Claudel. As you know, right at the end, in the solution given to the problem of desire, we have a saint, Orian by name, of whom it is expressly said that if he wants to give nothing to little Pensee, who happily is sufficiently armed to take it from him by force - it is because he has much too much: Joy, nothing less than that, Joy in its entirety, and that there is no question of debasing such

riches for a little adventure - this is said in the text - this sort of thing which happens like that, a matter of three nights in an hotel. It's a funny business. It is all the same a little superficial to apply psychology to creativity and to think simply that he is someone very repressed. But what poetic creativity signifies, namely the function that Orian has in this tragedy, namely that what interests us, is something quite different and this is what I want to highlight by pointing out to you that the saint is a rich man.

He does everything he can to look poor, it is true, at least in more than one country, but it is precisely that which makes him rich, and particularly stingy among the others because his is not a riches that one can-easily get rid of. The saint lives entirely in the domain of having. The saint renounces perhaps some small things but it is to possess everything. And if you look very carefully at the lives of saints, you will see that he can only love God as a name of his jouissance. And his jouissance, in the final analysis, is always rather monstrous.

We have spoken in the course of our analytic remarks here about some human terms among which is the hero. This difficult question of the saint, I am introducing here only in an anecdotal fashion, and rather as a support, one of those that I believe altogether necessary to map out our position. Because, naturally, as you can well imagine, I am not placing us among the saints! That still has to be said. Because, by not saying it, it would still remain for many that this would be the ideal, as they say. There are many things that one is tempted, in our (20) connection to say would be the ideal. And this question of the ideal is at the heart of the problems of the position of the analyst, this is what you will see being developed in what follows, and precisely everything that it would be appropriate for us to abandon in this category of the ideal.

Seminar 25:            Wednesday 14 June 1961

I woke up this morning with an appalling headache.        That never happens to me, I don't know where it could have come from.

I read, while I was having my breakfast, an excellent work by Conrad Stein on primary identification.        It is not every day that I get things like that from my students...!        What I am going to say today will show him that his work was well orientated.        But I no longer know where we were the last time and, as they say, I have not prepared my seminar well.        We are going to try to advance.        I had intended to read Sappho in order to find there things which might illuminate you.        This is going to take us to the heart of the function of identification. Since it is still a question of locating the position of the analyst, I thought that it would be no harm to take things up again.

Freud wrote Hemmung, Symptom und Ankrst. in 1926.        It is the third phase of putting his thought together, the first two were constituted by the stage of the Traumdeutung and the second topography.        We are going, right away, to go to the heart of the problem evoked by him, which is that of the meaning of anxiety. We are even going to go further because, right away, we are going to start from the economic point of view.        The problem is to know from where there is taken, he tells us, the energy for the signal of anxiety.        In the Gesammelte Werke, XIV, page 120, I read the following sentence: Das Ich zieht die (vorbewusste) Besetzung von der zu verdrängenden Triebreprä'sentanz ab und verwendet sie für die Unlust - (Angst) - entbindung.        Translated "The ego withdraws its (preconscious) cathexis from the instinctual representative" - that which is representative in the drive - "that is to be repressed and uses that cathexis for the purpose of releasing unpleasure (anxiety), Unlust-(Angst-)."

(2) It is obvious that it is not a question of falling on a sentence of Freud's and then of beginning to intellectualise. If I put it before you right away, it is after mature reflection.

It is a carefully deliberated choice which is meant to encourage you to reread this article as soon as possible.

As regards our own purposes, let us apply it, let us transport it right away to the heart of our problems.        I have told you enough about it for you to suspect that the structuring formula of the phantasy ^Oo must be involved at this moment of orientation that we are at.        This phantasy, is something I have not simply

formulated, but evoked, approached even, closely dogged even in every possible way. In order to show the necessity of this formula, it is necessary to know that, in this support of desire, there are two elements whose respective functions and functional relationship cannot in any way be verbalised by any attribute which would be exhaustive, and this is why I must give them as a support these two algebraic elements and accumulate around these two elements the characteristics that are in question.

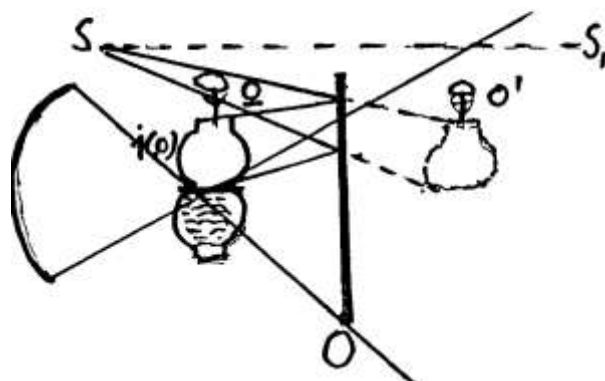
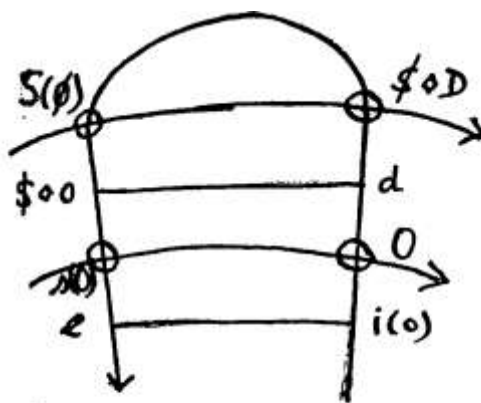
You know enough about it to know that  $j!$  is related to something which is called the fading of the subject and that the small other, which is the small  $o$ , has something to do with what is called the object of desire. This symbolisation has already the importance and the effect of showing that desire does not present itself in a simple subjective relationship to the object - even a reflexive one - the subject "thinking himself" in a relationship of knowledge to the object. The theory of desire is constructed to put in question again this theory of knowledge and the Cartesian "I think, therefore I am", which is something others have already done.

Let us take up this sentence and let us try to apply it to that. I will not give you the last word right away, in this way I am bringing you halfway in order to give you the illusion of searching.

What is meant by Freud's little sentence concerning the decathexis of the Triebreprasentanz in order that anxiety should be produced? That means that the cathexis of  $o$  is directed back onto the subject.

This subject is only graspable as that. He cannot be conceived of except as a place, because it is not even this point of reflexivity of the subject which could be grasped as desiring. Because the subject does not grasp himself in any way as desiring. But, in the phantasy in which he might do it, this place is always reserved. It is even reserved to such an (3) extent that it is ordinarily occupied by what is produced homologically at the lower stage of the graph,  $i(o)$  the image of the specular other, namely that it is not necessarily, but ordinarily occupied by that.


This is what is expressed, in the little schema which you saw above and which we have rubbed out, by the function of the real image of the vase in the illusion of the inverted vase, this vase which has been produced in order to appear to be surrounding the base of these floral stems which elegantly symbolise the little  $p$ , this is what is in question, it is the image, the narcissistic ghost which comes to fill, in the phantasy, the function of coadapting oneself to desire, the illusion of grasping one's object, as one might say. Henceforth, if  $\$$  is this place which can from time to time be found to be empty, namely that nothing comes to be produced there which is satisfying as regards the emergence of the narcissistic image, we can conceive



that it is indeed that to which there responds at its summons the production of the signal of anxiety.

I am going to try to show this extremely important point which one can say the final article of Freud on this subject really gives us all the elements to resolve - without giving it properly speaking the final twist. For the moment, the screw is still not tightened.

Let us say, with Freud, that the signal of anxiety is indeed something which is produced at the level of the ego. Nevertheless, we perceive here, thanks to our formalisations, that we are going perhaps to be able to say a little bit more about this "at the level of the ego". Our notations are going to allow us to deconstruct this question, to articulate it in a more precise fashion and this is what will (4) allow us to go beyond some of the points where, for Freud, the question ended up in an impasse.

Here, I am going right away to make a leap, Freud says, at the moment that he speaks about the economy, about the transformation necessary for the production of a signal of anxiety, that it ought not to require a very great quantity of energy to produce a signal. Freud indicates to us already that there is here a relationship between the production of this signal and something which is of the order of Verzicht - of renunciation, close to Versagung - because of the fact that the subject is barred. In the Verdrängung of the Triebreprasentanz, there is this correlation of the concealment of the subject which well confirms the correctness of our notation of the S barred, . The leap consists in designating here for you what I have announced to you for a long time as the place which the analyst really holds to - that does not mean that he occupies it all the time - but the place where he waits - and this word "to wait" takes on here all its import, what we will rediscover about the function of waiting, of the Erwartung - for the subject to constitute, to structure this signal. This place is precisely the place of ^ in the phantasy.

I said that I was taking a leap, namely that I am not proving it right away, I am indicating where I am leading you. Now, let us take the steps which are going to allow there to be understood what is in question. One thing therefore is given to us, it is that the signal of anxiety is produced somewhere, this somewhere that may be occupied by i(o), the ego qua image of the other, the ego qua fundamentally a function of miscognition. It occupies this place, not at all in so far as this image occupies it, but qua place, namely in so far as on occasions this image may be dissolved there. Observe carefully that I am not saying that it is the lack of the image which makes anxiety emerge. Observe carefully that what I have always said is that the specular relationship, the original relationship of the subject to the specular image is set up in what is called a reaction of aggressivity. In my article on the mirror stage, I already indicated this same specular relationship, I defined it, established it, as not being unrelated to anxiety, I even indicated that the way to grasp aggressivity in a slice, transversally, was to see that one had to orientate oneself in the direction of the temporal relationship. In effect, there is no spatial relationship which refers itself to the specular image to the other as such, namely that, when it begins to come to (5) life, when it becomes the incarnated other, there is a temporal relationship: "I can't wait (i 'ai hate) to see myself like him, otherwise where will I be?".

But, if you refer to my texts, you will also see that I am more prudent there and that, if I do not push the formula to its extremes, there is a reason for it. The function of haste in logic, those who are very aware of what I have written know that I dealt with it somewhere in a kind of little sophism which is the one of the problem of the three discs. This function of haste, namely this way in which man precipitates himself into his resemblance to man, is not anxiety. In order that anxiety should be constituted, there has to be a relationship at the level of desire. This indeed is why it is at the level of phantasy that I am leading you today by the hand in order to approach this problem of anxiety. I am going to show you well in advance where we are going and we will come back again in order to make a few detours around the kernel of the problem.

Here therefore is where the analyst is supposed to be in the relationship of the subject to desire, to an object of desire which we suppose on this occasion to be this object which carries with it a menace, of which there is question and which determines the zu verdrängen, the to be repressed. All of this is not definitive.

Let us pose ourselves the following question. If this is the way that we are tackling the problem, what would the subject expect of an ordinary companion who dared, in ordinary conditions, to occupy this same place? If this object is dangerous, because this is what is in question, the subject would expect him to give him the signal: "Danger", the one which, in the case of real danger, makes the subject scamper away. I mean that what I am introducing at this level, is something which one regrets Freud did not introduce into his dialectic, because it was something that should have been done. He tells us that the internal danger is altogether comparable to an external danger and that the subject strives to avoid it in the same way as one avoids an external danger. But then, look at what this offers us in terms of an effective articulation, think of what really happens in animal psychology.

Among social animals, among herd animals, everyone knows the role played by the signal before the enemy of the herd: the cleverest and the best of the herd animals is there to smell him, to scent him, to pick him out. The gazelle, the antelope lift their (6) noses, give a little bell and there is no delaying: everyone heads off in the same direction. The notion of signal in a social complex, the reaction to a danger, here is where we grasp at the biological level what exists in an observable society. Here it can be perceived that this signal of anxiety, it is indeed from the alter ego, from the other who constitutes his ego, that the subject can receive it.

There is something that I would like to highlight here. For a long time you have heard me warning you about the dangers of altruism. Beware, I said to you implicitly and explicitly of the snares of Mitleid, pity, of what prevents us from harming the other, the poor kid, so that one ends up marrying her and both spend a long time being sick of one another. I am schematizing: these are the dangers of altruism. Only, if these are dangers about which it is only humane to warn you, that does not mean that this is the final resort. This moreover is the reason why I am not, with regard to X to whom I speak from time to time, the devil's advocate who brings him back to the principles of a healthy egoism and who would turn him away from this quite attractive course which would consist in not being wicked.

The fact is that this precious Mitleid, this altruism, for the subject who does not know himself, is only the cover for something else, and you will always observe it, on condition all the same of being on the analytic plane. Work a little on the Mitleid of an obsessional: and here the first phase is to notice, with what I am highlighting for you, with what moreover the whole moralist tradition permits on occasion to be affirmed, namely that what he respects, what he does not want to touch in the image of the other, is his own image. But why is this in the final analysis? It is because if it were not carefully preserved, this unstainability, untouchability of his own image, what would arise from all that would be well and truly anxiety, and anxiety before what? Not before the other around whom he turns, the one whom I called above "the poor kid" - who is that only in his imagination, because she is always much tougher than you can imagine - and it is before "the poor kid" that he is anxious, before o, not the image of himself, but before the other, \_o, as object of his desire.

I am saying this to clearly illustrate something very important, which is that if anxiety is produced topographically at the place (7) defined by i(o), namely - as Freud's last formulation articulates it for us - at the place of the ego, there is no signal of anxiety, except in so far as it refers to an object of desire, this object of desire in so far as it disturbs the ideal ego, i(o), the one which takes its origin in the specular image.

What is meant by this link which is absolutely necessary to understand the signal of anxiety? That means that the function of this signal is not exhausted in its Warnung, its warning that you should scamper away. The fact is that, while accomplishing its function, this signal maintains the relationship with the object of desire. This is what is the key and the mainspring of what Freud, in this article and elsewhere, in a repeated fashion and with this accent, this choice of terms, this incisiveness which is so illuminating in him, accentuates for us, characterises for us by distinguishing the situation of anxiety from that of danger, Gefahr, and from that of Hilflosigkeit. In Hilflosigkeit, helplessness, being without recourse, the subject is simply turned inside out, overwhelmed by an erupting situation which he cannot face up to in any way. Between that and taking flight, what is the solution which, although it is not heroic, is the one which Napoleon himself found to be the truly courageous solution when it was a question of love: between that and flight, there is something else. And this is what Freud highlights for us in underlining, in anxiety, this character of Erwartung, of waiting, this is the central feature. That we can make of it secondarily the reason for decamping, is one thing, but it is not its essential character. Its essential character, is the Erwartung and this is what I am designating in telling you that anxiety is the radical mode under which there is maintained the relationship to desire. When, for reasons of resistance, of defence, etc.... everything that you can put in the order of mechanisms of cancelling out the object, when nothing but that remains and when the object disappears, vanishes, but not what can remain of it, namely the Erwartung, the direction towards its empty place - the place that it is henceforth missing from, where there is no longer question of anything but an unbestimmt Objekt, or again, as Freud says, we are in the relationship of Objektlosigkeit - when we are at that point, anxiety is the final mode, the radical mode under which it continues to sustain, even if it is in an unbearable way, the relationship to desire.



(8) There are other ways of sustaining the relationship to desire which concern the unsustainability of the object, this indeed is why I explain to you that hysteria, obsessionality can be characterised by these statuses of desire that I called, for you, unsatisfied desire and sustained as impossible desire, established in its impossibility.

But it is enough for you to turn your gaze towards the most radical form of neurosis, phobia, which is that around which there turns Freud's whole discourse in this article, phobia which cannot be defined otherwise than as follows: it is constructed to sustain the relationship of the subject to desire under the form of anxiety. The only thing that is to be added to fully define it, is that, just as the complete definition of the hysteric as regards phantasy is oO/ the metaphor of the other at the point that the subject sees himself as castrated, confronted with the big Other - Dora, in so far as it is by the mediation of Mr K that she desires, but that he is not the one she loves, it is through the mediation of the one she desires that she orientates herself towards the one that she loves, namely Madame K - which means that it is necessary for us to complete the formula for phobia also: therefore phobia, is indeed the following, the sustaining, the maintaining of the relationship to desire in anxiety with something supplementary, more precise. It is not the relationship of anxiety alone, it is that the place of this object, in so far as it is aimed at by anxiety, is required because of what I explained to you at length, in connection with Little Hans, to be the function of the phobic object, namely big phi,<sup>5</sup> the symbolic phallus in so far as it is the joker in the pack, namely that there is indeed question, in the phobic object, of the phallus, but it is the phallus that will take on the value of all the signifiers, that of the father on this occasion. What is remarkable in this observation, is at once his lack and his presence: lack in the form of the real father - Hans' father - presence under the form of the encroaching symbolic father - Freud. If all of this can play the same place on the same plane, it is of course, because already, in the object of the phobia, there is this infinite possibility of considering a certain function lacking, deficient, which is precisely that before which the subject was going to succumb if there did not arise at that place anxiety.

Having made this little circuit, I think that you can grasp that, if the function of the signal of anxiety warns us of something, (9) and of something very important in clinical, analytic practice, it is because the anxiety to which your subjects are open is not at all uniquely, as is believed, as you always look for it, an anxiety whose sole source would be, as I might say, internal to himself. It is proper to the neurotic to be, in this respect, as Monsieur Andre' Breton called it, a vase communicant. The anxiety with which your neurotic has to deal, anxiety as energy, is an anxiety that he is much in the habit of searching for with a magnifying glass right and left in one or other of the big O's with whom he has to deal. It is just as valid for him, just as usable for him as what he generates himself.

If you do not take this into account in the economy of an analysis, you will make serious mistakes. You will be at the stage, in many cases, of scratching your head to know from where there comes on one or other occasion this little re-emergence of anxiety at the moment when you least expected it. It is not necessarily from his own, from the one that you are already aware of through the practice of the previous months of analysis, that of the neighbours also counts,

and then your own. You think that there, of course, you have found your bearings again. You know well that you have already been warned about this. I am afraid that this does not warn you about very much, because precisely a question introduced starting from this consideration, is that of knowing what this warning implies, namely that your own anxiety, should not come into play, that the analysis ought to be aseptic as regards your own anxiety. What can that mean, on the plane that I am trying to sustain you for a whole year, on the synchronic plane, that which does not allow the invasion of diachrony, namely that you have already largely overcome your own anxiety in your previous analysis, which resolves nothing ? Because what it is a question of knowing, is the status in which you ought currently to be, you yourself as regards your desire, in order that there should not emerge in you, in analysis, not simply the signal, but also the energy of anxiety, in so far as it is there, if it emerges, ready-made to tip over into the economy of your subject, and this in the measure that he is more advanced in the analysis, namely that it is at the level of the big Other that you are for him that he is going to search out the path of his desire. Such is the status of the analyst in the synchrony involving anxiety.

(10) In any case, in order to loop this first loop, which makes intervene the function of the Other, big O as being concerned in the possibility of the emergence of anxiety as signal, you see both that the reference to the herd, in so far as this signal is exercised within a function of imaginary communication, is necessary - because it is through this that I want to make you sense that, if anxiety is a signal, this means that it can come from another - it nevertheless remains, in so far as it is a question of a relationship to desire, that the signal is not exhausted in the metaphor of the danger of the enemy of the herd, and precisely in this which distinguishes the human herd from the animal herd, that for each subject, as everyone knows, except entrepreneurs in collective psychology, the enemy of the herd is himself.

In this reference to the reality of the herd, we find an interesting transposition of what Freud articulates for us under the form of "internal danger". We find here confirmation of what I am always telling you about with regard to the universal in man. The individual and the collective are one and the same level. What is true at the level of the individual, this internal danger, is also true at the level of the collective. It is the same internal danger to the subject which is the internal danger to the herd. This comes from the originality of the position of desire as such, in so far as desire has just emerged to fill up the lack of certitude, the lack of guarantee to which the subject finds himself confronted with respect to what is important to him in so far as he is not simply a herd animal - he is that perhaps, only this elementary relationship, which surely exists, is gravely disturbed by the fact that it finds itself included, just as much at the collective level as at the individual level, in the relationship to the signifier.

The social animal, for his part, at the moment that he decamps with the signal that the watching animal or the loving animal gives him, is the herd. The speaking being, for his part, is essentially the want-to-be which has arisen from a certain relationship to the discourse, from a poetry, if you wish. This want-to-be, is something he cannot fill - I already articulated and indicated it for you - except through this action which - you sense it better in this context and in this parallel - takes on so easily, perhaps always takes on radically this character of headlong flight. But

precisely, fundamentally, this very action does not suit the herd at all. It does not operate at all on the plane of coherence or of collective defence. In a word, in (11) principle, the herd scarcely accommodates itself to his own action, or even does not want anything to do with it, and not only the herd, reality does not want anything to do with his action either, because reality - I am not saying the real - is precisely the sum total of certitudes accumulated by means of the addition of a series of previous actions, whereas the new one is always unwarranted.

This is what allows us to situate correctly, namely in a way which overlaps experience, namely - which is all the same surprising and nevertheless always more or less obvious - this little surge of anxiety which is produced every time the desire of the subject is really in question. We are there at the common place, at the root, at the kernel of everything that our experience gives us.

If analysis was not of some use in making men understand that their desire, firstly, is not the same thing as their need and, secondly, that desire in itself has a dangerous character, which is this danger whose character is quite obviously from the menace that it involves for the herd, I ask myself then what use analysis ever was.

It is a matter of climbing something and, because we are engaged on the path adopted today and perhaps more directly than the royal road which I did not prepare today, we are going to continue in the same way. We are going to pose an insidious question. I already prepared the question of what the Versagung of analysis should be, but there frankly I did not tell you much more about it. I pose the same question to you, is not the fruitful Versagung of analysis to refuse to the subject the analyst's own anxiety, to leave bare the place where he is in short summoned naturally, as Other, to give the signal of anxiety?

Let us see there being outlined this something of which I already gave you, at least the last time, the indication in telling you that the pure place of the analyst, in so far as we can define it in and through the phantasy, would be the place of the pure desirer, erastes or eron, which would mean this somewhere where there is always produced the function of desire, namely to come in place of the eromenos or of the eromenon - because this is the reason why I made you, at the beginning of the year, undertake this long investigation of the Symposium and of the theory of (12) love. One must succeed in conceiving that some subject is capable of holding the place of pure desirer, of abstracting himself, of removing himself, in the relationship to the other, from any supposition of being desirable.

What you have read of the remarks, of the responses of Socrates in the Symposium, should give you an idea of what I am in the process of telling you, because, if something is incarnated and signified by the episode with Alcibiades, it is indeed that. On the one hand, Socrates affirms that he does not know anything, except about what appertains to love. Everything we are told about him is that he is an put and put, inexhaustible desirer. But when it is a question of showing himself in the position of the desired one, namely in face of the public, scandalous, uncontrolled, drunken aggression of Alcibiades, what we are shown is that there is literally no longer anything there. This, I am not saying that it resolves the affair, but it at least illustrates what I am talking to you about. This

has a meaning which has, at least, been incarnated somewhere, because it is not only to me that Socrates appears to be a human enigma - a case like no other that has been seen and which one does not know what to do about, no matter what kind of tweezers one tries to seize him with - it is to everybody, every time that someone has really, in connection with Socrates, posed the question: what was this guy made of? Why did he wreck havoc everywhere simply by appearing and by telling little stories which seem to be about everyday affairs?

I would like us to pause a little at the place of the desirer. This has an echo, this rhymes with something that I would call the place of the prayer, in prayer. Because, in prayer, the prayer sees himself in the process of praying, there is no prayer unless the prayer sees himself in the process of praying.

I thought this morning- of Priam. He is the type of the prayer who entreats from Achilles the body of the last of his sons who are too many for him to count - he had fifty of them, it appears that this is more or less the last one: in any case, this Hector is very important to him. What does he tell Achilles? He cannot talk too much about Hector and that for several reasons. First of all because it is not easy to speak about him in the state that he is at that moment. Then, as it appears, every time there is question of the living Hector, Achilles, who is not an easy person to deal with, nor the master of his impulses, becomes furious again, even though he had received divine instructions, (13) namely that his mother Thetis had come to tell him: "The big boss wants you to give Hector back to his father, Priam. He came to visit me expressly for that". He is within a hair's breadth of not giving him back.

The important thing, is that Priam does not play the psychologist all that much. By the very fact that he is in the position of prayer, he is going to presentify in his very demand the personage of the prayer. I mean that Priam's prayer, the one which has resonated from the beginning of our age - because, even if you have not read the Iliad, this episode is circulating there among all of you as a model through the mediation of all the other models that it engendered - he raises, he reduplicates this praying personage that he is with another who is described, who is inserted into his prayer in the form of someone who is not there, namely Peleus, the father of Achilles whom he represents. It is he who prays, but in his prayer, it is necessary that this prayer should pass through something which is not even the invocation of Achilles' father - he traces out for him the figure of a father, who, for his part, is perhaps at this very moment, he says, very troubled because his neighbours are teasing him unmercifully. He knows that he has still a son who is someone of value, Achilles here present. You will rediscover in every prayer what I am calling the place of the prayer at the very interior of the demand of the one who is praying. The desirer - this is why I am making this detour, this is not the same, I mean that the desirer, as such - can say nothing of himself, except to abolish himself as desirer. Because, this is what defines the pure place of the subject qua desiring, it is that at every attempt at articulating oneself there emerges nothing other than a fainting of language and an impotency to speak because, once he speaks he is nothing but a beggar, he passes to the register of demand, and this is something else.

This is no less important if we have to formulate in some way that which, in this response to the other which constitutes analysis,

constitutes the specific form of the place of the analyst.

In order to finish today on something which will add perhaps a little more a formula from which there is no escape to all of those which already I seem to be serving you with, it is this one which has indeed some interest in so far as it completes the elements whose compass I have just sketched out, it is that, if (14) anxiety is what I told you it was, this relationship of sustaining desire where the object is missing, we rediscover this other thing of which we have experience, the fact is that, to reverse the formula - this is constantly seen in practice - desire is a remedy for anxiety. The most insignificant neurotic person knows as much about this, or even more than you. The support found in desire, however inconvenient it may be with its whole train of guilt, is something all the same much easier to hold to than the position of anxiety, so that in short, for someone who is - a little astute and experienced - I say that for the analyst - it would be a question of always having within one's reach a little well-polished desire in order not to be exposed to bringing into play into analysis a quantum of anxiety which would be neither opportune or welcome.

Is it then towards this that I intend to lead you? Surely not. In any case it is not easy to locate by hand the walls of the corridor. The question that is involved is not about the expedient of desire, it is of a certain relationship with desire which is not sustained in this way a week at a time.

At our next meeting, we are going to come back to the distinction, inaugurated the last time, of the relationship of the subject to the ideal ego and to the ego-ideal. This will allow us to orientate for ourselves in the true topography of desire, the function of the einziaer Zug, from what fundamentally differentiates the ego-ideal in such a way that it is only from there that one can distinguish, define the function of the object in its relationships with the narcissistic function.

This is what I hope to complete at our next meeting, by placing it under the title of the formula of Pindar "Man, the dream of a shadow, skias onar anthropos ", he wrote in the last verse of the eighth Ode. This relationship between the dream and the shadow, between the symbolic and the imaginary, is that around which I will make our decisive remarks turn.

Seminar 26:            Wednesday 21 June 1961

We are going to try today to make some remarks on the subject of identification in the measure that you have grasped, I hope, that we are led to it as the final term of the precise question around which we have made revolve this year our whole attempt at the elucidation of transference. I already announced to you the last time that I would begin again under the sign of the celebrated ejaculation of Pindar, in the eighth Pythian Ode composed for Aristomenes, the wrestler from Agina, the winner at the Games, "man, the dream of a shadow".

We will take up here again our reference to this relationship, the one to which, for your sakes, I tried to give the support of a model, between two concrete levels of identification - it is not by chance that I am putting the accent on the necessary distinction between them, an obvious distinction, phenomenologically within everyone's range. The ideal ego is not to be confused with the ego-ideal, this is something that the psychologist can discover of his own accord, and which moreover he does not fail to do. That the thing is just as important in the articulation of the Freudian dialectic, is indeed what will be confirmed for us, for example by the work to which I alluded the last time, that of M. Conrad Stein on primary identification.

This work ends with the recognition that what still remains obscure, is the difference between the two series that Freud distinguishes, underlines and accentuates as being the identifications of the ego and the identifications of the ego-ideal .

Let us take up therefore this little schema with which you are beginning to become familiar and which you will rediscover when you begin to work after a little rest on the number of the journal La Psychanalyse which is about to appear (see the schema) .

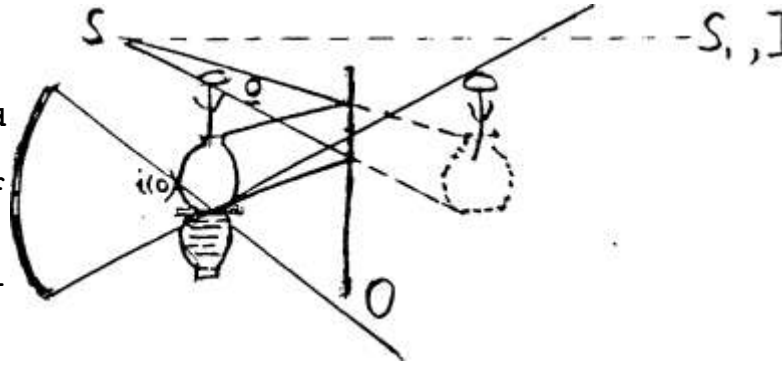
(2) The illusion here represented, which is called that of the inverted vase can only be produced for an eye which is situated somewhere within the cone thus produced by the point of junction of the edge of the spherical mirror with the focal point where there is produced the so-called illusion of the inverted vase. You know that this illusion, a real image, is what we use to metaphorise something which I call  $i(o)$ , regarding which you know that what is in question is that it is the support for the

function of the image. In it is the image as such and its tone, its accent, its power of fascination, the proper to it in of this libidinal well

distinguished by the term of

narcissistic cathexis. The function

$i(o)$  is the central function of narcissistic cathexis.



specular  
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cathexis

Freud under

These words are not enough to define all the relations, all the incidences under which we see appearing the function of  $i(o)$ . What we are going to say today will allow you to specify what is in question, it is moreover what I call also the ideal ego function  $cm$  as opposed and distinct from that of the ego-ideal.

Over against the bringing into play of the Other, the big  $O$ , the Other in so far as he is the Other of the speaking subject, the Other in so far as through him, the locus of the word, there comes to operate for every subject, for every subject with whom we, for our part have to deal as analysts, the incidence of the signifier, we can here fix the place of what is going to function as ego-ideal. In the little schema, as you will see it published in the journal which is going to appear, you will see that this purely virtual  $S$  is only there as a figuration of a function of the subject which is, as I might say, a necessity of (3) thought, this same necessity which is at the source of the theory of knowledge. We could not conceive of anything as object supported by the subject which does not precisely have this function of the subject whose real existence, as analysts, we put in question because what we, as analysts, bring to light, by the fact that the subject with whom we have to deal is essentially a subject who speaks, this subject cannot be confused with the subject of knowledge - because it is really a banal truth to have to remind analysts that the subject, for us, is not the subject of knowledge, but the subject of the unconscious. We could not speculate about it as the pure transparency of thought to itself because - this is precisely what we rise up against - it is pure illusion that thought is transparent.

I know the insurrection I may provoke at a turning point like this in the mind of a philosopher. Believe me, I have already had serious enough discussions with supporters of the Cartesian position to say that there is all the same a way for us to understand one another. I am therefore leaving to one side the discussion itself which is not what interests us today. This subject therefore, this  $S$  which is here in our schema, is in a position to use an artifice, of being only able to use an artifice, of only acceding by means of an artifice to the grasping of this image, the real image which is produced at  $i(o)$ , and this because he is not there. It is only through the mediation of the mirror of the Other that he comes to place himself there. Since he is nothing, he cannot see himself there, moreover it is not himself qua subject that he is looking

for in this mirror. A very long time ago, in the "Discourse on psychic causality" the Bonneval discourse shortly after the war, I spoke about this "mirror without... surface in which nothing is reflected".

This enigmatic remark might then have led to a confusion with some more or less mystical ascetic practice. You should recognise today what I meant or, more exactly, begin to sense the point on which there can be centred the question of the function of the analyst as mirror - it is not the mirror of specular assumption that is in question - I mean as regards the place that he the analyst has to hold, even if it is in this mirror that there must be produced the virtual specular image. This virtual image which is here at  $i' (o)$ , here it is and it is indeed in effect what the subject sees in the other, but he only (4) sees it there in so far as he is in a place which is not confused with the place of what is reflected.

No condition binds him to be at the place of  $i(o)$  in order to see himself at  $i'(o)$ . Certain conditions bind him to be all the same in a certain field which is the one sketched by the lines limiting a certain conical volume.

Why then, in this original schema, did I put S at the point that I put it, where you will find it in the figure that I published, nothing implies that it should be there rather than elsewhere? In principle, it is there because, with respect to the orientation of the figure, you see it appearing, in a way, behind  $i(o)$  and that this position behind is not without its phenomenological correspondent which is expressed well enough by an expression which is not there by chance: "an idea in the back of one's head". Why therefore should ideas, which are generally the ideas which sustain us, be qualified as ideas at the back of one's head? It should also be clearly understood that it is not for nothing that the analyst stays behind the patient. Moreover, this thematic of what is in front and what is behind, is one that we are going to rediscover later on.

In any case, it would be well for you to note the degree to which the fact that the position of S in so far as it is not located, as it is only locatable somewhere in the field of the Other, in the virtual field that the Other develops by his presence as 'field of reflection of the subject, only in so far as this position of S is found there at a point big I and in so far as it is distinct from the place where  $i^*(o)$  is projected, it is only in so far as this distinction is not alone possible, but that it is commonplace that the subject can apprehend what is fundamentally illusory in his identification in so far as it is narcissistic.

There is skias, the shadow, der Schatten, Freud says somewhere and precisely in connection with what? Das verlorene Objekt, the lost object in the work of mourning. Der Schatten, the shadow, that which the narcissistic structure of the world contributes in terms of essential opacity in the relationship to the object, if it is surmountable, it is in so far as the subject through the Other can identify himself elsewhere. In effect, if this is where I am in my relationship to the Other, in so far as we have imaged it here, under the form of a mirror under the form that existentialist philosophy grasps it and grasps it to the



exclusion of everything else, and this is what constitutes its (5) limitation, to say that the other, is the one who sends us back our image - in effect, if the other is nothing other than the one who sends me back my image, I am only indeed, in effect, nothing other, than what I see myself to be. Literally, I am the big Other as other in so far as he himself, if he exists, sees the same thing as I, he also sees himself at my place. How can I know if what I see myself to be there is not the whole affair because, in short, if the Other is this mirror, it is enough for us - which is the simplest of hypotheses, because he is the Other - to suppose him, for his part, to be a living mirror, in order to conceive that he, for his part, sees just as much as I do and, in a word, when I look at him, it is he in me who looks at himself and who sees himself at my place, at the place that I occupy in him. It -is he who grounds the truth of this look if he is nothing other than his own look.

To dissipate this mirage, something I represented for you the other day, is enough, is necessary, happens every day, like this movement of the head of the little child who turns back towards the one who is carrying him. It hardly requires that much, a nothing, a flash - that is saying too much, because a flash of lightning was always considered to be something, the very sign of the father of the gods, no less, and it is moreover the reason why I am advancing it - but a fly flying past is enough, if it passes in this field and goes bzz, to make me locate myself elsewhere, to draw me out of the conical field of visibility of i(o) .

Do not believe that I am amusing myself if I introduce here the fly or the wasp who goes bzz, or anything whatsoever that makes a noise, that surprises us. You know well that this is the elective object which is sufficient in its minimal character to constitute that I call the signifier of a phobia. It is precisely in that that this sort of object can have an operational, instrumental function which is quite sufficient to put in question the reality, the consistency of the illusion of the ego as such. It is enough that anything whatsoever should shift in the field of the Other, become the point of support of the subject for there to be, on the occasion of one of these gaps, dissipated, made uncertain, put in question the consistency of the Other, of what is there qua field of narcissistic cathexis. Because, if we follow the teaching of Freud rigorously, this field is central, essential, this field is that around which the whole destiny of human desire is played out. But there is not only this field, the proof is that already in Freud, at the beginning of the introduction of this field, in Zur Einführung des Narzissmus, it is distinguished from another, from (6) the relationship to the archaic object, from the relationship to the nourishing field of the maternal object. It takes on its value in the Freudian dialectic by being distinguished first of all as being of a different order.

What I am introducing to you once again by telling you that this other field, which if I understand correctly what M. Conrad Stein identified in his work under the term of primary identification, is structured for us in an original, radical fashion by the presence of the signifier as such .... It is not simply for the pleasure of contributing a new articulation in what is indeed always the same field, it is that by highlighting this function-

of the signifier as decisive, as that through which what comes from that field is simply what opens out for us the possibility of emerging from the pure and simple capture in the narcissistic field, it is only by highlighting it in this way, by highlighting as essential the function of the signifying element that we can introduce clarifications, possibilities of distinctions which are those necessitated - as you will see, I will show it to you, I hope - imperiously necessitated by clinical questions which are the most concrete possible. Outside of which, this introduction of which I am speaking, the articulation of the signifier as such in the structuring of this field of the Other, of the big Other, there is no salvation. It is uniquely through it that there can be resolved clinical questions which up to now have remained unresolved and which, because they have remained unresolved, lead equally to irreducible confusions.

In other words, this 'skias onar anthropos, man, the dream of a shadow" is my dream, it is by moving about in the field of the dream in so far as it is the field of the wanderings of the signifier that I can glimpse that I can dissipate the effects of the shadow, that I will be able to know that it is only a shadow.

Of course, there is something which I can still not know for a long time, it is that I am dreaming, but it is already at the level and in the field of the dream. If I know how to question it properly, if I know how to articulate it properly, not alone do I triumph over the shadow, but I gain my first access to the idea that there is something more real than the shadow, that there is, first of all and at least, the real of desire from which this shadow separates me. You will say that precisely the world of the real is not the world of my desires, but it is also the Freudian dialectic which teaches us that I only make my way (7) in the world of objects by means of the path of obstacles placed to my desire. The object is not, it is through objections the object is found.

The first step towards reality is made at the level of and in the dream and, of course, for me to reach this reality presupposes that I wake up. It is not sufficient to define awaking topologically by saying that, in my dream, there is a little too much reality, and that this is what wakes me. Awakening is produced, in fact, when there comes, in the dream, something which is the satisfaction of the demand - this is not usual, but it does happen.

On a plane which is that of the analytic journeying of the truth about man contributed by analysis, we knew what awaking is, we glimpse where the demand is going. The analyst articulates what man is demanding. With analysis man wakes up. He perceives that, for the million years that the species is around, he has always eaten dead bodies. This is the last word of that which, under the name of primary identification, the first species of identification, Freud articulates: man has never ceased to eat his dead, even when he dreamt, for a short period of time, that he had radically repudiated cannibalism, this is what will be shown to us by what follows.

It was important, at that moment, to highlight that it is precisely along this path - where we are shown that desire is a dream-desire, that desire has the same structure as the dream - that the first correct step is taken in terms of what is a

journeying towards reality, that it is because of the dream and in the field of the dream that we first prove ourselves to be stronger than the shadow.

Now that I have in this way highlighted, articulated in a way that I apologise for, even though you are not able to see right away its clinical correlates, the relationships of i(o) with the big I, we are going to show - and it is already implied in my preceding discourse - everything that is enough to guide us in the relationships to i(o), because what is important for us, are the relationships of this operation coupled with small o, the object of desire.

I will return in what follows to that which, outside this massive experience of the dream, justifies the accent that I placed on the function of the signifier in the field of the Other. The identifications to the ego-ideal as such, every time they are invoked, and specifically for example in the introjection which (8) is that of mourning around which Freud made revolve an essential step of his conception of identification.... You will always see that by looking carefully at the case, the clinical articulation that is in question, that it is never a question of what I might call a massive identification, of an identification which could be compared to narcissistic identification, that it comes to counter-attack, as enveloping from being to being and, in order to illustrate what I have just said, because the image comes to me just now, in the relationship that, in Christian icons, the mother is with respect to the child that she holds before her on her knees - a figuration which is in no way a matter of chance, you can well believe me - : she envelops him, she is bigger than him. The two relationships of narcissistic identification and of anaclitic identification.... if it were this opposition that was in question between the identifications, it would be like a vast container with respect to a more limited interior world which reduces the first by its fulness.

I tell you right away that the most demonstrative things to be read in this regard is Versuch einer Entwicklungsgeschichte der Libido which you should read. It is the history of the development of the libido - by Karl Abraham, 1921, where there is question of nothing but that: the consequences to be drawn from what Freud had just contributed as regards the mechanism of mourning and the identification that it fundamentally represents.

There is not a single example, among the very numerous clinical illustrations given by Abraham of the reality of this mechanism, where you will not grasp unambiguously that it is always a question of the introjection, not of the reality of an other in so far as it is enveloping, full, even confusing on occasion, massive, but always of an einzigiger Zug, a single trait. The illustrations that he gives of it go a long way because in reality, under the title of Versuch.... "A short study of the development of the libido", there is question of nothing but that: of the function of the partial in identification. And concurrently - one could say: under the cover of this research, unless this research is only an excuse or a subdivision of it - it is in this work that Karl Abraham introduces the notion which has since circulated through the whole of analysis and was the foundation stone of a considerable edifice concerning neuroses and perversions and which is wrongly called the conception of the partial object.

(9) You are going to see what this is about. Before even being able to come back to the striking illustrations that are given of it, it is enough for me to indicate the place and for you to seek things where they are in order to perceive that there is no retortion to be given to what I am formulating here, namely that this article only takes on its meaning and its importance in so far as it is the illustration, on every page, of this trait of identification that is in question as ego-ideal identification, that it is an identification through isolated traits, by traits which are each one unique, by traits having the structure of the signifier.

This is also what obliges us to look a bit more closely at a relationship and what must be distinguished in it, if one wishes to see clearly, namely that in the same context, and not without reason, Abraham finds "himself introducing what I mentioned above and designated as the function of the partial object. And it is precisely this that is going to be in question concerning the relationships of *i(o)* with small *o*.

If you read Abraham, you will read the following: first of all he never wrote in any way that it was a question of a partial object - he describes die Obieketes partial Liebe, which means "the objects of partial love, l'amour partiel de l'objet". You will see that what he accentuates, when he speaks about what is its most exemplary object, the only veritable object - even though others can be inscribed in the same structure - is the phallus. How does he conceive of - and I intend to bring it to you in his text - this rupture, this disjunction which gives its value as a privileged object to the phallus? On every page, he has produced for us what is in question in the following fashion: "the objects of partial love", what does that mean for him? That means, not the love of this something which has fallen from the operation under the name of phallus, it means the love ready to accede to this normal object of the genital relationship, the other, that of the other sex in so far as there is precisely a stage which is this phallic stage, in which there is effectively love of the other, as complete as possible, minus the genitals. That is what is meant by "the objects of partial love".

But the important thing is in a note, I give you the reference right away: p.9 of the original edition and, in the Selected Papers, p.495. All the clinical examples that have been given lead to it, namely the example of two hysterical women in so far as they certainly had relationships with the father entirely (10) founded on variations of the relationship which manifest themselves at first, for example, in so far as the father is only apprehended... is only taken, following on a traumatic relationship, for his phallic value. After which, in dreams, the father appears with his complete image, but censored at the level of genitals under the form of the disappearance of pubic hair. All the examples go in the same direction, partial love of the object being the love of the object minus the genitals. And that to find there the foundation of the imaginary separation of the phallus as henceforth intervening as central exemplary function, pivotal function, I would say, may permit us to situate what is different, namely *o*, in little *o*, qua little *o*, the general function as such of the object of desire. At the heart of the function of little *o*, allowing there to be grouped, to be situated the different possible modes of the object, in so far as

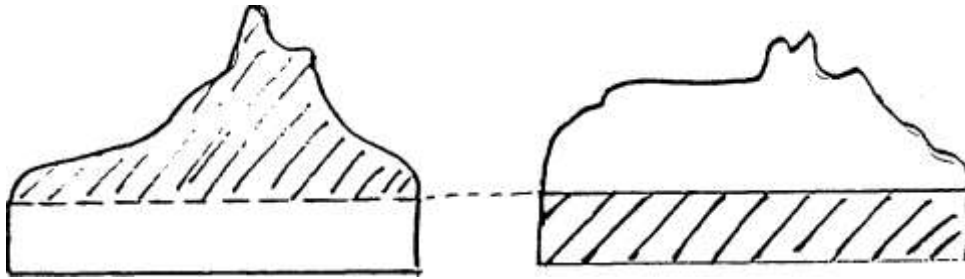
they intervene in the phantasy, there is the phallus. You should carefully understand that I have said that it is the object which allows the series to be situated, it is, if you wish, for us, an original point behind and ahead of a certain idea.

I read what Abraham wrote in the little note underneath: "Such a stage of object-love with genital exclusion seems to coincide in time with Freud's phallic stage in the psychosexual development of the individual, and moreover to have close internal relations with it," He adds "We may look upon hysterical symptoms as the obverse of those libidinal impulses which belong to object-love with genital exclusion and to the phallic organisation."

I must say that it is a long time since I read that text, having left it to two of you to look after it. It is perhaps not a bad thing for you to know-that the algebraic formula that I give of the hysterical phantasy is manifest here:  $\wedge > < > 0 \ll$  But the next step that I want you to take, is something different which is also found in the text but at which I believe no one has yet paused. I quote: Wir müssen ausserdem in Betracht Ziehen, dass bei jedem Menschen das eigene Genitale starker als irgendein anderer Körperteil mit narzisstischer Liebe besetzt ist. The fact is that "we must," he says, "not forget, too," - and at what moment: at the moment that he has asked himself, in the preceding lines, why things are that way, why this reluctance, why this rage, in a word, which already arises at the imaginary level, to castrate (11) the other to the quick, it is to this that there responds Grauen: horror, the preceding lines ought to justify the term rage that I introduced - "We must not forget, too, that the genitals are more intensely cathected by narcissistic love than any other part of the subject's own body", in order that there should be no ambiguity about his thought, it is precisely "Thus everything else in the object," anything at all, "can be loved sooner than the genitals."

I do not know whether you really appreciate what such a notification - which is not isolated like that as if it were a slip of the pen, but which everything here demonstrates to be the very underpinning of this thought - implies. I do not feel myself able to take that in my stride as if it were a commonplace truth, namely, despite the obviousness and the necessity of such an articulation, I do not know whether it has been highlighted by anyone up to the present.

Let us try to represent things a little more for ourselves. It is of course understood that the only reason for having introduced narcissism, is to show us that it is on the avatars of narcissism that there depends the process, the progress of objectal cathexis. Let us try to understand. Here is the field of one's own body, the narcissistic field, let us try to represent, for example, something which corresponds to what we are told, that nowhere is the cathexis stronger than at the level of the genitals. This presupposes that, whether we take the body from one side or from another, we end up with a diagram of the following kind:



(12) What Abraham's sentence implies, if we are to give it its value as a reason, as a consequence, is that, if this represents for us the profile of narcissistic cathexis, contrary to what one might think at first, it is not from on high that the energies are going to be withdrawn in order to be transferred to the object, it is not the-most cathected regions which are going to be discharged in order to begin to give a small cathexis to the object, I am saying - if we are speaking about the thinking of Abraham in so far as it is required by his whole book, in other words this book no longer has any meaning - it is on the contrary at the levels of the lowest cathexes that the energy we are faced with is going to be taken, in the world of the object, a certain cathexis, objectile cathexis, the object existing as object. Namely that it is in so far as in the subject - this is explained to us in the clearest fashion - the genitals remain cathected that in the object they are not. There is absolutely no way of understanding it otherwise.

Reflect a little whether all of this does not lead us to something much vaster and more important than you may believe. Because there is a thing which does not seem to be perceived about the function which is in the mirror stage, that of the specular image, which is that if it is in this mirror relationship that there occurs this something essential which regulates communication - the reversal or the warping or the transposing of what happens between the narcissistic object and the other object - should we not show a "little imagination and give some importance to the following which results from it: if effectively the relationship to the other as sexual or as not sexual is governed, organised in the case of man - the organising centre of this relationship in the imaginary takes place at the specular stage and moment - does this not make it worth the trouble to pause a little at the following, which is that there is a much more intimate relationship - it is never remarked - with what we call the face, the face-to-face relationship. We often use this term with a certain accent, but it does not seem that people have found the point about what is original in it.

One calls the genital relationship a tergo, a relationship more ferarum, it must not be that way for cats, if I may express myself in this way. It must indeed be the case. It will be enough for you to think about these lady cats to tell yourselves (13) that perhaps there is something decisive in the imaginary structuring which brings it about that the relationship with the object of desire is essentially structured, for the great majority of species, as having to come from behind, as a relationship to the world which consists in covering or in being covered, or indeed, in the rare species for whom this thing must come from the front, a species for whom a tangible moment of the apprehension of the object is a decisive moment - if you believe

both in the experience of the mirror stage and what I always tried to find there, to define there as a capital fact - as this object which is defined by the fact that in the case of the erect animal something essential is linked to the apparition of his ventral face, it does not seem to me that enough value has yet been given to all the consequences of this remark in what I would call the different fundamental positions, aspects of erotism. It is not only here and there that we see its traits and that the authors for a long time have remarked that almost all the primal scenes evoke, reproduce, are linked up around the perception of a coitus a tercero, why?

There are a certain number of remarks which could be organised in this direction, but what I want to point out to you, is that, in this reference, it is rather remarkable that the objects which are found to have, in the imaginary composition of the human psyche, an isolated value, and very specially as partial object, should be, as I might say, not only put out in front, but emerging in a way, if we take a vertical surface as measure, regulating in a way the depth of what is in question in the specular image, namely a surface parallel to the surface of the mirror, raising up with respect to this depth that which comes forward as emerging from libidinal immersion - I am not simply speaking of the phallus, but moreover of this essentially phantastical object which are called breasts.

The memory has come to me, in this connection, in a book by this splendid Mme Gyp, which is called Le petit Bob, an extraordinary epistle about the mapping out by little Bob, at the seaside, on a lady who smooths the way for him, of two little "sugar lumps" as he expresses it, whose appearance he discovers with a sense of wonder - and one cannot fail to notice a certain complacency in the author. I believe that one never fails to draw profit from reading authors who spend their time collecting childrens' (14) remarks. This one is certainly taken from life and, after all, the fact that this woman, whom we know to have been the mother of a now dead neurosurgeon who was no doubt himself the prototype of little Bob, was - it has to be said - was a bit of a numbskull. This does not prevent what results from it being of any lesser profit for us, on the contrary.'

Moreover, we will see better perhaps in the objectal relationship, the true function to be given to what we call nipple, the tip of the breast, we see it also in this Gestalt-like isolation against a background and, by this fact, of exclusion from this profound relationship with the mother which is that of feeding. If this were not the way things were, one would perhaps not often have such difficulty in getting the suckling to take hold of the bit in question, and perhaps also the phenomena of anorexia nervosa would have a different twist.

What must be said, what I want to say on this occasion, is therefore a little schema that it would be well for you to keep in mind concerning the mainspring of what happens in terms of reciprocity between narcissistic cathexis and object cathexis by reason of the liaison which justifies the denomination and the isolation of the mechanism. Not every object is to be defined as such as being purely and simply an object determined at the beginning, fundamentally, as a partial object, far from it. But the central characteristic of this relationship of one's own body

to the phallus must be taken as essential in order to see what it conditions retrospectively, nachtraglich, in the relationship to all objects, even the most primitive, whose character of being separable, possible to lose, would be different if there were not at the centre the destiny of this essential possibility of the phallic object emerging as a blank on the image of the body, as an island, like the islands of marine charts where the inside is not represented, but the periphery - namely that in the first place, in what concerns all the objects of this desire, this character of isolation as Gestalt at the beginning is essential. Because one will never sketch what is in the interior of the island. One will never enter under full sail into the genital object. The fact of characterising the object as genital does not define the "post-ambivalent" nature of the entry into this genital stage or then no one has ever entered it!

(15) Putting once again into your mental imagery, what I said today about the ventral image, brought to me the idea of the hedgehog. I read Le herisson. I would mention that at the moment when I was dwelling on the relationship between man and the animals, the idea of reading that came to me. How do they make love? It is clear that a tergo must present some problems. I will telephone Jean Rostand!

I am not going to dwell on this episode. .The reference to the hedgehog is a literary reference.

Archilochus expresses himself somewhere in this fashion: "The fox knows a lot, he knows all sorts of tricks. The hedgehog has only one, but it's a very good one". Now, what is in question concerns precisely the fox. Recalling or not recalling Archilochus, Giraudoux in Bella refers to the lightning style of a gentleman who has a marvellous contraption that he attributes to the fox - and perhaps it is the association of ideas which influenced it. Perhaps the hedgehog also knows that trick. It would, in any case, be important for him to know it, because it is a question of getting rid of his vermin, an operation which is extremely problematic for the hedgehog. As regards Giraudoux' fox here is how he proceeds: he enters very gently into the water beginning with the tail. He slips gently into it, he lets himself be submerged until there is nothing above the water but the tip of his nose on which the last fleas dance their final ballet, then he plunges into the water in order to be radically cleansed of everything that embrarrasses him.

Let this image illustrate for you that the relationship of anything narcissistic is conceived of as a root of castration.



Seminar 27:      Wednesday 28 June 1961

As the time comes for-me to make my final remarks before you this year, there comes to my mind Plato's invocation, at the beginning of the Critias. It is indeed here in effect that there is to be found, in so far as he speaks about tone as an essential element in the arrangement of what is to be said - may I, in effect, be able to maintain this tone. In order to do this, Plato invokes that which is the very object of what he is going to speak about in this incomplete text: nothing less than that of the birth of the Gods. A cross-checking which could not fail to please me, because, moreover, in a side-long way no doubt, we were very close to this theme to the point of hearing someone - whom you could consider from certain aspects as professing atheism - speaking to us about the gods as something which is found in the real.

It happens that what I tell you here is each time received by many as something addressed to themselves, to themselves as private persons (particulier) - I say private persons, not individuals - not certainly by whoever I wish because many, if not all, receive it, nor collectively either by the same token, because I notice that, from what is received, there is room between each one for contestation, if not for discordance. There is therefore a large place left between different people. This is perhaps what is called, in the proper sense, "speaking in the desert". It is certainly not that I have to complain this year about any desertion - as everyone knows in the desert there can be almost a crowd, the desert is not constituted by emptiness. The important thing, is precisely the following, which I dare to hope for: it is that it is a little in the desert that you have come to find me. Let us not be too optimistic, nor too proud of ourselves all the same, let us say that you have all had, however numerous you may be, a little worry about the boundaries of the desert. This indeed is the reason why I ensure that what I tell (2) you, is never in fact an obstacle to the role in which I find myself and which I have to hold with respect to a certain number of you, which is that of analyst.

In a word, it is in so far as my discourse, in the measure that on the path I took this year it is aimed at the position of the analyst - and that I distinguish this position in so far as it is at the heart of the response, of the satisfaction to be given by the analyst to the power of transference - in so far as at that very place which is his own, the analyst should distance himself

from any ideal of the analyst. In so far as my discourse respects this condition, I believe that it is able to allow this necessary conciliation, for some, of my two positions: that of analyst and that of one who speaks to you about analysis.

Under different titles, under different rubrics, one can formulate something, of course, which may be of the order of the ideal, there are the qualifications of the analyst, this is already enough to constitute an average in this order. The analyst, for example, should not be completely ignorant of a certain number of things, but it is not at all here that there exists what comes into play in his essential position as an analyst. Here, certainly, there opens up the ambiguity that exists about the word-knowledge (savoir). Plato, in this evocation at the beginning of the Critias, refers to knowledge, to the guarantee that, as regards what he is approaching, the tone will remain measured. The fact is that in his time the ambiguity was much less great. The meaning of the word knowledge there is much closer to what I am aiming at when I try to articulate for you the position of the analyst and it is indeed here that there is motivated, that there is justified, this beginning starting from the exemplary image of Socrates which is the one that I chose this year.

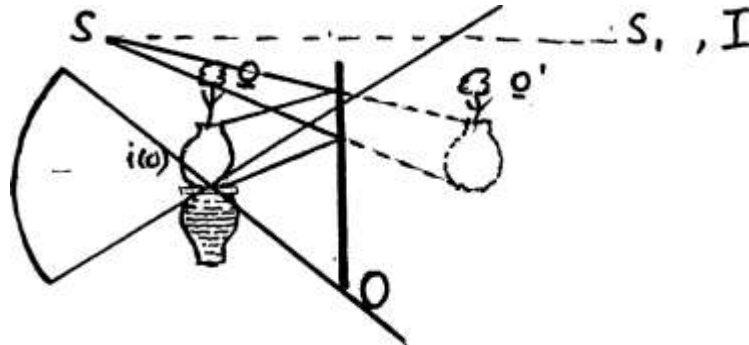
Here then I had arrived, the last time, at this point which I believe to be essential, a turning point in what we will have to enounce subsequently, about the function of the object *o* in my schemas in so far as it is what I have least elucidated up to now. I did so in connection with this function of the object in so far as it is a part which presents itself as a separated part - a partial object as they say - and, leading you back to the text which I would urgently ask you during these holidays to consult in detail and with attention, I pointed out to you that the one who introduced this notion of partial object, Abraham, understands by it in the most formal fashion a love of the object from which precisely this part is excluded, it is the object minus this part. This is the foundation of the experience around which there revolves this coming into play of the partial object, (3) of the interest that has been accorded it ever since. In the final analysis, the speculations of Winnicott, as an observer of infant behaviour, on the transitional object, refer back to the meditations of the Kleinian circle.

For a long time now, it seems to me that those who listen to me, if they are listening to me, may have had more than a suspicion regarding the most formal precisions of the fact that this partiality of the object has the closest possible relationship with what I have called the function of metonymy which lends itself in grammar to the same equivocations. I mean that there also you will be told that it is the part taken for the whole, which leaves everything open, at once as truth and as error:

- as truth, we are going to clearly understand that this part taken for the whole in the operation is transformed: it becomes its signifier,

- as error, if we attach ourselves simply to this aspect of part; in other words, if we refer ourselves to a reference to reality to understand it.

I sufficiently underlined this elsewhere, I am not coming back to it. The important thing is that you should remember that which, the last time, around the schema on the blackboard and of another one which I am going to take up again in a simpler form ...

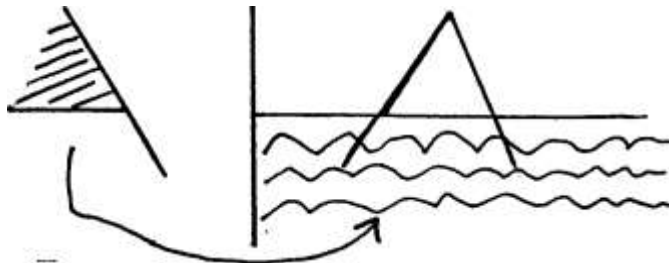


that you should know the relationship there is between the object of desire - in so far as, from the beginning, I underlined, articulated, insisted before you on this essential trait, its structuring as partial object in analytic experience - the relationship there is here and which I highlighted the last time, with the libidinal correspondent, because of that, is precisely (4) what remains most irreducibly cathected at the level of one's own body: the fundamental fact of narcissism and its central core.

The sentence that I extracted from Abraham, namely that it is in so far as the real phallus remains, unknown to the subject, that around which the maximum cathexis is conserved, preserved, kept, it is in this very relationship that this partial object finds itself elided, left blank in the image of the other qua cathected - the very term of cathexis taking on all the ambiguous meaning that it involves in the German besetzt - not simply with a charge, but with something which surrounds this central blank. And moreover, if we must attack something else that is obvious, is it not tangible that the image that we can erect at the high point of the fascination of desire is that precisely which, from the Platonic theme to the paintbrush of Botticelli, is renewed with the same form, that of the birth of Venus, Venus Aphrodite, the daughter of the foam, Venus emerging from the waves, this body erected above the waters of bitter love, Venus and Lolita as well.

What does this image teach us analysts, if we have been able to identify it precisely in the symbolic equation, to employ Fenichel's term, of girl = phallus? Because the phallus, what does it teach us if not that there is articulated here, not in a different way, but properly speaking in the same, nothing but the phallus, where we see it symbolically is precisely where it is not, where we suppose it to be manifesting itself under the veil in the erection of desire, is on this side of the mirror: where it is, is where it is not. If it is there before us in this dazzling body of Venus, it is precisely in so far as it is not

there and that this form is cathected, in the sense that we said earlier, with all the attractions, with all the Triebregungen which circumscribe it from outside, the phallus for its part with its charge remaining on this side of the mirror, within the narcissistic enclave.



(5) If the mirror is there, we have the following relationship, what emerges as a fascinating form is what finds itself cathected with the libidinal waves which come from the place from which it has been drawn, from the base, from the foundation, as I might say, from the narcissistic foundation, from which there is extracted everything which comes to form as such the objectal structure, on condition that we respect its relationships and its elements, that which constitutes the Triebregung as a function of desire. Desire in its privileged function - in the proper relationship which is called desire, which is distinguished from demand and from need - has its seat in this remainder to which corresponds in the image this mirage through which it is precisely identified to the part it lacks and whose invisible presence gives to what is called beauty precisely its brilliance, which means the antique himeros, which I approached on several occasions even to the extent of playing on its equivocation with hemera, the day.

Here is the central point around which there is played out what we have to think about the function of *o* and, of course, it is appropriate to come back to it again and to remind you of the myth from which we started. I say myth, this myth which I fabricated for you, this year, during the Symposium of the hand which stretches out towards the log. What strange heat must this hand carry with it in order that the myth should be true, in order that at its approach there should shoot forth this flame through which the object takes fire, a pure miracle against which all right-thinking people rise up, because however rare this phenomenon may be, it must again be considered as unthinkable that one cannot, in any case, prevent it. It is, in effect, the complete miracle that in the middle of this fire which has been induced a hand appears: such is the quite ideal image of a phenomenon imagined as being that of love. Everyone knows that the fire of love burns with only very little noise. Everyone knows that the damp log can contain it for a long time without anything being revealed outside. Everyone knows, in a word, what is entrusted, in the Symposium, to the nicest of the blockheads to articulate in a quasi-derisory fashion that the nature of love is the nature of dampness, which means precisely at bottom exactly the same thing as what is here on the blackboard: that the reservoir of objectal love, in so far as it is the love of something living, is precisely this Schatten, this narcissistic

shadow.

The last time, I put forward to you the presence of this shadow and today I would be quite willing to go so far as to call this stain of mildew (moi-sissure), of moi-si, perhaps better named than is believed, if the word "moi" is included in it. We would (6) be rejoining here the whole speculation of the tender Fenelon, he also, as they say, fluctuating when he also makes of the ego (moi) the sign of some "M.R.P. Alliance" with the Divinity! I would be just as capable as anyone else of pushing this metaphor very far and even so far as to make of my discourse a messenger of your sense of smell. This smell of dead rat which comes from a towel, provided one leaves it hanging on the edge of a bath, ought to allow you to see in it an essential human sign. My style of analyst, it is not uniquely by preference that I prefer for him ways that are qualified, that are stigmatised as abstraction, this may be simply to regulate in you a sense of smell that I could tickle you with as well as anyone else.

In any case, you see there being delineated behind this mythical point - which is surely indeed that born of libidinal evolution - that analysis, without ever knowing very well how to situate it on the scale, has circumscribed around the urinary complex with its obscure relationship to the action of fire, antinomical terms, one struggling against the other, involving the primitive ancestor. As you know - what a different ancestor! - analysis discovered that his first playful reflex with respect to the apparition of flame must have been to piss on it - renewed in Gulliver; the profound relationship of the uro, I burn, to urino, I piss on. All of this is inscribed at the foundation of infantile experience, the operation of drying sheets, the dreams of enigmatically starched linen - rather than the erotic nature of the laundress - in Mr Visconti. Those who are able to go to see the splendid production of ..... of all the possible whites illustrating on the stage, materialising for us the fact that and the reason why Pierrot is in white. In short, it is a very human little milieu which see-saws around the ambiguous moment between enuresis and the first pollutions.

It is around this that there is played out the dialectic of love and desire at its most tangible roots. The central object, the object of desire - without wanting to push any further this myth placidly incarnated in the first images in which there appear for the child what is called the first little geographical map, the little Corsica on the sheets that every analyst knows so well - the object of desire presents itself there at the centre of this phenomenon as an object rescued from the waters of your love. The object finds itself at a place which is precisely - and this (7) is the function of my myth - to be situated in the midst of this same burning bush where one day there was announced what there is in its opaque response: "I am who I am", at the same point where, for want of knowing who is speaking there, we are always at the stage of hearing the interrogation of the Che vuoi? whinnied by the devil of Cazotte, a strange metamorphosed camel's head from which moreover there may emerge the faithful little bitch of desire.

This is what we have to deal with in the small o of desire, this is the high point around which there pivots the reason why we have to deal with it right throughout its structure. But as regards the never superseded libidinal attraction, I mean that what comes before it in development, namely the first forms of the object, qua separated - the breasts, the faeces - only take on their function in so far as nachträglich, they are taken up as having played the same game, at the same place. Something enters the dialectic of love, from primitive demands, from the feeding Trieb which was established from the beginning: because the mother speaks, there is an appeal to the beyond of what can satisfy him, of this object which is called the breast, immediately taken up as an instrumental value, in order to distinguish this ground-, this background that the breast is not simply what is repulsed, what is refused because already one wants something else. It is also around the demand that the faeces - where the analyst recognised the value of the first gift - are held onto or given as response to the demand. Here therefore are these levels of anteriority where we have structured in the "oral" and "anal" relationship the function - where having is confused with being or serves as a summons for being - of the mother, beyond everything that she may contribute as an anaclitic support.

As I told you, it is starting from the phallus, from its advent into this dialectic, that there opens up precisely, because it has been reunited in it, the distinction between being and having. Beyond the phallic object the question - and make no mistake about it - opens up with respect to the object in a different way. What it presents here, in this emergence of the island (cf schema), this phantasy, this reflection in which precisely it incarnates itself as object of desire, manifests itself precisely in the image, I would almost say the most sublime one in which it can incarnate itself, the one that I put forward above, as object of desire: it incarnates itself precisely in what is lacking to it. It is starting from there that there originates everything that is going to be the (8) subsequent relationship of the subject to the object of desire. If it captivates by what is lacking to it here, how can that by which it captivates be found? The consequence and the horizon of the relationship to the object, if it is not above all a relationship of preservation, is, as I might say, to interrogate it about what it has in its stomach or what continues along the line where we are trying to isolate the function of little o, namely the properly Sadian line through which the object is interrogated to the depths of its being, through which it is solicited to turn itself back into what is most hidden in order to come to fill this empty form in so far as it is a fascinating form.

What is demanded of the object, is how far it can support this question. And after all, it can indeed only support it up to the point at which the final want-to-be is revealed, up to the point at which the question is confounded with the destruction of the object. It is because this is the term of this barrier that I

put in place for you last year, the barrier of beauty or of form, that through which the exigency of preserving the object is reflected back onto the subject himself.

Somewhere in Rabelais, Gargantua goes off to war: "Protect this thing which is the most beloved", says his wife designating with her finger that which, at the time, was much easier to designate unambiguously than in our time, because you know that this piece of clothing which was called the cod-piece had at that time its glorious character. That means: it cannot be kept at home. The second thing is properly speaking full of wisdom - this is never missing in any of Rabelais' remarks - it is the following: "Commit everything, in the battle everything can go, but this, protect it radically at-the centre", this indeed is what there is no question of putting at risk.

This allows a see-saw to occur in our dialectic. Because all of this would be very nice if it were so simple to think about desire starting from the subject, if we were to rediscover, at the level of desire, this myth which developed at the level of knowledge of making of the world this sort of vast web entirely drawn from the belly of the spider-subject. What does that mean, is it so simple for the subject to say: "I desire"? Not so simple, a lot less simple, as you know in your experience, than to say: "I love oceanically", as Freud so prettily expresses it in connection with his critique of religious effusions. I love, (9) I bathe, I dampen, I flood and what is more I dribble! And moreover, all this by mackling, more often scarcely enough to dampen a handkerchief especially since this happens more and more rarely! The great dampers are disappearing since the middle of the XIXth Century. If someone were to show me in our own time somebody like Louise Colet, I would go out of my way to go and see something else.

To be desiring, is something different. It rather seems that this leaves the I well in suspense, it leaves it so well stuck in any case in phantasy that I would defy you, to find this I of desire elsewhere than where M. Genet highlights it in Le balcon. I already spoke to you about M. Jean Genet the desire, this dear ..... about which I one day did a whole big seminar for you. You will easily find the passage in Le balcon of this play of phantasy where Genet admirably highlights something which girls know well, which is that whatever may be the lucubrations of these gentlemen who are parched with wanting to incarnate their phantasy, there is a trait common to all, which is that it is necessary that through some trait in the execution, this does not appear to be true because otherwise perhaps, if this became altogether true, one would no longer know where one was in it. There would perhaps not be, for the subject, a chance of surviving it. This is the place of the signifier S barred, S, in order that it may be known that here there is nothing but a signifier.

This indication of the inauthentic, is the place of the subject qua first person in the phantasy. The best way I find to

indicate it - I already suggested it several times somewhere - is to restore to its true form the cedilla of the c\_a in French. It is not a cedilla, it is an apostrophe. It is, xn the apostrophe of c'est, the first person of the unconscious and you can even strike out the t at the end: c'es, here is a way of writing the subject at the level of the unconscious, the subject of phantasy. It must be said that this does not facilitate the passage from the object to objectality. As you see - one speaks in the same way about the displacement of certain lines in the spectrum - there is a whole shifting of the object of desire with respect to the real object, in the measure that we may mythically aspire to it, that is fundamentally determined by the negative character of the apparition of the phallus. It was nothing other than this that I was aiming at earlier in making this circuit of the object for you - from its archaic forms up to its horizon of destruction - from the orifice-object, from the anificiel object, if I can express myself in this way, of the infantile past to the object (10) of the fundamentally ambivalent aim which remains that of desire up to the end. Because it is a pure lie - since moreover this is in no way required from a critical point of view - to speak in the relation of desire to the object of a so-called post-ambivalent phase.


Moreover, this fashion of ordering the ascending and concurring ladder of objects with respect to a phallic peak, is indeed what allows us to understand the similarity of level there is, for example, between a sadistic attack in so far as it is not at all a pure and simple satisfaction of a supposedly elementary aggression, but a way as such of questioning the object in its being, a way of deriving from it the "either" introduced at the phallic peak between being and having. That we find ourselves after the phallic stage just as full of ambivalence as before is not the worst misfortune. It is that by developing things in this perspective, what we can remark is that we never get very far, namely that there is always a moment when we are going to lose this object qua object of desire, precisely because we do not know how to pursue the question.

To force a being - since this is the essence of the o beyond the phallus - is not within everybody's competence. It is not simply this allusion that there are natural limits to constraint, to suffering itself, but that even to force a being towards pleasure is not a problem that we so easily resolve and for a good reason, which is that it is we who lead the dance, it is because we are the ones in question. Sade's Justine, everyone marvels at the fact that she resists, in truth, indefinitely to all the bad treatment, to such an extent that it is really necessary for Jupiter himself to intervene and fire off a thunderbolt in order to make an end of it. But it is because precisely Justine is only a shadow. Juliette is the only one who exists, because she is the one who is dreaming, as such and dreaming, it is she who must necessarily - read the story - expose herself to all the risks of desire and to ones which are no less than those which Justine herself runs. Obviously, we scarcely feel ourselves to be worthy of such company, because it goes a long way. Not too much should be made of it in polite



conversation. The people who are interested only in their own little selves find only a very minimal interest in it.

(11) We are brought back therefore to the subject. How then is it from the subject that this whole dialectic of desire can be carried on, if he is nothing, for his part, but an apostrophe inscribed in what? In a relationship which is above all the relationship to the desire of the Other? It is here that there intervenes the function of I, the signifier of the ego-ideal and very precisely in so far as I told you that it is from it that there is preserved i(o), the ideal ego, this precious thing that one attempts to take from this humidity, this ceramic, this little pot which has always been the symbol of the created thing in which everyone tries to give some consistency to himself. Everything converges on it, of course, all the notions of form and of model. We have here, in the reference to the other, this construction of this support around which there is going to be able to be played out the grasp of the flower or not. Why? The fact is, of course, that there is no other means for the subject to subsist. What does analysis teach us, if not that the character, the analogically radical function of the image of the phobia, is what Freud was able to unearth in the ethnographic formation of that time under the rubric of the totem which is now rather shaken.

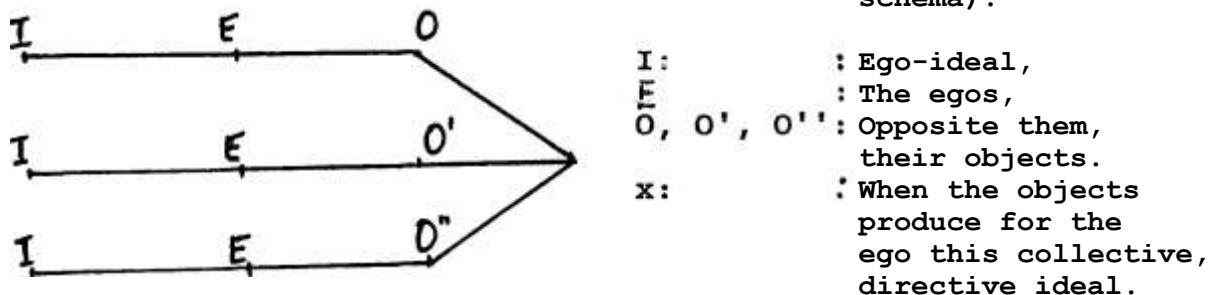


But what remains of it? Nothing other than the fact that one is quite prepared to risk everything for desire, for the fight, for the prestige, even one's life, but not without a certain limiting image, not the dissolution of the bank (rivage) which rivets the subject to this image. That a fish, a tree do not have phobias. That a Bororo is not an Ara is not a phobia of the Ara. Even if this apparently involves analogous taboos, the single common factor between the two is the image in its function of circumscribing and discerning the object, it is the ideal ego. This metaphor of the desirer in almost anything whatsoever can, in effect, always become urgent again in an individual case. Remember little Hans? It is at the moment when what is desired finds itself without defence with respect to the desire of the Other, when it threatens the bank, the limit, i(o), it is then that the eternal artifice is reproduced and that the subject constitutes it, makes it appear as enclosed in "the bear's skin before having killed it", but it is in reality an inside-out bear-skin, and it is within that the phobic protects what? The other aspect of the specular image. The specular image has a cathexis aspect, of course, but also a defence aspect, "a dam against the Pacific" of maternal love. Let us simply say that the cathexis of the other is, in short, defended by the ideal ego and that the final cathexis of his own phallus is defended by the (12) phobic. In a certain fashion, I would go so far as to say that phobia is the light that appears to warn you that you are driving on the reserves of your libido. One can still drive a certain time with that. This is what the phobia means and this indeed is why its support is the phallus as signifier.

I will not need, in this connection, to recall to you, in our previous experience, everything that illustrates, everything that

confirms this way of envisaging things. Simply remember the subject of "The analysis of a single dream" by Ella Sharpe, this little cough when he warns the analyst before coming into her office, everything that is hidden behind this, everything that emerges with his stories, his familiar reveries: "What would I do if I were in a place where I did not want to be found? I would give a little bark. People would say: it's only a dog". Everyone knows the other associations: the dog who, one day, masturbated along his leg, I mean the patient's leg. What do we find, in this exemplary history? That the subject, more than ever in a defensive position at the moment of entering the analytic office, pretends to be a dog. He pretends to be it, it is all the others who are dogs before he enters. He warns them to take on again their -human appearance before he enters. You must not imagine that this corresponds in any way to a special interest in dogs. In this example, as in all the others, to be a dog has only one meaning, that means that one goes "bow-wow", and nothing else. I would bark, people would say - those who are not there - "it's a dog", the value of the einziger Zug.

And moreover, when you take up the schema through which Freud gives us the origin of the identification which is properly that of the ego-ideal, from what angle does he take it? From the angle of Group Psychology. What happens, he tells us, anticipating the great Hitlerian explosion, to make everyone enter into this sort of fascination which allows the massing, the solidification of what is called a crowd to take place? (see the schema).



element. In order that collectively all the subjects, at least for an instant, should have this same ideal which permits anything and everything for a rather short time, what is necessary, he says to us? It is that all these exterior objects, äusseres Objekt should be taken as having a common trait, the einziger Zug

Why does this interest us? It is because what is true at the collective level is also true at the individual level. The function of the ideal, in so far as it is around it that there is accommodated the relationship of a subject to his objects, it is very precisely in so far as, in the world of a subject who speaks, it is a pure and simple matter of a metaphorical attempt to confer on all of them a common trait. The world of the subject who speaks, which is called the human world, corresponds to the following: it is that for all objects, to take them in this animal world that analytic tradition has made the exemplary operation of defensive identifications, it is a pure matter of decree to fix this trait common to the diversity of objects,

whether they are dogs, cats, badgers or deer. To decree that in order to subsist in a world where the i(o) of the subject is respected they all, whatever they are, go "bow-wow", this is the function of the einziger Zug.

It is essential to keep it structured in this way. Because, outside this register, it is impossible to conceive of what Freud means in the psychology of mourning and melancholia. What is it that differentiates mourning from melancholia? With my guidelines you will clarify it.

For mourning, it is quite certain that it is around the metaphorical function of traits conferred on the love object in so far as they then have narcissistic privileges, that there is going to unfold all the length and difficulty of mourning. In other words and in a fashion all the more significant that he says it as if he were surprised at it, Freud insists clearly on what is in question: the real loss, the mourning (14) consists in authenticating piece by piece, bit by bit, sign by sign, big I element by big I element to the point of exhaustion, when that has been done, finished. But what does that mean, if this object was an o, an object of desire, if not that the object is always masked behind its attributes, almost made banal.

But the business begins, as one might expect, only if we start from pathology, namely from melancholia where we see two things: the fact is that the object is - a serious thing - much less graspable because it was certainly more present and because it unleashed infinitely more catastrophic effects, because they go so far as the drying up of this Trieb which Freud describes as the most fundamental one, that which attaches you to life. You have to read, to follow this text, understand what Freud indicates about some disappointment or other that he does not know how to define. And there, what are we going to see for such a masked, such an obscure object? It is none of the traits of an object which are not seen that the subject can attack, but in so far as we follow him, we analysts, we can identify some of them through those that he aims at, namely the characteristics that he himself has: "I am nothing, I am only a ..... " Note that it is never a question of the specular image. The melancholic does not tell you that he looks bad or that he has a bad taste in his mouth or that he is twisted in some way. He is the lowest of the low, he draws catastrophies down on all his kin: he is entirely, in his self-accusations, in the domain of the symbolic. And to it you can add having: he is ruined.

Is this not designed to put you on the path of something? I am only indicating it to you today by marking out for you a specific point which, with respect to these two terms of mourning and melancholia, marks to my eyes at least for the moment, a converging point: it is the one I would call, not of the mourning, nor of the depression of the subject about the loss of an object, but of a certain type of remorse, in so far as it is unleashed by a certain type of event which we will signal as being of the order of the suicide of the object. Remorse,

therefore, in connection with an object who has entered, under some heading, into the field of desire and who, because of that fact or of some risk that he ran in the adventure, has died.

Analyse these cases, the way has already been traced for you by Freud. Already, in normal mourning, he indicates to you that this drive that the subject turns against himself could well be (15) with respect to the object, an aggressive drive. Investigate this dramatic remorse in the cases where it occurs. You will see perhaps how great is the force from which there returns, against the subject himself, a power of insult which can be related to that of melancholia. You will find its source in the fact that with this object, which has thus vanished, it was therefore not worth the-trouble to have taken, as I might say, so many precautions. It was therefore not worth the trouble to have turned aside from one's true desire, if the desire of the object was, as it seems, that one should go so far as to destroy it. This extreme example - which it is not so rare to see, with the waning of such a loss, after what happens between desiring subjects in the course of these long embraces that are called the oscillations of love - is something which carries us to the heart of the relationship between the big I and the small o.

Undoubtedly this limit on something around which there is always put in question the security of the limit, here is what is in question at this point of the phantasy which is the one about which we should know what to do. This supposes undoubtedly, in the analyst, a complete mental reduction of the function of the signifier, in so far as he ought to grasp by what principle, by what angle, by what detour it is always what is in question when it is a question of the position of the ego-ideal.

But there is something else which I can only, arriving here at the end of my discourse, indicate and which concerns the function of small o: what Socrates knows and what the analyst should at least glimpse, is that with the small o the question is completely different fundamentally to that of the access to any ideal. What is at stake here, what happens on this island, this field of being that love can only circumscribe, is something which the analyst can only think can be filled by any object whatsoever, that we are led to vacillate about the limits at which this question is posed: "Who are you" with any object whatsoever which has once come into the field of our desire, that there is no object which has a greater or lesser price than another. And here is the mourning around which there is centred the desire of the analyst.

Agathon, towards whom, at the end of the Symposium, Socrates' praise is going to be directed, is a royal idiot. He is the biggest idiot of them all, he is even the only complete idiot! And it was on him that there was conferred the honour of saying, in a ridiculous form, the truest thing about love. He does not (16) know what he is saying, he plays the fool, but that has no importance and he is no less the beloved object: Socrates says to Alcibiades: "Everything that you are saying there to me is for him".

The function of the analyst, with what it involves in terms of a certain mourning, but, and after all, what does that mean, if not that we rejoin there this truth that Freud himself left outside the field of what he could understand. A singular thing and probably due to these reasons of comfort - let us say those that I have exposed to you to-day under the formula of the necessity of protecting the china - it does not yet seem to have been understood that this is what "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" means - people do not want to translate it, because this would probably not be Christian, in the sense of a certain ideal but it is a philosophical ideal, believe me: Christianity has not yet said its last word! - that means: with respect to anybody whatsoever, to pose the question of the perfect destructiveness of desire.

With respect to anybody whatsoever, you can have the experience of knowing how far you dare to go in questioning a being, with the risk for yourself of disappearing.