

# POSITION OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

remarks made at the 1960 Bonneval colloquium

rewritten in 1964



*Jacques Lacan*

Henri Ey—thanks to his authority, which has made him the most influential figure in French psychiatric circles—brought together in his ward at Bonneval Hospital a very broad spectrum of specialists around the theme of the Freudian unconscious (October 30 to November 2, 1960).

The talk given by my students Laplanche and Leclaire promoted at the colloquium a conception of my work, which, since the talk was published in *Les temps modernes*, has become definitive, despite the divergence between their positions manifested therein.

Interventions made at a colloquium, when there is something at stake in the debate, sometimes require a good deal of commentary to be situated.

And when the texts have been thoroughly rewritten, the task becomes an arduous one.

Its interest wanes, moreover, with the time it takes to rewrite them, for one would have to replace it with what takes place during that time considered as logical time.

In short, three and a half years later, though barely having had the leisure to monitor the interval, I made a decision that Henri Ey, in a book on the colloquium published by Desclée de Brouwer, introduced in the following way:

This text summarizes Jacques Lacan's interventions which, due to their importance, formed the axis of all the discussions.

The transcripts of these interventions have been condensed by Jacques Lacan in these pages written at my request in March 1964.<sup>1</sup>

I hope the reader will allow that for me this logical time has been able to reduce the circumstances, in a text extracted from a more intimate gathering, to this mention of them.

(1966)

Remarks made at a colloquium such as this, inviting philosophers, psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychoanalysts on the basis of their respective expertise, fail to agree on the level of truth of Freud's texts.

Concerning the unconscious, one must go straight to the crux of Freud's experience.<sup>2</sup>

The unconscious *is* a concept founded on the trail [*trace*] left by that which operates to constitute the subject.

The unconscious *is not* a species<sup>3</sup> defining the circle of that part of psychical reality which does not have the attribute (or the virtue) of consciousness.

There may be phenomena that are subsumed by the unconscious according to both of these acceptations; the latter remain no less foreign to each other. The only relation between them is one of homonymy.

The importance I attribute to language as cause of the subject requires that I be more specific: aberrations abound when the concept "unconscious" is depreciated by being applied to phenomena *ad libitum* that can be classified under the homonymous species [*espèce*]. It is unthinkable that the concept might be restored on the basis of these phenomena.

Let me specify my own position concerning the equivocation to which the "is" and "is not" of my initial positions might give rise.

The unconscious *is* what I say it is,<sup>4</sup> assuming we are willing to hear what Freud puts forward in his theses.

Saying for Freud the unconscious *is not* what goes by that name in other contexts could be of little value if what I meant were not grasped: the unconscious, prior to Freud, *is not* purely and simply. That is because it names nothing [prior to Freud] that counts any more as an object—nor warrants being granted any more existence—than what would be defined by situating it in the "un-black" [*l'in-noir*].

The unconscious before Freud has no more consistency than this un-black—*viz.* the set of what could be classified according to the various meanings of the word "black," by dint of its refusal of the attribute (or virtue) of blackness (whether physical or moral).

What indeed could the following possibly have in common—to take the eight definitions reviewed by Dwelshauvers in a book that is old (1916),<sup>5</sup> but not so far out-of-date that, were such a catalogue to be prepared anew today, its heterogeneity would not be diminished: the sensory uncon-

scious (implied by the effects of contrast and of so-called optical illusions); the automatic unconscious developed by habit; the co-consciousness<sup>6</sup> (?) of split personalities; ideational emergencies of an oriented latent activity which imposes itself [upon consciousness] as in creative thought, and telepathy, which certain people would like to relate to the latter; the learned and even integrated reserves of memory; the passions in our character that get the better of us; the heredity that is recognized in our natural gifts; and finally the rational or metaphysical unconscious that is implied by "mental acts"?

(None of them can be grouped together, except confusedly, because of what psychoanalysts have added by way of obscurantism in failing to distinguish the unconscious from instinct, or, as they say, from the instinctual—the archaic or primordial, succumbing thereby to an illusion decisively dispelled by Claude Lévi-Strauss—and even from the genetics of a supposed "development.")

My claim is that they have nothing in common if one grounds oneself in psychological objectivity, even if the later is derived by extension from the schemas of psychopathology, and that this chaos merely reflects psychology's central error. This error consists in taking the very phenomenon of consciousness to be unitary, speaking of the same consciousness—believed to be a synthetic faculty—in the illuminated area of a sensory field, in the attention which transforms it, in the dialectic of judgment, and in ordinary daydreaming.

This error is based on the undue transfer to these phenomena of the value of a thought experiment which uses them as examples.

The Cartesian *cogito* is the major, and perhaps terminal, feat of this experiment in that it attains knowledge certainty. But it all the better exposes that which privileges the moment upon which it is based, and proves how fraudulent it is to extend its privilege to phenomena endowed with consciousness, in order to grant them a status.

For science, the *cogito* marks, on the contrary, the break with every assurance conditioned by intuition.

And the much sought-after [*recherchée*] latency of this founding moment, as *Selbstbewusstsein* [self-consciousness], in the dialectical sequence of Hegel's phenomenology of mind, is based upon the presupposition of absolute knowledge.

Everything, on the contrary, points to the distribution of consciousness in psychical reality—however the latter's texture is ordered—consciousness being heterotopic in terms of levels and erratic at each level.

The only homogeneous function of consciousness is the imaginary capture of the ego by its specular reflection, and the function of misrecognition [*méconnaissance*] which remains linked to it.

The negation [*dénégation*]<sup>7</sup> inherent in psychology in this regard should rather, following Hegel, be chalked up to the law of the heart and the delusion of presumption.

The subvention received by this perpetuated presumption, to consider only what it receives in the way of scientific honors, raises the question of where its value is situated; it cannot come down to the mere publication of more or less copious treatises.

Psychology transmits ideals: the psyche therein no longer represents anything but the sponsorship [*parrainage*] which makes it qualify as academic. Ideals are society's slaves.

A certain kind of progress in our own society illustrates this, when psychology furnishes not only the means, but even defers to the wishes of market research.

When a market study had concluded upon the proper means by which to sustain consumption in the U.S.A., psychology enlisted, enlisting Freud along with it, to remind the half of the population most exposed to business' goal that women only realize their potential through gender ideals (cf. Betty Friedan on the directed wave of the *Feminine Mystique*,<sup>8</sup> in that post-war decade).

Perhaps psychology, through this ironic channel, reveals why it has always subsisted. But scientists may recall that the ethics implicit in their training commands them to refuse all such blatant ideology. The unconscious as understood by psychologists is thus debilitating for thought, due to the very credence thought must lend it in order to argue against it.

Now the debates that have taken place during this colloquium have been remarkable in that they have constantly turned to the Freudian concept in all its difficulty, and have derived their very strength from this difficulty.

That is remarkable inasmuch as psychoanalysts' only endeavor, in today's world, is to enter psychology's ranks. The aversion everything coming from Freud meets with in their community has been plainly avowed, especially by a subset [*fraction*] of the psychoanalysts present.

This fact cannot be excluded from the examination of the issue at hand. No more than can another fact: that it is due to my teaching that this colloquium has reversed the trend. I am saying this not merely to make mention of the fact—many have done so—but also to note that this obliges me to account for the paths I have followed.

What psychoanalysis finds itself enjoined to do when it returns to the fold of "general psychology" is to sustain what deserves to be exposed—right here and not in the far-off realms of our former colonies—as primitive mentality. For the kind of interest that psychology comes to serve in our present society, of which I have given an idea, finds therein its advantage.

Psychoanalysis thus underwrites it by furnishing an astrology that is more decent than the one to which our society continues to surreptitiously sacrifice.

I thus consider justified the prejudice psychoanalysis encounters in Eastern Europe. It was up to psychoanalysis not to deserve that prejudice, as it was possible that, presented with the test of different social exigencies, psychoanalysis might have proved less tractable had it received harsher treatment [*elle s'y fût trouvée moins traitable d'être plus mal traitée*]. I gauge that on the basis of my own position in psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis would have done better to examine its ethics and learn from the study of theology, following a path indicated by Freud as unavoidable. At the very least, its deontology in science should make it realize that it is responsible for the presence of the unconscious in this field.

This function was served by my students at this colloquium, and I have contributed thereto in accordance with the method that I have constantly adopted on such occasions, situating each in his position in relation to the subject. The main axis is sufficiently well indicated in the recorded responses.

It would be of some interest, if only to the historian, to have the transcripts of the talks actually given, even if they were cut where blanks appeared due to defects in the recording devices. They underscore the incompetence of he whose services designated him as the person who could highlight with the greatest tact and accuracy the detours of a moment of combat in a place in which ideas were exchanged—his connections, his culture, and even his social savvy [*entregent*] allowing him to understand better than anyone else the recordings with the intonations. His failings [*défaillance*] already ensconced him in the good graces of defection.<sup>9</sup>

I do not deplore the occasion that was missed, everyone having since taken ample advantage of a time-worn practice, carefully reworking his presentation. I will take advantage of the occasion to explain my present doctrine of the unconscious, all the more legitimately as the resistances of a peculiar allocation of roles impeded me from saying more about it then.

This consideration is not political, but technical. It has to do with the following condition, established by my doctrine: psychoanalysts are part and parcel of the concept of the unconscious, as they constitute that to which the unconscious is addressed. I thus cannot but include my discourse on the unconscious in the very thesis it enunciates: the presence of the unconscious, being situated in the locus of the Other, is to be sought in every discourse, in its enunciation.

The very subject of the agent who sustains this presence—if he is an analyst—must, according to this hypothesis, in the same movement be

given form [*informé*] and "thrown into question," in other words, experience his subjection to splitting by the signifier.

Hence the sense of an arrested spiral one finds in the work presented by my students, Serge Leclaire and Jean Laplanche. For they limit it to the testing of a spare part [*pièce détachée*].

And that is the very sign that my statements<sup>10</sup> are, in all their rigor, made firstly for the function they only *serve* in their stead.

In the introductory phase, one can illustrate the effect of enunciation by asking a student if he can imagine the unconscious existing in animals, unless they have some degree of language [*à moins de quelque effet de langage*]*—*human language. If he indeed agrees that that is the condition which would allow him to at least consider the possibility, you have verified that he distinguishes between "unconscious" and "instinct."

Propitious initial omen, for if we were to call upon every analyst as well, regardless of the doctrine he was most trained in, and ask him whether, in fulfilling his role (bearing the patient's discourse, restoring the effect of meaning, throwing himself into question [*s'y mettre en cause*]<sup>11</sup>) by responding, as well as by remaining silent, he ever had the feeling he was dealing with anything like an instinct—could he say yes?

Reading analytic writings and official translations of works by Freud (who never wrote the word "official") that use the term "instinct" all across the board, there is perhaps a point in obviating a rhetoric which obturates the concept's effectiveness. The style appropriate for a paper on [analytic] experience does not constitute the whole of theory. But it guarantees that the statements by which analytic experience operates preserve within themselves the backward movement [*recul*]<sup>12</sup> of enunciation in which the effects of metaphor and metonymy are constituted, i.e., in accordance with my theses, the very mechanisms Freud described as those of the unconscious.

But here the question is legitimately raised: are they effects of language or of speech? Let us assume that the question here only assumes the outlines of Saussure's dichotomy. Directed at what interests Saussure—effects on language [*la langue*]*—*it supplies warp and woof to what is woven between synchrony and diachrony.

When it is directed at what throws us into question (as much as he who questions us, if he is not already lost in the stays of his question), namely the subject, the alternative [language or speech] proposes itself as a disjunction. Now it is this very disjunction that provides us with the answer, or, rather, it is in constituting the Other as the locus of our answer—the Other furnishing the answer in a form that inverts the question into a message—that we introduce the effective disjunction on the basis of which the question has meaning.

The effect of language is to introduce the cause into the subject. Through this effect, he is not the cause of himself; he bears within himself the worm of the cause that splits him. For his cause is the signifier, without which there would be no subject in the real. But this subject is what the signifier represents, and the latter cannot represent anything except to another signifier: to which the subject who listens is thus reduced.

One therefore does not speak to the subject. It<sup>13</sup> speaks of him, and that is how he apprehends himself; this is all the more necessary in that, before he disappears as subject beneath the signifier which he becomes, due to the simple fact that it addresses him, he is absolutely nothing. But this nothing is sustained by his advent, now produced by the appeal made in the Other to the second signifier.

As an effect of language, in that he is born of this original split, the subject translates a signifying synchrony into this primordial temporal pulsation that is the constitutive fading of his identification. That is the first movement.

But in the second, desire—bedding down in the signifying cut in which metonymy is effectuated, the diachrony (called "history") which was inscribed in fading—returns to the kind of fixity Freud assigned to unconscious wishes (see the last sentence of the *Traumdeutung* [*The Interpretation of Dreams*]).

This secondary subornation<sup>14</sup> not only closes<sup>15</sup> the effect of the first in projecting the topology of the subject into the instant of fantasy; it seals it, refusing to allow the subject of desire to realize that he is an effect of speech, to realize, in other words, that he is but the Other's desire.<sup>16</sup>

That is why any discourse is within its rights not to consider itself responsible for this effect—any discourse except that of the teacher when he addresses psychoanalysts.

I have always considered myself accountable for such an effect, and, while unequal to the task of overcoming it [*d'y parer*], it was the secret prowess of each of my "seminars."

For the people who come to hear me are not the first communicants Plato exposed to Socrates' questioning.

That the "secondary" they come out of must be doubled with an introductory,<sup>17</sup> says enough about its shortcomings and superfluities. Of their "philosophy [classes]," most have retained but a grab-bag of phrases—a catechism gone haywire—that anaesthetizes them from being surprised by truth.

They are thus even more easily preyed upon by prestige operations, and by the ideals of high personalism by which civilization presses them to live beyond their means.

Intellectual means, that is.

The ideal of authority with which the medical candidate falls in; the opinion poll in which one finds the mediator of relational impasses; the meaning of meaning<sup>18</sup> in which every quest finds its alibi; phenomenology, a lap that awaits whatever may fall into it—the range is vast and the dispersion great at the outset of an ordered obtusion.

Resistance, equal in its effect of denial despite Hegel and Freud, misfortune of consciousness and discontent of civilization.

A *χουνή*<sup>19</sup> of subjectification underpins resistance, which objectifies the false evidence of the ego and routes every proof away from certainty and towards endless procrastination. (Should I be opposed by an appeal to Marxists, Catholics, or even Freudians, I promise to request a roll call.)

That is why only the kind of teaching that grinds up this *χουνή* can trace out the path of what is known as “training analysis” [*analyse didactique*]; for the results of [analytic] experience are distorted by the very fact of being inscribed in that *χουνή*.

This doctrinal contribution has a name—it is, quite simply, “scientific spirit”—and it is altogether lacking in the places where psychoanalysts are recruited.

My teaching is anathema in that it is inscribed in that truth.

The objection that has been raised, concerning the impact of my teaching on the transference of analysts in training, will make future analysts laugh, if, thanks to me, there are still analysts for whom Freud exists. But what it proves is the absence of any doctrine of training analysis that includes the latter's relations with the affirmation of the unconscious.

It will thus be understood that my use of Hegel's phenomenology bore no allegiance to the system, but was intended as an example with which to counter the obvious fact of identification. It is in the way in which one conducts an examination of a patient and draws one's conclusions that a critique of intellectual fables [*bestiaire*] is put forward. It is by not avoiding the ethical implications of our praxis for deontology and scientific debate that the beautiful soul will be unmasked. The law of the heart, as I have said, is a bigger nuisance than paranoia. It is the law of a ruse which, in the ruse of reason, traces out a meander whose current is seriously slowed.

Beyond that, Hegel's statements, even if one sticks to the text, provide the opportunity to always say something Other,<sup>20</sup> something Other which corrects therein the link of phantasmatic synthesis, while preserving their effect of exposing the lures of identification.

That is my *Aufhebung* (sublation), which transforms Hegel's—his lure—into an occasion to point out, in lieu and place of the leaps of an “ideal progress,” the avatars of a lack.

To confirm in its function this point of lack, nothing is better at this point than Plato's dialogue, insofar as it falls into the comic genre, does not

shy away from indicating the point at which one can do nothing but oppose the “marionette's mask to wooden insults,” and remains stone-faced through the centuries, rooted to a hoax, waiting for someone to find a better hold than the one it clings to [*fige*] in its judo match with the truth.

That is why Freud is a guest one can risk inviting impromptu to the *Symposium*, if only on the basis of the short note<sup>21</sup> in which he indicates what he owes to its clear-sightedness [*justesse*] concerning love, and perhaps concerning the tranquillity of its view of transference. No doubt he was the kind of guy who would revive its bacchanalian lines, which no one remembers having said after the drunkenness.

My seminar was not “where it speaks” [*là où ça parle*], as people said jokingly. It brought forth the *place* from which it could speak, opening more than one ear to hear things which, had they not been recognized, would have been passed over indifferently. One of my listeners put this naively, announcing the marvelous fact that, that very evening, or perhaps just the day before, he had come across in a session with a patient what I had said in my seminar—verbatim.

The place in question is the entrance to the cave, towards the exit of which Plato guides us, while one imagines seeing the psychoanalyst entering there. But things aren't that easy, as it is an entrance one can only reach just as it closes (the place will never be overrun with tourists), and the only way for it to open up a bit is by calling from the inside.

This is not unsolvable, assuming the “open sesame” of the unconscious consists in having speech effects, the unconscious being linguistic in structure,<sup>22</sup> but requires that the analyst reexamine the way it closes.

What we have to account for is a gap, beat, or alternating suction, to follow some of Freud's indications, and that is what I have proceeded to do in grounding it in topology.

The structure of that which closes [*se ferme*] is indeed inscribed in a geometry in which space is reduced to a combinatory: it is what is called an “edge” in topology.<sup>23</sup>

By formally studying the consequences of the irreducibility of its cut, one could rework some of the most interesting functions between aesthetics and logic.

One notices that it is the closing<sup>24</sup> of the unconscious which provides the key to its space—namely the impropriety of trying to turn it into an inside.

That closing also demonstrates the core of a reversible time, quite necessarily introduced if we are to grasp the efficiency of discourse; it is rather easily perceived in something I have been emphasizing for a long time: the retroactive effect of meaning in sentences, meaning requiring the last word of a sentence to be sealed [*se boucler*].

*Nachträglichkeit* (remember that I was the first to extract it from Freud's texts), *Nachträglichkeit* or deferred action [*après-coup*], by which trauma becomes involved in symptoms, reveals a temporal structure of a higher order.

But above all, experience with this closing shows that it would not be gratuitous on the part of psychoanalysts to reopen the debate over the *cause*, a phantom that cannot be exorcised from [*conjuré de*] thought, whether critical<sup>25</sup> or not. For the cause is not, as is said of being as well, a lure of forms of discourse<sup>26</sup>—otherwise it would have long since been dispelled. It perpetuates the reason<sup>27</sup> that subordinates the subject to the signifier's effect.

It is only as instance<sup>28</sup> of the unconscious, the Freudian unconscious, that one grasps the cause at the level at which Hume attempts to flush it out [*débusquer*], which is precisely the level at which it takes on consistency: the retroaction of the signifier in its efficiency,<sup>29</sup> which must be rigorously distinguished from the final cause.

In demonstrating that that is the only true first cause, the apparent discordance of Aristotle's four causes would dissipate; from their terrain, analysts could contribute to this reformulation.

They would have the benefit of being able to use the Freudian term "overdetermination" as something other than an evasive answer. What follows introduces the feature that commands the functioning relationship between these forms: their circular, albeit non-reciprocal, articulation.

While there is closing [*fermeture*] and entry, they do not necessarily separate: they provide two domains with a mode of conjunction. They are the subject and the Other, respectively, and these domains are only to be substantiated here on the basis of my theses concerning the unconscious.

The subject, the Cartesian subject, is the presupposition of the unconscious—I have shown that elsewhere.

The Other is the dimension required in order for speech to affirm itself as truth.

The unconscious is, between the two of them, their cut in act.

This cut is seen to command the two fundamental operations with which the subject's causation should be formulated. These operations are ordered in a circular, yet non-reciprocal, relationship.

The first, alienation, constitutes the subject as such.<sup>30</sup> In a field of objects, no relationship is conceivable that engenders alienation apart from that of the signifier. Let us take for granted that no subject has any reason to appear in the real except for the fact that speaking beings exist therein. A physics is conceivable that accounts for everything in the world, including its animate part. A subject intervenes<sup>31</sup> only inasmuch as there are, in this world, signifiers which mean nothing and must be deciphered.

To grant priority to the signifier over the subject is, in my book, to take into account the experience Freud opened up for us: the signifier plays and wins, if I may say so, before the subject is aware of it, to such an extent that in the game of *Witz*, in puns, for example, it may surprise the subject. What it lights up with its flash is the subject's division from himself.

But the fact that the signifier reveals to the subject his own division should not make us forget that this division derives from nothing other than that very same play, the play of signifiers—signifiers, not signs.

Signs are polyvalent: they no doubt represent something to someone, but the status of that someone is uncertain, as is that of the supposed language of certain animals, a sign language which neither allows for metaphor nor engenders metonymy.

This someone could, by some stretch of the imagination, be the universe, insofar as information, so we are told, circulates therein. Any center in which information is added up [*se totalise*] can be taken for a someone, but not for a subject.

The register of the signifier is instituted in that a signifier represents a subject to another signifier. That is the structure of all unconscious formations: dreams, slips of the tongue, and puns. The same structure explains the subject's originary division. Produced in the locus of the yet to be situated Other, the signifier brings forth a subject from a being that cannot yet speak,<sup>32</sup> but at the cost of freezing<sup>33</sup> him. The ready-to-speak [*prêt à parler*] that *was to be there*—in both senses of the French imperfect "*il y avait*," placing the ready-to-speak an instant before (it was there but is no longer), but also an instant after (a few moments more and it would have been there because it could have been there)<sup>34</sup>—what *was to be* there disappears, no longer being anything but a signifier.

It is thus not the fact that this operation begins in the Other that leads me to call it "alienation." The fact that the Other is, for the subject, the locus of his signifying cause merely explains why no subject can be his own cause [*cause de soi*]. This is clear not only from the fact that he is not God, but from the fact that God Himself cannot be His own cause if we think of Him as a subject; Saint Augustine saw this very clearly when he refused to refer to the personal God as "self-caused" [*cause de soi*].

Alienation resides in the subject's division, the cause of which I just designated. Let us proceed to discuss its logical structure. This structure is a *vel*,<sup>35</sup> which shows its originality here for the first time. In order to do so, it must be derived from what is known, in so-called mathematical logic, as union<sup>36</sup> (which has already been acknowledged to define a certain kind of *vel*).

This union is such that the *vel* of alienation, as I call it, imposes a choice between its terms only to eliminate one of them—always the same

one regardless of one's choice. The stakes are thus apparently limited to the preservation or loss of the other term, when the union involves two terms.

This disjunction is incarnated in a highly illustratable, if not dramatic, way as soon as the signifier is incarnated [*s'incarne*] at a more personalized level in demand or supply: in "your money or your life" or "liberty or death."

It is merely a question of knowing whether or not (*sic aut non*) you want to keep life or refuse death, because, regarding the other term in the alternative, money or liberty, your choice will in any case be disappointing.

You should be aware that what remains is, in any case, diminished.<sup>37</sup> It will be life without money and, having refused death, a life somewhat inconvenienced by the cost of freedom.

That is the stigma of the fact that the *vel* here, functioning dialectically, clearly operates on the *vel* of logical union, which is known to be equivalent to an "and" (*sic et non*). This is illustrated by the fact that, in the long run, you will have to give up your life after your money, and in the end the only thing left will be your freedom to die.

Similarly, our subject is subjected to the *vel* of a certain meaning he must receive or petrification. But should he retain the meaning, the non-meaning produced by his change into signifiers will encroach on<sup>38</sup> this field (of meaning). This non-meaning clearly falls within<sup>39</sup> the Other's field, though it is produced as an eclipse of the subject.<sup>40</sup>

This [*la chose*] is worth saying, for it qualifies the field of the unconscious to take a seat, I would say, in the place of the analyst—let us take that literally—in his armchair. We have arrived at such a pass that we should leave him this armchair by way of a "symbolic gesture." The latter is an expression commonly used to say "a gesture of protest," and its import would be to challenge the order—so prettily avowed by its crude motto in "Francglaise" (to coin a term), directly issuing from the ἀμαθία<sup>41</sup> a princess perpetrated upon French psychoanalysis by replacing the Presocratic tone of Freud's precept, "*Wo es war, soll Ich werden*," with the croaking strains of—"the ego" (the analyst's no doubt) "must dislodge the id" (the patient's, of course).<sup>42</sup>

The fact that people have objected to Serge Leclaire's claim that the unicorn sequence<sup>43</sup> is unconscious, by pointing out that Leclaire himself is conscious of it, means that they do not see that the unconscious only has meaning in the Other's field. Still less do they see the consequence thereof: that it is not the effect of meaning that is operative in interpretation, but rather the articulation<sup>44</sup> in the symptom of signifiers (without any meaning at all) which have gotten caught up in it.<sup>45</sup>

Let us turn now to the second operation, in which the subject's causation closes, to test the structure of the edge in its function as limit, but also

in the twist that motivates the encroachment of the unconscious. I call this operation "separation." We will see that it is what Freud called "*Ichspaltung*" or splitting of the subject, and grasp why Freud, in the text in which he introduces it ["The Splitting of the Ego"], grounds it in a splitting, not of the subject, but of the object (namely, the phallic object).

The logical form dialectically modified by the second operation is called "intersection" in symbolic logic; it is also the product formulated by a belonging to \_\_\_ and to \_\_\_.<sup>46</sup> This function is modified here by a part taken from a lack situated within another lack,<sup>47</sup> through which the subject finds anew in the Other's desire the equivalent of what he is *qua* subject of the unconscious.

In this way, the subject is actualized<sup>48</sup> in the loss in which he surged forth as unconscious, through the lack he produces in the Other, following the course Freud considered to constitute the most radical drive: the "death drive," as he called it. A belonging *neither to \_\_\_* is called upon to fill a *nor to \_\_\_*. Empedocles' act, responding thereto, shows that a will is involved. The *vel* returns in the form of a *velle*.<sup>49</sup> That is the end<sup>50</sup> of the operation. Now for the process.

*Separare*, separating, ends here in *se parere*, engendering oneself. Let us dispense with the obvious gems we find in the works of Latin etymologists concerning the slippage in meaning from one verb to the other. One should simply realize that this slippage is grounded in the fact that they are both related to<sup>51</sup> the function of the *pars*.

The part is not the whole, as is said, though usually without thinking. For it should be emphasized that the part has nothing to do with the whole. One has to come to terms with it;<sup>52</sup> it plays its part [*sa partie*] all by itself. Here the subject proceeds from his partition<sup>53</sup> to his parturition. This does not imply the grotesque metaphor of giving birth to himself anew. Indeed, language would be hard pressed to express that with an original term, at least in Indo-European climes where all the words used for this purpose are of juridical or social origin. "*Parere*" was first of all to procure (a child for one's husband). That is why the subject can procure for himself what interests him here—a status I will qualify as "civil." Nothing in anyone's life unleashes more determination to succeed in obtaining it. In order to be *pars*, he would easily sacrifice the better part of his interests, though not in order to become part of the whole [*s'intégrer à la totalité*], which, moreover, is in no way constituted by others' interests, still less by the general interest which is distinguished therefrom in an entirely different manner.

*Separare, se parere*: in order to take on<sup>54</sup> the signifier to which he succumbs, the subject attacks the chain—that I have reduced to a binary,<sup>55</sup> at its most elementary level—at its interval. The repeating interval, the most

radical structure of the signifying chain, is the locus haunted by metonymy, the latter being the vehicle of desire (at least that is what I teach).

It is, in any case, through this impact—whereby the subject experiences in this interval something that motivates him Other [*Autre chose*] than the effects of meaning by which a discourse solicits him—that he in fact encounters the Other's desire, before he can even call it desire, much less imagine its object.

What he will place there is his own lack, in the form of the lack he would like to produce in the Other through his own disappearance—the disappearance (which he has at hand, so to speak) of the part of himself he receives from<sup>56</sup> his primal [*première*] alienation.

But what he thus fills up<sup>57</sup> is not the lack [*faille*]<sup>58</sup> he encounters in the Other, but rather, first of all, that of the constitutive loss of one of his parts by which he turns out to be made of two parts. Therein lies the twist whereby separation represents the return of alienation. For the subject operates with his own loss, which brings him back to his point of departure.

His “can he lose me?”<sup>59</sup> is, no doubt, the recourse he has against the opacity of the desire he encounters in the Other's locus, but it merely brings the subject back to the opacity of the being he receives through [*qui lui est revenu de*] his advent as subject, such as he was first produced<sup>60</sup> at the other's summoning.

It is an operation whose fundamental outlines are found in psychoanalytic technique. For it is insofar as the analyst intervenes by scandering<sup>61</sup> the patient's discourse that an adjustment occurs in the pulsation of the rim through which the being that resides just shy of it must flow.

The true and final mainspring of what constitutes transference is the expectation<sup>62</sup> of this being's advent in relation to what I call “the analyst's desire,” insofar as something about the analyst's own position has remained unnoticed therein, at least up until now.

That is why transference is a relationship that is essentially tied to time and its handling. But what is the being that responds to us, operating in the field of speech and language, from just inside the cave's entrance? I would go so far as to give it body in the form of the very walls of the cave which live, or rather come alive with palpitations whose living movement must be grasped now, i.e., since I articulated the function and field of speech and language in their conditioning.<sup>63</sup>

I don't see how anyone can rightfully claim that I neglect dynamics in my topology; I orient it, which is better than to make a common-place of it. (The most verbal is not where people are willing to say it is.<sup>64</sup>)

As for sexuality, concerning which people would like to remind me that it is a question of force and that that force is biological, I retort that analysts perhaps have not shed as much light as people at one time hoped

on sexuality's mainsprings, recommending only that we be natural, repeatedly trotting out the same bird-brained themes.<sup>65</sup> I will try to contribute something newer by resorting to a genre that Freud himself never claimed to have superseded in this regard: myth.

To compete with Aristophanes on his own ground in the above-mentioned *Symposium*, let us recall his primitive double-backed creatures in which two halves are fused together as firmly as those of a Magdeburg sphere. The halves, separated later by a surgical operation arising from Zeus' jealousy, represent the beings we have become in love, starving for an unfindable complement.

In considering the sphericity of primordial Man as much as his division, it is the egg that is evoked and that has thus perhaps been repressed since Plato, given the preeminence granted for centuries to the sphere in a hierarchy of forms sanctioned by the natural sciences.

Consider the egg in a viviparous womb where it has no need of a shell, and recall that, whenever the membranes burst, a part of the egg is harmed, for the membranes of the fertilized egg are offspring [*filles*] just as much as the living being brought into the world by their perforation. Consequently, upon cutting the cord, what the newborn loses is not, as analysts think, its mother, but rather its anatomical complement. Midwives call it the “afterbirth” [*délivre*].

Now imagine that every time the membranes burst, a phantom—an infinitely more primal [*primaire*] form of life, in no wise willing to settle for a duplicate role in some microcosmic world within a world [*redoubler le monde en microcosme*—takes flight through the same passage.

Man [*l'Homme*] is made by breaking an egg, but so is the “Manlet” [*l'Hommelette*].<sup>66</sup>

Let us assume the latter to be a large crêpe that moves like an amoeba, so utterly flat that it can slip under doors, omniscient as it is guided by the pure life instinct, and immortal as it is fissiparous. It is certainly something that would not feel good dripping down your face, noiselessly while you sleep, in order to brand it.<sup>67</sup>

If we are willing to allow the digestive process to begin at this point, we realize that the Manlet has ample sustenance for a long time to come (remember that it is among the organisms, which are quite differentiated, that have no digestive tract).

It goes without saying that a struggle would soon ensue with such a fearsome being, and that the struggle would be fierce. For it can be assumed that, as the Manlet has no sensory system, it has for guidance but the pure real. It thus has an advantage over us men who must always provide ourselves with a homunculus in our heads in order to turn that real into reality.



Indeed it would not be easy to obviate the paths of its attacks, which would, moreover, be impossible to predict, as it would know no obstacles. It would be impossible to educate, and just as impossible to trap.

As for destroying the Manlet, one had best avoid helping it proliferate, for to cut it up [*y faire une entaille*] would help it reproduce, and the least of its cuttings to survive—even after having been set afire—would preserve all of its destructive powers. Apart from the effects of a lethal ray, that has yet to be tested, the only way out would be to lock it up, placing it in the jaws of a Magdeburg sphere, for example, which turns up again here, as if by chance, being the only appropriate instrument.

But the *whole* Manlet would have to slip into the sphere, and would have to do so by itself. For to touch it in order to shove a negligible overflowing amount [*un rien*<sup>68</sup>] back in, even the bravest person would be justified in thinking twice for fear that it would slip between his fingers and take up its abode who knows where?

Except for its name, that I will now change to a more decent one, "lamella" (of which the word "omelette" is, in fact, but a metastasis<sup>69</sup>), this image and this myth seem to me apt for both illustrating [*figurer*] and situating [*mettre en place*] what I call "libido."

This image shows "libido" to be what it is, namely an organ, to which its habits make it far more akin than to a force field. Let's say that it is *qua* surface that it orders this force field. This conception is corroborated when one realizes that Freud considered the drive to be structured like a montage, and articulated it in that sense.

Referring to electromagnetic theory, and, in particular, to a theorem known as Stokes' theorem, would allow me to situate the reason for the constancy of the drive's pressure,<sup>70</sup> which Freud emphasizes so greatly,<sup>71</sup> in the fact that that surface is based on a closed rim which is the erogenous zone.

It is also clear that what Freud calls the *Schub*<sup>72</sup> or flow [*coulée*] of the drive is not its discharge, but should rather be described as the turning inside out and outside in<sup>73</sup> of an organ whose function should be situated in relation to the preceding subjective coordinates.

This organ must be called "unreal," in the sense that the unreal is not the imaginary and precedes the subjective it conditions, being in direct contact with the real.

That is what my myth, like any other myth, strives to provide a symbolic articulation for, rather than an image.

My lamella represents here the part of a living being that is lost when that being is produced through the straits of sex.<sup>74</sup>

That part is certainly indicated in the media that microscopic anatomy materializes in the globules expelled at the two stages of the phenomena organized around chromosome reduction, and in the maturation of a gonad.

Represented here by a deadly being, it marks the relationship—in which the subject plays a part—between sexuality, specified in the individual, and his death.

Regarding what is represented thereof in the subject, what is striking is the type of anatomical cut (breathing new life into the etymological meaning of the word "anatomy") by which the function of certain objects—which should not be called partial, but which stand apart from the others—is determined.

The breast, to take an example of the problems to which these objects give rise, is not merely a source of "regressive" nostalgia, having been a source of highly prized nourishment. It is, I am told, related to the mother's body, to its warmth, and even to tender loving care. But that does not sufficiently explain its erotic value, which a painting (in Berlin) by Tiepolo, in the exalted horror with which it presents Saint Agatha after her ordeal,<sup>75</sup> illustrates far better.

In fact, it is not a question of the breast, in the sense of the mother's womb,<sup>76</sup> though one may mix as much as one likes resonances in which the signifier relies heavily on metaphor. It is a question of the beast specified in the function of weaning which prefigures castration.

Weaning has been too extensively situated, since Klein's investigations, in the fantasy of the partition of the mother's body for us not to suspect that the plane of separation<sup>77</sup> passes between the breast and the mother, making the breast the lost object involved [*en cause*] in desire.

For if we recall that mammalian organization places the young, from the embryo right up to the newborn, in a parasitical relation to the mother's body, the breast appears as the same kind of organ—to be understood as the ectopia of one individual on another—as that constituted by the placenta at the beginning of the growth of a certain type of organism which remains specified by this intersection.

The *libido* is this lamella that the organism's being takes to its true limit, which goes further than the body's limit. Its radical function in animals is materialized in a certain ethology by the sudden decline [*chute*] in an animal's ability to intimidate other animals at the boundaries of its "territory."

This lamella is an organ, as it is the instrument of an organism. It is sometimes almost palpable [*comme sensible*], as when an hysteric plays at testing its elasticity to the hilt.

Speaking subjects have the privilege of revealing the deadly meaning of this organ, and thereby its relation to sexuality. That is because the signifier as such, whose first purpose is to bar the subject, has brought into him the meaning of death. (The letter kills, but we learn this from the letter itself.) That is why every drive is virtually<sup>78</sup> a death drive.

It is important to grasp how the organism is taken up in the dialectic of the subject. The organ of what is incorporeal in the sexuated [*sexué*] being is that part of the organism the subject places<sup>79</sup> when his separation occurs. It is through that organ that he can really make his death the object of the Other's desire.

In this way, the object he naturally loses, excrement, and the props he finds in the Other's desire—the Other's gaze or voice—come to this place.

The activity in the subject I call "drive" (*Trieb*) consists in dealing with [*tourner*] these objects in such a way as to take back from them, to restore to himself, his original loss.

There is no other pathway [*voie*] by which the impact of sexuality is manifested in the subject. A drive, insofar as it represents sexuality in the unconscious, is never anything but a partial drive. That is the essential failing [*carence*], namely the absence [*carence*] of anything that could represent in the subject the mode of what is male or female in his being.

The vacillation psychoanalytic experience reveals in the subject regarding his masculine or feminine being is not so much related to his biological bisexuality, as to the fact that there is nothing in his dialectic that represents the bipolarity of sex apart from activity and passivity, i.e., a drive versus outside-action polarity, which is altogether unfit to represent the true basis of that bipolarity.

That is the point I would like to make here—sexuality is distributed on one side or the other of our *rim qua* threshold of the unconscious as follows:

On the side of the living being *qua* being that will be taken up in speech—never able in the end to come to be altogether in speech, remaining shy of the threshold which, notwithstanding, is neither inside nor out—there is no access to the opposite sex as Other<sup>80</sup> except via the so-called partial drives wherein the subject seeks an object to take the place of the loss of life he has sustained due to the fact that he is sexuated.

On the side of the Other, the locus in which speech is verified as it encounters the exchange of signifiers, the ideals they prop up, the elementary structures of kinship, the paternal metaphor considered *qua* principle of separation, and the ever reopened division in the subject owing to his primal alienation—on this side alone and by the pathways [*voies*] I have just enumerated, order and norms must be instituted which tell the subject what a man or a woman must do.

It is not true that God made them male and female, even if the couple Adam and Eve said so; such a notion is also explicitly contradicted by the highly condensed myth found in the same text on the creation of Adam's companion.

No doubt Lilith was there beforehand, but that doesn't explain anything.

Breaking off here, I leave to the past the debates [at the Bonneval colloquium] in which, concerning the Freudian unconscious, irresponsible interventions were quite welcome, precisely because those responsible for them only came halfheartedly, not to say from a certain side [*bord*].

One of the results was, nevertheless, that the order issued by this side to pass over my teaching in silence was not respected.

The fact that, regarding the Oedipus complex, the final point—or rather the special guest award—went to a hermeneutic feat,<sup>81</sup> confirms my assessment of this colloquium and has since revealed its consequences.

At my own risk, I indicate here the means [*l'appareil*] by which precision could return.<sup>82</sup>

Translated by Bruce Fink<sup>83</sup>

#### Notes

- [*VI<sup>e</sup> Colloque de Bonneval: l'Inconscient*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1966, 159. All footnotes in square brackets are translator's notes.]
- [An alternative reading here would be: "To go to the crux of the unconscious, one must begin with Freud's experience."]
- [*espèce*: "species" should no doubt be understood here in terms of Medieval philosophy, where it is distinguished in ontological discussions from "genus"; the genus here would be psychological reality, and the species that which does not have the attribute "consciousness."]
- [or "the unconscious is what we say."]
- [Georges Dwelshauvers, *L'inconscient*, Paris: Flammarion, 1916, especially 14–16.]
- [Cf. Lecture XIX of Freud's *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.]
- [Lacan's translation for Freud's *Verneinung*.]
- [New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1963; see especially chapter nine, "The Sexual Sell."]
- [Lacan is apparently referring here to Jean-Bertrand Pontalis.]
- [*énoncés*. In this translation, statement(s) always corresponds to *énoncé(s)*. Here Lacan's statements serve the function Leclair and Laplanche failed to serve, even though the latter did the enunciating at the colloquium. *Énonciation* is always translated here as enunciation, though some translators prefer utterance.]

11. [This could also be translated: "situating himself as cause."]
12. [*recul* has many other meanings as well: distance, perspective, backing away (from), recoil, kick, postponement, lagging, reverse movement, switching back, etc. I have interpreted it here as referring to the retroactive effect of enunciation on the enunciated or statement.]
13. [*Ça* is also the French for "id."]
14. [*subornement* also means leading astray and seducing.]
15. [*boucler* also means to buckle or bring full circle.]
16. [I have abbreviated what Lacan says here as it sounds so awkward in English: *soit ce qu'il est de n'être autre que le désir de l'Autre*—"in other words, what he is due to the fact that he is no other than the Other's desire."]
17. [*propédeutique* here refers to college prep classes formerly taken by French high school graduates; thus their *secondary* education was followed by *introductory* classes—classes that introduced them into "higher education."]
18. [In English in the original. The reference here is to Ivor Armstrong Richards and C.K. Ogden's book, *The Meaning of Meaning*, 1923, which is also referred to in "Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious," *Écrits*, 150.]
19. [Common or shared thing or element.]
20. [*Autre-chose* could also be translated more idiomatically as "something Else."]
21. [Cf. *Standard Edition*, XVIII, 58.]
22. [*si le sésame de l'inconscient est d'avoir effet de parole, d'être structure de langage*—this ambiguous part of the sentence could also be translated "if the 'open sesame' of the unconscious is to have speech effects, i.e., to be linguistic in structure," etc.]
23. ["edge" and "rim" are the terms I have most often used here to translate *bord*, a term with topological, corporal, and political meanings; those meanings tend to be inseparable in Lacan's text, and run the gamut from edge, perimeter, rim (as of a bodily orifice or topological surface which closes upon itself), and limit, to border, side (in the sense of front or back, or political position), and margin.]
24. [*fermeture* also means lock, locking, shutting, etc.; in topology it is translated "closure," and a set is said to be "closed" if it contains each of its limit points.]
25. [*critique* should, no doubt, be understood here in the sense of Kant's "Critiques."]
26. [*formes du discours* seems to be modeled on *parties du discours*—parts of speech. Lacan himself says that there would be no being without the verb "to be": "*il n'y a d'être que de parler; s'il n'y avait pas le verbe être, il n'y aurait pas d'être du tout*" (Seminar XXI, *Les non-dupes errent*, January 15, 1974).]

27. [It should be kept in mind that *raison* can also mean ratio or proportion.]
28. [*Instance* is often translated as "agency"; one should keep in mind the element of insistence here.]
29. [I.e., in its capacity as efficient cause.]
30. [In French, *est le fait du sujet* would most usually mean that it is the subject's doing, i.e., that alienation is due to the subject or brought about by the subject, but that makes little sense given what follows.]
31. [*s'y impose* might also be translated "imposes itself therein," "intrudes therein," "forces itself upon the world (or upon physics)," or even "becomes a necessary addition" (to physics' theory of the world, no doubt exploding that theory).]
32. [*n'a pas encore la parole* also means "cannot yet express himself well" or "has not yet earned the right to be paid attention to when he speaks."]
33. [*figer* means to fix (like a fixer in photography or a fixative), congeal, clot, coagulate, etc.]
34. [The French imperfect functions to some extent like the English "The bomb *was to go off* two minutes later," where the verb tense allows one to imagine at least two different temporal contexts: one in which the bomb is set to go off in two minutes, and will go off if we don't manage to defuse it beforehand; and another in which, looking back on the situation, we note that the bomb actually went off two minutes after the moment we are considering (for example, in a documentary, one might hear, "The bomb *was to go off* two minutes later, killing the President and the First Lady"), did not go off at all (e.g., "the documents *were to be* destroyed, but turned up in KGB files rendered public many years later"), or went off, but not at the designated time. Lacan uses this example from Raymond Queneau's *On est toujours trop bon avec les femmes*, Paris: Gallimard, 1971.]
35. [Latin for "or," "either/or," or "alternative."]
36. ["Union" (*réunion*) is one of a pair of terms from set theory, Venn diagrams, Euler circles, etc., the other term being "intersection." Sheridan mistakenly translates it as "joining" in Seminar XI.]
37. [*écorné* also means spoiled, marred, abraded, eroded, chipped away, etc.]
38. [*mordre sur* also means to bite into, gnaw into, make a dent in, etc.]
39. [*relève de*: comes under, is related to, has to do with.]
40. [See the diagrams and discussions provided in Seminar XI, 209–215.]
41. [ignorance, crudeness, inexperience, blunder, etc.]
42. [See Marie Bonaparte's French translation of Freud's *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, the last page of Lecture XXXI.]

43. [See Leclaire's paper in *L'inconscient* and Lacan's commentary in Seminar XI, 212 and 250.]
44. [*articulation* should be understood in the sense of linking up or connection.]
45. Abbreviated version of my answer to an inoperative objection.
46. [Belonging, for example, to both set X and set Y.]
47. [*d'une part prise du manque au manque*—this highly ambiguous formulation could be interpreted in a number of ways (e.g., a part taken from one lack into the other, grasped by the lack in lack, grasped in the lack-to-lack lineup, taken from a lack by another lack); considered in terms of the diagrams Lacan provides in Seminar XI, it seems that the part is "taken" from the place where the two circles representing the subject and the Other overlap.]
48. [*Je sujet se réalise*: the subject comes to be, or is constituted, i.e., subjective realization occurs.]
49. [*Velle*—in French *vouloir*—to will, to desire, to want, to wish, etc. Empedocles' will here seems to be Strife, and his act that of flinging himself into Mount Etna's volcanic crater.]
50. [*fin* can be understood here as either terminus or goal.]
51. [*appariement commun*: Lacan continues to play on the word "part" here—"they have in common that they are paired with the function of the *pars*."] ]
52. [*en prendre son parti* could also be rendered: "come to a decision about it" or "make up one's mind about it."]
53. [*Partition* also means musical score.]
54. [*se parer du signifiant* literally means to adorn or bedeck himself with the signifier; more figuratively it means to take it upon himself, to assume it (like one assumes a responsibility), etc.]
55. [ $S_1$  and  $S_2$ ].
56. [*qui lui revient*: which accrues to him, or which he recovers, though it should be kept in mind that he did not have it before.]
57. [*comble* also means to fulfill, make good, etc.]
58. [*faille* has many meanings, running from failing, flaw, defect, weakness, and shortcoming to rift and fault (in the geological sense); here the meaning seems to be topological: it is a space that is filled up, the space constituted by the lack in the Other.]
59. [or "is he willing to lose me?", "can he afford to lose me?", "could he bear for me to be gone/dead?"]

60. [*il s'est produit* also means he produced himself, brought himself into being, created himself.]
61. [*scander* is the verb form of "scansion," and is usually translated as to scan or scanning (as in scanning verse). I have opted in all of my translations of Lacan's work to date to introduce a neologism—to scand, scanding—so as to distinguish the far more common contemporary uses of scanning (looking over rapidly, quickly running through a list, taking ultra-thin pictures of the body with a scanner, or "feeding" text and images in digital form into a computer) from Lacan's idea here of cutting, punctuating, or interrupting something (usually the analysand's discourse).]
62. [*attente de* also means waiting for.]
63. [See "Function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis," *Écrits*, written over 10 years earlier.]
64. [*verbal* could also be understood in the sense of verb-like here, thus word-like; *où l'on veut bien le dire* could also mean where people are willing to say it, or put it into words.]
65. [literally, "which sometimes go as far as cooing [*roucoulement*]"—lovers' warbling words to each other.]
66. [*Hommelette* is a conflation of *Homme*, man, and *omelette*; the ending, "ette," is a diminutive; compare with *femmelette*. Recall the French proverb, "*Pour faire une omelette il faut casser des œufs.*" ]
67. [*cacheter* literally means to seal or to stamp.]
68. [*un rien* could also be translated as a mere smidgen or as a trifling, trivial, or insignificant quantity, but the *rien* or nothing is also one of the "objects" associated with Lacan's object (a).]
69. It seems that those who espouse the virtues of mother's milk [*bon lait*] laugh at my references to . . . metastasis and metonymy (*sic*). But the one whose face is perfect [*parlant*] for illustrating the slogan that I would make its brand name, rarely makes people laugh: laughing cow dung [*la bouse de vache qui rit*].
70. [See "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" (1915); the *Standard Edition* gives "pressure" as the translation for *Drang*, while the *Collected Papers*, translated under the supervision of Joan Riviere, give "impetus"; Lacan's French translation is "*poussée*."] ]
71. It is well known what this theorem states about curl flux. It assumes a continuously differentiable vector field. In such a field, since the curl of a vector is based on the derivatives of the vector's components, it can be demonstrated that the circulation of this vector along a closed curve is equal to the curl flux calculated for the surface whose edge is defined by this curve. In other words, by positing this flux as invariable, the theorem establishes the notion of a flux "through" an official circuit, that is, such that the original surface need no longer be taken into account.
- For topologists:  $\int_{\vec{dl}} \vec{v} = \iint d\vec{S} \cdot \text{Curl } \vec{v}$

72. [*Schub* is also translated "thrust"—see "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" (1915)—appearing in that essay in connection with images like "successive eruptions of lava."]

73. [*évacuation aller et retour*: the figure provided in Seminar XI of the circuit of the drive would suggest that this be translated somewhat differently: "back and forth evagination" or "insertion in and back out."]

74. [*par les voies du sexe*: by sexual passageways, pathways, or means; via sex.]

75. [Saint Agatha was reputed to have had her breasts cut off.]

76. [*matrice* can take on a great many meanings, including womb, die, matrix, register, and mold in the sense of a shaping ring or die in which something is cast; note that *sein*, which I have translated here as "breast," can also mean "womb" or "uterus."]

77. ["plane" to be understood here in the geometrical sense.]

78. [*virtuellement* also means potentially, practically, and for all intents and purposes.]

79. [*vient à placer* suggests a placing or investing of something, in addition to a situating.]

80. [*l'Autre du sexe opposé* could also be translated as the Other of the opposite sex.]

81. [Paul Ricoeur spoke last, and soon published his hermeneutic reading of Freud and the Oedipus complex in *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation* (first published in French in 1965). Cf. Seminar XI, 153–4.]

82. Let it be pointed out, nevertheless, that in restoring here, in an ironic way, the function of the "partial" object, without making the reference to regression in which it is usually shrouded (let it be understood that this reference can only be operative on the basis of the structure defining the object that I call object *a*), I have not been able to extend it to the point which constitutes its crucial interest, namely the object (-  $\phi$ ) as "cause" of the castration complex.

But the castration complex, which is at the crux [*noeud*] of my current work, exceeds the limits assigned to [psychoanalytic] theory by tendencies in psychoanalysis that were claiming to be new shortly before the war and by which it is still affected as a whole.

The size of the obstacle I must overcome here can be gauged by the time it took me to provide this sequel to my Rome discourse and by the fact that, even now as I edit it [for the 1966 Seuil edition], the original version still hasn't been published.

83. [I wish to express my thanks here to Héloïse Fink, who provided a great deal of helpful criticism of this translation, and to Russell Grigg, Henry Sullivan, and Suzanne Barnard who made a number of very useful comments.]

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