

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK V

THE FORMATIONS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

1957 – 1958

Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts

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Seminar 1: Wednesday 6 November 1957

This year we have taken the formations of the unconscious as the theme of our *séminaire*.

Those of you - I think it was the majority - who were at the scientific meeting last night are already on the correct wavelength, in the sense that you know the questions we are going to ask, this time directly, about the function in the unconscious of what we have in previous years elaborated as being the role of the signifier.

A certain number of you - I am only expressing myself in this way because my ambitions are modest - have I hope read the article in the third number of *La Psychanalyse* which I called "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious". Those who have had the courage to do so will be well placed, in any case better placed than the others, to follow what we shall be talking about. In a way it is a modest enough ambition for me to have that you who go to the trouble of coming to listen to me should also go to the trouble of reading what I write, because after all it is for you that I write it. Those who have not done so would all the same be well advised to consult it, especially since I am going to be continually referring to it. I am obliged to take as known things that have already been stated.

Finally, for those who have made none of these preparations, I am going to tell you what I am going to limit myself to today, what is going to be the object of this introductory lecture to our subject matter.

First of all I am going to recall for you in a necessarily brief, necessarily allusive fashion - since I cannot begin everything over again - some points that punctuate, in a way, what the previous years have begun or have announced regarding what I have to say to you about the function of the signifier in the unconscious.

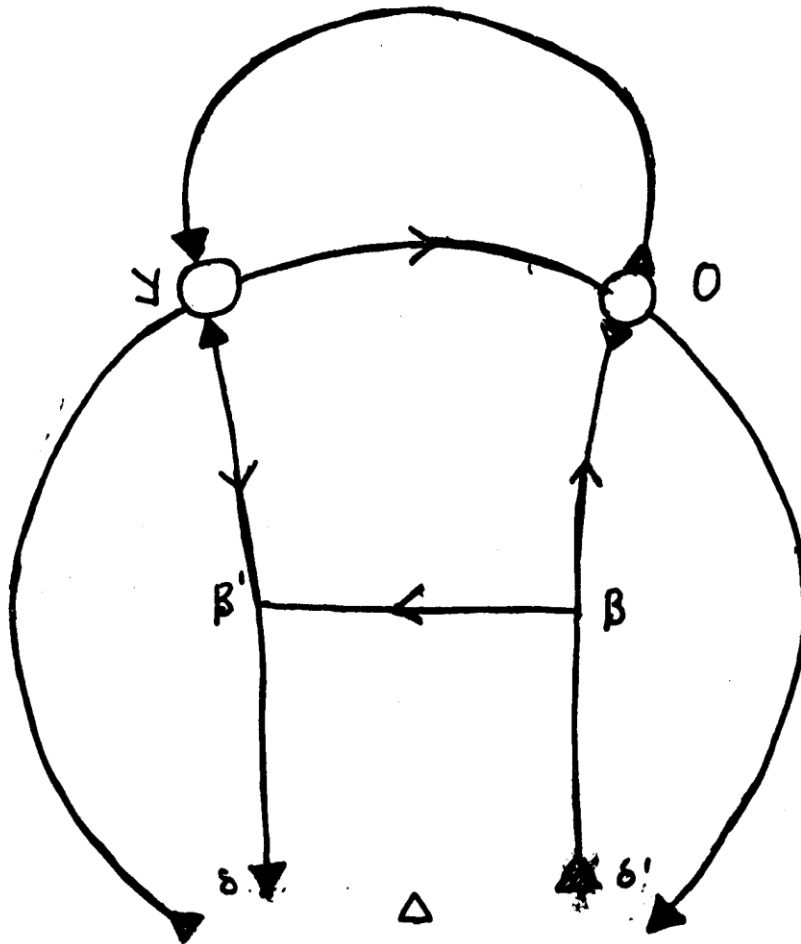
Then, in order to give some respite to those whom this brief recall may have left a little out of breath, I shall explain the meaning of this schema to which we shall have to refer for all our subsequent theoretical experience this year.

Finally, I will take an example, the first example that Freud uses in his book on jokes, not to illustrate it, but to introduce it, because a joke is always something particular, there is no such thing as a joke occurring in a vacuum, in the abstract. And I will begin to demonstrate in this connection how the witticism turns out to be the best way of getting into our subject matter, which is the formations of the unconscious. Not only is it the best way of getting into the subject but I would also say that it is the most brilliant form in which Freud himself shows the relationship of the unconscious to the signifier and to its techniques.

SCHEMA OF 6 November 1957.

from J.-B. Pontalis




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1st Application

- CIRCUIT $\delta y O \delta'$ - Signifying Chain
- CIRCUIT $O B B' y$ - Chain of Discourse
- y - Message - LOCUS OF METAPHOR
- O - Other - LOCUS OF CODE
- B' - Metonymical Object
- B - "I" of Discourse

Notes

-  INITIAL VECTORS
-  Terminal vectors
-  Intermediatè Vectors

Let me remind you then in the first place, since I have given you my three parts so that you can have a certain grasp of what I am going to explain and also economize your mental effort, that the first year of my *séminaire* consisted essentially, in the context of Freud's technical writings, in introducing you to the notion of the function of the symbolic as being the only function capable of accounting for what can be called the determination of meaning, this being the reality which we must hold onto as being fundamental in the Freudian experience.

So that, if I may remind you, the determination of meaning in this case is nothing other than a rational definition. This rationality is at the foundation of the possibility of analysis. It is precisely because a thing has been bound to something like a word that discourse can unbind it.

In this connection I stressed the distance that separates this word when it is full of the being of the subject from the empty discourse that drones on beneath human actions, that themselves are made impenetrable by the imagination of those motives which become irrational, precisely in so far as they have only been rationalized in the perspective of egoistic *méconnaissance*.

That the ego itself should be a function of the symbolic relation and can be affected by it in its density, in its synthetic functions, which are also the products of a captivating mirage, is, I also recalled to you in the first year, only possible because of the gap opened up in the human being by the original biological presence in him of death, due to what I have called the prematurity of birth.

This is the point of impact where the symbolic intrudes, and this is where we had arrived at the junction of my first and my second *séminaire*.

Let me recall that the second *séminaire* highlighted the factor of repetitive insistence as coming from the unconscious. A repetitive consistency which we identified with the structure of a signifying chain. This is what I tried to help you see by giving you a model in the form of a syntax called in which you have a statement that despite the criticisms, some justified, that it has received - there are two little lacks that must be corrected in a future edition - seems to me to be a brief *résumé* of the subject matter of this syntax, which should be of assistance to you for a long time to come. I am even convinced that it will be modified as time goes by and that you will find fewer difficulties in it if you look at it in a few months time, or even at the end of this year, rather than now.

I am only recalling to you what was involved in this syntax to respond also to the praiseworthy efforts that some of your number have made to lessen its importance. It was in any case an opportunity for them to test themselves against it. Indeed this is precisely all that I am trying to achieve, so that in the end whatever *impasse* they found in it, it helped them to do that much. It assisted the mental gymnastics that we will confront again in this year's work. I would like to point out that of course, as those who have given themselves the trouble of doing all this work have stressed to me, and have even written, each one of these terms is marked by a fundamental ambiguity, but that it is precisely this ambiguity that gives the example its value.

Moreover, we have in this way made our entry into groups, onto the path of what in our day makes up the speculation of the research into groups and sets, since their starting

point is essentially based on the principle of beginning with complex structures, within which simple structures only appear as particular cases. Now in fact I am not going to remind you how these little letters originated, but it is certain that we end up after the manipulations that allow us to define them, at something very simple. Each one of these letters being defined by the relationship between one another of two couples each having two terms - the couple of the symmetrical and the asymmetrical, of the asymmetrical and the symmetrical, and then of the couple of the similar to the dissimilar, and of the dissimilar to the similar.

We have then the minimal group of four signifiers that have as a property that each one of them can be analysed in terms of its relations with three others. Namely, to confirm the path taken by analysts - Jacobson and also his own statement when I met him recently - that the minimal group of signifiers necessary to establish the initial elementary conditions for what can be called linguistic analysis.[?] But you will see that this linguistic analysis has the closest possible relationship with what we simply call analysis, and that they even overlap. They are not essentially different things, when we look at them closely enough.

In the third year of my *séminaire* we spoke about psychosis in so far as it is based on a primordial signifying lack, and we showed how it comes about that the real is subverted when, drawn along by a vital invocation, it comes to take its place in that lack of the signifier which was spoken of last night under the name of *Verwerfung*, and which I agree is not a concept that is without its difficulties. That is why we shall have to come back to it this year, but I think that what you have learned in the *séminaire* on psychosis is, if not the final source, at least the essential mechanism of this reduction of the Other, the big Other, the Other as locus of the word, to the imaginary other; this substitution for the symbolic by the imaginary, and even the way that we can conceive the effect of total strangeness of the real that is produced in the moments of the breakdown of the delusional dialogue, which is the only way that the psychotic can sustain in himself what we call a certain intransitivity of the subject, something that appears for us to be completely natural: "I think, therefore I am ", we say intransitively. But of course this is the difficulty for the psychotic, precisely to the degree that a reduction occurs in the twofold nature of the Other and the other, of the Other as the locus of the word and the guarantor of the truth, and of the dual other who is the one before whom he discovers himself as being his own image. The disappearance of this duplicity is precisely what makes it so difficult for the psychotic to maintain himself in human reality, that is to say in symbolic reality.

Let me finally recall that in this third year I illustrated the dimension of what I call dialogue in so far as it permits the subject to sustain himself, by the example of nothing other than the first scene of *Athalie*. It is a seminar that I would have liked to have gone back to in order to write it up, if I had had the time. Nevertheless I am sure that you have not forgotten the extraordinary dialogue of Abner who is put forward here as the prototype of the treacherous friend, the double agent. He comes as it were to sound things out in the first statement he makes:

"Yes, I have come into the temple."

This has overtones of a certain attempt at seduction. You have to admire it as something extraordinary. It is true of course that the reverential fashion that we have treated it makes us forget almost all these resonances. I stressed for you the way the high priest used some essential signifiers: "The gods remain faithful", "in all their threats", "the

promise of heaven", and "why do you give up". The term heaven and some other well-chosen words are essentially nothing other than pure signifiers, and I stressed for you their absolute emptiness. You could say that he skewered his adversary, in such a way that he makes of him from then on nothing more than this derisory worm who goes back to take up his place again, as I told you, in the ranks of the procession, and to serve as a lure for Athalia who, as you know, will end this little game by dying.

This relation of the signifier to the signified, so visible, so palpable in this dramatic dialogue, is something that I brought forward in referring to the famous schema of Ferdinand de Saussure: the flux, or more exactly the double parallel stream - this is how he represents it to us - of the signifier and the signified as being distinct and destined to slide perpetually one over the other. It was in this connection that I constructed the images of the technique of the upholsterer, of the buttoning point, since it is necessary that some point of the fabric of one should attach itself to the fabric of the other. So that we are able to grasp at least something about the possible limits of the sliding, the buttoning points allow some elasticity in the links between the two terms. This is the point that we will take up again when I have evoked for you the function served by the fourth year of the *séminaire*, when I will have shown you in a way that is parallel and symmetrical to this - and it was at this point that the dialogue between Joad and Abner culminated - that there is no true subject who can sustain himself, unless he speaks in the name of the word, in the name of speech. You will not have forgotten the plane on which Joad speaks:

"Here is how God answers you through my mouth."

There is no subject other than in a reference to that Other. This is symbolic of what exists in every word worthy of the name.

In the same way in the fourth year of the *séminaire*, I tried to show you that there is no object that is not metonymical, the object of desire being the object of the desire of the other, and desire always being desire of something else, precisely of what is lacking in the object that has been primordially lost, in so far as Freud shows it as something that has always to be rediscovered. Likewise the only meaning that exists is metaphorical, a meaning that only arises from the substitution of a signifier for another signifier in the symbolic chain.

This is precisely what was meant in the work that I spoke about above, and that I invited you to consult, "The agency of the letter in the unconscious". In the following symbols of metaphor and metonymy respectively, S is linked in the combination of the chain to S₁, and the whole with reference to S₂ which culminates in the fact the S, in its metonymical function, is in a certain metonymical relationship with s in signification

$$F (S \dots S_1) S_2 = S (-) s$$

Likewise, it is in the substitution of S with respect to S a relationship of substitution in the metaphor that we have the following which is symbolized by the relation of capital S to small s, which indicates here - it is easier to express in the case of metonymy - the function of the emergence, of the creation of meaning.

$$F \left(\frac{S_1}{S_2} \right) S = S (+) s$$

This then is where we are, and now we are going to approach what will be the object of our research for this coming year. To approach it I first of all constructed a schema for you, and I will now tell you what, at least for today, it will serve to connote for us.

If we have to find a way of approaching more closely the relationships of the signifying chain with the signified chain, it is by this crude image of the buttoning point. But obviously, if it is to be worthwhile, we must ask where the upholsterer is. He must clearly be somewhere; the place where we could put him in this schema might after all be a little bit too infantile.

You may be lead to the idea that since the essential aspect of the relation of the signifying chain in relation to the current of the signified is something like a reciprocal sliding, and that despite the sliding we must grasp where the liaison is, the coherence between these two currents, you might come to the idea that this sliding, if there is a sliding, is necessarily a relative sliding; that the displacement of each one produces a displacement in the other and also that it must be related to a sort of ideal present, to something like an intersection in the opposite direction of these two lines, that we should be able to find some sort of schema to serve as an example.

You can see that it is around something like this that we can organize our speculations.

This notion of the present is going to be extremely important, except that discourse is not simply, what I might call, a series of punctuations *à la* Russell. A discourse is something which leads somewhere, has a fabric, a texture, and not only does it take time, not only does it have a dimension in time, a certain density which means that we cannot in any way be satisfied with the instantaneous present, but in addition all our experience, everything that we have said and everything that we are capable of making present immediately by experience - it is quite clear for example that if I begin a sentence you will not understand its meaning until I have finished, since it is after all absolutely necessary (it is the very definition of a sentence) that I should say its final word if you are to understand the relevance of the first - this shows us in the most tangible way what we can call the retroactive action of the signifier, precisely what I repeatedly tell you is given in the text of the analytic experience itself, on an infinitely greater scale in the story of the past.

In any case it is clear - that is one way to say it I - I think it is something that you have grasped, and besides I re-emphasized it in my article on the agency of the letter in the unconscious in a very precise fashion and I would ask you provisionally to consult it, something that I expressed in the form of what might be called a topological metaphor: it is impossible to represent the signifier, the signified and the subject on the same plane. This is neither mysterious nor opaque, it can be demonstrated in a very simple fashion with reference to the Cartesian *cogito*. I will refrain from going back on this now because later we will rediscover it in another form. This is simply to justify to you these two lines that we are now going to manipulate, and which are the following. The little bob means the beginning of a trajectory, and the tip of the arrow the end. You will recognize my first line here, and the other hooked on to it after having twice crossed over it. I would like to point out however that you cannot confuse what the two lines represent here, namely the signifier and the signified, with what they represent in this case which is slightly different, and you will see why.

In fact we are situating ourselves entirely on the plane of the signifier. The effects on the signified are elsewhere, they are not directly represented on this schema. It is a matter of two states, of two functions of a signifying sequence that we can apprehend. In the first moment of this first line, we have the signifying chain in so far as it remains entirely permeable to the properly signifying effects of metaphor and metonymy, and this implies the possible actualization of signifying effects at every level, in particular down to the phonematic level, to the level of the phonological element of what grounds the pun, the play on words, in short that which in the signifier is that something with which we analysts must continually operate, because I think that except for those of you who arrive here for the first time, you should be able to remember how all this happens in the play on words and in puns. Moreover it is precisely the way in which today we are going to begin our entry into the subject of the unconscious, by the witticism and the *Witz*.

The other line is that of rational discourse into which are already integrated a certain number of reference points, of things that are fixed, those things which as it happens cannot be grasped except at the level of what is called the usages of the signifier, that is to say that which concretely in the use of discourse constitutes the fixed points which, as you know, are far from corresponding in a univocal way to a thing. There is not a single semanteme that corresponds to a particular thing or to things which for the most part are very different. We pause here at the level of the semanteme, that is to say at what is fixed and defined by a use.

This other line then is that of current, everyday discourse, as it is admitted into the code of the discourse, of what I would call the discourse of reality which is common to us all. It is also the level at which the fewest creations of meaning are produced, because the meaning is, in a way, already given, and because most of the time this discourse only consists in a rehashing of what are called received ideas. It is at the level of this discourse that there is produced the famous empty speech from which a number of my remarks on the field (*parente*) of language began.

You can see clearly then that this is the concrete discourse of the individual subject, of the person who speaks and who makes himself understood. It is the discourse that can be recorded on a record. The other is what all of that includes as a possibility of decomposition, of reinterpretation, of resonance, of metaphorical or metonymical effects. One goes in the opposite direction to the other for the simple reason precisely that they slide over one another. But they do intersect with one another, and they intersect at two points that are perfectly recognizable. If we begin from the discourse, the first point at which the discourse meets the other chain which we shall call the properly signifying chain, is from the point of view of the signifier, what I have just explained to you, namely the collection of usages, in other words what we shall call the code; and this code must be somewhere if discourse is to be heard. This code is obviously in this capital O which is here, namely in the Other in so far as it is the companion of language. It is absolutely necessary that this Other should exist, and I would ask you to note in passing that there is absolutely no need to call it by the imbecilic and delusional name of "collective consciousness". An Other is an Other, and a single one is sufficient for a tongue to be alive. And it is all the more sufficient that there should be just one, that this other can all by itself also be the first moment. If there is one who remains and who can speak his tongue to himself, this is sufficient and not only an Other, but even two others, in any case

someone who understands him. One can continue to produce witticisms in a tongue, even though one is the only person who knows it.

This then is the first encounter at the level of what we have called the code. In the other, the second encounter which completes the loop, which properly speaking constitutes the meaning, constitutes it in terms of the code which it encountered first, is the culminating point. You see two arrows which end here, and today I will spare myself the trouble of explaining the meaning of the second arrow that ends here at this point gamma; it is the result of the conjunction of the discourse with the signifier as a creative support of meaning - it is the message.

It is here that meaning is born; the truth that is to be announced, if there is any truth, is there in the message. Most of the time there is no truth enunciated, for the simple reason that the discourse in no way passes through the signifying chain, that it is the pure and simple droning of mere repetitiveness, of the word-mill (*moulin-à-paroles*), and that it passes through here in a sort of short-circuit between β and β' , and that the discourse says absolutely nothing except to indicate to you that I am a speaking animal. It is the commonplace discourse of speech that says nothing, but thanks to it you reassure yourself that you are not face to face simply with what man is in his natural state, namely a savage beast.

These two points β and β' being the minimal nexuses on the short-circuit of discourse are very easily recognizable. One is the object precisely in the sense of the metonymical object that I spoke to you about last year; the other is the "I" in so far as it indicates in the discourse itself the place of the one who is speaking.

You should notice that in this schema you can see in a very concrete way both what links and what distinguishes the truth that is perfectly and immediately accessible, from linguistic experience; this is something that the Freudian experience of analysis rejoins with the distinction that exists originally between this "I" which is nothing other than the place of the one who speaks in the chain of discourse, and which does not even need to be designated by an "I", and on the other hand the message, that is to say the thing that absolutely requires a minimum of the apparatus of this schema to exist. It is absolutely impossible to produce a message or any word whatsoever in a sort of concentric, radiating fashion coming from the existence of some subject or other, if there is not all this complexity. No word is possible for the very good reason that the word presupposes precisely the existence of a signifying chain, which is something whose origins are far from simple to discover - we spent a year trying to arrive at it - and which presupposes the existence of a network of uses, in other words of the usage of a tongue; and which presupposes besides all this mechanism which ensures that whatever you say, whether you think about it or not, whatever you formulate, once you've got caught in the wheel of this word-mill, your discourse always says more than you are saying, and very obviously basing itself, by the simple fact that it is speech, on the existence somewhere of this term of reference that is the dimension of truth; of truth in so far as it is distinct from reality and something that brings into play the possible emergence of new meanings being introduced into the world, which the truth (*réalité*) literally introduces into it - not the meanings that are there, but rather the meanings that it makes emerge.

Here you have, radiating out from the message on the one hand and from the "I" on the other hand, the meaning of these little wingtips that you see here; two diverging directions, one that goes from the "I" to the metonymical object and towards the Other, to which corresponds in a symmetrical fashion the message by way of the return of the discourse, the direction of the message towards the metonymical object and towards the Other; all of this is provisional and I would ask you to take it down. On the schema you will see that there is something which will be of great use to us and which might seem to you to require no explanation, the line that goes from "I" to the Other and the line that goes from "I" to the metonymical object, and you will see to what these two other extremely interesting lines correspond which go from the message to the code on the one hand, because in fact this return line does exist; if it did not exist, as the schema itself indicates, there would not be the slightest hope for the creation of meaning. It is precisely in the interplay between the message and the code, and also in the return of the code to the message, that the essential dimension into which the witticism immediately introduces us will have its effect. It is here I think we will remain for a certain number of lectures in order to see all the extraordinarily suggestive and instructive things that can take place here. In addition this will give us a further opportunity to grasp the relationship of dependence in which the metonymical object is, this famous object that never is, that object which is always situated elsewhere, that is always something else, and which we began to concern ourselves with last year.

Now let us approach this *Witz*. What does this *Witz* mean? It has been translated by *le trait d'esprit* and also by *le mot d'esprit*. I will not go into the reasons why I prefer *le trait d'esprit*.

The *Witz* can also mean *l'esprit*. We must admit that *l'esprit* immediately introduces something that appears to be extremely ambiguous because in fact a witticism is something that is occasionally looked down on: it is frivolity, lack of seriousness, fantasy, capriciousness. But *esprit* by itself brings us up short, and we think twice before thinking of *esprit* in the same way. Nevertheless the spirit in the sense of *un homme spirituel* has not got an excessively good reputation. However it is around this that the centre of gravity of the notion of *l'esprit* is to be found and it is better to allow it to keep all its ambiguities. This includes the spirit in the widest sense, the spirit that all too often has the stamp of very shoddy goods, the spirit of spiritualism.

We can centre the notion of spirit on the witticism, that is to say on that which appears to be most contingent, most out of date, most open to criticism. It is really part of the genius of psychoanalysis to do something like this, and that is why we should not be surprised that it is in fact the only point in the work of Freud where he mentions the Spirit, this time ornamented with a capital letter. Nevertheless there still remains this relationship between the two poles of the term spirit, and it has always given rise to disputes about classification.

It really would be fun to evoke for you the English tradition in which the term used is wit, which is still more ambiguous than *Witz* and even than *l'esprit* in French - the discussions on the true, the genuine spirit, the good spirit to call him by his name; and then of the bad spirit, the one with which charlatans amuse people. How can we distinguish all of this? The only thing that we must really take as a reference-point is the difficulty that all the critics have found themselves in, and this continues after the 18th century with Addison, Pope, etc., up to the beginning of the 19th century. In the English Romantic

school the question of wit could not but be on the agenda and in a place of first importance, and in this respect the writings of Hazlitt are also very significant, and someone else that we will have to talk about, namely Coleridge, is the one who has gone farthest along this path.

I could equally well say this about the German tradition, and in particular about the link between the promotion of wit to its place of prime importance, and the literary Christianity which in Germany followed a strictly parallel evolution, and where the essential question of *Witz* is at the heart of all Romantic speculation in Germany. This is something which from a historical point of view, and also from the point of view of analysis, that we will have to reconsider again.

Something that is very striking is the extent to which the criticism concerning the function of *Witz* or of 'wit' - to which I have to say there is nothing comparable in this country, and whether you are aware of this or not, the only people who were seriously concerned with it here in France were the poets, by which I mean that in this period of the 19th century, the question is not only alive, but is at the heart of Baudelaire and Mallarmé - but in any case it was never considered even in essays except from the critical point of view, I mean from the point of view of an intellectual formulation of the problem.

The decisive point is this. The fact is that whatever you read on the subject of the problem of *Witz* or of 'wit', you will always come up against very real *impasses*, which I cannot expand on for you today due to lack of time - I will come back to it. I must omit this part of my lecture but it bears witness, as I will prove to you later on, to the leap forward, to the clear-cut difference of quality and results that is brought about by the work of Freud.

Freud did not carry out this inquiry that I have just been alluding to, that which would embrace the whole European tradition on the subject of *Witz*. I left to one side another one, the principal one, the Spanish tradition, because it is so important that we will certainly have to come back to it frequently. Freud did not do this. He tells us what his sources are. They are clear. They are three books, very sensible, very readable books, written by good German professors from small universities, who had time to calmly reflect on things, and who produced works that were not at all pedantic. Their names are Kuno Fischer, Friedrich Theodore Vischer and T. Lipps, a Munich professor who certainly wrote the best work of the three and who goes a long way, in fact one could say that he really reaches out, to meet up with Freud's investigation. If only *Herr* Lipps had not been so careful about the respectability of his *Witz*, if he had not wanted there to be a false and a true *Witz*, he would certainly have gone much further.

On the contrary this is something that did not hold Freud back at all. Freud was already in the habit of committing himself, and that is why he saw things much more clearly. It is also because he saw the structural relationships that exist between the *Witz* and the unconscious.

On what plane did he see them? Exclusively on what could be called the formal plane. I mean formal not in the sense of pretty forms, the confused notions of everything that tries to swamp you in the blackest obscurantism: I am talking about form in the sense that it is understood, for example, in literary theory. There is still another tradition that I have not spoken to you about, also because we will often have to come back to it, a

tradition of recent birth, the Czech tradition. This is the group that formulated formalism which you may think is just a vague reference, not at all, it is only your ignorance that makes you think that; formalism is a school of literary criticism that has an extremely precise meaning, and that the organization of states that is situated over there in Sputnik-land has already been persecuting for some time past.

In any case, it is precisely at the level of this formalism, namely of a structural theory of the signifier as such, that Freud situates himself from the beginning. There is no doubt either about the results - they are absolutely convincing. This is a key that will allow you to make much greater progress. After having asked you from time to time to read my articles, I hardly need to ask you, since we are talking this year about *Witz*, to read Freud's book. This does not seem to me to be demanding too much. When you look at how it is organized, you will see that is based on the fact that Freud starts from the technique of the joke, and that he constantly comes back to it and that it takes as support the technique of joking.

What does that mean for him? It means what is called verbal technique, something that I call more precisely the technique of the signifier.

It is because he speaks of the technique of the signifier, and because he comes back to it repeatedly, that he really works out the problem. He shows its different planes, which means that all at once you see with the greatest clarity what must be recognized and distinguished in order not to get lost in the perpetual confusions of the signified, and of thoughts, which gives absolutely no hope of ever clarifying matters. Right away, for example, you see that there is a problem of wit, and a problem of the comic which is not at all the same thing, any more than the problem of the comic and the problem of laughter. It may well happen that from time to time these are found together, and indeed all three may become mixed up, but nevertheless it is not the same problem.

To clarify the problem of wit, Freud starts with the signifying technique. It is also from there that we will begin with him, and there is the very curious fact that all of this takes place at a level at which there is nothing at all to indicate at first that it is at the level of the unconscious, and it is precisely from this, and for profound reasons that concern the very nature of *Witz*, it is precisely by considering this that we will see most about what is not quite there, what is to one side, which is the unconscious, and which in fact cannot be clarified, does not betray itself, except when you look a little to one side.

Here you will discover also something that you will find all the time in the *Witz*, it is the nature of the *Witz* that appears thus when you look here, it is what allows you to look where it does not exist.

Let us begin then with Freud by means of the keys of the technique of the signifier. Freud did not go to very much trouble to find his examples, since all the examples he gives us, which may appear a bit banal to you and to be not all of the same quality, are taken from his professors, Fischer, Vischer and Lipps, which is why I told you that I hold them in considerable esteem. There is however another source that Freud has really explored. It is Heinrich Heine. It is from this source that he takes the first example, the marvellous mot that is put into the mouth of Hirsch-Hyacinth, an impoverished and half-starved Jewish collector from Hamburg, whom he comes across at the Baths of Lucca. If you want to make a thorough study of the *Witz* you must read the *Reisebilder*. It is amazing that this

book is not a classic. You find in the *Reisebilder* a passage in the Italian section on the Baths of Lucca, and it is there that with this indescribable character Hirsch-Hyacinth, about whose attributes I hope I will have the time to tell you something, it is in speaking with him that he obtains the declaration, that he had had the honour of treating the corns of the great Rothschild, Nathan the Wise, and that at the time he, Hirsch-Hyacinth, thought himself an important man because, while he was paring his corns, he thought that Nathan the Wise was thinking of all the courtiers that he would be sending to kings, and that if he, Hirsch-Hyacinth, pared his corns a bit too closely there would result an irritation in the upper regions, that would make Nathan too cut more deeply into the hide of the kings.

And, little by little, he goes on to tell us too of another Rothschild that he has known, Solomon Rothschild, and that one day when he announced himself as Hirsch-Hyacinth, he received a reply in the most debonair language: "I too am a collector of I do not wish my colleague to have to eat in the kitchen. "And", cried Hirsch-Hyacinth, "he treated me quite famillionairely".

It is at this point that Freud pauses and goes on to ask very acutely: What is this? A neologism? A slip of the tongue? A witticism? It is certainly a witticism, but the fact that I could ask the other two questions already introduces us into an ambiguity, into the signifier, into the unconscious and in fact what is Freud going to tell us? We recognize in it the mechanism of condensation materialized in the material of the signifier, a sort of collision, with the help of some machine or other, between two lines of the signifying chain: "Solomon Rothschild treated me quite familiarly" (*familiär*), and then beneath it - Freud too constructs a signifying schema - there is "millionaire (*Millionär*)", and thus there is *ar* in both, and also *mil*. They are condensed, and in the interval there appears "famillionaire" (*famillonär*).

Let us try to see what this gives on our schema. I must go a bit quickly, but there is still something to which I want to draw your attention.

The discourse is obviously something that begins in "I", and goes to the Other. This can be schematized here as going towards the Other. More correctly we can also see that every discourse which begins from the Other, whatever we may think of it, begins and returns, is reflected in the "I," because it must play some part in the affair, and goes towards the message. This simply introduces in a second moment the invocation of the other originating chain of the discourse: "I was with Solomon Rothschild, quite familiarly", a return to the Other in a second moment.

Nevertheless because of the mysterious property of the *mil* and the *ar*, which are in both one and the other as correlatives - do not forget that these two lines are after all two lines that are only of interest to us if things are circulating at the same time on this line. If something stirs that gives rise to a vibration in the elementary signifying chain as such, and that here at the first moment of the outline of the message is going to be reflected onto the metonymical object which is "my millionaire", because the metonymical object of "my belonging" schematized here is what concerns Hirsch-Hyacinth; it is his millionaire who at the same time is not his millionaire, because it is much more the millionaire who possesses him, so that things do not turn out as planned. It is precisely because this does not happen that the millionaire comes to be reflected in a second moment, that is to say at the same time as the other, the "quite familiarly", has arrived there. In the third moment millionaire

and familiar have come to meet and to join with one another in the message, in order to produce famillionaire.

This may seem to you to be completely puerile as a discovery, especially since I constructed the schema myself. However when this has had its effect on you for a year, you will perhaps be able to say that this schema is of some use. It has, after all, one interesting feature, which is that thanks to what it presents in terms of topological necessity, it allows us to measure the steps that we take with regard to what concerns the signifier, namely that because of the way it is constructed, and whatever way you go around it, it limits every step we take. What I mean is that every time a step is required, it will necessitate that we take no more than three elementary ones.

You will see that it is towards this that the little bobs at the start and the arrow heads at the end tend, as well as the little ailerons that concern the segments which must always be in a secondary, intermediary position, the others being either initial or terminal.

Thus, in three moments the two chains, that of the discourse and that of the signifier, have managed to converge at the same point, at the point of the message. This is why Mr. Hirsch-Hyacinth was treated quite famillionairely. This message is quite incongruous in the sense that it is not received, not in the code. That says it all! The message in principle is constructed to have a certain relationship distinguishing it from the code, but here it is on the plane of the signifier itself that it manifestly violates the code, from the definition of the witticism that I gave you, in the sense that it is a question of knowing what is happening, what is the nature of what is happening here, and the witticism is constituted by fact that the message that is produced at a certain level of signifying production. It contains by its difference, by its distinction from the code, it takes on from this difference, from this distinction, the value of a message. The message lies in its very difference from the code. How is this difference sanctioned? This is the second plane that is involved. This difference is sanctioned as a witticism by the Other. This is indispensable, and it is in Freud. Because there are two things in Freud's book on the witticism: there is the promotion of the signifying technique, and the express reference to the Other as a third party, which I have been drumming into you for years. It is articulated in an unquestionable way in Freud, very especially in the second part of his work, but it has to be there from the beginning. For example, Freud continually emphasises for us that the difference between the witticism and the comic is determined by the fact that the comic is dual. As I have said, the comic is a dual relationship, but this third Other is necessary for there to be a witticism. In fact the sanction of this third Other, whether it is supported by an individual or not, is absolutely essential. The Other returns the ball, that is to say ranks something in the code as a witticism; it says that in the code this is a witticism. This is essential, so that if nobody does it there is no witticism. In other words, if famillionaire is a slip of the tongue and nobody notices it, then it is not a witticism. The Other must codify it as a witticism.

And the third element of the definition? It is inscribed in the code, through this intervention of the Other, that the witticism has a function that is related to something that is profoundly situated at the level of meaning, and that is, I will not say a truth - I shall illustrate for you in connection with this example that it is not so much with regard to famillionaire that we can make subtle allusions about the psychology of the millionaire and of the parasite, for example.

This certainly contributes a good deal to our pleasure, and we will return to it, but I am laying down from today that the witticism, if we wish to discover it, and discover it with Freud, because Freud leads us as far as possible in the direction of finding the point of it, because it is a question of a point and a point exists, and its essence depends on something that is related to something absolutely radical in the sense of truth, namely something that I called elsewhere (in my article on "The Agency of the Letter") something that depends essentially on the truth, that is called the dimension of the alibi of the truth, namely in a point that may enable us, by using a sort of mental diplopia, to better circumscribe the witticism.

What is in question, is what it is that expressly constructs the witticism in order to designate that which is always to one side, and which is seen precisely only by looking elsewhere. This is where we will begin again the next time. I am certainly leaving you on a note of suspense, with an enigma, but I think that I have at least been able to set out the very terms that we must necessarily hold onto, and this I hope to demonstrate in what follows.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 13 November 1957

Let us take up our account at the point we left it the last time, namely at the moment that Hirsch-Hyacinth speaking to the author of the *Reisebilder* whom he met at the Baths of Lucca, said to him: "And as true as God shall grant me all good things, I sat down quite as an equal, quite famillionairely."

This then is where we will begin, with the word famillionaire which has had its good fortune. It is known because Freud takes it as his starting point.

This then is where we will recommence, and it here that I am already going to try to show you the way that Freud approaches the witticism. The analysis is important for our purposes.

In fact, the importance of this exemplary point is to show us, because, alas, there is need for it, in an unmistakable fashion the importance of the signifier in what we can call with him the mechanisms of the unconscious.

It is clearly very surprising to see already that the whole body of those whom their discipline does not especially prepare for it - I mean the neurologists - in the measure that they are working together on the delicate subject of aphasia, namely of speech deficits, are from day to day making remarkable progress in what is in question, what can be called their linguistic formation, while psychoanalysts whose whole art and technique is based on the use of the word, have not up the present taken the least account of it, even though what Freud shows us, is not simply a type of humanistic reference manifesting his culture and the extent of his reading in the field of philology, but a reference that is absolutely internal and organic.

Because I hope that since the last day, most of you at least have opened *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, you can see for yourselves that his reference to the technique of the joke qua language-technique, is very precisely the point around which his argument always pivots; and that if what emerges in terms of meaning, in terms of signification in the joke is something that seems to him to deserve to be related to the unconscious, it is only - I want to hammer home that everything that I have to say about the witticism is related to this - founded on its very function of pleasure which pivots and turns always and uniquely because of analogies of structure that are only conceivable on the plane of linguistics, analogies of structure between what happens in the joke, I mean the technical aspect of the joke, let us call it the verbal aspect of the joke, and what happens under different names that Freud discovered, moments under different names, which is the mechanism proper to the unconscious, namely the mechanisms such as condensation and displacement. I limit myself to these two for today.

Here then is where we are: Hirsch-Hyacinth speaking to Heinrich Heine; or Hirsch-Hyacinth, a fiction of Heinrich Heine, gives an account of what happened to him. Something happens at the beginning, to limit ourselves to the segment that I have just isolated, something particularly clear, raising in a way in order to put it on a plateau, to exalt it, what is to follow, this invocation of the universal witness and of the personal relationship of the subject to this witness, namely God. "As true as God shall grant me all good things", which is

incontestably something that is at once significant by its meaning, and ironic because of what reality can show us as lacking in it, but starting from here the enunciation is made: "I was sitting beside Solomon Rothschild, quite as an equal." Here we have the emergence of the object; this 'quite' carries with it something which is significant enough. Every time we invoke the 'quite', the totality, it is because we are not altogether sure that this totality is really closed, and in effect this can be discovered at many levels, and indeed at every level at which this notion of totality is used.

Here in effect he begins again with this 'quite', and he says: 'quite', and it is here that the phenomenon is produced, the unexpected thing, the scandal in the enunciation, namely this new message, this something that we do not even yet know what it is, that we are not yet able to name, and which is "..... famillionairely", something of which we do not know whether it is a parapraxis or a successful act, an accident or a poetic creation. We will see. It can be all of these at once, but it would be well to lay stress on the formation on the strict signifying plane, of the phenomenon of what will taken up afterwards.

I will tell you what it is, and I already announced it the last day: in a signifying function which is proper to it qua signifier escaping from the code, that is from everything that had been accumulated up to this in terms of formations of the signifier in its functions as a creator of the signified, something new appears there, that can be linked to the very sources of what can be called the progress of a tongue, its changes.

We must pause first of all at this something in its very formation, I mean at the point at which it is situated in relation to the formative mechanism of the signifier. We have to lay stress on it in order to be able even to continue in a valid way on what will turn out to be the consequences of the phenomenon, even of what accompanies it, even its sources, its reference points. But the essential phenomenon, is this nexus, is this point, at which appears this new paradoxical signifier. this famillionaire from which Freud begins, and to which he repeatedly returns, on which he asks us to dwell, to which, as you will see up to the end of his speculation on the witticism, he does not fail to return as designating the essential phenomenon, the technical phenomenon that specifies the joke, and that allows us to discern what the central phenomenon is, that by which he teaches us on the plane that is our own proper plane, namely the relationship with the unconscious, and that which allows us also at the same time to illuminate from a new perspective everything that surrounds it, everything that leads it towards what can be called the *Tendenzen*, because it is the term *Tendenz* that is employed in this work, of this phenomenon that has different spheres of influences, the comic, laughter, etc...; phenomena that may radiate out from it.

Let us pause then at famillionaire. There are several ways to approach it, this is the aim, not just of this schema, but of this schema in so far as it is provided to allow you to inscribe the different planes of the signifying elaboration, the word elaboration being chosen here specially, because it is expressly chosen here, Freud introduces it specially.

Let us stress this, and in order not to surprise you too much, let us begin to perceive the direction in which it is going. What happens when famillionaire appears? It can be said that something is indicated there that we experience as a perspective opening out towards meaning; something tends to emerge from it that is ironical, even satirical, also something that is less evident, but which develops we might say, in the after-effects of the phenomenon, in what is going to be propagated from here into the world as a consequence. It is a type of emergence of an object, that itself tends rather in the direction of the comical, of the absurd,

of the nonsensical. It is the *famillionaire* in so far as it derides the millionaire, by tending to take on the form of a figure, and it would not be difficult to indicate the direction in which in fact it tends to be embodied.

Moreover, Freud mentions in passing that in another place also, Heinrich Heine reduplicating his joke, calls the millionaire the *millionnär*, which in German means the idiotic millionaire, and can be translated in French following on the line of the substantivation of millionaire that I have just spoken to you about, the 'fat-millionaire' with a hyphen. This is to show you that we have here an approach which ensures that we do not remain inhuman.

Let us not go much further, because to tell the truth this is not the time, this is just the type of step not to taken too quickly, namely not to be too quickly understood, because by understanding too quickly, one understands absolutely nothing at all. This still does not explain the phenomenon that has just occurred in front of him, namely how it can be connected with what we can call the general economy of the function of the signifier. On this point I must all the same insist that you get to know what I have written in what I called "The agency of the letter in the unconscious", namely the examples I gave in this text of two functions that I call the essential functions of the signifier, in so far as they are those through which one can say, that the ploughshare of the signifier opens up in the real what can be called the signified, literally evokes it, makes it emerge, manipulates it, engenders it; namely the functions of metaphor and metonymy.

It appears that for certain people, it is my style that bars the entry into this article. I am sorry. First of all I can do nothing about it, my style is what it is. I would ask them in that connection to make an effort, but I would simply like to add that whatever the deficiencies that may intervene in it because of factors that are personal to me, there are also, notwithstanding, in the difficulties of this style, perhaps they can glimpse it, something that must correspond to the very object it is dealing with.

If it is in fact a question, in connection with the creative functions that the signifier exercises on the signified, of speaking about it in a worthwhile way, namely not simply of speaking about the word but to speak as one might say with the grain of the word, to evoke its very functions, perhaps the subsequent teaching this year will show you that there are internal necessities of style, conciseness for example, allusiveness, even some sting are perhaps the essential, decisive elements necessary to enter a field of which they control not only the avenues, but the whole texture.

We will return to this subsequently in connection precisely with a certain style that we will not even hesitate to call by its name, however ambiguous it may appear, namely mannerism, and in connection with which I will try to show you that it has behind it, not only a great tradition, but an irreplaceable function.

This is only a parenthesis in order to return to my text. In this text then you will see that which I call following the example of others - it is Roman Jakobson who invented it - the metaphorical and the metonymical function of language, are linked to something that is expressed very simply in the register of the signifier, the characteristics of the signifier being those, as I already stated several times in the course of the preceding years, of the existence of an articulated chain, and I added in this article, tending to form closed groups, namely formed from a series of rings latching on to one another to form chains, which themselves are

taken up into other chains like rings, something that is also evoked somewhat by the general form of the schema, but is not directly represented.

The existence of these chains in their double dimension, implies that the articulations or the liaisons of the signifier contain two dimensions, the one which can be called the combination, the continuity, the concatenation of the chain, and that of the possibilities of substitution always implied in each element of the chain.

This second absolutely essential element is the element which, in the linear definition that Freud gave of the relationship of the signifier to the signified, is omitted. In other words, in every act of language the diachronic dimension is essential, but there is an implied synchrony, evoked by the permanent possibility of substitution inherent in each of the terms of the signifier. In other words we have the two relationships indicated here:

$$F (S \dots S') S \quad \text{and,}$$

$$F \left(\frac{S}{S'} \right) S$$

one giving the link of combination of the signifier's link, and the other the image of the relationship of substitution always implicit in every signifying articulation.

You do not need to be extraordinarily intuitive to perceive that there must be at least some relationship between what we have just seen being produced, and what Freud schematizes for us concerning the formation of *famillionaire*, namely on two different lines: "I was sitting beside S. Rothschild in a quite familiar way", and underneath "millionaire". Freud completes this by asking: what does that mean? It can mean that there is something that has been dropped, which is eluded; in so far as one can permit it, or can realize or achieve it, a millionaire. Something has been dropped from the articulation of meaning, something has remained, the millionaire. Something is produced that has compressed, pushed together with one another, the familiar and the millionaire, to produce *famillionaire*.

Therefore there is something here that is a kind of particular case of the function of substitution; a particular case whose traces remain in some way. Condensation, if you like, is a particular form of what can be produced at the level of the function of substitution.

It would be good if even now you kept in mind the long development that I made about one metaphor, the one about Booz's sheaf:

"His sheaf was not avaricious or spiteful"

showing that it is the fact that "his sheaf" replaces the term "Booz", that constitutes there the metaphor, and that thanks to this metaphor something concerning the person of Booz emerges which is a meaning, the meaning of the advent of his paternity, together with all those things that can radiate out and spring forth from the fact that he comes to it, as you well remember, in an unlikely, belated, unexpected, providential, divine fashion, that it is precisely this metaphor that is there to show this advent of a new meaning in connection with the person of Booz who seemed to be excluded, foreclosed from it, and that it is also essentially in a relationship of substitution that we should see it, the creative source, the creative force, the generating force, we might even say, of the metaphor.

This is quite a general function, I would even say that it is in this way, that it is in this possibility of substitution that there can be conceived the very generation one might say, of the world, of meaning, that the whole history of the tongue, namely the changes in function by means of which a tongue is constituted, that it is here and not elsewhere that we must grasp it; and that if there is any possibility of giving ourselves a type of model or example of what is the genesis of the appearance of a tongue in this unconstituted world that the world may be before speech, we must presuppose something irreducible and original which is certainly the minimum of signifying chains, but a certain minimum that I will not insist on today, even though it would be advisable to talk about it. But I have already given you enough indications on it, on this certain minimum, given that it is by way of metaphor, namely by the operation of the substitution of one signifier for another, at a certain place, that there is created not only the possibility of the development of the signifier, but also the possibility of the emergence of ever new meaning, going always in the direction of ratifying, of complicating and of deepening, of giving its sense of depth to what in the real, is only pure opacity.

I will let you search out an example of this to illustrate for yourselves, what can be called what happens in the evolution of meaning, and how we always more or less find in it this mechanism of substitution. As usual in these cases, I wait for chance to provide me with an example. And sure enough an example did not fail to be provided for me in my own immediate entourage, by someone who, while struggling with a translation, had had to look up in the dictionary the meaning of the word *atterré*, and who was surprised at the thought that he had never properly understood the meaning of the word *atterré*, when he perceived that contrary to what he believed, *atterré* does not originally and in many of its uses, have the meaning of to be struck with terror, but rather of landing.

In Bossuet *atterré* means literally to land, and in other texts just a little bit later, we see this kind of accent of terror becoming more defined. For my part, I would say incontestably that the purists contaminate, pervert, the meaning of the word *atterré*. However it remains true that here the purists are quite wrong, there is no contamination here of any sort, and even if after suddenly having had recalled for you the etymological meaning, of the word *atterré*, some of you may have the illusion that *atterré* is obviously nothing else than to turn towards the land, to make touch land, or to cast down as low as the ground, in other words to strike with consternation, it nevertheless remains that in current usage the word implies this background of terror.

What does this mean? It means that if we begin with something that has a certain relationship with the original meaning by pure convention, because nowhere is there an origin for the word *atterré*, but that it is the word *abattu* in so far as it evokes in fact what the word *atterré* in this supposedly pure sense, could evoke for us, the word *atterré* which is substituted for it first of all as a metaphor, a metaphor that does not appear to be one, because we begin from this hypothesis that originally they mean the same thing: to throw on the ground or to the ground, this is what I would like you to notice, that it is not in so far as *atterré* changes in any way whatsoever the meaning of *abattu*, that it will be fruitful, generate a new meaning, namely what is meant when we say that someone is *atterré*. In effect it is a new meaning, it is a nuance, it is not the same thing as *abattu*, and even though it does imply terror, it does not mean terrorize either, it is something new.

About this new nuance of terror that this introduces into the psychological and already metaphorical meaning that the word *abattu* has, because psychologically we are neither

atterré nor *abattu*, there is something that we cannot say as long as the words do not exist, and these words come from a metaphor, namely what happens when a tree is *abattu*, or when a wrestler is grounded, *atterré*, second metaphor.

But notice that it is not at all because originally this is what gives the matter its interest, that *ter* which is in *atterré* means terror, that terror is introduced; in other words the metaphor is not an injection of meaning as if that were possible, as if the meaning were somewhere, or as if it were in a reservoir. The word *atterré* does not bring about meaning insofar as it has a signification, but *qua* signifier, namely that having the phoneme *ter*, it has the same phoneme which is in terror. It is by the signifying path, it by the path of equivocation, by the path of homonymy, namely by the most nonsensical thing possible, that it comes to engender this nuance of meaning, that it is going to introduce, going to inject into the already metaphorical meaning of *abattu*, this nuance of terror.

In other words, it is in the relationship of s_s , namely of a signifier to a signifier, that a certain relationship $\frac{s}{s}$ namely of a signifier to a signified will be engendered. But the distinction between the two is essential, it is in the relationship of signifier to signifier, in something that links the signifier here to the signifier there, namely in something that is the purely signifying, namely homonymic relationship of *ter* and *terror*, that there will be able to be exercised the action that is the generation of signification, namely a nuancing by terror of what already existed as meaning on an already metaphorical basis. This then exemplifies for us what happens at the level of metaphor. I would like simply to point out to you something that will show you how this rejoins by a faint pathway, something that is going to be very interesting for us from the point of view of what we see happening in the unconscious.

Everything, insofar as at the level of the normal phenomenon of the creation of meaning by way of substitution, by the metaphorical way that governs both the evolution and the creation of the tongue, but at the same time the creation and evolution of meaning as such, I mean of meaning insofar as it is not simply perceived, but that the subject includes himself in it, namely insofar as meaning enriches our lives.

I want simply to point this out to you: I have already indicated that the essential signifying function of the hook *ter*, namely of something that we must consider as being purely signifying, from the homonymic reserve with which, whether we see it or not, the metaphor works.

What also happens? I do not know whether you are going to grasp it properly right away, but you will grasp it better when you see the development. It is only the start of an essential path. It is that to the very degree that the nuance of the signification *atterré* is affirmed or is constituted, this nuance, you notice, implies a certain domination and a certain taming of terror. This terror is here not only named, but is also attenuated, and it is moreover this that allows to be conserved, so that you can continue to maintain in your mind the ambiguity of the word *atterré*. After all you tell yourself that *atterré* has really got a relationship with "terre", that the terror in it is not total, that *abattement* in the sense that it is unambiguous for you, keeps its prevalent value, that it is only a nuance, that to put it clearly, the terror is half hidden on this occasion.

In other words, it is to the very extent that the terror is not directly noticeable, is taken from the intermediary angle of depression, that what is happening is completely forgotten up

to the moment at which, as I recalled for you, the model is itself, as such, out of commission. In other words, to the very extent that the nuance *aterré* is established in the usage in which it has become meaning and the usage of meaning, the signifier is presentified (*présentifié*) to it, let us say the word: the signifier is properly speaking repressed. In any case, once the usage of the word *aterré* has been established with its contemporary nuance, the model, unless you refer to a dictionary, to the discourse of the learned, is no longer at your disposal. As far as the word *aterré* goes, it is like *terre, terra*, repressed.

I am going just a little bit too far here, because it is a style of thinking to which you are not yet very accustomed, but I think it will save us the trouble of coming back on it again. You will see the extent to which what I call the start of something, is confirmed by the analysis of the phenomena.

Let us come back to our famillionaire, to the point of metaphorical conjunction or condensation where we saw it being formed.

At this level, to separate the thing from its context, namely from the fact that it is Hirsch-Hyacinth, namely the mind of Heinrich Heine who engendered him, later on we will search for it much farther back in its genesis, in the antecedents of Heinrich Heine, in the relations of Heinrich Heine with the Rothschild family. You would even have to read the whole history of the Rothschild family to be quite sure of not making a mistake, but we are not at that stage here.

For the moment we are at famillionaire. Let us isolate it for a moment. Let us restrict as far as we can, the field of vision of the camera around this famillionaire. After all it could have come to birth somewhere other than in the imagination of Heinrich Heine; perhaps Heinrich Heine constructed it at a moment other than the moment when he was sitting in front of his blank page with a pen in his hand; perhaps it was on the evening of one of the perambulations around Paris that we shall evoke, that it came to him out of the blue. There is even every chance that it was at a moment of fatigue, at dusk. In fact this famillionaire might just as well be a slip of the tongue, this is even very likely.

I already mentioned a slip of the tongue I picked up as it blossomed on the lips of one of my patients. I have others, but I return to this one because you should always come back to the same things until they have been well used, and then pass on to something else. It is the patient who, while telling his story on my couch, or in the course of his associations, evoked the time when with his wife whom he had finally married in the presence of the Mayor, he was only living *maritablement*.

You have all already seen that this can be written *maritalement*, which means that one is not married, and underneath something in which the situation of the married and the unmarried combines perfectly, *miserablement*. This gives *maritablement*. It is not said, it is much better than said. You see here the degree to which the message goes beyond, not the one I would call the messenger, because it is really the messenger of the gods who speaks through the lips of this innocent, but the support of the word, the context as Freud would say, completely excludes the possibility that my patient might have made a joke, and in fact you would not know about it if I had not been on that occasion the Other with a capital O, the listener, and not only the attentive listener, but the hearing listener, in the true sense of the word. Nevertheless, it remains true that put in its place, precisely in the Other, it is a particularly outstanding and brilliant joke.

Freud gives us innumerable examples of this *rapprochement* between witticisms and slips of the tongue in the “Psychopathology of Everyday Life”, and on occasion he himself underlines it, and points out that it is something that is so close to the joke, that he himself is obliged to say, and we are obliged to take it on his word, that the context excludes that the male or female patient should have created it as joke.

Somewhere in the “Psychopathology of Everyday Life”, Freud gives the example of the woman who, speaking of the reciprocal situation of men and women, says: "Yes, a woman must be pretty if she is to please men," which is not she implies in her sentence within everybody's power. "A man is much better off, as long as he has his five straight limbs he needs nothing more."

Such expressions are not always fully translatable, and I am often obliged to transpose them completely, that is to say to re-create the joke in French. Here you would almost have to use the term *tout raide*. The word straight is not commonly used, so little used that it is not current in German either. Freud has to make a between the four members and the five members, in order to explain the genesis of the thing which nevertheless gives you the slightly smutty tendency that is doubtless there.

In any case what Freud shows us, is that the *mot* does not reach its target all that directly, any more in German than in French, where it is translated by *cinq membres droits*, and on the other hand he states textually that the context excludes that the woman should appear to be so crude. It is indeed a slip of the tongue, but you can see how it resembles a joke.

Therefore we see, it can be a joke, it can be a slip, I would even say further: it can be pure and simple stupidity, a linguistic naiveté. After all when I qualify it the case of my patient who was a particularly nice man, it was not in his case really a slip, for him the word *maritablement* was well and truly part of his vocabulary; he did not think at all that he was saying anything extraordinary. There are people like that who carry on with their existence, who sometimes have very important jobs, and who come out with *mots* of this kind. A celebrated film producer, it appears, produced ones like this by the kilometre all day long. He would say for example in concluding one of his imperious sentences; "That's the way it is, it is *signe qua non*." This was not a slip of the tongue, it arose simply from his ignorance and stupidity.

I just want to show you that it is important for us to pause for a moment at the level of this formation, and because we have in fact spoken about a slip of the tongue, which in all of this is what affects us most closely, let us see a little what occurs at the level of the slip of the tongue. Just as we have spoken about *maritablement*, let us return to the slip that we have worked through on numerous occasions to underline precisely this essential function of the signifier, what I might call the original slip of the tongue, at the foundation of Freudian theory, the one that reinaugurates the “Psychopathology of Everyday Life” after having also been the first thing published in an earlier form, namely the forgetting of names.

At first sight forgetting is not the same thing as the things I have just been talking to you about, but if what I am trying to explain to you is important, namely if it is well and truly the mechanism, the metabolism of the signifier that is at the source and origin of the formations of the unconscious, we should find them all there, and what appears to be distinct

at the outside should find its unity within. So that now instead of having a millionaire, we have the opposite, we are missing something.

What does Freud's analysis of the forgetting of a name, of a proper, foreign, name demonstrate?

These are only the beginning of things that I will be returning to, and that I will develop later, but I must indicate to you in passing the particularity of this case as Freud presents it to us.

The proper name is a foreign name. We read the "Psychopathology of Everyday Life" the way we read the newspaper, and we know so much about it that we think it is not worth our while to stop at things that were nevertheless the steps of Freud, while each one of these steps deserves to be retained, because each one of these steps carries lessons and is rich in consequences.

I indicate to you therefore in this connection, because we will have to come back to it, that in the case of a name, and of a proper name, we are at the level of the message. This is something whose importance we will rediscover later on. I cannot say everything all at once, like the contemporary psychoanalysts who are so learned that they say everything at the same time, who speak of the "I" and the "ego" as things that have no complexity, and who mix everything up.

What is important, is that we should dwell on what is happening. That it should also be a foreign name, is something different from the fact that it is a proper name. It is a foreign name in so far as its elements are foreign to Freud's native tongue, namely that *Signor* is not a word that belongs to the German tongue. But if Freud points this out, it is precisely because we are here in a dimension that is different to the proper name as such, which one might say, was absolutely not proper and particular, would seem to have no fatherland. They are all more or less attached to cabalistic signs, and Freud stresses that this is not unimportant. He does not tell us why, but the fact that he isolated it in an opening chapter, proves that he thought that it was a particularly sensitive point of the reality he is approaching.

There is another thing that Freud also highlights right away, and on which we have become accustomed not to dwell, it is that what appeared remarkable to him in the forgetting of names as he begins to evoke them to approach the "Psychopathology of Everyday Life", it is that this forgetting is not an absolute forgetting, a hole, a gap, that something else is presented instead, other names. It is here that there begins what is the beginning of all science, namely wonder. One cannot really wonder except at something which one has already begun if only in some small way to accept, otherwise one does not stop at it at all because one sees nothing. But Freud precisely prepared by his neurotic experience, sees something there, sees that in the fact that substitutions are produced, there is something worth dwelling on. I must now go a little more quickly, and point out to you that the whole economy of the analysis which is going to be made of this forgetting of a name, of this slip in the sense that we should give to the word slip the meaning that the name has dropped down.

Everything is going to centre around what we can call a metonymical approximation. Why? Because what will re-emerge at first, are replacement words: Boltraffio, Botticelli.

How does Freud show us that he understands them in a metonymical fashion? We are going to grasp it in this fact, and this is why I am making this detour by way of the analysis of a forgetting, that the presence of these names, their emergence in place of the forgotten Signorelli, is situated at the level of a formation, it is no longer one of substitution, but of combination. There is no perceptible relationship between the analysis that Freud might make of the case between Signorelli, Boltraffio and Botticelli, except the indirect relationships linked solely to phenomena of the signifier. Botticelli he tells us, and I hold in the first instance to what he tells us.

I should say that it is one of the clearest demonstrations that Freud ever gave of the mechanisms of the analysis of a phenomenon of formation or deformation, linked to the unconscious. As regards clarity it leaves absolutely nothing to be desired. I am obliged for the clarity of my account, to present it to you in an indirect fashion by saying that this is what Freud says. What Freud says makes its impact by its rigour, in any case what he says is of this order, it is namely that Botticelli is there because it is the remainder in its second half, is the "elli" of Signorelli left incomplete by the fact that *Signor* is forgotten; "bo" is the remainder, the something incomplete from Bosnia Herzogovina, in so far as the "Her" is repressed. Likewise for Boltraffio, it is the same repression of "Her" which explains that Boltraffio associates the "bo" of Bosnia Herzogovina with Trafoi, which is a locality immediately preceding the adventures of this journey, the place where he heard of the suicide of one of his patients for reasons of sexual impotence, namely the same term as the one evoked in the conversation that immediately preceded with the person who is in the train between Ragusa and Herzogovina, and who evokes those Turks, those Hohommadens who are such lovely people who, when the doctor has not succeeded in curing them, say to him: "*Herr* (sir), we know that you have done everything you could, but nevertheless etc" The *Herr*, the particular weighting, the significant accent, namely this something that is at the limit of the sayable, this absolute *Herr* which is death, this death which as La Rochefoucauld says, "one cannot like the sun steadily regard it", and which effectively Freud, no more than anybody else, cannot steadily regard. While, it makes itself present to him through his role as a doctor on the one hand, by a certain liaison which is also manifestly present, it, on the other hand with a quite personal accent.

This liaison at this moment in an unmistakable fashion in the text, precisely between death and something which has a very close relationship with sexual potency, is probably not only in the object, namely in what is made present to him by his patient's suicide.

It certainly goes further. What does it mean? It means that all that we discover are metonymical ruins connected with a pure and simple combination of signifiers: Bosnia Herzogovina are the metonymical ruins of the object in question which is behind the different particular elements that have entered into play here, and in a very recent past which is behind that, the absolute *Herr*, death. It is to the extent that the absolute *Herr* passes elsewhere, effaces itself, retreats, is pushed back, is very properly speaking *unterdrückt*, that there are two words that Freud plays with in an ambiguous fashion. This *unterdrückt*, I have already translated for you as "falling into the nether regions", in so far as the *Herr*" here at the level of the metonymical object, has gone off in that direction, and for a very good reason, that it was in danger of being too present after these conversations, that as an *ersatz* we rediscover the debris, the ruins of the metonymical object, namely the "bo" that succeeds here in linking up with the other ruin of the name that is repressed at that moment, namely "elli", so that it does not appear in the other substitutive name that is given.

This is the trace, it is the index that we have from the metonymical level that allows us to rediscover the chain of the phenomenon in discourse, in what can be still made present in this point where, in analysis, is situated what we call free association, in so far as this free association allows us to track down the unconscious phenomenon.

But that is not all, it still remains that neither the Signorelli, nor the *Signor*, were ever there where we discover the traces, the fragments of the broken metonymical object. Because it is metonymical it is already broken up. Everything that happens in the order of language is always already accomplished. If the metonymical object already breaks up so well, it is because already *qua* metonymical object it is only a fragment of the reality that it represents.

If the *Signor*, itself, cannot be evoked, if it is what ensures that Freud cannot rediscover the name of Signorelli, it is because he is implicated. Obviously he is implicated in an indirect fashion, because for Freud the *Herr* which effectively had been pronounced at a particularly significant moment of the function that it can take on as absolute *Herr*, as the representative of that death which on this occasion is *unterdrückt*, it is because *Herr* can simply be translated as *Signor*.

It is here that we rediscover the substitutive level, because substitution is the articulation, the signifying means in which the act of metaphor is established. But this does not mean that substitution is metaphor. If I teach you here to go along every path in an articulated fashion, it is not precisely in order that you should continually indulge in abuses of language. I tell you that the metaphor is produced within the level of substitution, that means that substitution is a way in which the signifier can be articulated, and that metaphor operates there with its function as creator of the signified at that place where substitution may be produced. They are two different things. Likewise metonymy and combination are two different things.

I specify this for you in passing, because it is in these non-distinctions that what is called an abuse of language is introduced, that is typically characterized by this, that in what one can define in logical-mathematical terms as a set or a sub-set, when there is only one single element, the set in question, or the sub-set, must not be confused with this particular element.

This may be of some use to those who have criticized my

Let us return then to what happens at the level of *Signor* and *Herr*. Simply something as simple as this, it is obviously what happens in every translation: the substitutive liaison in question is a substitution which is called heteronymic. The translation of a term into a foreign language on the plane of the substitutive act, in the comparison necessitated by the existence at the level of the phenomenon of language of several linguistic systems, is called heteronymic substitution.

You may say that this heteronymic substitution is not a metaphor. I agree, I need only one thing, that is that it should be a substitution. I am only following what you are forced to admit in reading the text. In other words, I want you to draw out of your knowledge, precisely this that you should know it. What is more, I am not innovating, you have to admit all of this if you admit Freud's text.

Thus if *Signor* is implicated in the affair, it is because there is something that links it to something of which the phenomenon of metonymical decomposition is a sign, at the point at which it is produced, and which depends on the fact that *Signor* is a substitute for *Herr*.

I need no more in order to tell you that if the *Herr* has gone this way, the *Signor*, as the direction of the arrows indicates, has gone that way. Not only has it gone that way, but we can admit until I have come back to it, that it is here that it begins to turn, namely that it is sent back and forth like a ball between the code and the message, that it turns round and round in what can be called - remember what I let you glimpse on another occasion regarding the possibility of the mechanism of forgetting, and at the same of analytic remembrance, as being something we should conceive of as being extremely close to the memory of a machine, of what is in the memory of a machine, namely of that which turns round and round until it reappears, until one has need of it, and that is forced to turn round and round in order to constitute a memory. One cannot realize in any other way the memory of a machine, it is very curiously something that we find an application for in the fact that if we can conceive *Signor* as turning round and round indefinitely until it is rediscovered between the code and the message, you see there at the same time the nuance that we can establish between *unterdrückt* on the one hand and *verdrängt* on the other, because if the *unterdrückt* here needs only to be done once and for all, and in conditions to which being cannot descend, namely to the level of its mortal condition, on the other hand it is clear that it is something else that is at stake, namely that if this is maintained in the circuit without being able to re-enter it for a certain time, we must admit as Freud admits, the existence of a special force that contains it there, and maintains it there, namely of what can be properly called a *Verdrängung*.

Nevertheless, after having indicated where I want to get to on this precise, particular point, I would like to indicate that even though in effect there is here indeed only substitution, there is also metaphor. Every time there is substitution, there is a metaphorical effect or induction. It is not quite the same thing for a German speaker, to say *Signor* or to say *Herr*. I would even go further: it is altogether different that those of our patients who are bi-lingual or who simply know a foreign language, and who at a certain moment when they have something to tell us, tell it to us in a foreign language. You can be certain that it always suits them much better; it is never without reason that a patient passes from one register to another. If he is really a polyglot it has a meaning, if he knows the language he is referring to imperfectly, that has naturally not got the same meaning, if he is bilingual from birth that has not the same meaning either. But in every case it has one, and in any case here provisionally in the substitution of *Signor* for *Herr*, there was no metaphor but simply heteronymic substitution.

I return to this point to tell you that on this occasion *Signor* on the contrary, despite the whole context that it is attached to, namely to Signorelli, namely precisely to the frescoes at Orvieto, namely that are as Freud himself tells us, the evocation of the last things, historically represent the most beautiful elaboration there is of that reality impossible to affront, which is death. It is very precisely by telling ourselves a thousand fictions - taking fiction here in its truest sense - about the last things, that we metaphorise, that we tame, that we make enter into language this confrontation with death.

Therefore it is quite clear that the *Signor* here in so far as it is attached to the context of Signorelli, is something that really represents a metaphor.

Here then is what we arrive at. We arrive at this that we are approaching something that allows us to reapply point by point, because we find they have a common topography, the phenomenon of *Witz*. At the point at which there was produced the positive production of *famillionaire*, there is a phenomenon of *parapraxis*, of a hole. I could take another one and demonstrate it for you again, I could give you as an exercise to refer for example to the next example given by Freud in connection with the Latin phrase evoked by one of his interlocutors: *exoriare ex nostris ossibus*. By arranging the words a little because the *ex* is between *nostris* and *ossibus*, and by dropping the second word that is indispensable for the scansion, *aliquis*, there results the fact that he cannot make *aliquis* emerge. You would really not be able to understand it without referring it to this same framework, to this same skeleton, with its two levels, its combinatory level with this privileged point at which is produced the metonymical object as such, and to the substitutive level with this privileged point at which there is produced at the encounter of the two chains of the discourse on the one hand, and on the other hand of the signifying chain in its pure state, at the elementary level, and which constitutes the message.

As we have seen, the *Signor* is repressed here in the message-code circuit, the *Herr* is *unterdrückt* at the level of the discourse, because it is the discourse that preceded, that caught this *Herr*, and what you rediscover, that which allows you to get back on the track of the lost signifier, are the metonymical ruins (*ruses*) of the object.

This is what we are given by the analysis of the example of the forgetting of a name in Freud. From now on it will appear more clearly to us what we can think of *famillionaire*.

The *famillionaire* is something which, as we have seen, has something about it that is ambiguous and altogether of the same order as the production of a symptom. If it can be referred to, superimposed on what happens in the signifying economy of the production of a language symptom, the forgetting of a name, we should be able to find at its level that which completes, what I tried to make you understand a little while ago about its double function, its function of aiming in the direction of meaning, and its confusing, upsetting, neological function from the point of view of something that can be called a dissolution of the object, namely no longer: He treated me quite as his equal, quite "famillionairely", but this something from which emerges what we can call the *famillionaire* to the extent that as a fantastic and derisory character, it is like one of those creations in a certain poetry of fantasy that allows us to imagine something intermediary between the mad millionaire and the centipede, which would however also be a sort of human type that can be imagined as moving, living and growing in the interstices of things, a *melkose*(?) or something analogous, but even without going this far, might pass into the tongue in the way that for some time now a *respectueuse* means a whore.

These sorts of creations are something that has its own value of introducing us to something unexplored up to then. They give rise to this thing that we could call a verbal being, but a verbal being is also simply a being, that tends more and more to become incarnated. In the same way the *famillionaire* is something that it seems to me plays, or has played a number of roles not simply in the imagination of poets, but also in history. I do not need to remind you that many things would go still closer than this *famillionaire*.

Gide in his *Prometheus Ill-bound* makes the whole story revolve around what is not really the god, but the machine, the banker, Zeus whom he calls the *miglionnaire*, and I will show you in Freud what is its essential function in the creation of the joke. We do not know

whether we should pronounce Gide's *migliaionnaire* as Italian or French, but I myself believe that it should be pronounced as Italian.

In short, if we consider *famillionaire* we will then see in the direction I am indicating to you, which is not reached at the level of Heine's text at this time, that Heine does not at all give it its liberty, its independence, at the substantive state. If I even translated it above as "quite *famillionairely*", it is indeed to indicate to you that we remain there at the level of the adverb, because one can even play with words, attract the tongue from the manner of being (?), and in dividing things between the two, you see the whole difference there is between the manner of being and what I was in the process of indicating to you as a direction, namely, a manner of being.

We did not go as far as that, but you see that the two are continuous. Heine remains at the level of the manner of being, and he was himself careful in translating his own term, to translate it precisely, not as "quite as a *famillionaire*", but as I did above, as "quite *famillionairely*".

What is supported by this "quite *famillionairely*"? Something that is, even though we do not in any way get to this poetical being, something that is extraordinarily rich, teeming, swarming, in just the way things happen in metonymical decomposition.

Here Heinrich Heine's creation deserves to be replaced in its text, in the text of the Baths of Lucca, in the text of that *de facto* familiarity in which Hirsch-Hyacinth lives with Baron Cristoforo Gumpelino, who has become a very fashionable man and spends himself on all kinds of courtesies and attentions to beautiful women, and to which must be added the fabulous, astonishing familiarity of Hirsch-Hyacinth hanging on to his coat-tails. The function of parasite, of servant, of domestic, of commissioner of this character, suddenly evokes for us another possible decomposition of the word *famillionaire*, without taking into account that behind - I do not want to go into the frightful and miserable function of women in the life of this caricature of a banker whom Heine produces for us here, but which certainly includes the aspect of craving associated with success, the hunger that is no longer the *sacra famas*, but the hunger to satisfy something that until the moment of his accession to the highest circles of life, had been refused him. This will allow us to follow the trace of another possible manner of decomposition, the possible signification of the word 'fat-millionaire'. The 'fat-millionaire' is at once Hirsch-Hyacinth and Baron Cristoforo Gumpelino.... And it is indeed something else, because behind it there are all the relationships of the life of Heinrich Heine, and also his relationships with the Rothschilds, which were particularly *famillionaire*.

The important thing is that you see in this joke itself the two aspects of metaphorical creation: in one sense, in the sense of meaning, in the sense that this joke bears, stirs up, is rich in psychological signification, and in this instance hits the mark and gains our attention by a talent that borders on a poetic creation, and on the other hand on a sort of reverse side that is not necessarily immediately perceived by him, the *mot* by virtue of the combinations that we could extend here indefinitely, seethes with all the teeming needs that surround an object on this occasion.

I have already alluded to *famas*. There would also be *fama*, namely the need for brilliance and reputation which accompanies the personage of Hirsch-Hyacinth's master. There would also be the basic infamy of that servile familiarity that culminates in the scene at the Baths of Lucca, with the fact that Hirsch-Hyacinth gives his master one of those

purgatives of which he has the secret, and that he is in the grip of agonizing stomach cramps at the precise moment that he finally receives from his beloved lady the letter, that would in other circumstances have allowed him to realize all his dreams.

This grossly farcical scene reveals what can be called the underpinnings of this infamous familiarity, and is something which really gives its weight, its meaning, its connections, its open and hidden side, its metaphorical aspect and its metonymical aspect, to this formation of the joke, and which is nevertheless not its essence, because now that we have seen both its aspects, all the ins and outs, the creation of meaning of *famillionaire* which also implies a loss, is something which is repressed. It must necessarily be something that concerns Heinrich Heine, something that will begin like the Signor above to turn round and round between the code and the message. When on the other hand we also have on the side of the metonymical thing, those losses of meaning that are all the sparks, all the spatters produced around the creation of the word *famillionaire*, and which constitute its radiation, its weight, that which gives it for us its literary value, it nonetheless remains that the only important thing is the centre of the phenomenon, namely that which appears at the level of signifying creation, whatever ensures that this is precisely a witticism, and not everything that is there which is produced all about and puts us on the path of its function *qua* centre of gravity of this whole phenomenon, what gives it its accent and its weight, should be looked for at the very centre of the phenomenon, namely at the level of the conjunction of signifiers on the one hand, and on the other hand, as I have already indicated, at the level of the sanction that is given by the Other to this creation itself, through the fact that it is the Other who gives to this signifying creation the value of a signifier in itself, the value of a signifier in relation to the phenomenon of signifying creation.

Here lies the distinction between the witticism compared to what is pure and simple phenomenon, the relating of a symptom, for example; it is in the passage to the second function that the witticism itself lies. But on the other hand if all that I have just told you today did not exist, namely what happens at the level of the signifying conjunction which is its essential phenomenon, and of what it develops as such, in so far as it participates in the essential dimensions of the signifier, namely metaphor and metonymy, there would be no sanction possible, no other distinction possible for the witticism. For example in comparison with the comic there would be none possible; or compared to the jest, or compared to the raw phenomenon of laughter.

In order to understand what is in question in the witticism *qua* signifying phenomenon, we had to isolate its aspects, its particularities, its attachments, all its ins and outs at the level of the signifier, and that the fact that the *Witz* (S?), something that is at such an elevated level of signifying elaboration, was dwelt on by Freud in order to see in it a particular example of the formation of the unconscious, is also something that retains us, it is also this whose importance you should begin to see when I have shown you in this connection how it allows us to advance in a rigorous fashion into a phenomenon that is itself psychopathological as such, namely the *parapraxis*.

Seminar 3: 20 November 1957

We have approached our task then by way of the witticism, the first example of which we began to analyse the last day, the one that Freud made his own in the famillionaire joke, while at the same time attributing it to Hirsch-Hyacinth, himself a very significant poetic creation. It is not by chance that it is against this background of poetic creation that Freud chose his first example, and that we ourselves have found, as is usually the case, that this original example turned out to be particularly suitable to portray, to demonstrate, what we want to demonstrate here.

You have no doubt perceived that this brings us to the analysis of the psychological phenomenon that is in question in the witticism, at the level of a signifying articulation which, no doubt, even though it may interest you, at least I hope a good number of you, is nonetheless the object, as you can well imagine, of something that might easily appear disturbing. I mean that without doubt this something that surprises, upsets your way of thinking is also at the very core of the renewal of the analytic experience that I am carrying on here with you, and concerns the place, I would say up to a certain point the existence, of the subject. Someone asked me about this, someone who is certainly far from being badly informed, nor indeed badly informed about the question itself, nor badly informed about what I am trying to contribute to it.

Someone asked me the question: "But what then becomes of the subject? Where is it?"

The reply is easy when you are dealing with philosophers, because it was a philosopher who asked me the question at the Philosophical Society where I was speaking. I was tempted to reply: "But on this point I could easily ask you to answer your own question, and say that I leave it to philosophers to speak about it. After all, I do not see why I should do all the work."

This question of the elaboration of the notion of the subject certainly needs to be revised as a result of the Freudian experience. If there is something that has to be modified in it, this is hardly a cause for surprise. In other words, if Freud has introduced something essential, should we still really expect to see intelligent people, particularly psychoanalysts, all the more completely overwhelmed by a particular notion of the subject, embodied in a certain style of thinking, as being simply the ego - which is nothing but a return to what we can call the grammatical confusions of the problem of the subject, the identification of the ego with a power of synthesis that certainly no data of experience can allow us to sustain. You could even say that there is no need to draw on the Freudian experience. There is no need to refer to it since a simple, sincere inspection of the life of any one of us helps us to see that this so-called power of synthesis is more than held in check; and that really, unless we are dealing in fiction, there is nothing more common in experience than what we can call not just the incoherence of our motives, but even more, I would say the sentiment of their profound lack of motivation, of their fundamental alienation. So that if Freud puts forward a notion of the subject that operates beyond this, this subject that is so difficult to grasp in ourselves, if he shows us its sources and its action, there is something that should always have given us pause, namely that this subject - in so far as it introduces a hidden unity, a secret unity into what is apparent to us at the most banal level of experience, our profound

division, our profound fragmentation, our profound alienation with respect to our own motives - that this subject is other.

Is it simply a kind of double, a subject that is perhaps a bad ego, as some have said, since in fact it conceals some rather surprising tendencies, or simply another ego, or as you might rather think I am saying, the true ego? Is that really what is in question? Is it simply an understudy, purely and simply an other whom we can conceive of as being structured like the ego of our experience?

That is the question, and that is also why we approach it this year at the level and under the title of formations of the unconscious.

The question is of course already present, and offers a response. It is not structured in the same way: in this experiential I (*moi*) something is presented that has its own laws. It has in fact an organization of its formations, and has not only a style but also a particular structure. Freud approaches this structure and deconstructs it at the level of neuroses, at the level of symptoms, at the level of dreams, at the level of parapraxes, at the level of the witticism. He recognizes it as being unique and homogeneous. The whole core of what he exposes to us at the level of the witticism, and this is the reason why I chose it as a point of entry, rests on this; it is his fundamental argument for making of the witticism a manifestation of the unconscious.

This means that it is structured, that it is organized according to the same laws as those we find in the dream. He recalls these laws to us, he enumerates them, he articulates them, he recognizes them in the structure of the witticism. They are the laws of condensation; the laws of displacement; essentially and above all something of the other adheres to them; he also recognizes in them what I translated at the end of my article as *égards aux nécessités de la mise en scene* (tr: considerations of representability). He introduces this also as a third element. But naming them is not what is important. The core of what he puts forward, the key to his analysis is this recognition of common structural laws. This, as he says, is how you recognize that a process has been drawn into the unconscious. It is what is structured according to the laws, structured according to their types. This is what is in question when the unconscious is in question.

What happens then? What happens at the level of what I am teaching you, is that we are now able, that is after Freud, to recognize this event that is all the more demonstrative because it is really extremely surprising. That these laws, this structure of the unconscious, that by which a phenomenon can be recognized as belonging to the formations of the unconscious is strictly identifiable with, overlaps, and I would even say further, overlaps in an exhaustive fashion what linguistic analysis allows us to detect as being the essential modes of the formation of meaning, in so far as this meaning is engendered by combinations of signifiers.

The term signifier takes on its full meaning from a certain moment in the evolution of linguistics, that at which there is isolated the notion of the signifying element, a notion very closely linked in the actual history to the separating out of the notion of the phoneme. Since it is uniquely localized by its associations with this notion, the notion of signifier, in so far as it allows us to take language at the level of a certain elementary register, can be doubly defined, on the one hand as a diachronic chain, and, as a possibility within this chain, of a permanent possibility of substitution in the synchronic sense. This grasp at an elementary level of the functions of the signifier is a recognition at the level of this function of an original power

which is precisely that in which we can localize a certain generation of something called meaning, and something that in itself is very rich in psychological implications, and that receives a kind of complement, without even needing to push any further its own way, its research, to plough any further its own furrow, in what Freud himself had already prepared for us at this point of conjunction between the field of linguistics and the proper field of psychoanalysis. It is to show us that these psychological effects, that these effects of the generation of meaning are nothing other than this, and overlap exactly what Freud show us as being the formations of the unconscious.

In other words, we are able to grasp something that remained elided up to then in what can be called the place of man, and it is precisely this: the relationship that there is between the fact that for him there exist objects of a heterogeneity, of a diversity, of a variability that is truly surprising compared to the biological objects that we could expect as corresponding to his existence as a living organism, namely something particular that presents a certain style, a certain superabundant and luxuriant diversity, and at the same time something impossible to grasp as such as a biological object, something that comes from the world of human objects, something that is found in this instance to be closely and indissolubly related to the submission, to the subduction, of the human being by the phenomenon of language.

This had of course already made its appearance, but only up to a certain point and masked in some way; masked in so far as what is graspable at the level of discourse, of the concrete discourse, always presents itself with respect to this generation of meaning in an ambiguous position; this language, in effect, being already turned towards objects that include in themselves something of the creation that they have received from language itself and something that had already been the object precisely of a whole tradition, even of a whole philosophical rhetoric, that which asks the question in the most general sense of the critique of judgement: what is the value of language? What do these connections represent in relation to the connections at which they appear to culminate? That they should even put themselves forward as representing the connections that exist in the real order.

It is at all of this, in fact, that there culminates a critical tradition, a philosophical tradition, whose high point and summit we can define by Kant, and already we can in a certain way interpret, think of Kant's critique as the most profound questioning of every kind of reality, in so far as it is submitted to *à priori* categories not only of aesthetics but also of logic. Here indeed is something that represents a pivotal point from which human meditation can begin again to rediscover that something that was not at all perceived in the way of asking the question at the level of discourse, at the level of logical discourse, at the level of the correspondence between a certain syntax of the intentional circle in so far as it is closed in each sentence, to take it up again right through this book on the critique of logical discourse, to reconsider again the action of the word in this creative chain in which it is always capable of engendering new meanings, most obviously by means of metaphor; and by way of metonymy in a fashion that - I will explain why in due course - has up to recent times always remained profoundly masked.

This introduction is already difficult enough to make me return to my example of millionaire and to make us try here to complete it.

We only arrived at this notion in the course of an intentional discourse in which, while the subject presents himself as wishing to say something, something else is produced that

goes beyond his wish, something that presents itself as an accident, as a paradox, as a scandal, a neo-formation, that appears with certain features that are not at all the negative ones of a sort of stumbling like in a parapraxis which is what it might have been - I showed some equivalent things that are very like it in the order of pure and simple parapraxes - but which on the contrary is found, in the conditions that the accident occurs, to be registered and given a value as a meaningful phenomenon; precisely of being a generation of meaning at the level of a Signifying neo-formation, of a sort of co-lapsing, of signifiers that in this instance, as Freud puts it, are compressed into one another, stuck one against the other, and that this created meaning, and I showed you its nuances and its enigmatic qualities. Between what and what? Between a certain evocation of a properly metaphorical manner of being: "he treated me quite famillionairely"; and a certain evocation of a particular type of being, a verbal being that is ready to take on the peculiar animation whose ghost I already brandished before you with the famillionaire; the famillionaire in so far as he makes his entry into the world as the representative of something that is very likely to take on for us a much more consistent reality and weight than the more hidden reality and weight of the millionaire, but which I also showed you as having a certain something in existence that is vivid enough to really represent a personage characteristic of a certain historical époque. And I pointed out to you that Heine was not the only one to have invented it, I talked to you about Gide's *Prometheus Ill-bound* and his "miglionnaire".

It would be very interesting to pause for an instant at the Gidean creation of *Prometheus Ill-bound*. The millionaire in *Prometheus Ill-bound* is the banker Zeus, and there is nothing more surprising than the way this character is elaborated. I do not know why in our memories of Gide's work, it is eclipsed perhaps by the ineffable brilliance of *Palude*, of which it is nonetheless a sort of correspondent and double. It is the same character who is involved in both. There are many features here that overlap: the millionaire, in any case, is someone who is found to have rather peculiar relationships with his fellows, because it is here that we see emerge the idea of the gratuitous act. Zeus, the banker, who is incapable of having with any other person a true and authentic interchange, since he is identified one might say with absolute power, with this aspect of the pure signifier that there is in money, that questions one might say the existence of every possible kind of significant exchange, can find no other way of escaping from his solitude than to proceed in the following way: as Gide puts it, to go out on the street with in one hand an envelope containing what at the time was something of value, a five hundred franc note, and in the other hand a box in the ear, if one can put it like that; he lets the envelope fall and, when someone obligingly picks it up, asks him to write a name on the envelope, in return for which he gives him a blow in the face. And it is not for nothing that he is Zeus. It is a tremendous blow that leaves him dazed and hurt; then he goes off and sends the contents of the envelope to the person whose name had been written by the person whom he had just treated so roughly.

In this way he finds himself in the position of not having to make a choice, of having compensated, one might say for a gratuitous piece of badness by a gift that owes absolutely nothing to him. His choice is to restore by his action the circuit of exchange into which he cannot introduce himself in any way or from any angle, to participate in it in this way by effraction, as it were, to engender a sort of debt in which he does not participate, and all of whose consequences, which will develop in the rest of the novel through the fact that the two characters themselves never succeed in connecting what they owe to one another; one will become almost blind and the other will die of it.

This is the whole story of the novel and it seems that to a certain extent it is a very instructive and moral story that could be used at the level of what we want to demonstrate.

Here then we have our Heinrich Heine who has created this character as a background, and this character has produced with the signifier *famillionaire*, the double dimension of metaphorical creation, and on the other hand a sort of new metonymical object, the *famillionaire*, whose position you can situate here and here.

I showed you last day that to conceive of the existence of the signifying creation called the *famillionaire* we can find here, even though here of course attention is not drawn to this aspect of things, all the debris, all the ordinary waste from the reflection of a metaphorical creation on an object; namely, all the underlying signifiers, all the signifying packets into which we can break the term *famillionaire*, the *fames*, the *fama*, the infamy, in fact anything you like, the *famulus*, everything that Hirsens-Hyacinth effectively is for his caricature of a boss, Cristoforo Gumpelino. And here in this place, we should systematically search every time we are dealing with a formation of the unconscious as such, for what I have called the debris of the metonymical object which certainly, for reasons that are altogether clear from experience, are shown to be naturally more important when the metaphorical creation, one might say, has not succeeded. I mean when it has culminated in nothing, as in the case that I have just shown you of the forgetting of a name; when the name Signorelli is forgotten to rediscover the trace of this hollow, of this hole that we find at the level of metaphor, the metonymical debris take on all their importance.

The fact that at the level of the disappearance of the term *Herr*, it is something that forms part of the whole metonymical context within which *Herr* is isolated, namely the context of Bosnia Herzegovina, that allows us to restore it, takes on here all its importance.

But let us return to our *famillionaire*.

Our *famillionaire* is produced then at the level of the message. I pointed out to you that we would find ourselves at the level of *famillionaire* when we were dealing with the metonymical correspondences of the paradoxical formation that is produced at the level of the forgetting of a name. In the case of Signorelli we should also find something corresponding to the concealment, to the disappearance of *Signor*, in the case of the forgetting of a name. We should also find it at the level of the witticism.

This is where we stopped. How can we think, reflect on what happens at the level of *famillionaire*, given that the witty metaphor has succeeded in this case? There must be something that up to a certain point corresponds, marks in some way, the residue, the refuse of the metaphorical creation.

A child would tell you right away. If we were not fascinated by the entifying aspect that always makes us handle the phenomenon of language as if it were an object, we would learn simply to say the obvious things in the way that mathematicians go about their work when they handle their little symbols of \underline{x} , \underline{a} and \underline{b} , namely, without thinking of anything, without thinking of what they signify, because it is precisely that that we are looking for, this is what happens at the level of the signifier. In order to know what it signifies let us not try to find out what it signifies; it is absolutely clear that what is rejected, what marks at the level of the metaphor the remainder, what emerges, what remains as a residue of the metaphorical creation, is the word familiar (*familier*).

If the word familiar did not emerge and if *famillionaire* came in its place, we must think of the word familiar as having gone somewhere, as having the same fate as that I designated for you the last time as being reserved for the Signor of Signorelli, that is of going to continue its little circuit somewhere in the unconscious memory. It is the word familiar.

We will not be at all surprised that this should be the case for the simple reason that this word familiar is precisely what on this occasion effectively corresponds to the mechanism of repression in its most usual sense, in the sense of what we experience at the level of something that corresponds to a past experience, to a personal experience, to a previous historical experience that goes back very far and of course in this case it is no longer a question of the being of Hirsch-Hyacinth himself, but of that of his creator, Heinrich Heine.

Even though the word *famillionaire* is particularly appropriate when spoken by Heinrich Heine's poetic creation, it is of little importance for us to know the circumstances in which he discovered it. Perhaps he found it during one of those night walks in Paris that he had to complete on his own, after the meetings he had around the 1830's, with Baron James Rothschild who treated him as an equal, and quite "*famillionairely*". It was perhaps then that he invented it, rather than having it occur to him as he was sitting at his writing table. But it does not matter, it is enough that he made such a successful discovery.

In this I am saying no more than Freud. About a third of the way through the book, after the analysis of *famillionaire*, you see Freud taking up the example again at the level of what he calls the motives (*tendances*) of jokes, and identifying in this creation, in the formation of this witticism, identifying the ingenious invention of this creation of Heine. It is something that has its guarantee in his past, in his own personal family relations. *Famillionairely* is very familiar to him because behind Solomon Rothschild, whom he implicates in his fiction, there is another *famillionaire* who belongs to his own family, his uncle Solomon Heine, who played the most oppressive role in his life, throughout his whole existence, treating him extremely badly, not only refusing him what he could have expected from him on the practical level, but far more: by being the man who refused him, who was an obstacle in Heine's life to the realization of his great love, the love he had for his cousin whom he was not able to marry for a reason that was essentially *famillionaire*, because his uncle was a millionaire and he was not. So that Heine always considered as a betrayal, something that was only the consequence of this familial impasse so profoundly marked by "*millionaioredom*".

We can say that this familiar is found here to be what has the major signifying function in the repression that corresponds to the witty creation, it is the signifier that in the case of Heine the poet, the artist of language, shows us in a clear-cut fashion an underlying, personal meaning in relation to this witty and poetic creation. This underlay is linked to the word, and not to the confused accumulation of permanent meaning in Heine's life, arising from a dissatisfaction and from a very particularly false position *vis-à-vis* women in general. If something intervenes here, it is through the signifier familiar as such. There is no other way in the example referred to, to come upon the action, the incidence of the unconscious, except by showing here the signification that is closely linked to the presence of the signifying term "*familiar*" as such.

Needless to say, these remarks are made to show you that when we have set out on the road of linking to the signifying combination the whole economy of what is registered in the unconscious, it has many implications, and leads us in a regression that we can consider, not

as being infinite, but as going to the origin of language. We should consider all human meanings as having been at some time metaphorically engendered by signifying conjunctions; and I should say that considerations like this are certainly not without interest. We always have a lot to learn from the examination of the history of the signifier.

This remark that I make in passing is made simply to give you an illustration while I am about it, in connection with the identification of the term family as being what is repressed at the level of metaphorical formation, because after all, unless you have read Freud or unless there is a certain homogeneity between the way you think when you are in analysis and the way you read a text, you do not think of family in the term *famillionaire* as such. In the term *atterré* that I analysed for you the last day, the more the term *atterré* develops, the more it tends towards the meaning of terror, and the more *terre* is avoided even though it is the active element in the signifying introduction of the term *atterré*".

In the same way here, the further you go into the meaning of *famillionaire*, the more you think of *famillionaire*, that is to say of the millionaire who has become transcendent, something that exists in being, and no longer purely and simply a sort of sign; but the more family itself tends to be avoided as a term that is at work in the creation of the word *famillionaire*. But if for a moment you begin to interest yourself in the term family, as I have done, at the level of the signifier, I mean by opening Littré's dictionary in which M. Chassé tells us Mallarmé got all his ideas - the joke is that he is right, but he is only right in a certain context, I would say that he did not get them there any more than his interlocutors; he has the feeling there that he has made a breakthrough. Of course he has made a breakthrough because it had not been said up to then. If in fact people thought about what poetry was, there would really be nothing surprising in perceiving that Mallarmé was extremely interested in the signifier. But since nobody has ever really approached what poetry really is, since they oscillate between some vague and confused theory about comparison, or on the other hand a reference to some musical terms or other, an attempt is made to explain the supposed lack of meaning in Mallarmé, without at all seeing that there should be a way of defining poetry as a function of relationships to the signifier, that there is perhaps a more rigorous formula, and that once one gives this formula, it is much less surprising that in his most obscure sonnets, Mallarmé should be implicated.

I do not think that anyone is going to discover some day that I also get all my ideas in Littré's dictionary. The fact that I consult it does not mean that it is there that the question lies.

I open it then and I can tell you something that I suppose some of you may know, that in 1881 the term *familial* was a neologism. A careful reference to some good authors who have since devoted themselves to the question, allowed me to date the appearance of the word *familial* to 1865. That means that we did not possess the adjective *familial* before that year. Why not?

Here is something very interesting. In the final analysis the definition that Littré gives for it, refers to the family at the level of political science. In fact the word *familial* is much more closely linked to the context of family allowances than to anything else. It is because at a certain moment the family could be taken, could be approached as being an important object at the level of political reality, because precisely it no longer had the same relationship, no longer had the same structural function for the subject that it had always had up to a certain epoch, namely that it was in some way included, grasped, in the very foundations, in

the very basis of the discourse of the subject without anybody thinking of isolating it, that it was promoted to the level of a consistent object, of an object that could be subject to a particular technical kind of management, that something as simple as the adjective correlative to the term family came to be born; and in this you can hardly fail to see that it is also perhaps something that is not indifferent at the level of the very usage of the signifier family.

In any case, this remark is also made to make us think of the fact that we should not consider what I have just told you about the entry into the circuit of the repressed and of the term family in Heinrich Heine's day, as having an absolutely identical value to the one it may have today, because by the very fact that the term *familial* is not only not usable in the same context, but did not even exist in Heine's day is enough to change what we might call the axis of the signifying function linked to the term family. This is a nuance that one can consider on this occasion as being far from negligible.

Besides, it is thanks to a series of oversights of this kind, that we can imagine that we understand ancient texts in the way their contemporaries understood them. Nevertheless everything points to the fact that there is every chance that a naive reading of Homer does not at all correspond to the true meaning of Homer, and it is certainly not for nothing that there are people who devote themselves with an exhaustive attention to the Homeric vocabulary as such, in the hope of approximately restoring to its place the dimension of meaning that is contained in his poems. But the fact that they keep their sense, despite the fact that in all probability a good part of what is inaccurately called the mental world, the world of the meanings of Homer's heroes escapes us completely, and very probably escapes us in a more and more definitive fashion, it is all the same on the plane of this distance of the signifier from the signified that allows us to understand that a particularly well-made concatenation, is precisely what characterizes poetry; these signifiers to which we can still and shall probably indefinitely until the end of time be able to give plausible meanings.

Here we are then with our *famillionaire*, and I think that I have almost completed what can be said about the phenomenon of the creation of a witticism in its own order and register. This is perhaps something that will allow us to state more accurately the formula we can give for the forgetting of a name that I spoke to you about last week.

What is the forgetting of a name? On this occasion it means that the subject has posed to the Other, and to the other himself *qua* Other, the question: "Who painted the frescoes at Orvieto?" And he finds nothing.

On this occasion I would like to point out to you the importance of the care I take to give you a correct formulation; on the pretext that analysis discovers that if he cannot evoke the name of the painter of Orvieto, it is because *Signor* is missing you may think that it is *Signor* that is forgotten. That is not true. First of all because it is not *Signor* that he is looking for, it is *Signorelli* that is forgotten, and *Signor* is the repressed signifying waste of something that is happening at the place at which *Signorelli* is not found.

Pay close attention to the absolutely rigorous character of what I am telling you. It is absolutely not the same thing to remember *Signorelli* and *Signor*. When you have given *Signorelli* the unity that it requires, that is when you have made of it the proper name of an artist, the designation of a particular name, you no longer think of *Signor*. If *Signor* has been separated out from *Signorelli*, isolated within *Signorelli*, it is because of the action of decomposition proper to the metaphor, and in so far as *Signorelli* was caught in the

metaphorical interplay that culminated in the forgetting of the name, a name that analysis allowed us to reconstitute.

What analysis allows us to reconstitute, is the correspondence of *Signor* to *Herr* in a metaphorical creation that is directed towards the meaning that exists beyond *Herr*, the meaning that *Herr* took on in the conversation with the person who accompanied Freud at that time in his little trip towards the mouth of the Catarro, and that ensured that *Herr* became the symbol of something before which his medical mastery failed, of the absolute master, namely the illness that he does not heal, the person who commits suicide despite his treatment, and also the death and the impotence threatening Freud himself personally. It is in the metaphorical creation that there is produced this breaking up of Signorelli, that allowed the Signor which is in fact discovered as an element to go somewhere. You must not say that Signor is forgotten, it is Signorelli that is forgotten, and Signor is something that we find at the level of metaphorical waste in so far as the repressed is this signifying waste. Signor is repressed, but it is not forgotten, there is no need for it to be forgotten because it did not exist beforehand. Besides if it was able to fragment so easily and to detach itself from Signorelli, it is because Signorelli is precisely a word in a tongue that was foreign to Freud, and that it is very striking, remarkable and this is an experience that you can very easily perform provided you have some experience of a foreign tongue that you much more easily discern the constitutive elements of the signifier in a foreign tongue than in your own. If you begin to learn a tongue you perceive the constitutive elements between the words, constitutive relationships that you completely overlook in your own tongue. In your own tongue you do not think of words by decomposing them into a radical and a suffix, while you do it in the most spontaneous way when you learn a foreign tongue. That is why a foreign word is much more easily fragmentable and usable in its signifying elements and decompositions, than is any word in your own tongue. This is only an element assisting a process that can also occur with the words of your own tongue, but if Freud began with this examination of the forgetting of a foreign word, it is because it is particularly accessible and demonstrative.

So what is there at the level of the place where you do not find the name Signorelli? It means precisely that there was an attempt at that place at a metaphorical creation. The forgetting of the name, what presents itself as the forgetting of a name, is what can be determined in place of millionaire. Nothing at all would have happened if Heinrich Heine had said: "He received me quite as an equal, quite..em..em ..em."

It is exactly what happens at the level that Freud searches for the name Signorelli, it is something that will not emerge, that is not created, it is here that he searches for Signorelli in an excessive way. Why? Because at the level that he should search for Signorelli, because of the preceding conversation, a metaphor is expected and summoned that concerns something that is destined to mediate between the subject-matter of the conversation that Freud had at that moment, and the part of it that he refuses, namely death. It is just this that is involved when he turns his thoughts towards the frescoes at Orvieto, namely to what he himself calls the "Four Last Things", what can be called the eschatological elaboration that is the only way that he can approach the sort of abhorrent term, this unthinkable term of his thoughts, this something on which he must nevertheless dwell. Death exists and limits his being as a man, limits his action as a doctor, and also provides an absolutely irrefutable limit for all his thoughts.

It is because no metaphor comes to him in the sense of the elaboration of these things as being the last things, because Freud refuses to accept any eschatology, except in the form

of an admiration for the frescoes painted at Orvieto, that nothing comes, that at the place where he searches for the artist - because in the last analysis it is a question of the artist, of naming the artist - nothing is produced, because no metaphor succeeds, no equivalent can be given at that moment for Signorelli, because Signorelli has taken on a necessity, is called at that moment into a very different signifying form than that of its own name, which at that moment is summoned to participate in the way that *atterré* plays its part by the radical *ter*, that is to say it breaks up and is elided. The existence somewhere of the term Signor is the result of the unsuccessful metaphor that Freud calls at that moment to his aid. That is why you see the same effects that I pointed out to you as existing at the level of the metonymical object, namely, at that moment of the object in question, the represented, painted object of the last things. Freud withdraws it. "Not only did I not find the name of Signorelli, but I never remembered better, never better visualised than at that moment the frescoes at Orvieto, even though I am not", and we know it through all sorts of other features, by the form of his dreams in particular, "I am not all that imaginative."

If Freud made all these discoveries it is very probably because he was much more open, much more permeable to the interplay of symbols than to the interplay of images; and he himself notes this intensification of the image at the level of memory, this more intense reminiscence of the object in question, namely the painting, and down to the face of Signorelli himself who is there in the posture in which the donors, and sometimes the artist, appeared in paintings of that epoch. Signorelli is in the painting and Freud visualizes him. There is not therefore a pure and simple, massive type of forgetting; on the contrary there is a relationship between the revival, the intensification of certain of its elements, and the loss of other elements, of signifying elements at the symbolic level, and we find at that very moment the sign of what happens at the level of the metonymical object, just as we can now formulate what happens in the formula of the forgetting of a name, more or less as follows:

$$\frac{X}{\text{Signor}} \cdot \frac{\text{Signor}}{\text{Herr}}$$

We rediscover here the formula of the metaphor in so far as it operates through the mechanism of the substitution of a signifier S for another signifier S'.

What happens as a result of this substitution of the signifier S for another signifier S'? What happens is this, that at the level of S' a change of meaning takes place, namely, that the meaning of S', let us call it s', becomes the new meaning that we call s, since it corresponds to the big S.

But in order that there should remain no ambiguity in your minds, such as the idea that what is involved in this topology, is that s is the meaning of S, and that S must be in relation to S' in order for s to produce only in these conditions, what I call s". It is the creation of this meaning that is the end, the function of metaphor. The metaphor is always successful to the degree that when this is executed, when the meaning is realized, when the meaning has become a function in the subject, S and s are simplified out and cancelled, exactly like in a formula for the multiplication of fractions.

It is in so far as *atterré* ends up by signifying what it really is for us in practice, namely, more or less struck with terror that the *ter* that served as an intermediary between *atterré* and *abattu* on the one hand, that is properly speaking the most absolute distinction,

there is no reason why *atterré* should replace *abattu*, except that the *ter* that is here because it served as a homonym brought this terror with it, that *ter* in the two cases can be simplified out. It is a phenomenon of the same order that is produced at the level of the forgetting of names.

If you really want to understand what is involved, it is not a question of the loss of the name Signorelli, it is an X that I introduce to you here because we are going to learn to recognize it and to use it. This X is the summons of the significant (*significative*) creation whose place we find in the economy of other unconscious formations. I can tell you right away, that this is what happens at the level of what is called the desire of the dream. I will show you how we will find it, but here we see it in a simple fashion at the place at which Freud should have found Signorelli. He finds nothing, not just because Signorelli has disappeared, but because at that level he must create something that satisfies what is the question for him, namely the last things, and it is in so far as this X is present, something that is the metaphorical formation that tends to be produced, and we can see from this that the term Signor appears at the level of two opposing signifying terms, of two times the value S', and that it is under this heading that it undergoes repression as Signor, that at the level of X nothing is produced, and this is why he does not find the name, and why *Herr* plays the role from the place it occupies as metonymical object, as an object that cannot be named, as an object that is only named by something that is connected to it. Death is the absolute *Herr*. But when one speaks of *Herr* one does not speak of death because one cannot speak of death, because death is precisely both the limit and probably also the origin of all speech.

Here then is where we are led by the comparison, the relating term by term of the formation of the witticism with that unconscious formation whose form you can now detect more clearly since it is apparently negative. It is not negative. To forget a name is not simply a negation, it is a lack, but a lack - we always tend to go too quickly - of that name. It is not because this name cannot be grasped that it is a lack, it is the lack of this name that means that searching for this name, the lack at the place where this name should be exercising this function, where it can no longer exercise it because a new meaning is required, that demands a new metaphorical creation. That is why Signorelli is not found, but that on the contrary the fragments are found where they should be found in the analysis, where they exercise the function of the second term of the metaphor, namely, the term elided in the metaphor.

This may be Chinese to you, but it does not matter if you simply allow yourselves to be led as things emerge. Because even though it may appear to be Chinese in a particular case it is very rich in consequences in that if you remember it as you should, it will permit you to clarify what is happening in the analysis of all sorts of unconscious formations, to account for them in a satisfying fashion, and on the contrary to perceive that in eliding it, in not taking it into account, you are led into what are called entifications or identifications that are quite crude, incomplete, or even the source of errors, or at least coming together and tending to sustain the errors of verbal identification that play such an important role in the construction of a certain lazy-minded psychology.

Let us come back once again to our witticism, and to what we must make of it. I would like to introduce you to another sort of distinction that brings us back in a way to that with which we began, namely the question of the subject.

The question of the subject, what does that mean? If what I told you a little while ago is true, if it is in so far as thought always tends to make of the subject the one who designates

himself as such in the discourse, I would like you to notice that what distinguishes, what isolates, what opposes it, is something that we can define as the opposition between what I can call the Statement of the present and the present of the statement.

This looks like a play on words, it is not at all a play on words. The statement of the present means that what calls itself 'I' in the discourse, in common besides with a series of other particles, with *Herr* we could now put here, now, and other taboo words in our psychoanalytic vocabulary, is the something that serves to locate in the discourse the presence of the speaker, that locates him in his actuality as speaker. It is enough to have the slightest knowledge or experience of language, to see that the present of language, of course, namely what is at present in the discourse, is something completely different to this localization of the present in the discourse. What happens at the level of the message, that is the present of the discourse. This can be read in all sorts of ways, on all sorts of registers, it has no relationship in principle to the present, in so far as it is designated in the discourse as the present of the one who supports it, namely something completely variable, and for whom besides words have really only the value of a particle. It has no more value here than in the here and now. The proof is that when you speak to me about the here or now, and that it is you my interlocutor who speaks about it, you are not speaking of the same here or now, you are speaking of the here or now that I am speaking of. In any case, your I is certainly not the same as mine. These are very simple words destined to fix the I somewhere in the discourse.

But the present of the discourse itself is something completely different, and I will immediately give you an illustration of it at the level of the witticism, the shortest one that I know, which will also introduce us at the same time to a dimension other than the metaphorical dimension.

There is another one. If the metaphorical dimension is the one corresponding to condensation, I spoke to you some time ago about displacement. It has to be somewhere: it is in the metonymical dimension. If I have not already tackled it, it is because it is much more difficult to grasp, but in fact this witticism will be particularly favourable to help us to understand it, and I shall introduce it today.

The metonymical dimension, in so far as it can enter into the witticism, is the one that concerns the context and the use of the combinations of the chain, of horizontal combinations. It is something therefore that will operate by associating the elements that are already conserved in what can be called the treasury of metonymies; it is to the degree that a word can be linked in a different fashion, in two different contexts that will give it two completely different senses, that by taking it up in a certain way we are properly operating within the metonymical meaning.

I shall give you the first example for it also the next day, in the form of the witticism that I can introduce to you so that you can meditate on it before I talk to you about it. It is the one that takes place when Heinrich Heine is with the poet Frederic Soulié in a salon, and when the latter says to him, again a propos of a very rich person, this was very important at the time as you see, and of whom he says, seeing him surrounded by people - it is Soulié who is speaking - "You see my friend that the worship of the golden calf is not over." "Oh!" replies Heinrich Heine, having looked at the personage, "for a calf he seems to me to be a little old."

Here is an example of a metonymical joke. I shall come back to it and deconstruct it the next day.

It is in so far as the word calf is taken in two different metonymical contexts, and only because of this, that it is a witticism, because it adds really nothing to the signification of the witticism to give it its meaning, namely, that this person is an animal. It is funny to say it this way, but it is a joke only because one corresponds to the other, calf has been taken in two different contexts and used as such.

If you are not convinced we shall come back to it the next day. This is only a way back to the witticism though which I want to help you to see what is at stake when I say that the witticism operates at the level of the interplay of the signifier, and that it can be demonstrated in an ultra-short form.

A potential young lady to whom we can accord all the qualities of having had a good education, that which consists in not using dirty words, but in knowing them all the same, is asked to dance at her first surprise party by a lout who tells her after some moments of boredom and silence, during a far from perfect dance: "You must have noticed, Mademoiselle, that I am a *Comte*." - "Ah," she simply replies, "*te!*"

I am not making this up, I think you have seen it in a special little collection, and you may have heard it from the lips of the author who was very proud of it. But it nevertheless presents some particularly exemplary characteristics, because what you see here is precisely the essential embodiment of what I called the present of the discourse. There is no I, the I does not name itself. Nothing could exemplify better the present of the statement as opposed to the statement of the present, than the pure and simple exclamation. The exclamation is the very type of the presence of discourse in so far as the person that produces it completely effaces her present; her present is, we might say, entirely recalled in the present of the discourse.

Nevertheless at this level of creation the subject proves that she has presence of mind, because something like that cannot be premeditated, it comes out like that and this is how you recognize that a person has wit. She adds this simple modification to the code which consists in adding to it this little *te* which takes on all its value from the context, which is that she is not content with her *Comte*, except that the *Comte*, if he is as I say so discontenting, might notice nothing. It is a completely gratuitous joke. Nevertheless you see here the elementary mechanism of the witticism, namely, that this slight transgression of the code is taken by itself as a new value permitting the instantaneous generation of the meaning that one needs.

What is this meaning? It may seem to you to be certain, but after all the well brought-up young lady did not tell her *Comte* that he was what he was minus the *te*, she told him nothing of the kind. The meaning that is to be created is precisely what is situated somewhere in suspense between the ego and the Other. It is an indication that there is something lacking at least for the moment. On the other hand you see that the text is not transposable: if the individual had said that he was a *marquis* the creation would not have been possible.

It is evident that in the good old formula that our forefathers of the last century used to enjoy: "*Comment vas-tu?*" you were asked, and you were meant to reply "*et toile à matelas*", it was better not to reply "*et toile à édreton*". You will tell me that it was a time when they were satisfied with simple pleasures.

This *Ah! Te!* you grasp it here in its shortest form, in what is incontestably a phonematic form, because it is the shortest way of composing a phoneme. There have to be two distinctive features, the shortest form of the phoneme being: C V; a consonant supported

by a vowel or a vowel supported by a consonant, but a consonant supported by a vowel is the classic formulation. Here it is a consonant supported by a vowel, and this is amply sufficient to constitute its message as having the value of a message, in so far as it is a paradoxical reference to the current use of words and directs the thought of the Other to something that is essentially the instantaneous grasp of meaning.

This is what is meant by being witty, it is also what for you initiates the properly combinatory element on which all metaphor rests, because if today I have spoken to you a good deal about metaphor, it is on the plane once again of the location of the substitutive mechanism, which is a mechanism with four terms, the four terms in the formula that I gave you in the "Agency of the Letter", and in which you sometimes see so singularly what is the essential operation of intelligence at least in its form, namely, to formulate the correlative of what is established with the X of a proportion.

When you do intelligence tests this is what you are doing. Only it is not enough to say, all the same, that man is distinguished from animals by his intelligence as crudely as that. He is perhaps distinguished from the animal by his intelligence, but perhaps in the fact that he is distinguished by his intelligence, the essential introduction of signifying formulations is primordial.

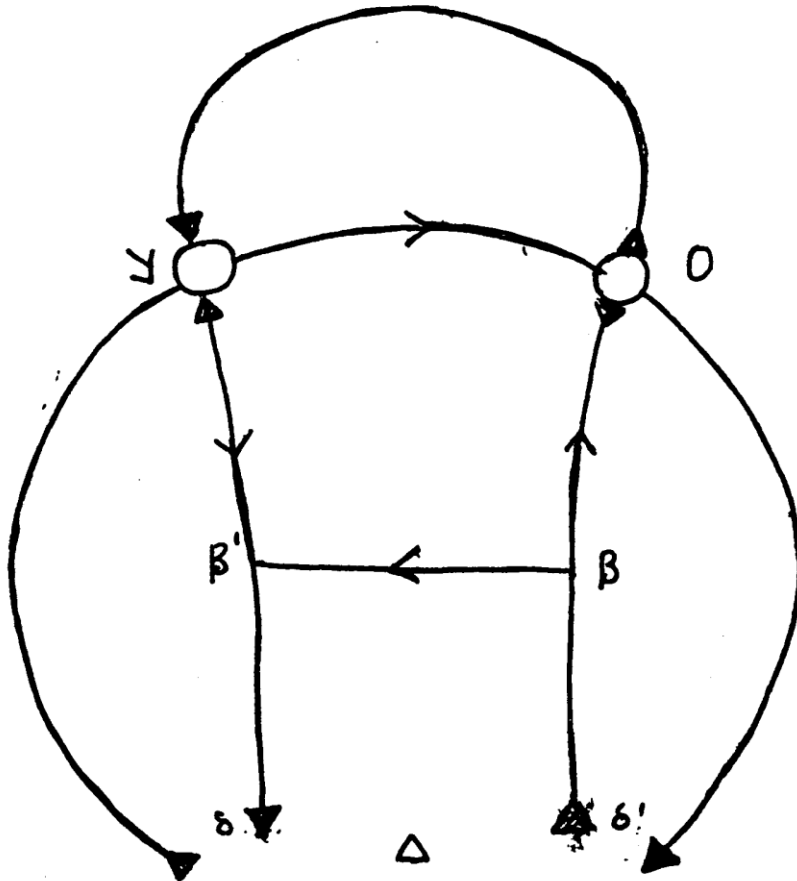
In other words to formulate things still better, to put in its place the question of the so-called intelligence of man as being the source of his reality plus X, we have to begin by asking intelligence of what? What is there to understand? With the real, is it so much a question of understanding? If it is purely and simply a question of relationship to the real, our discourse should surely succeed in restoring it to its existence in the real, that is to say, should end up with nothing. Which is what discourse does in general. If we end up with something else, if one can even speak of history as ending in a certain knowledge, it is in so far as discourse has brought an essential transformation to it.

This indeed is what it is all about, and perhaps it is about these four little terms linked in a certain fashion, that are called proportional relationships. These proportional relationships we tend once again to entify, that is to believe that we find them in objects; but where in the objects are these proportional relationships if we do not introduce them by means of our little signifiers? It remains that for any metaphorical interplay to be possible, it must be founded on something where there is something to substitute, on something that acts as a base, namely the signifying chain, the signifying chain as base, as principle of combination, as the locus of metonymy. This is what we will try to tackle the next day.

SCHEMA of 6 November 1957.

from J.-B. Pontalis

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1st Application

- CIRCUIT $\delta y O \delta'$ - Signifying Chain
- CIRCUIT $O \beta \beta' y$ - Chain of Discourse
- y - Message - Locus of METAPHOR
- O - Other - Locus of CODE
- β' - Metonymical Object
- β - "I" of Discourse

Notes

-  INITIAL VECTORS
-  Terminal VECTORS
-  Intermediate VECTORS

Seminar 4: Wednesday 27 November 1957

We left things the last day at the point at which in the analysis of the witticism having in a first approach shown you one of its aspects, one of its forms, in what I called here the metaphorical function - we were going to take up a second aspect, which is the one introduced here in the register of the metonymical function.

You may be surprised at a way of proceeding that consists in starting from an example and developing successively functional relationships, which because of this seem at first not to be linked with our subject in a general way. This comes from a necessity proper to our subject, and you will see moreover that we will have the opportunity of showing its key element.

We can say that with regard to anything that is of the order of the unconscious in so far as it is structured by language, we find ourselves confronted by the phenomenon that it is not simply the particular genus or class, but the particular example itself that allows us to grasp its most significant properties.

We have here a sort of inversion of our usual analytic perspective, I mean analytic not in the sense of psychoanalytic but in the sense of the analysis of mental functions. There is here, if I may put it this way, something that can be called the failure of the concept in the abstract sense of the term, or more exactly, the necessity of going through a form other than that of the conceptual grasp. That was what I was alluding to the day I spoke about Mannerism, and I would say that this feature is something very relevant to our field, to the area that we move about in; that it is rather by the usage of the concept, by the usage of the *conchetto* that we are obliged to proceed in this field. This is precisely because of the dimension in which the structures we are talking about operate.

The term pre-logical is one that will only lead to confusion, and X would advise you to eliminate it in advance from your categories, given what has been made of it, namely a psychological property. It is rather a question of structural properties of language in so far as they are antecedent to any question that we can pose to language on the legitimacy of what language itself proposes to us as an aim. As you know, it is nothing other than what in itself has been the object of anxious interrogation by philosophers, thanks to which we have arrived at a sort of compromise which is more or less the following: that if language shows us that we cannot say an awful lot about it, except that it is a being of language, it is certainly because in this perspective there is going to be realized for us a "for us" that is called objectivity.

This is no doubt a rather hasty way of summarizing for you the whole adventure that goes from formal logic to transcendental logic. But it is simply to situate, to tell you right away that we place ourselves in another field, and to indicate to you that Freud does not tell us when he speaks of the unconscious, that this unconscious is structured in a certain way. He tells it to us in a way that is at once discourse and verbal, in so far as the laws that he advances, the laws of composition, of articulation of this unconscious reflect, exactly overlap, certain of the most fundamental laws of the composition of discourse. That on the other hand, in this mode of articulating the unconscious, all sorts of elements are lacking, which are also the ones involved in our common discourse; the link of causality he tells us in connection

with the dream, negation, and immediately after he goes on to show us that it is expressed in some way or other in the dream. It is this, it is this field that has already been explored, in as much as it has already been staked out, defined, circumscribed, even ploughed up by Freud. This is what we are trying to return to in order to formulate, I would go further, in order to formalize more exactly what we have just called the primordial structural laws of language, since if there is anything that the Freudian experience has contributed, it is that we are determined by these structural laws to what, rightly or wrongly, can be called the condition of the most profound image of ourselves that can be signified, or more simply, that something in ourselves that lies beyond our grasp of ourselves, beyond the idea that we can construct of ourselves, on which we base ourselves, more or less hold on to, and which we sometimes forced a little too prematurely to make of it the synthesis, the totality, of the person. All terms, let us not forget, that precisely because of the Freudian experience, are objects of controversy.

In fact Freud teaches us - and I should, after all, put it here as a signed frontispiece - about something that we can call the distance, even the gulf, that exists between the structuring of desire and the structuring of our needs; because, even if the Freudian experience does precisely come to be referred in the last analysis to a metapsychology of needs, there is assuredly nothing obvious in this, it could even be said to be completely unexpected in relation to what appeared at first sight to be the case.

It is in function of this progress, of the detours that the experience instituted and defined by Freud forces us to, and shows us the extent to which the structure of desires is determined by something other than need; the extent to which these needs only come to us in a way that is refracted, broken, fragmented, structured, precisely by all those mechanisms called condensation, called displacement, called according to their poems, the manifestations of the psychic life in which they are reflected, which suppose other intermediaries and mechanisms, and in which we recognize, precisely, a certain number of laws which are the ones we are going to get to at the end of this year of seminars, and which we will call the laws of the signifier.

These laws are the laws that dominate here, and in the witticism we learn how they operate: a *jeu d'esprit*, with the question mark that the introduction of the term here requires. What is the spirit? What is *ingenium*? What is *ingenio* in Spanish, since I referred above to *conchetto*? What is this something or other that intervenes here and is something other than the function of judgement? We can only situate it when we have properly carried out our procedures and elucidated it at the level of these procedures. What is in question here? What are these procedures? What is their fundamental aim?

We have already seen, in connection with the ambiguity between the witticism and the slip of the tongue, the kind of fundamental ambiguity that emerges and is in a way constitutive of it, which means that what is produced according to the particular case, can be seen as a slip of the tongue, a sort of psychological accident that still perplexes us without Freudian analysis, or on the contrary, taken up, assumed by a certain way of listening by the Other, by ratifying it in a certain way at the level of signifying value, that which precisely on a particular occasion was assumed by the neological, paradoxical, scandalous term "famillionairely"; a particular signifying function that consists in designating something that is not simply this or that, but a sort of beyond, a certain relationship that has failed in this case. And this beyond is not just linked to the impasses of the relationship of the subject to the protecting millionaire, but to something that is signified here as fundamental. So that

something is introduced into the consistency of human relationships, a type of essential impasse based on the following: that no desire can in fact be received, can be admitted by the Other, except by all sorts of arrangements that refract it, make it something other than it is, make it an object of exchange, and to speak plainly, already submit the processes of demand at their very origin to a sort of necessity of refusal.

Let me explain, and in a way because we are talking about the witticism I will allow myself, in order to introduce the real level at which there is posed this question of the translation of a demand into something that produces an effect, to introduce it by a story which even though not very witty has a perspective, a register that does not limit it to the little spasmodic laugh.

It is the story that no doubt you all know, the story of the masochist and the sadist: "Hurt me," says the former to the latter; to which the latter replies severely: "No".

I can see that it does not make you laugh. It does not matter, a few people are laughing all the same. This story is not there in the final analysis to make you laugh; I would like simply to point out to you that in this story something is suggested to us which develops to a level that no longer has anything witty about it, and is precisely this: who are better made to get on together than the masochist and the sadist? Yes. But, as you see in this story, provided they do not speak.

It is not out of badness that the sadist replies "no". It is in function of his quality as sadist, once he replies, and he is obliged to reply once speech has been used, at the level of the word. Therefore it is in so far as we have passed to the level of the word that this something that should culminate, provided nothing is said, at the most profound agreement, ends up precisely at what I called above the dialectic of refusal, the dialectic of refusal in so far as it is essential in order to sustain in its essence as demand, what is manifested by way of the word.

In other words, if you can see, it is here that there appears, I am not saying in the circle of the discourse, but in a way, at this dividing point, this switch point, that the subject expresses that something looping back on itself and which is an articulated sentence, a ring of discourse. If it is here at the point delta that we situate need, need encounters by a sort of necessity of the Other the sort of response that we call for the moment refusal, namely, betrays the essential asymmetry between these two elements of the circuit, the closed loop and the open loop, which means that to directly take the circuit from his need towards the object of his desire, namely, following this trajectory, what is presented here as a demand ends up here with a no.

No doubt it would be worth investigating more fully what appears here only as a sort of paradox that our schema simply serves to situate. This is where we will take up again our sequence of propositions on the different phases of the witticism, and where today I shall introduce what I have called one of its metonymical manifestations. I have already pinpointed the idea, the example of it, in a form in which you can see the total difference there is between it and millionaire.

It is the story of the dialogue between Heinrich Heine and the poet Frederic Soulié, who is more or less his contemporary, a dialogue that is reported in Kuno Fischer's book which, I believe, was rather well-known at the time: "Look," says Frederic Soulié to the man who was only a little older, and whom he admired so much, "Look how the 19th century

adores the golden calf" - this in connection with the crowd gathered around an old gentleman who was no doubt basking in the reflected glory of his financial power. To which Heine, casting a disdainful eye on the object to which his attention had been drawn, replies: "Yes, but he seems to me to be too old for that."

What does this joke mean? Where does it get its spice and its power? You know that with respect to the joke Freud right away puts us immediately on the following plane: we shall look for the witticism where it is, namely in its text. There is nothing more striking in the work of this man to whom all sorts of psychological hypostases have been attributed than the way in which on the contrary it is always from the opposite end, from the materiality of the signifier that he begins, treating it as a datum that exists in itself, and on the other hand we have a clear example of this only in his analysis of the witticism. Not only does he begin each time with the technique but he depends on these technical elements to discover the source of its power.

What does he do then? What he calls "an attempt at reduction". By this he shows us at the level of the millionaire joke, that by translating it into what might be called its developed meaning, the whole witty aspect vanishes, showing thus that it is in some way in the fundamentally ambiguous relationship that is proper to the metaphor, namely that it is in the fact that a signifier $F S \left(\frac{S}{S^1} \right)$, namely that the function takes a signifier in so far as it is substituted for another one latent in the chain, that it is in this relationship of ambiguity on top of a sort of positional similarity or simultaneity, that we can see what is involved.

If we decompose what is involved, and if we then read it as follows, namely if we say "as familiar as one can be with a millionaire", all the wit disappears.

Freud then approached the witticism at the level of one of its metaphorical manifestations. Here he finds himself confronted with something that is palpably different, but for a moment - because Freud is not one to spare us the detours of his approach towards a phenomenon - he hesitates, and qualifies this new variety as a conceptual joke as opposed to a verbal joke. But he very quickly perceives that this distinction is completely insufficient, that assuredly it is to something that can be called the "form", namely to the signifying articulation, that he must here have recourse; and once again he will try to subject this example to a technical reduction, in order to make it answer for what underlies in it the questionable form given by the subjective agreement that this is a joke. And we shall see that there he encounters something different.

First of all, it seems to him that there must be something metaphorical here. I repeat, we must follow all the approaches of his thinking. That is why he pauses for a moment at the protasis, at what was contributed by the person who is speaking to Heinrich Heine, namely Frederic Souli4. Besides in this he is only following Kuno Fischer who in fact remains at this level. There is in this golden calf something metaphorical, certainly the golden calf has a sort of double value: on the one hand it is the symbol of intrigue, and on the other hand the symbol of the reign of the power of money.

Does this mean that the gentleman receives all this homage because he is unquestionably rich? Do we not find here something that in a way reduces and causes to disappear the source of what is involved. But Freud quickly notices that after all this is only something quite fallacious. This means that it is worth looking much more closely at the details to discover the wealth of this example.

It is quite certain that there is something already involved in these first elements of the coming into play of the golden calf, something that can be called the material. Without exploring completely the way the verbal usage of an undoubtedly metaphorical term is established, it must be observed that if the golden calf is already something that in itself has the closest connection with the relationship of the signifier to the image, which is effectively the aspect on which idolatry is installed, it is in the last analysis in connection with a perspective that demands, one might say, in the recognition of the one who presents himself as: "I am who I am", namely the God of the Jews, that something particularly exigent sets its face against anything that poses itself as the origin of the signifier itself, the nomination *par excellence* of any imaged hypostases, because we have of course gone a little further than the idolatry that is purely and simply the adoration of a statue. It too is something that searches for its beyond, and it is precisely to the extent that this mode of searching for its essential beyond is refused in a certain perspective, that this golden calf takes on its value, and it is only by means of something that is already a sliding that this golden calf takes on a metaphorical usage: that what exists in the religious perspective of what can be called in idolatry a topical regression, a substitution of the imaginary for the symbolic, here takes on secondarily a metaphorical value to express something else, something that can also be referred to the level of the signifier, namely something that people other than myself have called the fetichistic value of gold, namely something that also makes us touch on a certain signifying concatenation.

It is not for nothing that I am evoking it here, because it is precisely this function of the fetish that we are going to touch on immediately. It is only conceivable, it can only be referred to, precisely in the dimension of metonymy.

We are dealing here with something that is already charged with all the enmeshments, all the entanglements, of the symbolic imaginary function in connection with the golden calf, and is it here that the joke can or cannot be found, because Freud notes that it is not at all the place where it is situated.

The joke, as he understands it, lies in Heinrich Heine's riposte. And Heinrich Heine's riposte consists precisely in cancelling out one might say, in subverting, all the references in which this golden calf is maintained as a metaphorical expression, in order to make of it something else, which is purely and simply to designate somebody who is suddenly brought back to his true worth, and this does not happen by chance, in which context he no doubt deserves from a certain moment on to be the calf that is worth so much a pound, if I can express myself in that way. The calf is suddenly taken for what it is, something alive, and in fact for something reduced here in the market instituted by the reign of gold, to being nothing but itself, sold as an animal, a calf's head, and in connection with it we have the statement: "Surely he does not fall within the limits of the definition given by Littré", namely a calf in its first year, or one that I believe a purist in butchering would define as a calf that has not yet stopped suckling its mother, a refinement that I have pointed out is respected only in France. "For a calf, he is a bit too old." There is no way of submitting to a reduction the fact that in this case the calf is no longer a calf, that it is a rather old calf; this remains a witticism, whether or not you have the background of the golden calf.

Therefore Freud grasps here a difference between what is unanalysable and what is analysable, and yet both are witticisms.

What then can this mean, except that the experience of the witticism is doubtless to be referred to two different dimensions of the thing that we are trying to circumscribe more closely? And that what is presented as being in a way, as Freud himself says, fraudulent, a piece of trickery, faulty thinking, is the common feature of a whole other category of wit, in fact what would be popularly described as taking a word in a different sense from the one intended.

The same feature also appears in another story, the one referring to the *premier vol de l'aigle* which became a joke in connection with a rather considerable confiscation of the wealth of the Orleans family by Napoleon III when he came to the throne. "*C'est le premier vol de l'aigle*" he said. And everyone was delighted with this ambiguity. No need to insist.

Here again is something that really there is no question of describing as a conceptual joke, it is in fact a verbal joke, in quite the same category as that presented here, taking a word apparently in another sense.

It is sometimes amusing to explore what underlies such words and if Freud takes care, because the joke is reported in French, to underline for those who do not know French the ambiguity between *vol* as an action, the movement of birds, with *vol* in the sense of taking away, of abduction, of the theft of property, it would be well to recall here what Freud passes over - I am not saying that he did not know it - namely, that one of these meanings was historically borrowed from the other, and it is from a usage of *vol* that the term *volerie* came to be used about the 13th or 14th century, because the falcon steals (*vole*) quail, to describe a sin against one of the essential laws of property, called stealing (*vol*).

This is not an accident in French, I cannot say that it happens in every language, but it was already in Latin where *volare* had taken on the same meaning from the same origin, showing also on this occasion something not unrelated to what we are talking about, namely euphemistic modes of expression for what in the word must finally represent the violation of the word, precisely, or the violation of the contract. It is not for nothing that on this occasion the word *viol* is borrowed here from a completely different register, namely from the register of an abduction which has nothing to do with what we can properly and juridically call stealing.

But let us stop here and take up that for which I introduced the term metonymy; and indeed I think that we should look beyond these fleeting ambiguities of meaning, for something else to serve as reference to define this second register in which the witticism is situated; this something else that will allow us to unify the source, the mechanism with the first type; to discover the common factor, the common source, the way to which is indicated by everything in Freud, without of course quite succeeding in formulating it.

What would be the use of my talking about Freud if we do not attempt to draw the maximum profit from what he has contributed? It is for us to push forward a little bit further, I mean to give the necessary formalization; we will learn from experience if it is an appropriate formalization, if it is a correct formalization, if it is really in this direction that phenomena are organized. In any case it is a question that is rich in consequences, because assuredly for our whole way of treating things in the broadest sense, that is to say not simply of treating therapeutically but of conceiving the modes of the unconscious, the fact that there is a certain structure, and that this structure is the signifying structure in so far as it takes up, that it cuts across, that it imposes its grid on every human need, is something absolutely decisive and essential that we see when we confront metonymy.

I have already introduced this metonymy several times particularly in the article on "The agency of the letter in the unconscious". I deliberately gave you an example of it on a popular level taken from the experience you may recall of your studies in secondary school, in particular of your grammar. Metonymy is what at that time was called, in a kind of perspective associated with an underrated Quintilian, because it is quite clear that if you were stuffed with anything it was not with figures of rhetoric; there was never much attention paid to them until now.

At the point that we are at in our conception of the forms of discourse I took this example of metonymy: "Thirty sails instead of thirty ships", noting in this connection that these thirty sails were not purely and simply what we were told, namely a taking of the part for the whole, in other words a reference to the real, because there are surely many more than thirty sails. It is rare for ships to have only one sail. But because here there is a literary background; you know that you find these thirty sails in a particular monologue of *Le Cid*.

It is simply a reference point or an introduction to what is to come.

Here we are then with our thirty sails, and we do not know what to do with them, because after all, either there are thirty and there are not thirty ships, or there are thirty ships and there are more than thirty. Now what it means is that there are thirty ships, and it is certain that in indicating that it is in the word for word correspondence of what is involved that the direction of what can be called here the metonymical function must be sought, I am simply putting before you here a problematic aspect of the thing. But we must enter more deeply into the heart of the difference between it and metaphor, because after all, you might say to me that it is a metaphor.

Why is it not one? That is the question. Moreover for some time now I hear that some of you, in the course of your everyday lives, are all of a sudden struck by an encounter with something that they no longer know how to classify in terms of metaphor or metonymy. This occasionally brings about disproportionate disorders in their organism, and leads to language that is sometimes a little strong about the starboard of metaphor and the port of metonymy and leaves some people a little seasick.

Let us try then to grasp more closely what is at stake because, after all I was also told in connection with Booz, that "his sheaf was neither greedy nor spiteful" could also be metonymy. I think I showed in my article what this sheaf was, and the degree to which this sheaf is something other than an item he possesses, it is something that in so far as it precisely substitutes for the father, makes emerge the whole dimension of biological fecundity that here underlies the spirit of the poem, and that it is not for nothing that at the horizon, and even more than at the horizon, in the firmament, there also appears the sharp edge of the sickle which evokes the background of castration.

Let us return then to our thirty sails, and let ask ourselves, in the final analysis, so that it can be affirmed here once and for all, what is the meaning of what I call the metonymical function or reference.

I think I have said often enough, although it is still enigmatic, that the structural mainspring of metaphor lies essentially in substitution, in the function supplied to a signifier S, in so far as this signifier is substituted for another in the signifying chain.

Here is what metonymy is: a function that takes a signifier, also S, in so far as this signifier is related to another signifier in the contiguity of the signifying chain:

$$F S (S \dots S')$$

The function supplied to the sail in so far as it is related to the ship in the signifying chain, and not in a signifying substitution.

I thus transferred in the clearest fashion, and this is why the apparently formal representations, in so far as these formulae may naturally lead to further exigencies on your part. Someone reminded me recently that I had once said that what I was trying to construct for your use here, in order to circumscribe the things that we are concerned with, was a rubber logic. It was I myself who said it. It is in fact something of that kind that we are aiming at, a topical structuring that must sometimes necessarily leave gaps because it is constituted by ambiguities. But let me tell you in passing that we cannot avoid, even though we push this topical structuring pretty far, we will not escape from an additional requirement that still remains, in so far as your ideal on this occasion is that of a certain univocal formalization, because certain ambiguities are irreducible at the level of the structure of language as we are trying to define it.

Let me also say in passing that the notion of meta-language is very often used in the most inadequate manner, in so far as it overlooks the following: that either meta-language has formal exigencies that are such that they displace entirely the phenomenon of structuring in which it should be situated; or else that the meta-language itself must conserve these ambiguities of language. In other words that there is no meta-language; there are formalizations either at the level of logic or at the level of that signifying structure whose autonomous level I am trying to separate out for you. There is no meta-language in the sense that it would mean for example the complete mathematization of the phenomenon of language; and this is the case precisely because here there is no way of formalizing beyond what is given as the primitive structure of language. Nevertheless this formalization is not only required, it is necessary. It is necessary here, for example, because after all you must see that this notion of the substitution of a signifier for another, is a substitution within something whose place must already be defined; it is a positional substitution, and position itself requires a signifying chain, that is to say, a combinatory succession - I am not saying that it requires all its features, I mean that the fact that this combinatory succession is characterized by elements for example that I would call intransitivity, alternation, repetition. If we go now to this original, minimal level of the constitution of a signifying chain, we will be drawn far away from today's subject. There are minimal requirements, and I do not claim that I have yet dealt with all of them. I have all the same given you enough to propose to you something that allows, I might say, a certain reflection to be supported and to begin in this connection from the particularity of the example which, in this domain, is something from which we should, for reasons that are absolutely essential, draw all our teaching.

This is once again how we are going to proceed, and remark in connection with this example, that even if this seems like a play on words, these sails (*voiles*) given the function that they play on this occasion conceal (*voilent*) from us the living reality, in so far as they designate for us that these sails do not enter here with all their qualities of sails, that they do not enter under full sail into the usage that we make of them. These sails never grow slack; these sails are something reduced in their scope and in their sign.

This is something that can be found not only in the thirty sails but also in the village of thirty souls in which it soon appears that these souls are there as shadows of what they represent, that they are even less substantial than the term that suggests too much the presence of inhabitants, that these souls, as the title of a famous novel goes, may be much more than beings, may also be dead souls, souls that are not there.

In the same way as thirty fires (*foyers*) is also a usage of the term, and surely represents a certain degradation, a minimalization of meaning. I mean that these fires are also dead fires, they are fires about which you would certainly say that there is no smoke without fire, and that it is not for nothing that these fires are used in a way that says metonymically what they have come to stand for.

You will no doubt say that here I am relying in the final analysis on a reference to meaning to show the difference. I do not think so, and you should note that what I began with, is that metonymy is the fundamental structure within which that something new and creative called metaphor can be produced; that even if something with a metonymical origin is placed in a position of substitution as in the case of the thirty sails, it is something other in its nature than metaphor; so that to speak plainly there would be no metaphor if there were not metonymy.

I mean that the chain with respect to which, and within which the places, the positions are defined in which the phenomenon of metaphor can be produced, is in this regard involved in a sort of sliding or equivocation. "There would be no metaphor if there were no metonymy", came to me as an echo, and not at all by chance because it has the closest possible relationship with the exclamation, the comical invocation that I am able to put on the lips of Père Ubu. There would be no metaphor if there were no metonymy; likewise: "Long live Poland because without Poland there would be no Poles," as Père Ubu also said.

Why is this a witticism? That is precisely the core of our subject. It is a witticism, and it is funny precisely in so far as it is a reference to the metonymical function as such, because you would be on the wrong track if you thought that this was a joke for example about the role the Poles have played in the all too familiar miseries of Poland. It is just as funny if I say: long live France, because without France there would be no French! Similarly if I say long live Christianity, because without Christianity there would be no Christians! And even long live Christ!

It is always just as funny, and one can legitimately ask why. I stress that here the metonymical function can absolutely not be overlooked, that every kind of relationship of derivation by the use of a suffix, of an affix, or of a designation in the case of inflected languages, is properly the utilization for signifying purposes of the dimension of the chain.

Here there is no ego whatsoever, and I would even say that all the references cross-check with it. The experience of the aphasic for example shows us precisely that there are two cases of aphasia, and that when we are dealing with the troubles that can be called problems of contiguity, that is of the chain, those which the subject has most difficulty in distinguishing concern the relationship of the word with the adjective, of *bienfait* with *bienfaisant*, or with *bienfaire* or with *bienfaisance*; it is in the metonymical other that something is produced. It is precisely this flash that on this occasion makes us consider this reference to be something that is not just comic, but even a piece of buffoonery.

I would like to stress that it is in fact important here to focus on what can be called a property of the signifying chain, and to grasp - I tried to find some reference points that would enable you to grasp it - as far as we are able, what I want to designate by this effect of the signifying chain, an effect essentially inherent to its nature as a signifying chain, with respect to what can be called meaning.

Do not forget that last year it was with an analogous reference that may seem to you to be metaphorical, but which I underlined clearly was not such, that it claimed to be taken literally in the metonymical chain, that I placed, indicated, situated, what is the essence of every kind of fetichistic displacement of desire, in other words the fixation of desire somewhere before, after, or to one side of, in any case at the threshold of its natural object, in other words the institution of an absolutely fundamental phenomenon that can be called the radical perversion of human desires. Here I would like to indicate another dimension, what I would call the sliding of meaning in the metonymical chain. And I have already indicated to you the relationship between this and the literary technique, usage, procedure, which is usually described as realism.

It is not realized that in this domain all sorts of experiments can be tried; I tried taking a novel from the age of realism in order to reread it to see the features that might help you to grasp this original something whose reference to the dimension of meaning can be linked to the metonymical usage as such of the signifying chain, and so amongst the novels of the age of realism, I turned at random to a novel by Maupassant called *Bel Ami*.

In the first place it is a very pleasant read. You should try it some time. And once I had got into it, I was quite surprised to find in it exactly what I was looking for to designate as sliding, beginning at the top of *rue Notre-Dame-de-Lorette* where we see George Duroy starting out.

Taking the change for his five-franc piece from the woman behind the till, Duroy left the restaurant. A well set-up man, with all the swagger of an ex-cavalry N.C.O., he drew himself up, twirled his moustache with a familiar soldierly gesture and swiftly cast his eye round the room over the belated diners like a handsome young man looking for fish to catch.

This is how the novel begins. It seems quite innocuous but afterwards you go from moment to moment, from encounter to encounter, and you witness this sort of sliding in the clearest and most obvious fashion. If we survey the whole progress of the novel we see something that ensures that a fairly basic human being, which is what I would say he has been reduced to at the beginning of the novel, since this five franc piece is his last, reduced to the most direct needs, to the immediate preoccupations of love and hunger, is progressively led by a succession of chances, that are good and bad, but good in general because he is not only handsome but also lucky, is caught up in a circle of systems, of manifestations of exchange, of the metonymical subversion of these primary data, which once they are satisfied are alienated for him in a series of situations - for there is never any question of something in which he can find himself and be at rest - and carry him from success to success to an almost total alienation from what is his own person.

This does not matter, it is in the detail, I mean in the way that the aim is never to go beyond what happens in the succession of events and of their notation in terms that are as concrete as possible. At every instant the novelist shows us a sort of diplopia that puts us, and

not just the subject of the novel, but everything around him, in a position that is always double with respect to what may even be the most immediate object.

I will take the example of the meal at the restaurant, which begins to be one of the first moments of the upturn of the fortunes of this character:

Succulent Ostend oysters were brought in, looking like dainty little ears enclosed in shells and melting between the tongue and the palate like salty tidbits.

After the soup came a trout as pink-fleshed as a young girl; tongues began to wag.

They had reached the stage of witty suggestiveness, of words, veiled yet revealing, that are like a hand lifting up a skirt, the stage of clever allusions, skilfully hidden impropriety, shamelessly brazen hypocrisy, cryptic words that cover naked images and which fill the eye and the mind with a sudden vision of what dare not be said openly and enables smart society to enjoy a subtle, mysterious sort of lovemaking, a sort of marriage of impure minds, by simultaneously conjuring up, with words as sensual and disturbing as a sexual embrace, the secret, shameful desire for body to clasp body. The roast had now appeared, partridges...

I can tell you that the roast, the partridges, the *terrine de volaille*, and all the rest:

They had eaten it all without tasting it properly, without realizing what they were eating, immersed in thoughts of love.

These perpetual alibis, which bring it about that you do not know after all whether it is the flesh of a young girl or a trout that is on the table, and this in a perspective of what is called descriptive realism, are something that dispense not only with any reference to the abyss in any sense of the word, any transcendental meaning of any kind, whether poetic or moral or anything else, this is something that sufficiently illuminates, it seems to me, what I am indicating when I say that it is in the perspective of this perpetual sliding of meaning that any discourse that aims at conveying reality, is obliged to remain, and that what gives it its value, and what ensures that there is no literary realism, is precisely that in this effort to come to close quarters with reality by talking about it in the discourse, the discourse always succeeds in showing what the introduction of discourse adds in terms of disorganization and perversity to this reality.

If some of this still seems to you to remain too much in an impressionistic mode, I would like to try out something else for you. You see we are trying to stay, not at the level at which the discourse responds to the real, when it simply claims to note it, to follow its relationship to the real, fulfilling the function of annalist with two n's. Look where this gets you. I have chosen an author of some quality, Felix Feneon, whom I do not have the time to present to you here, and his series "The News in Three Lines" (*Nouvelles en trois lignes*) published in *Le Matin*. It is not without reason that they have been collected; there is certainly a particular talent to be seen here. Let us try to see what it is.

Here are some examples of "The News in Three Lines" which at first we can take at random, afterwards we will try to take the most significant of them.

"Because they threw a few stones at the police, three pious ladies were obliged to pay a fine by the judges at Toulens-Comblebourg."

"Paul, a school teacher at the Ile Saint-Denis, rang the bell for the pupils to return."

"At Clichy, an elegant young man threw himself under a rubber-tired carriage; then, unhurt, under a truck which crushed him."

"A young lady was sitting on the ground at Choisy-le-Roi. The only identifying word that her amnesia allowed her to say: model."

"The body of a sixty-year-old hung on a tree at Arcueil wearing the notice: too old to work."

"In connection with the mystery at Luzarches, the instructing judge from Le Puy interrogated the prisoner..... But she is mad."

"Behind a coffin, Mangin de Verdun-Chevigny. He did not reach the cemetery that day. Death surprised him en route."

"The valet installed at Neuilly, in the house of his absent master, an amusing lady, then disappeared taking everything except her."

"Pretending to look for rare coins in an ugly porcelain figure, two swindlers stole a thousand ordinary francs from Mademoiselle Ivry."

"At beach in Finistère, two ladies were drowning. A swimmer plunged in, so that Monsieur Etienne had to save three people."

What makes you laugh? Here we really have the notation of facts with impersonal rigour the whole art of which consists, I would say, simply in their extreme reduction. It is said with the fewest possible words.

If there is something comical, if we take one of the examples above, what happens when we hear: "Behind a coffin, Mangin de Verdun-Chevigny. He did not reach the cemetery that day. Death surprised him en route."

Here is something that touches in absolutely no way the journey we are all making to the cemetery, whatever the different ways in which we may make that journey. There is absolutely nothing of the kind here, and I would say up to a certain point that this would not appear if things were said at greater length, I mean if it were all drowned in a flood of words.

What I have called here the sliding of meaning, namely, something that means that we literally do not know where to pause at any moment in the sentence as it comes to us in its rigour, in order to give it its centre of gravity, its point of equilibrium - it is this that constitutes the whole art of editing "The news in three lines". It is what I would call here their decentering. There is no morality, there is a careful concealment of anything that could have an exemplary character; what can be called on this occasion, the art of detachment of this style.

Nevertheless what is said here is something, a sequence of events, and I would even go further, it is the other merit that it has, it gives their coordinates quite rigorously.

It is here then that there lies the thing that I am aiming at, that I am trying to help you see by showing you the degree to which the discourse in its horizontal dimension, in its chain

dimension, is properly a skating rink, just as useful to study as the skating patterns, on which this sliding of meaning occurs no doubt in a slight, tiny track that may perhaps be so slight that it appears to be nothing, but in any case presents itself and introduces itself in the order of the witticism in what we could call a derisory, a degrading, a disorganizing dimension.

It is in this dimension that the style of the "*vol de l'aigle*" witticism, can be situated and placed, at the encounter of the discourse with the signifying chain that is here at the same level as the millionaire, waiting at gamma, and that is produced here simply at little further on.

Here Frederic Soulié contributed something that obviously goes towards the "I" since the witticism is addressed to Heinrich Heine and he calls on him as a witness. There is always in the witticism this perspective, this appeal to the Other as locus of verification. "As true," begins Hirsch-Hyacinth, "as true as God shall grant me all good things." And God here in this reference can also be ironical. It is fundamental here. Soulié invokes Heinrich Heine, a much more prestigious figure than himself - without going into the history of Frederic Soulié, although the article on him in Larousse is very well done. Soulié says to him: "You see, my dear master" - something of that kind - "is it not amusing to see the 19th century" - here there is the appeal, the invocation, the pull towards the "I" of Heinrich Heine, who is the pivoting point present in this matter - "..... to see the 19th century still adoring the golden calf?"

We therefore went along this way (see the schema), and then we came back here in connection with the golden calf, to the locus of uses and of metonymy, because in the last analysis this golden calf is a metaphor, even though a worn-out one, that has passed into the language. We have shown above in passing its origins, and the way it was produced, but in fact it has become a platitude. And he sends his commonplace remark here to the locus of the message by the classic alpha-gamma route.

Here then we have two characters, and you know well that these two characters may also be just one, because the Other, by the very fact that the dimension of the word exists, is in everyone, so that as Freud remarks, if there had not already been something present in the mind of Soulié, something that made him qualify this character as a golden calf, it is a usage that for us no longer appears admissible; but I did find it in Littré. Littré tells us then that we describe as a golden calf, a gentleman who is very wealthy, and who because of this is the object of universal admiration. There is no ambiguity, nor is there any in German.

At that moment, namely between gamma and alpha, the reference back from the message to the code, namely here on the line of the signifying chain, and in a kind of metonymical way, the term is taken up into something that is not the plane on which it was dispatched, is taken up in a fashion that certainly allows us to fully perceive the sense of the loss of meaning, the reduction of meaning, the devaluation of meaning, and to be honest, this is what is in question, and at the end of today's lecture, this is what I want to introduce: it is that metonymy is, properly speaking the locus in which we must situate this primordial something, this primordial and essential something in human language, in so far as we are going to take it here in the opposite sense, the dimension of meaning, namely in the diversity of objects already constituted by language into which there is introduced the magnetic field of the need of each person, with its contradictions, the response that I introduced above, this other thing that is something that will perhaps appear paradoxical, namely the dimension of value.

This dimension of value is properly something that has its dimension of meaning connected to it. It bases itself and imposes itself as being in contrast, as being another aspect, as being another register.

If some of you are familiar enough, I will not say with the whole of *Das Kapital* - who has read *Das Kapital!* - but with the first book of *Das Kapital* that almost everyone has read, I would ask you to refer to the page where Marx, at the level of the formulation of what is called the theory of the particular form of the value of merchandise, shows himself to be a precursor of the mirror stage. On this page Marx makes this very fruitful remark in this incredible first book, which shows him to be, something rare, someone who maintains an articulated philosophical discourse; he makes this proposition: that before any kind of study of the quantitative relationships of value, it must first be laid down that nothing can be set up, except first of all in the form of the establishment of a sort of fundamental equivalence which is not simply something to do with equal measures of cloth, but with half the number of clothes: that there is already something that must be structured in the equivalence cloth-clothes, namely that the clothes can represent the value of the cloth, namely that it is not in so far as clothes are something that you can wear, that there is something necessary at the very beginning of the analysis, in the fact that clothes can become the signifier of the value of the cloth. That in other words, the equivalence that is called value depends precisely on the abandonment on the part of one or of both of those terms, of what is also a very important part of their meaning.

It is in this dimension that there is situated the effect of meaning of the metonymical line, that will subsequently allow us to discover the utility of the putting into operation of the effect of meaning of the two registers of metaphor and metonymy; how they relate to one another, through the fact of this common operation in a dimension, in a perspective that is the essential one that allows us to rejoin the plane of the unconscious. This is what makes it necessary for us to appeal precisely, and in a way centred about this, to the dimension of the Other in so far as it is the locus, the receiver, the necessary pivotal point of this exercise.

This is what we will do next day.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 4 December 1957

When he gets to the synthetic part of his book on jokes, the second part, Freud poses himself the question of the origin of pleasure, of the pleasure procured by the joke.

Needless to say, it is more and more necessary - I recall it for those of you who might think themselves dispensed from it - that you should have at least read the text of *Jokes*. It is the only way you have of getting to know this work, unless I were to read the text for you here myself, and this is not I think something you would enjoy. I will choose certain pieces, but that brings about a noticeable lowering in the level of attention. It is the only way for you to realize that the formulae I put before you, or that I try to put before you, frequently follow line by line, I mean in the closest possible way, the questions asked by Freud.

The questions Freud asks, he often asks them in a roundabout way, he refers to themes, psychological and other, which are more or less accepted; those to which he refers implicitly by using accepted themes, are also important, even more important than his explicit references. Those he refers to are the ones he has in common with his readers. The way he makes use of them - you would really want not to have opened the text not to see it - shows a dimension that was never even suggested previously.

This dimension is precisely that of the role of the signifier.

I would like to go straight to the subject that concerns us today, namely what is, Freud asks, the source of pleasure.

Does he tell us what the source of pleasure is? It is essentially, in a language that is too wide-spread today, and which some people use in describing The source of pleasure in the joke is essentially to be looked for in its formal aspect. Luckily, this is not the way Freud expresses himself, he expresses himself in an altogether more precise way: he goes so far as to say that the source of pleasure in the joke, is simply the jest. This truly is its proper source.

Nevertheless of course, the pleasure that we take in telling jokes is centred elsewhere. Do we not perceive the direction in which this source lies, and throughout the whole of his analysis, the sort of ambiguity that is inherent in the very practice of joking, which means that we do not see where our pleasure comes from, and it requires the whole effort of his analysis to show it to us? It is an element, a step that is absolutely essential.

In accordance with a system of references that will be more and more pronounced up to the end of the book, he refers this primitive source of pleasure back to a playful period of infantile activity, namely that it is something that can be referred to the first games with words, which in fact brings us back directly to the acquisition of language as pure signifier, because it is properly to verbal games, to a practice that we would say is almost purely, in order not just to say of transmission, purely the transmission of a verbal form, that he will relate pleasure, in its primitive and essential form.

Is it thus purely and simply a question of a sort of return to an exercise of the signifier as such, to a period before the control that criticism and reason will progressively make

necessary through an education in all the lessons of reality, will force the subject to bring this control and criticism to the usage of the signifier? Is it in this difference that the principal source of the exercise of pleasure in joking will consist? Matters certainly appear to be very simple, if what Freud contributed can be resumed in this way.

It is of course far from being what he limits himself to: he tells us that this is the source of pleasure, but he tells us also the way that this pleasure is utilized. This pleasure is used for a kind of operation that relates to the liberation of the old pathways in so far as they still are there in virtual potency, existing, still as it were sustaining something. And because of the fact that it passes along these pathways, makes them privileged compared to those brought into the foreground by the control of the subject's thinking in his progress towards the state of adulthood.

Rediscovering these privileged pathways, is something that makes us enter right away, and this is where his whole previous analysis of the source and the mechanisms of the joke intervene, into those very structuring pathways which are those of the unconscious.

In other words, the two aspects of the joke - it is he himself who speaks in this way - are on the one hand the aspect of the exercise of the signifier with that liberty that maximizes its possibility of fundamental ambiguity, and even more its primitive character in relation to meaning, the essential polyvalence it has in relation to meaning, the creative function it has with regard to meaning, the arbitrary accent that it brings to meaning. That is one of its aspects.

The other is the fact that this exercise of itself introduces us to, directs us towards, evokes everything that is of the order of the unconscious; and this is sufficiently indicated to Freud's inspection by the fact that the structures that the joke reveals, the way its constitution, its crystallization function, are no different from those he himself discovered in his first apprehensions of the unconscious, namely at the level of the dream, at the level of those faulty actions that are really successful, depending on how you look at them, even at the level of symptoms.

It is to this that we have tried to give a tighter, and more precise formulation, when under the form, under the rubric of metaphor and metonymy, we discovered their most general forms, in the forms that are equivalent to them in every exercise of language, and that we also find in anything in the unconscious that is structuring. These forms are then the most general forms of which condensation, displacement, and the other mechanisms that Freud stresses in the structures of the unconscious, are in a way only applications.

This common measure of the unconscious with which we compare it, not just out of mental habit, but because there is effectively a dynamic in the relationship with desire, this common measure of the unconscious and of the structure of the word, in so far as it is regulated by the laws of the signifier, it is this that we try to approach more and more closely, to exemplify, to make exemplary by having recourse to Freud's work on jokes. This is what we are going to look at more closely today.

If we put the accent on what we can call the autonomy of the laws of the signifier, if we say that they are primary with regard to the mechanism of the creation of meaning, this does not of course dispense us from asking ourselves the question of how we should conceive not just the emergence of meaning but also, to parody a rather awkward formula produced in the logical-positive school, the meaning of meaning; not that this has a meaning. But what do

we mean when we talk about meaning? Freud too evokes it in the chapter on the mechanism of pleasure, and refers to it continually, and he does not fail to take into account the formula so often mentioned in connection with the practice of joking: sense in nonsense, cited for a long time by the authors as the sort of formula that in some way accounts for the two apparent aspects of pleasure; the way that it strikes us at first by its nonsense, and then on the other hand proceeds to hold on to us and to repay us by the appearance of some kind of secret meaning, always by the way very difficult to define, if we begin from this perspective, in the nonsense itself, in other words a path opened up by nonsense that at that moment stuns and bewilders us.

This is perhaps closer to the mechanism, and Freud is certainly much more prepared to concede more properties to it, namely, that nonsense has for an instant the role of deceiving us long enough for a meaning not grasped up to then, and which moreover also passes very quickly, fleetingly, in a flash, just like the bewilderment that retained us for a moment in the nonsense, to strike us through this grasp of the joke.

In fact if you look at things more closely you will see that Freud goes as far as to repudiate the term nonsense, and it is on this that I would also like us to dwell today, because it is proper to these approximations that precisely allow the last term, the ultimate source of the mechanism that is operating to be avoided, to be content with formulae that no doubt have their psychological appearance and seduction, but that are not really the ones that are appropriate.

I am going to propose that we should begin with something that will not be a recourse to children who can in fact as we know find some pleasure in verbal games, and to whom one can refer in order to give meaning and weight to a sort of psychogenesis of the mechanism of wit, but which after all if you think about it as other than a satisfaction, a routine established by the fact of referring to something like this primitive, far-distant, playful activity, to which after all one can attribute anything and everything, it is perhaps not something either that should satisfy us too much, because after all, it is not sure that the pleasure of wit in which a child only participates from a distance, is something that can be exhaustively explained by a recourse to fantasy (*fantaisie*).

But I would like to get to something that makes the link between the usage of the signifier and what we can call satisfaction or pleasure. Here it is I who will refer back to something that may appear elementary: that if we refer to the child it should all the same not be forgotten that at the beginning the signifier is made to have a particular use, it is made to express a demand.

Let us dwell then for a moment on the source of the demand. It is that part of a need that is conveyed by means of a signifier which is addressed to another. I already told you the last day that it would be worth our while to investigate the different moments of this reference.

These moments are so little explored that I made an allusion to the fact in one of my articles. An eminently representative personage of the psychoanalytic hierarchy wrote a whole article of a dozen or so pages, to express his wonder at the power of what he called "wording", a word that in English corresponds to what we call more awkwardly in French *passage au verbal* or *verbalisation*. It is clearly more elegant in English than in French. He is astonished that a patient was particularly affected by an intervention that he made telling her something that meant more or less: "You have very peculiar or very strong demands", which

in English has an even more insistent stress than in French, was literally overwhelmed as if by an accusation, as if by a denunciation, while when he took up the same term a few moments later using the word "need", that is *besoin*, he found her completely docile and ready to accept his interpretation.

The momentous character given by the author in question to this discovery, is well suited to show us the primitive state in which the art of wording still is within analysis, or at least in a certain circle of analysis. Because in fact this is the whole point: demand is something that of its nature is so related to the other, that if it is the other who accentuates it, he finds himself immediately in the position of accusing the subject himself, and of rejecting him, while if he evokes need he authenticates this need, he assumes it, he ratifies it, he takes it to himself, he begins to recognize it, and this is an essential satisfaction.

The natural mechanism of the demand is the fact that the other by his nature opposes it, or again one could say that the demand by its nature requires to be opposed, in order to be sustained as a demand, is linked precisely to the introduction of language into communication, and is illustrated at every instant by the way that the other accedes to the demand.

Let us consider this carefully. It is to the degree that the dimension of language comes to be remodeled here, but also comes to place the system of needs within the infinite complex of the signifier, that the demand is essentially something that by its nature poses itself as something that can be exorbitant. It is not for nothing that children ask for the moon. They ask for the moon because it is in the nature of a need which expresses itself through the intermediary of a signifying system, to ask for the moon; it is also indeed why we do not hesitate to promise it to them; and also why we are almost on the point of getting it.

However we do not yet have the moon, and what is essential all the same is to see that, and to highlight it: after all in this demand for the satisfaction of a need, what is it purely and simply that happens? We respond to a demand, we give our neighbour what he asks of us. Through what mouse-hole must he pass? What reduction of his pretensions and of himself must he submit to for his demand to be accepted?

This is something that sufficiently shows the value of the phenomenon of need when it appears in its naked form. I would even say that to accede to it *qua* need we must refer beyond the subject to some Other called Christ who, for those who practice Christian charity, is identified with the poor; but even for others, for the man of desire, for Molière's *Don Juan*, he gives the beggar what he asks of him, and it is not for nothing that he adds: "for the love of humanity". In the last analysis it is to an Other beyond the one who is face to face with you, that the response to the demand, the granting of the demand is referred, and the story that is one of those on which Freud makes his analysis of the joke pivot, the so-called "Salmon Mayonnaise" story, is a splendid story to illustrate this.

A wealthy man is outraged, when having given a beggar some money that he needs to deal with some debt or other, with his creditors, he sees him making use of the object of his generosity, in a different way to the one intended by this small-minded individual. It is a genuinely funny story, when he discovers him the following day in a restaurant, treating himself to what is considered to be a sign of lavish expenditure, namely salmon mayonnaise. With the little Viennese accent that gives the whole story its tone, he says to him: "Is that what I gave you money for? So that you could treat yourself to salmon mayonnaise!" To which the other, entering into the joke, replies: "But listen, I don't understand. When I have

no money I can't have salmon mayonnaise, and when I have money I can't have it either! When then am I to eat salmon mayonnaise?"

Every example of the joke is made even more significant by the field that it takes place in, and it is made even more significant by the particularity that seems to be that special something in the story that cannot be generalized. It is by this particularity that we will come to the clearest source of the dimension within which we situate ourselves, and this story is no less pertinent than any other story and always puts us at the heart of the problem, at the relationship between the signifier and desire, and the fact that desire has profoundly changed its accent, has been subverted, has been made ambiguous, by its passage through the paths of the signifier.

Let us be clear what that means. It is always in the name of a certain register that makes the Other intervene beyond the one making the demand, that any satisfaction is accorded, and precisely this profoundly perverts the system of demand and of the response to demand. "Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, visit the sick" I do not need to remind you of the seven or eight or nine works of mercy. It is striking enough in their very expression, that in clothing the naked, one could say that if the demand were something that should be directly sustained in its fullness, why not clothe the naked man or woman at Christian Dior's? This does happen from time to time but in general it is because one has begun by undressing them oneself.

The same goes for feeding the hungry. Why not let them get drunk? That is not done, that would harm them, they are used to sobriety, they must not be upset.

And as for visiting the sick, I recall Sacha Guitry's *bon mot*: "Paying a visit always gives pleasure, if it is not when one arrives, at least it will be when one leaves."

The thematic connection of demand is at the heart of our subject today. Let us try then to schematize what happens at this moment in time that in a way shifts on to a sort of particular pathway to one side, the communication of the demand to its reception.

It is not therefore to something that is other than mythical, but something which is profoundly true, that I would ask you to refer in order to make use of this little schema. It goes as follows:

Let us presuppose something that after all must exist somewhere, even if only on our schema, a successful demand, because in the final analysis that is what it is all about. If Freud introduced a new dimension into our consideration of man, it is not I would say that nevertheless something gets through, but that this something that is destined to get through, the desire that should get through, leaves somewhere not just traces, but an insistent circuit.

Let us then begin with something on the schema that might represent the demand that gets through. Let us imagine, since childhood exists, that the demand that gets through can take place then. This child who articulates something which is still for him only an uncertain articulation, but an articulation that gives him pleasure, to which Freud refers. He directs his demand. Let us say that it starts - happily it has not yet come into play - something is adumbrated which leaves this point that we call delta or D, demand, and this.

What does this describe for us? This describes the function of need: something is expressed which begins with the subject and which ends the line of his need. It is precisely

what ends the curve of what we have isolated here as discourse, and this is done with the help of the mobilization of something that is pre-existent. I did not invent the line of discourse, the coming into play of what is at this time a very limited stock, the stock of the signifier, since correlatively it articulates something.

Look at the facts. If you wish to show together on the two planes of intention, however confused you may suppose it to be, the young subject in so far as he directs his appeal, the signifier no matter how disorganized you may also imagine its usage, in so far as it is mobilised in this effort, in this appeal that it pushes forward at the same time, and if there is any meaning to the notion of growth, the usefulness of which I already noted for you in understanding the retroactive effect of the sentence that culminates at the end of the second moment. Note that these two lines do not yet intersect, in other words, that the one who says something says at once both more and less than he should say. The reference to the tentative character of the first usage of the tongue by the child can be fully employed here.

In other words, if there progresses in a parallel manner here, on these two lines, the completion of that something that here is called the demand, it is likewise at the end of the second moment that the signifier will complete its loop on something which completes here in as approximate a manner as you wish, the meaning of the demand which is what constitutes the message: that something which the Other, let us say the mother, granting that from time to time there are good mothers, properly speaking evokes, and which coexists with the completion of the message.

Both are determined at the same time, one as message the other as Other, and in a third moment, from this double curve we will see something that reaches completion here, and also here something that we are going at least hypothetically to indicate how we can name, situate them in this structuring of demand that we are trying to put right at the base, at the foundation of the first exercise of the signifier in the expression of desire.

I would ask you, at least provisionally, to admit as being the most useful reference for what we are going to try to develop subsequently, to admit in this third moment the ideal case where the demand in some way encounters exactly something that prolongs it, namely the Other who takes it up in connection with its message.

I think that what we should here consider, is something that cannot exactly be confused with satisfaction, because there is in the intervention, in the very operation of every signifier with respect to the manifestation of a need, something that transforms it and already brings to it through the contribution of the signifier, this minimum of transformations, of metaphors in fact, which means that what is signified is something that goes beyond raw need, something remodelled by the use of the signifier.

It is here that there begins to operate, to intervene, to enter into the creation of the signified, something that is no longer the pure and simple translation of need, but the taking up, the reassumption, the remodelling of need, the creation of a desire that is something other than need, a desire plus a signifier. As Lenin used to say: Socialism is probably a very nice thing, but the perfect community has electrification as well.

Here we have the signifier as well in the expression of need. And on the other side here, at the third moment, there is certainly something that corresponds to this miraculous apparition. We have supposed it to be miraculous, fully satisfying because of the satisfaction by the other of something, the something that is created here. It is this something that here

normally culminates at what Freud presents to us as pleasure in the exercise of the signifier, in fact of the exercise of the signifying chain as such, in this ideal case of success in the case where the Other appears here in the very prolongation of the exercise of the signifier. And this prolongs the effort of the signifier as such; it is the resolution here in a proper, authentic pleasure, the pleasure of the exercise of the signifier. You see it on some boundary lines.

I ask you for the moment to accept as a hypothesis what is properly speaking the hypothesis that will remain underlying all that we will try to conceive of as happening in the usual cases, in the cases of the real operation of the signifier. For the usage of the demand is something that will be underpinned by this primitive reference to what we can call the complete success, or the first success, or the mythical success, or the archaic, primordial form of the exercise of the signifier.

This full passage, this successful passage of the demand as such into the real, in so far as it creates at the same time the message and the Other, culminates in this remodelling of the signified on the one hand, which is introduced by the usage of the signifier as such, and on the other hand directly prolongs the exercise of the signifier in an authentic pleasure. They balance one another, there is on the one hand this exercise that we discover in fact with Freud right at the origin of verbal play as such and which is an original pleasure always ready to arise. And of course how always and everywhere we see what now happens in terms of what opposes it, and how masked on the other hand is this novelty which appears not simply in the response to the demand, but in the fact that in the verbal demand itself there is this something original that complicates, that transforms need, and puts it on the plane of what from now on we will call desire, desire being that something that is defined by an essential shift with respect to everything that is purely and simply of the order of the imaginary direction of need, which is something that introduces it by itself into a different order, into the symbolic order with all the perturbations that this can involve.

So that we here see arising in connection with the first myth to which I ask you to refer, because we have to depend on it for everything that follows, unless we want to make incomprehensible everything that Freud will articulate for us in connection with the proper mechanism of pleasure in the joke. I stress that this novelty which appears in the signified through the introduction of the signifier, is something that we find everywhere accentuated at every turn by Freud as an essential dimension in whatever is a manifestation of the unconscious.

Freud occasionally tells us that something appears at the level of the formations of the unconscious, that can be called surprise. This is something that should be taken not as accidental to this discovery but as an essential dimension of its essence. There is something original, in the phenomenon of surprise, that it should be produced within an unconscious formation in so far as in itself it shocks the subject by its surprising character, but also if at the moment that you unveil it for the subject, you provoke in him this sentiment of surprise. Freud indicates it in all sorts of ways in the analysis of dreams, in the psychopathology of everyday life, and again at every instant in the book on jokes. This dimension of surprise is itself consubstantial with desire, in so far as it has passed over to the level of the unconscious. This dimension is what desire implies in terms of a condition of emergence that is proper to it as desire, is properly that by which it is even capable of entering the unconscious, because not every desire is capable of entering the unconscious. The only desires that can enter the unconscious are those which because they have been symbolized, can conserve in their symbolic form when they enter it, in the form of this indestructible trace, the example of which Freud takes up again in the *Witz*, desires that do not wear away, that do not have the

impermanent character proper to all dissatisfaction, but which on the contrary are supported by that symbolic structure that maintains them at a certain level of the circulation of the signifier, that I designate for you as being situated in this schema in the circuit between the message and the Other, that is occupying a function, a place that according to the case, according to the incidences where it is produced, means that it is on the same paths that we should conceive of the turning circuit of the unconscious, in so far as it is always there ready to reappear.

It is in the action of the metaphor, in so far as certain original circuits impact on the everyday, banal, commonplace circuit of metonymy, that there is produced the emergence of new meaning, in so far as it is in the witticism that we can see in plain view that there is produced this ball that is sent back and forth between the message and the Other, that will produce the original effect of the witticism.

Let us now go into more detail to try to grasp it and conceptualize it. If we are no longer at this primordial level, at this mythical level of the first establishment of demand in its proper form, how are things brought about?

Let us refer to an absolutely fundamental theme that appears throughout the witty stories; all you see are beggars to whom things are given, either that they are given what they are not asking for, or that when they are given what they do ask for they misuse it, or they behave *vis-à-vis* the person who granted it to them, in a particularly insolent way, reproducing here in the beggar-donor relationship, the blessed dimension of ingratitude. Otherwise it would be really intolerable to accede to any demand, because observe as our friend Mannoni pointed out very pertinently in an excellent work, that the normal mechanism of the demand that has been acceded to is to provoke continually renewed demands, because in the last analysis what is this demand, in so far as it encounters its hearer, the ear it is destined for?

Here let us do a little etymology, even though it is not in it that there resides the essential dimension that one should refer to in the usage of the signifier. A little etymology can nevertheless help us to clarify things.

This demand that is so marked by themes of exigency in its concrete practice, in its usage, in the use made of the term, and even more in Anglo-Saxon than in other languages, but also in other languages, is originally *de-mandare*, it is to entrust oneself, it is on a common level of register and of language as a giving over of one's whole self, of all one's needs to another. The signifying material of the demand is no doubt borrowed to take on another accent which is very specially imposed on it by the effective exercise of the demand.

But here the fact of the origin of the materials that are employed metaphorically, you see it in the progress of the tongue, is well fitted to teach us about the famous dependency complex that I evoked above by saying, in Mannoni's terms, that when the one who demands thinks that the other in fact has effectively accepted a demand of his, there is in fact no longer any limit: he can, he must, it is to be expected that he should entrust all his needs to him. Everything that I hinted at above about the benefits of ingratitude puts an end to things, puts an end to what otherwise would not be able to stop.

But we also see that the beggar, from experience, is not in the habit of presenting his demand in its naked state; there is nothing confiding in his demand, he knows too well what he is dealing with in the mind of the other, and that is why he disguises his demand. That is to

say that he demands something that he needs in the name of something else that he sometimes also needs, but which would be more easily admitted as a pretext for the demand; if necessary, if he does not have that other thing he can purely and simply invent it, and above all he will take into account in the formulation of his demand what the system of the other is, the one that I alluded to above. He will address himself in one way to the lady devoted to good works, in another way to the banker, all the characters described in such an amusing fashion; in another way to the match-maker, in still other ways to this or that person, which means that not only will his desire be taken up and remodelled in the system of the signifier, but in the system of the signifier as it has been set up, established, in the Other, namely according to the code of the Other, and his demand will simply begin to be formulated starting with the Other, so that first of all it is reflected on something that for a long time has become active in his discourse, on the "I" here and there which proffers the demand in order to reflect it on the Other, and go by this circuit to be completed as a message.

What does that mean? This is the appeal, the intention, it is the circuit of the secondary need that as you see has as yet no need to be given too much of a rational accent, except that of being controlled, controlled by the system of the Other which of course implies already all sorts of factors that we will just on this occasion be justified in qualifying as rational. Let us say that if it is rational to take them into account, it is not yet implied in their structure that they effectively are rational.

What happens on the signifying chain in accordance with the three moments that we see described here? Again it is something that mobilizes the whole apparatus, the whole mechanism, the whole machine in order to arrive here first of all at something, but something that does not go right away to the Other, that comes to be reflected here in something that, in the second moment, corresponded to the appeal to the Other, namely to the object in so far as it is an object admissible by the Other, that it is the object of what the Other may well desire, that it is the metonymical object, and it is by reflecting off this object to come to converge here in the third moment in the message, that we find ourselves here not in the happy state of satisfaction that we might have reached at the end of the three moments of the first mythical representation of demand and of its success with its surprising novelty, and its pleasure that was satisfying in itself. We find ourselves dwelling here on a message that bears in itself the character of ambiguity since it is the encounter of a formulation alienated from the beginning, in so far as it begins from the Other, and from this point of view is going to culminate in something which is in some way a desire of the Other, in so far as it is from the Other itself that the appeal had been evoked; and on the other hand to introduce into his very signifying apparatus all sorts of conventional elements that properly speaking are what we will call the character of community, or of displacement properly speaking of objects, in so far as objects are profoundly remodelled by the world of the Other. And we have seen that the discourse between these two culminating points of the arrow at the third moment, is something so striking that it is the very thing that can culminate in what we call a slip of the tongue, a stumbling in speech along the two pathways.

It is not certain that it is a univocal signification that is formed, so little is it univocal that the fundamental character of error and of *méconnaissance* of language, is one of its essential dimensions.

It is on the ambiguity of this formation of the message that the joke will work; it is from this point under different headings, that the joke can be formed. I am not going to go over again for you today the diversity of forms in which this message can be taken up so that it is constituted in its essentially ambiguous form, in a form that is ambiguous in its structure

because it has undergone a treatment that has, according to what Freud tells us, the aim of finally restoring the ideal pathway that should culminate in the surprise of a novelty on the one hand, and at the pleasure of the play of the signifier on the other hand. It is the object of the joke.

The object of the joke is to re-evoke for us this dimension through which desire if it does not recapture, at least indicates everything that is lost on the way along this path, namely all it has left behind at the level of the metonymical chain on the one hand, in terms of waste, and on the other hand whatever is not fully realized on the level of the metaphor, if we call natural metaphor what has happened above in that pure and simple, ideal transition of desire in so far as it is formed in the subject towards the Other who takes it up and accedes to it.

We find ourselves here at a more evolved stage, at the stage at which there have already intervened in the psychology of the subject these two things that are called the "I" on the one hand, and on the other hand the profoundly transformed object which is the *métonymieal* object. We find ourselves confronted by, not the natural metaphor, but the usual exercise of the metaphor, whether it succeeds or fails in this ambiguity of the message in which there is or is not a question of now finding its destiny in the conditions that remain at the natural state. We have a whole part of this desire which will continue to circulate in the form of the waste of the signifier in the unconscious. In the case of the witticism, by a sort of forcing, by a sort of happy shadow of astonishing success and conveyed purely by the signifier, of reflections of ancient satisfactions, something is going to happen that has very exactly as an effect the reproduction of the primary pleasure of the satisfied demand, at the same time as it accedes to an original novelty. It is this something that the witticism essentially realizes, and how does it realize it?

What have we seen so far? We have said in effect that what is needed for that, is that this schema can help us to see this something which is the completion of the primary curve of this signifying chain, and which is also something that prolongs whatever of the intentional need that passes into the discourse. How is that? By the witticism. But how is the witticism going to come to birth?

Here again we find the dimensions of sense and nonsense, but I think that we should circumscribe them a little more closely.

If something in what I told you the last day was intended as indicating a metonymical function, it is properly speaking the equalizing, the levelling out, the effacing and thus the reduction of meaning, produced in the simple unfolding of the signifying chain.

That does not mean that it is nonsense, it is something that by the very fact that I took the Marxist reference, that we put into operation two objects of need, in such a way that one becomes the measure of the value of the other, effaces in it what is precisely the order of need, and in this way introduces it into the order of value, from the point of view of meaning and by a sort of neologism that also presents an ambiguity, could be called *dé-sens*. Let us simply call it today the *peu de sens* and we will also see, once we have this key, the signification of the metonymical chain of this *peu de sens*.

There very precisely is what the majority of jokes operate on. A joke should highlight, should make emerge this character not of nonsense, we are not concerned with the jokes of those noble souls who immediately after the great desert of which [they] would claim to have revealed to us the great mysteries of general absurdity, the discourse of the beautiful soul,

which if it did not succeed in ennobling our sentiments, recently e-nobled the dignity of the writer. But this discourse on nonsense is nevertheless the most useless discourse that we have ever heard. There is absolutely no nonsense in operation, but every time an equivocation is introduced, whether it is a question of the story of the calf, of that calf (*veau*) which I amused myself with the last day by almost making Heinrich Heine's reply by saying that this calf is after all worth scarcely anything (*ne vaut guère*) at the time it was spoken about, and also everything you can find in the play on words, and especially those that are called conceptual word plays, consists in playing on the slightness of words for sustaining a full meaning.

It is this *peu de sens* as such that is taken up, and through which something happens that reduces to its dimension this message in so far as it is at the same time success, failure, but a necessary form for any formulation of demand, and which comes to interrogate the other about this *peu de sens* that is here, and the dimension of the essential Other.

This is why Freud halts as before something that is taken as completely primordial, in the very nature of the joke, of the witticism, namely that there are no solitary witticisms, the witticism always is in solidarity with something, even when we have invented it, forged it ourselves, if it really is the case that we invent the witticism and that it is not it that invents us. We feel the need to propose it to an other, it is the Other who is charged with its authentication.

Who is this Other? Why this Other? What is the need for this Other?

I do not know if we will have enough time to define it today, to give it its structure and its limits, but we will simply say this at the point that we have got to: that what is communicated in the witticism to the Other, is what operates essentially in a way that is particularly cunning and has a character that we must constantly keep before our eyes. What is always involved, is not to provoke this pathetic invocation of some fundamental absurdity or other which I mentioned above in referring to the work of one of the great so-called geniuses of our time; it is rather this that must be suggested: the dimension of the *peu de sens*, while interrogating in a way value as such, and in summoning it as one might say, to realize its dimension of value, in summoning it to unveil itself as a true value, which is, you should carefully note, a ruse of language, because the more it unveils itself as true value, the more it will unveil itself as being supported by what I call the *peu de sens*. It can only reply in the sense of this *peu de sens*, and this is why it is in the nature of the message that is proper to the witticism, namely that in which here at the level of the message I take up with the Other the interrupted path of metonymy, and I put to him this interrogation: what does all this mean?

The witticism is only completed beyond this, namely in so far as the Other takes it on board, responds to the witticism, authenticates it as a witticism, namely perceives what in it conveys as such the question of the *peu de sens*, in terms of a demand for meaning, namely the evocation of a meaning beyond this thing that is incomplete, what in all of this has been lost *en route*, marked by the sign of the Other marking above all by its profound ambiguity every formulation of desire, binding it as such, and properly speaking to the necessities and ambiguities of the signifier as such, to homonymy properly so called, by which I mean to homophony. It is to the degree that the Other responds to it, namely on the upper circuit, that which goes from O to the message, and authenticates what?

What we would call the nonsense in it. Here too I must insist. I do not think it is necessary to keep this term "nonsense" which has no meaning except in a perspective of reason and criticism, namely that this precisely is avoided in this circuit.

I propose the formula of the *pas-de-sens*; of the *pas-de-sens* in the same way as you say the *pas-de-vis*, the *pas-de-quatre*, the *pas-de-suze*, the *Pas-de-Calais*. This *pas-de-sens* is properly speaking what is realized in metaphor, because in metaphor it is the intention of the subject, it is the need of the subject, to find a satisfaction that goes beyond metonymical usage, beyond what finds satisfaction in the common measure, in accepted values, and introduce precisely this *pas-de-sens*, this something that, taking an element at the place it is and substituting another one for it, I would almost say anyone at all, introduces this perpetual beyond of need with respect to any formulated desire that is at the origin of metaphor.

What is the witticism doing there? It indicates nothing more than the very dimension, the step properly speaking as such, the step I might say in its form, the step emptied of every kind of need that here would all the same express that which, in the witticism, can manifest what is latent in me of my desire, which is something that may find an echo in the Other, though not necessarily.

The important thing is that this dimension of the *pas-de-sens* should be taken up, authenticated. It is to this that displacement corresponds. It is not beyond the object that the novelty is produced at the same time as the *pas-de-sens*, at the same time as for the two subjects. He who speaks is one who speaks to the Other, who communicates it to him as a witticism, it has passed along this segment of the metonymical dimension, it has made the *peu de sens* as such be accepted. The Other has authenticated the *pas-de-sens*, and the pleasure for the subject is complete. It is in so far as he has managed to surprise the Other with his witticism, which brings him the pleasure that is indeed the same primitive pleasure as that which the mythical, archaic, infantile, primordial subject I evoked above, had received from his first use of the signifier.

It is at this step that I shall leave you. I hope that it has not appeared too artificial or too pedantic for you. I apologise to those of you who get a pain in the head from this kind of little exercise on the trapeze. I think nevertheless that it is necessary - not that I do not think you have the wit to grasp these things, but I do not think that what I call your common sense is something that has been so adulterated by the medical, psychological, analytical and other studies that you have pursued - that you cannot follow me along these paths simply by way of allusion. Nevertheless the laws governing my teaching do not make it inappropriate that we should separate out in some way the stages, the essential moments of the progress of subjectivity in the witticism.

Subjectivity. This is the word that I now come to, because up to the present and even today in manipulating with you the paths taken by the signifier, there is something missing in the midst of all this; you will see that there is a reason for this lack, it is not for nothing that in the midst of all of this we saw appearing today only subjects who were quasi-absent, kinds of supports to send back and forward the ball of the signifier. And yet what is more essential to the dimension of the witticism than subjectivity?

When I say subjectivity, I am saying that the object of the witticism can nowhere be grasped, because even what it designates beyond what it formulates, its character of essential allusion, of internal allusion, is something that here alludes to nothing, except to the necessity of the *pas-de-sens*.

And yet in this total absence of the object there is something in the final analysis that sustains the witticism, that is the most living part of living experience, that is most fully assumed of what is assumed, this something which in fact is properly speaking so subjective.

As Freud says somewhere, this essential subjective conditionality, this sovereign word is there emerging between the lines. "...only what I allow," he says with that razor-sharp quality of formulae that one hardly finds in any literary author, I have never seen that written by anyone, "...only what I allow to be a joke is a joke" (SE 8 105), and yet I need the Other because the whole chapter that follows the one I have been speaking to you about today, namely the one on the mechanism of pleasure, and which is called the motive of jokes, the social tendencies promoted by wit - it has been translated in French as *mobile*, I have never understood why *motif* was translated as *mobile* in French - has this Other as an essential reference.

There is no pleasure in the joke without this Other, this Other also *qua* subject, these relationships of two subjects, of the one called the first person of the witticism, the one who produces it, and the one to whom as he says, it is absolutely necessary that it should be communicated, the order of the other that this suggests, and to speak plainly now the fact that this Other is properly speaking, and this with the characteristic traits that nowhere else can be grasped with such clarity, that this Other is here what I call the Other with a capital O.

This is what I hope to show you the next day.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 11 December 1957

Today I have some very important things to say to you.

We left things the last day on the function of the subject in the witticism. I am sure that the weight that I give to the subject is not something you treat lightly, on the pretext that it is something that we make use of here. When one uses the word subject, it gives rise in general to lively reactions that are very personal, and sometimes emotional, among those who hold above all to objectivity.

On the other hand we had arrived at a sort of point of confluence situated here and that we call 0, in other words the Other *qua* locus of the code, the locus at which the message constituted by the joke arrives, by way of this path that in our schema can be taken at this level here, of the message to the Other, which is the path of the simple succession of the signifying chain in so far as it is the foundation of what is produced at the level of discourse, namely along the path where in the text of the sentence is manifested the essential thing which emanates, which is what we have called the *peu de sens*.

This homologation of the *peu de sens* of the sentence, always more or less manifest in the witticism, by the Other, is what we indicated the last day without dwelling on it, contenting ourselves with saying that from the Other, what is here transmitted, is relaunched in a double operation which returns to the level of the message, which is what homologates the message, which is what constitutes the witticism, that is in so far as the Other has received what is presented as a *peu de sens*, it transforms it into what we ourselves have called, in an ambivalent, equivocal, fashion the *pas-de-sens*.

What we have underlined by this is not the lack of meaning, or nonsense, but something that is a step in the understanding of what meaning shows about its procedure, about the allusive, metaphorical aspect it always has, about the way need from the moment it has passed through the dialectic of demand introduced by the existence of the signifier, this need is in a way never rejoined. It is by a series of steps like those by which Achilles never catches up on the tortoise, that everything that belongs to language proceeds and tends to recreate this full meaning, this elsewhere meaning, this meaning that is nevertheless never attained.

Here then is the schema at which we arrived in the last quarter hour of our discourse the last day, which it appears was a bit weary, as some people have told me. According to some I was not finishing my sentences. Yet in re-reading my text I did not find the ends missing. It is because I try to propel myself step by step into something that is difficult to communicate, that this stumbling must necessarily occur. I apologise if it happens again today.

We are at the point at which we must question ourselves about the function of this Other, of the essence of the Other in this breaking through that we call, we have pointed it out often enough, by the name of the *pas-de-sens*; this *pas-de-sens* in so far as it is in a way the partial regaining of that ideal plenitude of the demand as being purely and simply realized that we began from, as the starting point of our dialectic. By what transmutation,

transubstantiation, subtle operation of communion as we might say, can this *pas-de-sens* be assumed by the Other? Who is this Other?

In fact this is something that is sufficiently indicated by the problematic stressed by Freud himself when he speaks about jokes, with this capacity for suspending a question that undoubtedly the more I read - and I do not stint myself - of the different attempts that have been made throughout the ages to circumscribe this mysterious question of the joke, I really do not see, no matter what author I approach, even when I go to the fruitful period, the Romantic period, any author who has even assembled the primary, material elements of the question. Something like the following for example, that Freud focuses on here, one could say in two ways, that on the one hand he tells us with that sovereign tone he has and that cuts through the usual blushing timidity of scientific discourse, "only what I allow to be a joke is a joke", this is what he calls the irreducible subjective conditionality of wit, and the subject is indeed there the one that speaks, says Freud himself. And on the other hand, highlighting the fact that when I have in my possession something that is properly speaking of the order of wit, I have only a single concern, I cannot even fully appreciate the pleasure of the joke, of the story, unless I have tried it out on an other, and even more: unless I have in a way communicated its context.

It will not be difficult to show this perspective, this sort of game of mirrors by which, when I tell a story, if I am really looking for completion, for repose, the harmonizing of my pleasure with the consent of the Other, there remains on the horizon the fact that this Other will tell the story in his turn, that he will transmit it to others, and so on.

Here we have the two ends of the chain: the joke is only what I myself recognize as such, but on the other hand my own consent is not sufficient in this respect; the pleasure of the witticism is only completed in the Other and by the Other. We could say, if we pay careful attention to what we say, I mean if we do not see here any kind of simplification that could be implied in the term, that wit (*l'esprit*) must be communicated, on condition that we allow this term communication an openness which is to be filled by we know not what.

We find ourselves then in Freud's observation, confronted by something essential that we know already, namely the question of what is this Other which is in a way the correlate of the subject. Here we find this correlation affirmed in a requirement, in a veritable need inscribed in the phenomenon. But the form of the relationship of the subject to the Other, we know already; we know it since the time when we insisted here on the necessary mode in which our reflection proposes for us the term subjectivity.

I alluded to the sort of objection that could occur to minds formed in a certain discipline, who try, on the pretext that psychoanalysis presents itself as science, to introduce the requirement that we should never speak except about things that are objectifiable, namely that can be agreed on from experience, and that by the very fact of speaking about the subject, it becomes a subjective thing that is not scientific, implying by this in the notion of the subject, something that is there at a certain level, namely that it is on this side of the object which allows it in a way to find its support. It is both beyond and behind the object, this [something] that presents to us that sort of unknowable substance, that something which resists the objectification the whole weaponry of which is in a certain way provided by your education, by your psychological formation.

This naturally leads to types of objections which are still more common. I mean the identification of the term subjective with the deforming effects of sentiment on the

experiencing of another, introducing into it moreover nothing less than a sort of transparent mirage which bases it on a type of immanence of self-consciousness, which is resumed a little bit too quickly by resuming in it the theme of the Cartesian *cogito*; in short, a whole series of thickets that are only there to get between us and what we designate when we bring subjectivity into play in our experience. It cannot be eliminated from our experience as analysts, and in a fashion that takes a path that is completely different to the path on which these obstacles are set up.

Subjectivity is for the analyst, for someone who proceeds by way of a certain dialogue, what he must take into account in his calculations when he is dealing with this Other who may introduce into his calculations his own error, and not try to provoke it as such.

Here is a formula that I propose to you, and which is certainly something tangible. The slightest reference to a game of chess, or even to the game of odds and evens, is enough to prove it. Let us say that in thus posing its terms, subjectivity emerges or seems to emerge - I already underlined all of this elsewhere, it would not be useful to take it up again here - in the dual State, namely once there is struggle or camouflage in a fight or in a parade. Nevertheless, we certainly seem again to see its reflection at work in some way here. I illustrated this in terms that I think I do not need to go into again, by the approach and the phenomena of erectile fascination in fights between animals, or even in their intersexual parade.

In it we certainly see a sort of natural co-adaptation of which the character of reciprocal approach, of behaviour leading to intercourse, therefore at the motor level, at the level of what is called behaviourism, in the quite striking appearance of animals, who seem to perform a dance.

This indeed is also something that lends a note of ambiguity to the notions of intersubjectivity in this case. The reciprocal fascination can be conceived as being simply subject to the regulation of an identifiable cycle in instinctual processes, that which after the appetitive stage allows for the achievement of the instinctual end that properly speaking is sought. We can reduce it to an innate mechanism, to a mechanism of innate relays, which without the problem of the function of this imaginary captation, ends up by being reduced to the general obscurity of living teleology, and which after having arisen for a moment from the opposition we might say of two subjects, can when one tries to objectify it, vanish once again, efface itself.

It is completely different once we introduce into the problem, any of the resistances in any form, of the signifying chain. The signifying chain as such introduces into this an essential heterogeneity - you should understand heterogeneity with the accent laid on the *heteros* which means inspired in Greek, and whose proper meaning in Latin is that of a remainder, of a residue. There is a remainder once we bring the signifier into play, once it is through the intermediary of the signifying chain that one addresses and relates to an other, a subjectivity of a different order is established that relates to the locus of the truth as such, and that renders my behaviour no longer luring, but provocative with thisthat is included in it, namely this that even for a lie, must appeal to the truth and can make of the truth itself something that does not appear to belong to the register of the truth.

Remember this example: "Why do you tell me you are going to Cracow so that I'll think you're going to Lemberg when you're really going to Cracow?" This can make of the

truth itself something that is required by the lie, and that taking things further makes the qualification of my good faith depend at the moment that I put my cards on the table, namely submits me to the judgment of the other, in that he thinks he has discovered my game precisely when I am trying to show it to him, and which subjects the discrimination of bluff and trickery to the mercy of the bad faith of the other.

These essential dimensions are simple experiences of everyday experience, but even though they are woven into our everyday experience, we are still inclined to elide them, to avoid them, and why is that?

For the reason that as long as analytic experience and the Freudian experience had not shown us the hetero-dimension of the signifier operating by itself, as long as we have not touched, realized, this hetero-dimension, we can believe and we do not fail to believe - and the whole of Freudian thought is impregnated with this belief founded on something that marks the heterogeneity of the signifying function, namely the radical character of the relationship of the subject to the Other in so far as he speaks; it had been masked until Freud by the fact that we take as given that the subject speaks, in accordance with his conscience, whether it be good or bad. This means that we think that the subject never speaks without the intention of signifying something. Intention lies behind his sincerity and his lies, it does not matter much, but this intention is derisory, namely that if it is taken as failed, I mean in thinking that he does so the subject tells me the truth, or if he deceives himself, even in an effort to make an avowal, it remains that the intention was until now confused on that occasion with the dimension of consciousness, because it seemed to us that this dimension of consciousness [was] inherent to what the subject had to say *qua* signification.

The very least that was thought to be affirmable up to now, was that the subject always had a signification to express, and because of this the dimension of consciousness seemed to be inherent to it. The obstacles, the objections to the theme of the Freudian unconscious always spring in the final resort from this. How could the *Tra.....gung* as Freud presents them to us have been foreseen, namely that something which for ordinary intuition or apprehension, appear as thoughts that are not thought?

This is why a veritable exorcism is necessary at the level of the theme of thought. Needless to say the Cartesian *coqito* must still be reckoned with, but what I can call its harmfulness comes I might say here from the fact that it is always biased: I mean that this "I think therefore I am", is difficult to grasp at its very source, and after all perhaps it is only a witticism. But let us leave it at this plane, we are not trying to show the relationship between philosophy and the witticism. The Cartesian *coqito* is effectively experienced in the consciousness of each of us, not as an "I think therefore I am", but as an "I am as I think", and of course this supposes in the background an "I think as I breathe", naturally.

I think it is enough to reflect on the slightest experience of what supports the mental activity of those around us, and because we are intellectuals, let us mention those devoted to great scientific tasks in order to convince ourselves very quickly that there is on average no more thought at work in the totality of this body of thinkers, than in any hardworking charlady Struggling with the most immediate necessities of existence. The term, the dimension of thought has absolutely nothing to do with the importance of the discourse that is conveyed; and furthermore, the more this discourse is coherent and consistent, the more it seems to lend itself to all kinds of absence with respect to what can be reasonably defined as a question posed by the subject regarding his existence as subject.

So that in the last analysis we are once again confronted with the fact that in us a subject thinks, thinks according to laws that are found to be properly speaking the same as the laws of the organization of the signifying chain, of that signifier in action that in us is called the unconscious, designated as such by Freud, and made so original, so separate from everything that is the operation of a tendency, that Freud in a thousand forms repeats that what is in question is another psychical scene. The term is repeated at every instant in the *Traumdeutung*, and in fact is borrowed by Freud from Fechner.

I already underlined the singularity of the Fechnerian context which is far from being something that we can reduce to the observation of a psycho-physical parallelism, or even to the strange extrapolations Fechner indulged in about the existence of the field of consciousness, affirmed by him.

The fact that Freud from his thorough reading of Fechner, borrowed the term "another psychical scene", is something always correlated by him with the strict heterogeneity of the laws concerning the unconscious, compared to everything that can be related to the domain of the preconscious, namely to the domain of the comprehensible, to the domain of signification.

This Other that is in question here, and which is rediscovered by Freud, that he appeals to again with reference to the psychical scene in connection with the witticism, is the one we have to question today, is the one Freud continually brings us back to in connection with the paths and the very procedures of the joke. "For us," he says, "there is no possible emergence of a joke without a certain surprise" (cf. SE 8 154) - and in German it is even more striking, this something that makes the subject a stranger to the immediate content of the sentence, this something that presents itself on occasion by means of apparent nonsense, of nonsense understood with respect to signification of which one can say for a moment, "I don't understand, I'm puzzled", this break, the assent of the subject compared to what he assumes, there is in a way no true content in this sentence.

This is the first stage, Freud tells us, of the natural preparation of the joke, and it is within this that there is going to be produced this something that for the subject, will constitute precisely this sort of pleasure-generator, this pleasurable thing that is the characteristic of the joke.

What happens at this level? What is in a way this order of the Other that is invoked in the subject? Because there is also something immediate in him, that is turned by means of the joke, the technique of this turning movement should tell us what is aimed at, what mode of the Other must be attained in the subject.

This is what we are going to consider today, and to introduce it, up to this I have never, or scarcely ever, referred to stories other than those reported by Freud himself. I will introduce it now by a story that is not specially chosen either. When I decided to approach with you this year the question of the *Witz* or of wit, I began a little investigation. It should not surprise you that I began by questioning a poet, but a poet who precisely introduces into his prose and also on occasion into more poetic forms, in a very particular fashion this dimension of a specially lively wit that in a way runs right through his work, and that he brings into play even when on occasion he speaks - because he is also a mathematician - about mathematics. I am speaking here of course about Raymond Queneau.

When we had exchanged our first remarks on the subject, he told me a story. As always, it is only within the field of analysis that you come upon things that fit like a glove. I had spent a whole year talking to you about the signifying function of the horse in phobias (*trait d'esprit*), and now the horse is going to return in quite a strange way into the field of our attention.

You will not have heard the story Queneau told me; he took it precisely as an example of long witty stories, as opposed to short ones. It is in fact a whole kind of primary classification, as we will see, that conditions what Jean Paul Richter calls somewhere, the body and the soul of wit, to which one can oppose the phrase of the monologue in Hamlet saying that if brevity is lavished by the joke, it is only its body and its adornment.

Both statements are true because both authors know what they are talking about. You will see whether in fact the term "long story" fits Queneau's story because the witticism occurs at a particular point.

Here then is the story. It is a story about an examination, the Baccalaureate if you like. There is the candidate, and there is the examiner.

- Tell me, says the examiner, about the battle of Marengo.

The candidate pauses for a moment, with a dreamy air: The battle of Marengo? The dead! It's terrible! The wounded! ... It's appalling

- But, says the examiner, could you not tell me something a bit more precise about this battle?

The candidate reflects for a moment, and then replies: A horse rearing up on his hind legs, neighing!

- The examiner, surprised, wants to test him a little more; In that case, sir, can you tell me about the battle of Fontenoy?

The battle of Fontenoy?The dead! Everywhere..... The wounded! More and more of them. The horror of it

- The examiner, interested, says: But can you give me any more precise details about this battle of Fontenoy?

Oh! says the candidate, a horse rearing up on his hind legs, neighing!

The examiner, to find some room for manoeuvre, asks the candidate to tell him about the battle of Trafalgar.

He replies: The dead! It's a slaughter-house..... The wounded! In hundreds

- But my dear sir, can you not tell me something more specific about this battle?

A horse....

- Forgive me, sir, but I think I should tell you that the battle of Trafalgar was a naval battle.

Whoa! Whoa!, says the candidate, back up my beauty!

This story has a value in my eyes because it allows us to decompose, I think, what is involved in the witticism. I think that the whole witty side of the story, is in the punch-line. The story has no reason to finish, to come to an end, if it is simply constituted by the sort of game or joust between the two interlocutors. Moreover no matter how far you take it, the effect is produced immediately. It is a story that makes us laugh because it is comic; it is comic, I do not want to go any further into the comic, because so many appalling things have been said about the comic and particularly obscure things ever since Monsieur Bergson wrote a book on laughter, about which the best thing one can say is that it is readable. In what does the comic consist?

Let us limit ourselves for a moment to saying that the comic is linked to a dual situation. It is in so far as the candidate is before an examiner that this joust in which the weapons are quite obviously so radically different, takes place, and something is provoked in us that can be called a lively amusement.

Is it properly speaking the ignorance of the subject that makes US laugh? I am not so sure. Needless to say the fact that he p*its forward truths that are elementary for any battle, things that one would never say, at least when one is doing a history exam, merits a moment's reflection. But we cannot go into it. Because in fact this would involve us in questions bearing on the nature of the comic, and I do not know whether we will have the opportunity to go into it, except to complete our examination of Freud's book which effectively ends with a chapter on the comic in which it is striking to see all of a sudden that Freud falls well below his usual perspicacity, and we are more inclined to ask ourselves why Freud, just like the worst author dealing with the most elementary notion of the comic, in a way refused to tackle it. This no doubt will make us more indulgent towards our psychoanalytic colleagues who themselves also, lack any sense of the comic; it seems that it is excluded from the exercise of the profession.

It seems then, that what is involved when we participate in a really comic incident, is something that is much more a preparation for war, and it is on this that the final stress should be laid, something that comes before this properly witty story.

I would ask you to carefully observe the following: that even if one or other of you is not particularly sensitive to what constitutes the wit in the story, the wit after all is concealed, it lies in the punch-line, namely in this sudden excursus beyond the boundaries of the test, namely when the candidate does something that is properly speaking unbelievable if we had for a moment taken the line that this story could be situated in any sort of living reality; for the subject it suddenly seems to go beyond the limits, by pulling on the reins of the kind of image that here, almost takes on a quasi-phobic value; a moment that is in any case homogeneous, it seems, in a flash, to what can be found in all sorts of infantile experiences, that make the phobia extend to all sorts of excesses in imaginary life, where there are similar things that we have moreover the greatest difficulty in understanding. It is not rare after all, for us to see reported in the whole anamnesis of the life of a subject, an attraction properly speaking for the big horse, for the same horse who descends on his hind legs from a tapestry, the entry of this horse into a dormitory where the subject is with his fifty comrades.

This sudden emergence of the signifying phantasy of the horse is what makes of this story, this drole or poetic story - as you wish - that in any case deserves on this occasion to be

called witty. If as Freud says, it is simply up to you to decide the matter, you can also qualify it as a funny story.

That it should converge by its content at something that is linked to a form that has been noticed, located at the level of unconscious phenomena, should not then surprise us; what moreover gives this story its value, is that this aspect is so clear. But does that mean that this is enough to make a witticism of it?

Here then we have decomposed in some way the two moments that I would call the preparation and the punch-line. Are we going to stop here? We could stop here at the level of what we call Freudian analysis. I do not think that it would be any more difficult in the case of any other story to show these two moments, these two aspects of the phenomenon, but here they are particularly well separated out.

In the final analysis I think that what creates not just the poetic or the drole character, but also the wittiness of the story, is something that follows the retrograde or retroactive path, of what we designate here in our schema as the *pas-de-sens*. Fleeting and ungraspable though the point of the story may be, it is nevertheless directed towards something. To articulate it, no doubt means forcing things a little, but to show its direction it is all the same necessary to articulate it. The fact is that this particularity to which the subject returns with something that in another context might no longer belong to wit, but to humour, namely this horse rearing up on his hind legs, and neighing, but it may well be that this gives the story its real spice.

Let us remind ourselves that of all the history that we have integrated into our experience, into our formation, into our culture that this is the most essential image and that we cannot take three steps in a museum, to look at paintings of battles, without seeing this horse rearing up on his hind legs, and neighing. Since it entered with such *éclat* into the history of war - as you know the moment you had people sitting on a horse, or astride this animal that is represented as rearing up on his hind legs and neighing, is an important date in history. At the time when it happened, namely somewhere between Echnos II and Echnos III, with the arrival of the Achaeans on horses, it brought about an enormous progress, namely that these people had suddenly an enormous tactical advantage compared with a horse harnessed to a chariot; until the war of 1914-18 when the horse disappeared behind other instruments that practically put it out of commission. Thus from the epoch to the 1914-18 war, the horse was effectively something absolutely essential in the relationship, in the human commerce that is called war, and the fact that it is also the central image of certain conceptions of history that we can call precisely battle-history, is already something that we are able to perceive, because this period has passed, as a phenomenon whose signifying character has properly speaking been decanted with the progress of history. In the final analysis a whole history is resumed in this image which appears futile to us in the light of that history, and the meaning indicated is something that means that after all there is not much point in agonizing about battles, whether that of Marengo or of Fontenoy - perhaps the battle of Trafalgar is a little bit more relevant.

Needless to say all this is not in the story. It does not try to teach us in this connection any wisdom drawn from the lessons of history, but the story aims at, is directed towards - it does not teach - it indicates in what sense this present *pas-de-sens* goes on this occasion in the direction of a reduction of value, of an exorcising of something fascinating.

In what way does this story work, and in what sense does it satisfy us, and give us pleasure?

Precisely in connection with this margin of the introduction of the signifier into our significations, which means that we remain subject to it from a certain point on, that something escapes us after all beyond what this chain of signifiers contains for us in terms of liaison with this something that can also be said to be right at the beginning of the story, namely "The dead! The wounded!", and the very fact that this sort of repeated monadic theme can make us laugh, also indicates to us the degree to which access to reality is refused to us, because we penetrate it from a certain angle which is properly speaking the angle of the signifier.

On this occasion this story should simply serve as a reference point for us. Freud underlines that there are always three persons involved, when we talk about the transmission of a joke and the satisfaction it brings us. For the comic the interplay between two people is enough; in the joke there are three. This Other who is the second is situated at different places: he is sometimes here the second in the story, even though we do not know, and we do not need to know if he is the student or the examiner. He is also you, while I am telling you the story, namely, that during the first part, you let yourselves be lead along a little, I mean in the direction required by your differing sympathies, either for the candidate, or for the examiner who in a certain fashion fascinates you and creates in you an attitude of opposition with regard to something by which you see that in the story, is not so much our opposition that is sought, but simply a captivation in this game in which the candidate in the final analysis is immediately at close quarters with the examiner, and in which the examiner is going to catch the candidate out. And of course it is hinted at in other stories that are far more tendentious, in stories of the smutty or sexual type.

You can see that it is not so much a question of getting round your resistance or your repugnance in a certain way, but on the contrary to begin to activate it. In fact, far from extinguishing any objections you might have, a good story already indicates to you whether it is going to be smutty, already at the beginning something will indicate to you that we are going to move onto this area. Then you prepare yourself, either to consent, or to resist, but certainly something in you will oppose it on the dual plane and let itself be carried along by this aspect of prestige or parade that introduces the register and the order of the story. Nevertheless something unexpected will occur, which is of course always on the plane of language in this story, the aspect of the play on words properly so called, is taken much further. Here it is almost so decomposed that we can see on the one hand a pure signifier, a horse on this occasion, and on the other hand we also see in the form of a cliché that is much more difficult to find here, the element of play properly speaking of signifiers, but nevertheless it is clear that there is nothing other than that in this story.

It is beyond, it is in so far as something that is a fundamental equivocation surprises you, the way that in the story there is a passage from one meaning to another by the intermediary of a signifying support - the examples that I gave previously suffice to indicate what I mean - that this hole, will make you reach the stage where what is communicated to you will strike you as being a joke, and that you are always struck somewhere other than the place where your attention, your assent, your opposition was attracted in the first place, whatever the effects were, whether the effects of nonsense or comic effects, or the effects of smutty participation in something sexually exciting. Let us say that it is never more than a preparation, than something by which one might say there is something imaginary, reflected, properly speaking sympathetic in the communication, the bringing into play of a certain tendency in which the subject is the second person, can divide himself into two opposing roles. This is only the support for, the preparation of the story. Likewise, everything that

attracts the attention of the subject, everything that is aroused in him at the conscious level is only the basis destined to permit something to pass onto another plane; a plane that is presented always as something more or less enigmatic, surprising, in fact, and it is in this way that we find ourselves on this other plane at the level of the unconscious.

It seems to me therefore, that we can pose for ourselves the problem, since it is always a question of something that is purely linked to the mechanism of language as such, on this plane where the Other seeks and is sought, where the Other is rejoined, where the Other is aimed at, where the Other is touched in the witticism.

How can we define this Other? After all if we pause for a moment at this schema, we are going to be able to use it to say some elementary truths and some very simple things. This schema involves, even when it has been constructed, only something that is a framework, or a grid where one can essentially locate the signifying elements as such.

When we take the different modes or the different forms in which the witticism can be classified, we find ourselves led to classifications like the following: the play on words, the pun properly so called, the play on words by transposition or displacement of meaning, the witticism by the transposition or displacement of meaning, the witticism by what is called a small modification in a word that is enough to highlight something and to give rise to an unexpected dimension ; indeed whatever Classifying elements we introduce into it, we have tended with Freud to reduce them to terms that can be inscribed in the register of the signifier.

Does this mean that in the final analysis a machine situated somewhere in O or in M , namely receiving from both sides for example the capacity to decompose the entry paths along which are formed the term *famillionaire* in the first example we took, or on the contrary in the other example, that of the golden calf, the passage from the golden calf to the butcher's calf, is in some way able to authenticate, to ratify as such, if we suppose it to be sufficiently complex to make an exhaustive, complete analysis of the elements of the signifier, if it is capable of acknowledging it and saying that this is a witticism, namely in a certain way, equal to the message with respect to the code, is just what is necessary for us to remain at least within the possible limits, of something that is called a witticism.

Heedless to say this invention is only produced here in a purely humorous way. There is no question about it, it is self-evident. What does that mean? Is it enough for what we are saying, that we should find ourselves confronted with a man? Of course, this may be self-evident, and we would be very happy about it. If we say that, it corresponds to the bulk of our experience, but precisely because for us the term unconscious with its enigma exists, man, is precisely the sort of response that we must deconstruct.

We will begin by saying that we must be confronted with a real subject. This indicates that since it is in this direction of meaning that the witticism lies; this meaning that we have already indicated and affirmed, cannot be conceived of except in the interaction between a signifier and a need. In other words, the absence of this dimension of need for a machine is what creates the obstacle and the objection to its ratifying the joke in any way.

Therefore we see quite clearly that this situates the level of the question, but are we yet able to say that this real someone must have needs that are homogeneous with ours? This is not something that is necessarily indicated from the beginning of our progress, because in fact in the witticism this need will nowhere be designated, and that what the witticism designates, what it tends towards, is something that is precisely a distance between need and

that something that is brought into play in a certain discourse, and which from this very fact distances us by an infinite series of reactions from what is properly speaking need.

Here then is a first definition. This subject must be a real subject; god, animal, or man? In fact we do not know. And what I am saying is so true, that all the stories of the supernatural that do not exist without a reason in human folk-lore, in no way exclude that one can joke with a fairy or with a devil or even with a sphinx, with someone who is in a way posed as having completely different relationships with its real, from those defined by human needs.

You will no doubt tell me that these more or less verbal beings of thought, are nevertheless more or less woven out of human images. I do not disagree, and this is even the very point, because in fact we find ourselves between these two terms: first of all to have to deal with a real subject, namely a living being; on the other hand with a living being who understands language, and even much more, who possesses a stock of the usages, the uses, the locutions, the terms that are exchanged verbally, in the absence of which of course there would be no question of our communicating with him in any way through language.

What is it that the witticism suggests to us and allows us in a way to touch? It is that the images as they are in the human economy, namely in this state of disconnectedness, with this apparent freedom that allows to occur between them all the coalescences, the exchanges, the condensations, the displacements, the juggling that we see at the basis of so many of the manifestations that constitute at once the richness and the heterogeneity of the human world compared to the biological real, that we too often take in the analytic perspective as a system of reference, that in this freedom of the images there is something that we do not wish to consider as primitive, namely as conditioned by a certain primary lesion in the inter-relationship of man to his entourage, this thing that we have tried to designate in the prematurity of birth, in the essential relationship that means that it is through the image of the other that man finds the unification of his most elementary movements, whether it is there or elsewhere that this begins, what is certain, is that these images in their anarchic state characteristic of the human order, of the human species, are influenced, are caught up, are utilized by signifying management, and that it is under this heading that they take their place in what is involved in the witticism.

What is involved in the witticism, are these images in so far as they have become signifying elements more or less common, more or less ratified in what I have called the metonymical treasury, in what the Other is supposed to know about the multiplicity of their possible combinations, moreover completely abbreviated, elided, let us even say purified with regard to the signification. What is in question, are all the metaphorical implications that already from the beginning are piled up and compressed in language. It is language in so far as it bears within itself its moments of meaningful creation but in a non-active, latent state. This is what is going to be sought, this is what I invoke in the witticism, what I try to awaken in the Other, the support of which I entrust in a way to the Other, and in fact I only address myself to him to the extent that I suppose that what I bring into play in my witticism, is something that is already to be found in him. He has this metonymical treasury when, to take one of Freud's examples about a famous wit in Viennese society, on the subject of a bad writer who was flooding the Viennese papers with his productions on the story of Napoleon and his descendants. The person Freud is talking to us about has a physical peculiarity, that of being red-headed. The German *mot* can be translated into French by saying that this person says stupid things (*fadaises*), and that he is red-headed, this *rouquin filandreux* (red *Fadian*),

as the French translation goes, who runs through the whole story of the Napoleonids, and Freud pauses to say: we see a possible decomposition on two planes; what on the one hand gives its spice to the story, is the reference to the red thread that runs through the whole diary, itself a poetic metaphor. As you know, Goethe borrowed it from the red thread that allows to be recognized the smallest piece of Cordage, even if it stolen, especially if it is stolen, from the vessels of his Britannic Majesty, at a time when sailing ships made great use of cordage, and which meant that thanks to this red thread something absolutely authenticates a certain type of material as having a certain provenance. So it is with this metaphor more celebrated for German speaking people than it may be for ourselves, but I suppose that enough of you at least through this quotation have come to hear, perhaps even without knowing it, about this passage from Goethe's *Elective Affinities*, which means you know what is in question, that in the interplay between this red thread and the red-haired person who says stupid things, there is located this reply more or less in the style of the time. This can give rise to a good deal of laughter at a particular time, in a particular context, and that is where I will come to from another angle, in a certain context that can be called rightly or wrongly cultural, that ensures that something comes across as a point well made, as a witticism.

What Freud sometimes tells us on this occasion, is that under the protection of the witticism something is satisfied, which is this aggressive tendency of the subject that otherwise would not be manifested. It would not be allowable to speak so crudely about a literary colleague, if it were not possible to do so under the guise of a witticism. Needless to say it is only one aspect of the question, but it is clear that there is a great difference between purely and simply offering an insult, and the fact of expressing oneself in this register. To express oneself in this register is to appeal to all sorts of things in the Other, that are supposed to be part of his usage, part of his current code.

It was expressly to give you this perspective, that I took this example borrowed from a special moment in the history of Viennese society. It is in so far as this red thread is something that is immediately accessible to everyone, and I would say up to a certain point flatters in everyone that something which is there as a common symbol, something it is a pleasure to recognize, everyone knows what it is about, and by evoking this red thread something else is indicated in the direction of the joke, that calls into question not simply the person, but also a very particular value that is very questionable and can be defined as follows: the people who are essayists or who consider history from a certain anecdotal point of view, are the very ones who are also in the habit of taking as a basic theme in it something that shows up only too well the limitations of the author, the poverty of his categories, even the weariness of his writing, in short a certain style of production at the limit of history, and precisely belonging to this sort of production that encumbers the journals. It is something that is sufficiently characterized, sufficiently indicated in this joke, to show us the same characteristics of direction, of meaning that does not reach its term, but is nevertheless precisely what is aimed at in the joke and gives it its importance and its value.

He are therefore now in a position to say in opposition to this fact, that the living being must be a real living being. This Other is essentially a symbolic locus, it is precisely that of the treasury, let us say of those sentences, even of those "accepted" ideas without which the witticism cannot take on Its value and its importance. But let us note that at the same time it is not in him, even though it is precisely stressed as a signification, that it is aimed at; on the contrary something happens at the level of this common treasury of categories, and What we can call the abstract character of this common treasury - I am alluding precisely to the element of transmission which ensures that there is here something

that is in a certain way super-individual, linked by an absolutely undesirable community to everything that separated out from the origin of culture the singularly immortal character one might say, of what one addresses when one aims at the subject at the level of the equivocations of the signifier. It is something that is really the other term, the other pole between which the question is posed of who the Other is.

It is of course necessary for us that this Other should be quite real, that it should be a living being, of flesh, even though all the same it is not his flesh that I provoke; that on the other hand there is something quasi-anonymous there in that to which I refer in order to reach him and to arouse his pleasure as well as my own.

What is the mainspring between the two, between the real and the symbolic? The function of the Other which is properly speaking called into play. Assuredly there is enough to tell us that this Other, is indeed the Other as locus of the signifier; but from this locus of the signifier I only give rise to a direction of meaning, only a *pas-de-sens*, in which is really found, and at the final term, the mainspring of what is at work.

I think we can say that in this respect the witticism is assuredly like a Spanish inn, or more exactly since one must bring one's food to it - the wine is there already - here it is rather the contrary, it is I who must bring the wine of the word, because I would not find it even if I consumed my adversary in a more or less farcical or comical way. But this wine of the word is always present, always there in all I say, I mean that usually the witticism is there ambient in all that I am talking about once I speak, and I speak necessarily in the double register of metaphor and metonymy. This *peu de sens* and this *pas-de-sens* intersect with one another all the time just as the thousand Shuttles, that Freud refers to somewhere in the *Traumdeutung*, cross and recross.

This wine of the word, I would say that usually it is poured out on the sand. What happens in the very special communion between the *peu de sens* and the *pas-de-sens*, that is produced in me and the Other in connection with the witticism, is indeed something like a communion, and concerning our opposition, it is no doubt more specifically humanising than any other, but if it is humanising, it is because we start from a level that from both sides is very inhuman.

It is in this communion that I indicate the Other. I would say that I have all the more need for his help in so far as there is in himself something of the vase, or the Grail, and it is precisely because this Grail is empty, I mean that I do not address myself to anything that is specified in him, I mean that which might unite us at that moment in some kind of communion or Other, towards some kind of harmonising of desire or of judgment, but that it is only a form, and a form constituted by what? Constituted by the thing that is always involved in the witticism, and which in Freud is called the inhibitions.

It is not for nothing that in the preparation of my witticism, I evoke something that tends in the Other to solidify him in a certain direction. This is still only a shell compared to something more profound that is precisely linked to the stock of metonymies without which I can certainly communicate absolutely nothing in this order to the Other.

In other words, in order that my witticism should make the Other laugh, there must be - as Bergson says somewhere - an exercise, a *tour-de-force*, a piece of trickery, destined in the last analysis to give pleasure to the Other, to the big Other, who as I told you, does not give a damn about it.

Acting out is a different matter, and that is why it is interesting for us to consider it, because acting out is always and ever a message, and this is why it is of interest to us. When it occurs in an analysis, it is always addressed to the analyst, and to the analyst in so far as he is not too badly placed, but is not quite in his proper place either. In general it is a hint the subject gives us, which sometimes goes very far, and which is sometimes very serious, but it is a hint if the acting out occurs outside the confines of the treatment, I mean after the treatment. Clearly it is a hint that the analyst can scarcely take advantage of, but this is precisely what is serious and important about it, it is that every time we are led to designate it in a precise fashion, something that has the character of this paradoxical act that we are trying to describe, that is called acting out, outside the confines of the treatment it is certainly this that is in question, it is in the last analysis to reach something articulated on this line, namely a clarification of the relationship of the subject to the demand, in so far as it reveals that every relationship to this demand is fundamentally inadequate, and in so far as it is a question of the subject finally acceding to the effective reality of this effect of the signifier on the subject, namely of putting himself on the level of the castration complex as such, and strictly speaking, namely that it might have been missed, this can be missed, and this is what I will try to show you the next day, precisely to the degree that in this intervening space in which there are produced all these confused exercises going from exploit to phantasy, and from phantasy to a love of objects that is absolutely passionate, and partial, it has to be said, of the abject, because Abraham never spoke about the partial object, but of partial love, of the object, it is in so far as in moving around in this intermediary space of the object, one has found illusory solutions, the one manifested in what is called homosexual transference within obsessional neurosis.

This is what I call an illusory solution, and I hope the next day to show you in detail why it is an illusory solution.

Seminar 7: Wednesday 18 December 1957

The last day I spoke to you about the Grail. It is you who are the Grail, that I solidify by awakening your contradictions in all kinds of ways, so that you may authenticate in spirit, if I may express myself in this way, that I am sending you the message, of which the essential consists in its very defects.

Since it is always a good thing to return a little even to what is best understood, I will try in some way to materialise on the board what I told you the last day.

What I told you last day concerned the Other, this blessed Other which in short will succeed in completing, in fulfilling in a certain fashion in the communication of the *Witz*, this something, this gap that constitutes the insolubility of desire.

In a way *Witz* restores its *jouissance* to the essentially unsatisfied demand, under the double but identical aspect of surprise and of pleasure: of the pleasure of surprise and the surprise of pleasure.

I insisted the last day on this procedure of immobilising the Other, of the formation of what I called the empty Grail, which is represented in Freud by what he calls the facade of the joke, this thing that distracts the attention of the other from the path along which the joke will pass, the thing that fixes the inhibition somewhere, precisely to free up the pathway along which the witty word is going to pass.

Here then more or less is how things can be schematised. The pathway that is traced from a word that is here condensed in a message, that is addressed here to the Other, a message whose incompleteness, whose gaps, whose defects are authenticated by the Other as a joke, but in this way restoring essentially to the subject himself, and constituting the indispensable complement for the subject of the desire proper to the joke.

Here then is the schema that we habitually use and here is the Other, here at gamma the message, the I here, the metonymical object. But if the Other is indispensable for us - these are of course points that have already been made and that I am going to take as known - if the Other is indispensable for the completion that the discourse constitutes in so far as it arrives at the message in a way that satisfies, at least symbolically the fundamentally insoluble character of the demand as such; if therefore this circuit which is the authentication by the Other of this allusion to the fact that no part of the demand can be attained, once man has entered into the symbolic world, except by a sort of infinite succession of *pas-de-sens*, so that man, a new Achilles pursuing another tortoise, is destined because of the grip on his desire, in the mechanism of language, to this infinite never satisfied approach, linked to the integration, to the very mechanism of desire, of something that we shall simply call discursiveness.

Thus if this Other is there as an essential at the last symbolically satisfying step, constituting in an instantaneous moment, the joke as it passes by, it is only right that we should remember that this Other, itself also exists. It exists in the manner of what we have called the subject, which is circulating around somewhere like a ferret. You must not imagine

that the subject is at the origin of need: need is not yet the subject. Where is it? Perhaps we will say more about it today.

The subject, is the whole system and perhaps something that reaches completion in this system. The Other is the same, it is constructed in the same way, and this indeed is the reason why the Other can relay my discourse.

I am going to encounter some special conditions that should all the same not fail to be representable in it, if my schema is to be of any use. These conditions are the ones we mentioned the last time. Let us now note now what it is that distinguishes the vectors or the directions on these segments. Here they are then, going from the I to the object and towards the Other, going from the message towards the Other and towards the object because needless to say there is a very considerable symmetrical relationship between this message and this I, and a similar centrifugal one and another centripetal one between the Other as such, as the locus of the treasury of metonymies, and this metonymical object itself in so far as it is constituted in the system of metonymies.

What did I do, what did I explain the last time, about what I can call the preparation of the joke? This preparation which is sometimes best made by omitting it; but it is clear that it is not a bad thing to make some, we have only to remind ourselves of what happened when I did not make any, you were sometimes left a little up in the air, for something as simple as the "Ah...te!" which I told you one day, and which it seems left some people puzzled. If I had made some preparation on the reciprocal attitudes of the little Count and the well brought up young lady you might have been alerted so that then the *te* might have been more easily able to break through something. Since you were paying very close attention to it, some of you took some time to understand it. On the contrary the story the last day about the horse, made you laugh much more easily because it involves a long preparation, and while you were being amused by the remarks of the examinee who appeared to you to be distinguished by the powerful insolence that dwells at the heart of ignorance, you found yourselves in fact being sufficiently prepared for the entry of this flying horse which ends the story, which really gives it its spice.

What I produce, by this preparation is the other. It is assuredly something that in Freud is called *Hemmung*, inhibition. Something that is simply this opposition which is the fundamental basis of the dual relationship, to everything that I can as an object before you, oppose to you as objections. It is quite natural, you prepare yourself to withstand the shock, the approach, the pressure, something is organized which is usually called defence, which is the most elementary force. And this indeed is what is in question in these sorts of introductions which can just as well be made in a thousand ways. Sometimes it is nonsense that plays this role of introduction, it is a provocation that draws the mental attention in a certain direction. It is a lure, this kind of *corrida*, sometimes it is the comic, sometimes the obscene.

In fact, what you must accommodate the other to, in a way goes in a direction contrary to the metonymy of my discourse, a certain fixation of the other in so far as he is himself discoursing about a certain metonymical object and in a certain fashion, we could say it does not matter which, it is not at all necessary that it should have the least relationship with my own inhibitions. It does not matter, anything will do provided that at that moment a certain object occupies the other.

This is what I explained to you the last time when I spoke to you about the imaginary solidification which is the first position in order for the joke to get across.

In fact what you see, is the homologue at the level of the other, that we take here as homologue of the line that we usually call $\beta \beta$, relationship of the I to the metonymical object; what we will here call the first subject, and to indicate therefore the superposition of the system of the Other subject with respect to the system of the first one.

You see therefore what is involved, for a relay to be made from the Other towards the message authenticating the joke as such, it is necessary that the relay should be taken up in its own signifying system, namely I might say, that the problem should be returned, namely itself authenticate the message as a joke in its own system.

In other words my $\varphi \alpha$ presupposes that there is inscribed an insufficient parallelism with a $\varphi \alpha$ something which is exactly noted on the schema, this necessity inherent in the joke that gives it this sort of perspective that theoretically can be reproduced to infinity, that the good story is meant to be told, that it is not complete until it is told and others have laughed it it, and that even the pleasure of telling it includes the fact that others in their turn can test it out on still more people.

But if there is no necessary relationship between what I should evoke in the other in terms of metonymical captivation, to clear the way for a witty remark, there is on the contrary a relationship necessary - this is made sufficiently obvious by this schema between the signifying chain as it must be organized in the other, the one that goes here from \diamond or \diamond'' to \diamond'' , just as here this goes from \diamond' to \diamond -- there has to be a relationship, and that is what I expressed the last time by saying that the other must be from the same parish. It is not enough that he should broadly speaking understand French, although this is already a first way of belonging to the parish. If I make a joke in French, there are a lot of other things supposed known, in which he must participate, in order that one or other joke may get across and be successful.

Here then we have in fact represented on the schema two conditions that we could more or less write like this, that if you like, something that here would be $\beta'' \beta''''$, namely a certain inhibition provoked in the other. Here I make a sign composed of two little arrows going in opposite directions, which are in equal and opposite directions to my metonymy, namely to $\varphi \alpha$. On the contrary there is a sort of parallelism between $\varphi \alpha$ and $\varphi' \alpha'$, that can be expressed in the following way, that $\varphi \alpha$ can there find its homologation. We have expressed this by placing a rough breathing in parenthesis in $\alpha' \varphi'$, namely that the Other homologates it as such, homologates it as message, authenticates it as a joke.

Here at least is something that has the advantage of fixing your ideas, of visualising for you, because it is one of the mental organs most familiar to the intellectual, of visualising for you what I mean when I spoke to you the last day about two subjective conditions being necessary for the success of a joke, namely what it requires of the imaginary other so that on the interior of that cup that the imaginary other presents, the symbolic Other understands it.

I will leave it those of ingenious spirit to link this up with what, curiously enough, I once before said in a metaphor, and I must have had a reason for that, to use almost the same formal schemas, when once before on a previous occasion I used the image of the concave

mirror in connection with narcissism. At that time I was above all concerned with imaginary images, and with the conditions for the appearance of imaginary unity in a certain Organic reflection, by means of something whose formal tendencies make it

Let us not get involved in making a *rapprochement* that in any case would be forced, even though it might be suggestive.

He are now going to make a little further use of this schema, because however interesting what I recall to you here may be, the meaning of what I said to you the last day, if it were not to take us any further than this, it would not amount to much.

I want you at least once to clearly grasp this, that the initial schema that we have been using since the beginning of the year is thus transformed into what we have here, in virtue of the fact that we develop the formula of the Other as subject, is transformed in the sense that we have $\phi \alpha$ for the subject here. $\beta \beta'$, and beyond is reproduced this arrangement which gives $\beta'' \beta'''$ that the other, he also has a relationship to a metonymical object, finds himself able to see reproducing itself at the following level the necessity for $\phi \alpha$, which here becomes $\phi' \alpha'$, and so on indefinitely. The final loop, by which there passes essentially the return of the need towards something that is this indefinitely deferred satisfaction, is something that must in a way make the whole circuit of the others, before coming back here to the subject at its terminal point.

We are going moreover to have to use this schema again later on. For the moment let us pause at something which is a particular case, and which Freud envisages immediately after he has given this analysis of the mechanisms of the joke, of which this is nothing more than a commentary. He talks about what he calls the social motives of jokes, and from there he goes on to the problem of the comic.

This is what we are going to try to approach today, not to exhaust it, because Freud states expressly that he only approaches it from the point of view of the joke, that otherwise there is here a field that is far too vast for him even to think of approaching it, at least from his own experience. It is very striking that to introduce the analysis of the comic, he gives pride of place as being that which in the comic is closest to the joke, with that sureness of orientation and of touch that is Freud's, what is closest to the joke and what he presents to us as such, is precisely what might appear at first glance to be furthest from wit, namely the naive.

The naive, he tells us, is realized through something that is based on ignorance, and naturally he gives examples of it borrowed from children, the scene that I believe I already evoked for you here, about the children who put on a pretty little play for the adults, and which consists in the fact that a couple separates, the husband going to seek his fortune and coming back after some years having succeeded in fact in becoming wealthy, and his wife greets him saying: "You see how well I have done, I have not been wasting my time either while you were away, " and she opens the curtain on a row of ten dolls. It is like a little puppet show, but naturally the children are astonished, or perhaps just surprised, perhaps on this occasion they know a bit more than you think, but in any case they are surprised by the laughter that explodes from the adults who have come to assist at this little play.

This gives the type of the drollery, of the good story, of the naive joke as Freud presents it to us. He presents it in a form that is still closer technically to what we call the

procedures of language, in the story of the little girl who proposes for her brother who has a pain in his stomach, a *Bubizin*. The little girl had heard that she was to have a medicine, and since *Madi* in German means little girl, and *Bubi* little boy, she thinks that if there is a *Medizin* for little girls there should also be a *Bubizin* for little boys.

Here again is something that, on condition that one has the key to it, namely that one understands German, can easily be transformed into a funny story, or can be presented on the level of wit.

In truth, even though this reference to children is not of course out of place, the feature, we would not even describe it as ignorance, of this something that Freud describes very specially by what makes it have a character that can easily be of assistance in the mechanism of the joke, which comes from the fact that there is something, as he says, that pleases us in it, and which is precisely that which plays the same role as that which I earlier called metonymical fascination or captivation. What is important is that we feel that there is no inhibition in the speaker, and it is this, this absence of inhibition in the other that allows us to pass on to the other, the person to whom we tell it, and who is already himself fascinated by this absence of inhibition, to pass on to him the essence of the joke, namely the beyond that it evokes and which here in the child, in the cases that we have just evoked, does not consist essentially in their funniness, but in the evocation of that childhood time when the relationship to language is something so close, that in this way it directly evokes in us the relationship of language to desire which is what in the joke, constitutes the satisfaction proper to it.

We are going to look at another example taken from adulthood, one that I think I already quoted once. One of my patients who is not distinguished by what are ordinarily called very advanced circumvolutions, and who was, as was often the case with him, telling one of his rather sad stories, explained that he had made an appointment with a lady whom he had met on his travels, and that the said lady, as often happened to him, had stood him up. He finished his story by saying: "I once again understood that she was a *femme de non recevoir*."

He was not making a joke, he was saying something very innocent, that nevertheless has a piquant character and satisfies in us something that goes well beyond the comical perception of the person in his disappointment, which on this occasion, if it evokes in us, and this is not at all certain, a sentiment of superiority, is certainly very inferior in this characteristic. Because in this characteristic I am alluding to one of the mechanisms often put forward, promoted, as supposedly belonging to the mechanism of the comic, namely that which consists in our feeling ourselves superior to the other. This is very much open to criticism, since there is nothing in it, even though it was a man of considerable intelligence, namely Rops, who tried to sketch out the mechanism of the comic from this point of view, it can be completely refuted that the essential pleasure of the comic lies here. If there is anybody who on this occasion remains completely superior, it is our friend who found on this occasion a way of explaining a disappointment that is far from shaking his unbounded self-confidence. If therefore some superiority is hinted at in connection with this story, it is indeed rather a kind of lure, namely that for a time everything committed you for a moment to the mirage consisting of the way in which you yourself position yourself, or position the person who is telling the story, with regard to the text of desire and its disappointment, but what goes well beyond, is that precisely behind this term of *femme de non recevoir*, the fundamentally disappointing character *per se* of every approach, well beyond the fact that one or other particular approach may be satisfied.

In other words, what amuses us so much here, is the satisfaction found by the subject who in his disappointment uttered this innocent *mot*, namely that he thinks it sufficiently explained by what he thinks is an accepted expression, a metonymy that is just right for such occasions, in other words who rediscovers it in the top-hat in the shape of a furry rabbit which he thinks is the living rabbit of the true explanation, and which is in fact itself, well and truly imaginary, this rabbit which constitutes his very disappointment, which is always ready to be reproduced, constant and unshaken, without otherwise being affected by it, every time he approaches the object of his mirage.

Here then, what you see, is that the witticisms of the ignorant or the naive, of the person who on this occasion to make a joke which this time is entirely one might say at the level of the other, I no longer have any need to provoke in the other anything that constitutes the solid cup, it is already totally given to me by the one who by elevating it to the dignity of a funny story, the one from whose lips I receive the precious word whose communication is going to constitute a joke, someone whom I elevate in a way to the dignity of master-fool by my story. This is in fact its mechanism, that the whole dialectic of the naive joke depends on this, that the whole dialectic of the naive joke is contained in the blue part of this schema, and that what has to be provoked in the other in the imaginary order, so that a joke in its ordinary form can get through and be received here, is in a way already constituted by his naiveté, his ignorance, his very infatuation, and today it is enough to simply approach it, to have it homologated there by the third the big Other to whom I communicate it as such to have it pass to the rank and title of a joke.

Here naturally, nevertheless by the promotion of the imaginary other as such in this analysis of metonymies, in the pure and Simple satisfaction that he finds in language, and which helps him to not even perceive the extent to which his desire is lured, this introduces us, and this is why Freud places it at the function of the joke and the comic, this introduces us to the dimension of the comic as such, and makes us pose the question of it.

Here we are not at the end of our labours, because really on this Subject of the comic there has been no lack of ideas and theories, all more or less unsatisfactory, and it is certainly not a vain question for us to ask ourselves, why these theories are unsatisfactory, and also why they have been advanced.

Of course it would be necessary for us to go through all the kinds of forms under which these theories have been presented, to go back over all of that. It would be impossible to spell them out; to add them up, describe their succession, their history as they say, would not I believe, lead us to or put us on the trail of anything fundamental. We can in any case say, that the question of the comic has always been avoided every time an attempt has been made even to approach it, I will not say to resolve it, on the purely psychological level. Wit and the comic, are obviously easy to unify on the psychological level under the category of the laughable or of what provokes laughter. Of course you cannot help being struck, that up to now even while concluding that the joke may be more or less well received, understood by the fact that you sanction it with a discreet laugh or at least with a smile, I have not approached this question of laughter.

The question of laughter is far from being resolved. Of course every single person is happy to make of it an essential characteristic of what happens in wit, and in the comic as well, but when it is a matter of trying to link it up to what might be called on this occasion the expressive character of laughter, when it is a question of even simply connoting to what

emotion might respond this phenomenon of which it is possible to say, even though it is not absolutely certain, that it is proper to man, one begins to get into things that generally speaking are extremely troublesome. I mean that even those whom one really feels are trying to approach it, who touch in a certain analogical, metaphorical fashion, a certain relationship between laughter and what is involved in the apprehension that corresponds to it, the best that can be said, is that those who have advanced the most tenable, the most prudent propositions, scarcely do more than to note something that appears to be analogous to the phenomenon itself of laughter, namely the oscillating traces that it may leave somewhere, in the tense that it is a spasmodic movement accompanied by a certain mental oscillation that is supposed to be that of a passage for example, as Kant says, of something that is a tension to its reduction, to a nothing; the oscillation between a tension that has been awoken and its sudden collapse before a nothing, an absence of something which it is thought after its arousal of the tension, should have been able to resist it.

Bare is an example in which the sudden passage from a concept to its contradiction, appears first in a psychologist of the last centuries, Leon Dumont, whom Dumas talks about in his article on psychology. It is a typical Dumas article, very astute, very subtle, and with which that contented man did not go to a lot of trouble, but which is worth while reading, because even without doing too much trouble, he makes some very good points.

In short, laughter itself of course extends far beyond the Question of both wit and the comic. It is not unusual to see recalled that in laughter there is something that is for example the simple communication of laughter, laughter at laughter; laughter at something that is linked to the fact that you are not supposed to laugh, the laughing fits of children for example in certain circumstances is also something that would be worthy of attention. There is also the anxious laugh, and even that before an imminent threat; the uneasy laugh of the victim who suddenly finds himself threatened with something that altogether exceeds the limits of what he expected; the laugh of despair. There is even a laugh that can come when you suddenly learn of a bereavement.

Are we going to deal with all these forms of laughter. This is not our subject, I just want to note here, because it is not my object to construct a theory of laughter for you, that in any ease nothing is less likely to satisfy you than Bergson's theory of the mechanical arising in the midst of this kind of myth of vital harmony, of this something of which, to take them up here in a particularly schematic fashion, the so-called eternal newness, the permanent creativity of the *élan vital*, to be taken up again here in a particularly condensed fashion in this discourse on laughter. Bergson shows adequately, demonstrate clearly enough the properly character, because to formulate that one of the characteristics of the mechanical as opposed to the vital is its repetitive character, as if life did not present us with any repetitive phenomena, as if we did not piss every day in the same way, as if we did not go to bed every day in the same way, as if you re-invented sex every time you made love. What we have here is something that is really unbelievable; this type of explanation by the mechanical is itself an explanation that right through the book is itself shown to be a mechanical explanation, I mean that it is the explanation itself that falls into a lamentable hysterotypicity that allows what is essential in the phenomenon to escape completely.

If it were really the mechanical that is at the origin of laughter, where would we be going? What would we make of the subtle remarks of Klaus about puppets which go completely against this supposedly laughable and inferior character of the mechanical? Because he very astutely stresses that it is an Ideal of grace that is really realized by these

little machines which though simply moved by some bits of wire, realize in themselves a kind of elegance of outline in their movements, linked to the constancy of the centre of gravity of their contour, provided they have been carefully constructed, I mean following the strict example governing the characteristics of human articulations, so that finally, he underlines, no dancer can attain the grace realized by a simple marionette that is manipulated with skill.

Let us leave the Bergsonian theory to one side for now, remarking simply the degree to which it leaves completely to one side what is given by the first, most elementary apprehension of the mechanism of laughter; I mean, before it gets involved in anything as elaborate as its connection with wit or its connection with the comic. I mean the fact that laughter touches everything that is imitation, duplication, the phenomenon of the double, the mask, and if we look more closely at it, not only the phenomenon of the mask but that of unmasking, and this according to moments that deserve our attention.

You approach a child with your face covered by a mask: he laughs in a tense, nervous way. You approach him more closely, and something begins that is a manifestation of anxiety. You take off the mask: the child laughs. But if under this mask you have another mask he does not laugh at all.

I only want to indicate here how much all this at least deserves a study, which could only be an experimental study, but which could only be one if we begin to have a certain idea of the sense in which it should be directed, and in which everything, in any case, in this phenomenon as in others that I could give here to support my affirmation - I do not intend to stress it too much here - in which everything shows us that there is in any case a very intense, a very close connection between the phenomena of laughter and the function of the imaginary in man, namely the captivating character of the image, captivating beyond the instinctual mechanisms that correspond to it, whether of fighting or of parade, sexual parade or combative parade, and to which there is added in man this accent which means that the image of the other is very profoundly connected to this tension that I spoke about a while ago, this tension that is always evoked by the object that one's attention is drawn to; an attention that consists in putting him at a certain distance from desire or from hostility, from that something which in man, is at the foundation and the very base of the formation of the ego, of that ambiguity which means that his unity is outside himself, that it is with reference to his fellow-man that he takes his stand and finds that unity of defence, which is that of his being *qua* narcissistic being.

It is in this field that the phenomenon of laughter should be situated, and to indicate what I mean, I would say that it is in this field that there are produced the drops in tension to which the authors who have interested themselves most especially in the phenomenon, attribute the momentary, instantaneous release of laughter. If someone makes us laugh simply because he falls down, it is in function of a more or less tense, a more or less pompous image to which we do not even pay very much attention beforehand, as these phenomena of stature and of prestige which are in a way the warp and woof of our living experience, but to such a degree that we do not even grasp their prominence. It is, in fact, in so far as the imaginary personage continues his more or less affected progress, in our imagination, when what is his real support is there landed and sprawled out on the ground, it is to that degree that laughter explodes. It is always through something that is a liberation from the image.

You should understand liberation in the two ambiguous senses of the term, that something is liberated from the constraint of the image, and also that the image continues on

by itself. There is something comical about the duck whose head has been cut off and who still continues to take a few steps in the yard. This too is something of this order, and it is also the real reason why the comic enters into some sort of connection with the laughable, it is at the level of the direction of the I-object, β β' or β'' β''' . It is certainly to the degree that the imaginary is somehow involved in this relationship with the symbolic, that we are going to see reappearing at a higher level which interests us infinitely more than the all the phenomena of pleasure, laughter in so far as it connotes, as it accompanies the comic.

To introduce the notion of the comic today, I would like to begin with an example. When Heinrich Heine in the story of the golden calf replies to Soulié in a *mot* which is destined to achieve a witty communication, when he talks about the golden calf in connection with the banker, it is almost already a joke, or at least a metaphor that encounters Heinrich Heine's response: "For a calf, he seems to me to be a little old." Note that if Heine had said that literally, it would simply mean that he had understood nothing, that he would be like the ignorant patient I mentioned above, like the one who talked about the *femme de non recevoir*. The reply that Heinrich Heine gives him could be comical, in a certain way, and this is what constitutes the underpinnings of this joke; it is also something like this, I mean that it puts Soulié back in his box, puts him in his place (*le mets dans ses petits souliers*) I might say. After all Soulié had not said anything very funny and Heinrich Heine by taking his pawn, by showing him that things could be arranged in a different way, by setting up a metonymical object other than the first calf, comes in and plays on the level of comical opposition.

Comical opposition in fact is linked to the following, that it is Impossible not to perceive first of all an absolutely essential difference. It is that the comic, though we grasp it here in a fleeting state, in a witticism, in a flash, in a *mot*, in a passage of arms, is all the same something that goes well beyond that, I mean that it puts in question, not purely and simply our encounter, a flash of something in which there is no need for a very long embrace for it to get across with a witticism. I am speaking to all of you, whatever may be your present position, without knowing where you are coming from, nor even who you are. For there to be a comical relationship between us, something is necessary that would involve each one of us much more with one another on the personal level, so that here you see outlined in the relationship between Soulié and Heinrich Heine, something that involves a mechanism of seduction. All the same there is something rebutted on Soulie's side, by Heinrich Heine's reply.

In short, for there to be the possibility of speaking about the comical relationship, we must place this relationship of the demand to its satisfaction, no longer in an instantaneous moment, but in something that gives it its stability and constancy, its pathway in its relationship to a particular other. Because what we have analysed in the underpinnings of the joke as being that essential structure of the demand in so far as it is taken up by the other and must be essentially unsatisfied, there is all the same a solution which is the fundamental solution, that which every human being seeks from the beginning of their life until the end of their existence, because everything depends on the other. In fact the solution is to have another person completely to oneself. This is what is called love.

In this dialectic of desire it is a question of having another completely to oneself, the field of the full word as I formerly evoked it for you, is designated, defined on this schema by the very conditions that we have just seen that there can and should be realized something that is equivalent to the satisfaction of desire, the indication that it can precisely be satisfied only in the beyond of the word. It is the bond that unites others with this I, its metonymical

object and the message. This is the arena, and the surface that the something that should be the full word should keep to, namely that the essential, characteristic message that constitutes it, this full word, which I imaged for you by the "you are my master" or "you are my wife" appears in fact in the form: "you, thou, the other, art my wife".

It is in this form, as I told you, that man gives the example of the full word in which he engages himself as subject, grounds himself as the husband of the one to whom he is speaking and announces it to her in this form, and says to her: "you are my wife."

I also showed you the strangely paradoxical character of this "you are my wife". It is that everything depends on something that should close the circuit; it is that the metonymy that this involves, the passage from the other to this unique object that is constituted by the sentence, requires all the same that the metonymy should be accepted, that afterwards something goes from ϕ to α , namely that the "you" involved does not reply for example, purely and simply: "No, there's no question of it."

Even if she does not reply "No, there's no question of it", something else occurs much more commonly, it is that precisely for the reason that no preparation as skilful as that of the joke has succeeded in confusing this line β " β " with the metonymy $\beta \phi \alpha$, namely that these two lines remain completely independent, that is that the subject in question himself well and truly conserves his system of metonymical objects. We will see produced the contradiction established in the circle $\beta' \beta'' \beta'''$, namely that since everyone as they say, holds onto his own notions, this founding word runs up against what I would call. Because what we have here is a square, not the problem of the squaring of the circle, but of the circling of these metonymies which are well and truly distinct, even in the most ideal union: "There are only good marriages, there are no delightful ones, " said La Rochefoucauld.

Now, the problem of the other and of love is at the centre of the comic. To realize this it would be well first of all to remember that if one wishes to inform oneself about the comic, it would perhaps not be a bad thing for example to read some comedies. Comedy has a history, comedy even has an origin that has been much studied, and the origin of comedy is linked in the closest possible fashion to what can be called the connection between the self and language.

What is this self that we are now talking about? It is not of course purely and simply the original radical need, this need that is at the root of the individualization of the organism, this self is only grasped beyond every elaboration of desire in the network of language, this self is something that is only realized in the final analysis at the limit. Here human desire is not caught up at first in this system of language that puts it off indefinitely; there is no place for this self to constitute and to name itself. It is nevertheless beyond all this elaboration of language, which represents the realization of this first need, its form, and which at least in man, has no chance of even knowing itself. We do not know what the self of an animal is, and there is little chance that we shall ever know it; but what we know, is that man's self is entirely engaged in this dialectic of language: it is what conveys and conserves the first existence of the tendency.

Where does comedy come from? We are told that it is from the banquet where man in fact says yes in a kind of orgy - let us leave this word with all its vagueness - from the same meal that is constituted by offerings to the gods, namely to the immortals of language. The fact that in the last analysis every process of the elaboration of desire in language, leads back

to and can be associated with the eating of a banquet, in the fact that after all this detour is made in the last analysis to get back to *jouissance* and to its most elementary form, here is the way that comedy makes its entry into what one can consider with Hegel, as being the aesthetic aspect of religion.

What does ancient comedy show us? It would be a good thing for you from time to time to dip into Aristophanes. It is always the moment when the self takes advantage of language, puts itself in its shoes for its own most elementary uses, as you can see in *The Clouds*, where Aristophanes mocks Euripides and Socrates - especially Socrates. In what form does he present him to us? He shows him to us in this form that all the lovely dialectic will serve an old man to try to satisfy his desires by all sorts of tricks, to escape from his creditors, to arrange that he is given money; or for a young man also to escape from his commitments, from all his duties, to complain about his ancestors, etc...

This return of need in its most elementary form, this emergence to the forefront of what originally entered into the dialectic of language, namely in a special way all sexual needs, and in general all the needs that are hidden. This is what you see being presented on the forefront of Aristophanes' stage, and this goes very far, and I would particularly recommend to your attention the plays concerning women and the way in which in this return to the character of elementary need as underlying the whole process, what special role is given here to women, in so far as it is by their mediation, that Aristophanes invites us for example to the moment of imaginary communion that is represented by comedy, to perceive something that can only be perceived retroactively, that if the state exists, and the city, it is so that one can take advantage of it, it is in order that a feast, in which no one really believes, can be set up in the agora, it is so that one can come to be astonished at the contradictions to common sense brought about by the perverse emotions of the city which is subject to all the pulling and dragging of a dialectical process, in order that one should be brought back through the mediation of women, the only ones who really know what men need, one is brought back by women to common sense, and naturally all this takes on the most exuberant forms.

It has piquancy not only because of what it reveals to us in terms of the violence of certain images. It also makes us imagine pretty well a world where women were not perhaps quite what we imagine from the authors who provide us with a well-polished view of antiquity. Women, it seemed to me, must have been - I am talking about real women, not about the Venus de Milo - must in antiquity have had a lot of hair and not have smelled very well, if one can believe the insistence that is put on the use of the razor and of certain perfumes.

In any case, in the twilight of Aristophanes, especially in that which deals with that vast insurrection of women, there are some images which are very beautiful and which do not fail to impress, even if we just take the one that is suddenly expressed in the sentence of one of the women before her comrades who are all in the process, not only of dressing themselves up as men, but of putting on beards which have an omnipotent aspect, only it would be a question of knowing which beard is meant, she suddenly starts laughing and says: "It's so funny, we look like a collection of cuttle-fish with beards!"

This penumbral vision is also something that appears to be of a kind to suggest the whole foundation of relationships in ancient society.

Towards what will this comedy evolve?

Towards the new comedy, and what is this new comedy? The new comedy is something that shows us people committed in general in the most fascinated and stubborn fashion, to some metonymical object. All the human types of every kind are encountered there. There are the lustful, the characters that one will later rediscover in Italian comedy, characters defined by a certain relationship to an object, and around whom pivot all the new comedy, that which goes from Menander to our own day, around something which is substituted for the eruption of sex which is love, then there is love named as such, the love that we will call naive love, ingenuous love, the love that unites two young people who are generally rather dim-witted, which forms the pivot of the plot; and when I say pivot, it is because love really plays this role, not of being comical in itself, but of being the axis around which turns all the comic of the situation, up to the époque that one can clearly characterize by the appearance of Romanticism, and which we will leave to one side for today.

Love is a comic sentiment. The high-point of comedy can be perfectly localized and defined, comedy in its proper sense, in the sense that I am putting it forward for you here, its high point is found in a unique masterpiece which is in some way the hinge of a passage from the presentation of relationships between the self and language, in the form of the taking possession of language by the self, to the introduction of dialectic as such, of relationships of man to language which take place in a blind, closed way. In Romanticism it is very important, in the sense that Romanticism without knowing it, turns out to be a confused introduction to this dialectic of the signifier as such, of which in fact psychoanalysis turns out to be the articulated form. But in the line of what we can call classical comedy, the high point occurs at the moment when the comedy that I am talking about, which is by Molière and which is called *L'Ecole des femmes*, poses the problem in an absolutely schematic manner, because it is about love, but the love is there as an instrument of satisfaction.

Molière proposes the problem to us in a fashion that absolutely gives it its framework with a limpidity comparable to one of Euclid's theorems. A gentleman called Arnolphe, who does not even need for the rigour of things, to be a man with a single idea, it is just found to be better like that, but in the way that in the witticism metonymy serves to fascinate us, is a gentleman, who in fact we see making his entry from the beginning with what we can call an obsession about not being cuckolded. It is his principal passion, it is a passion like any other, all passions are equivalent, all passions are equally metonymical. The principle of comedy is to pose them as such, namely to focus the attention on a self who believes completely in his metonymical object; which means moreover that he believes in it. This does not at all mean that he is bound to it, because it is also one of the characteristics of comedy, that the self of the comic subject whoever he is, always comes out of it absolutely intact. Everything that happens during the comedy Sons off him like water off a duck's back, whatever the paroxysms he gets into in the course of the comedy. *L'Ecole des femmes* concludes with a "Phew!" from Arnolphe, and yet God knows what he has gone through. Here I will try to briefly recall the story for you.

Arnolphe then has declared himself for a little girl:

The gentle, meek expression which she wore;
Endeared Agnes to me when she was four.

He has then chosen his little wife, and has already expressed his "you are my wife". This is the very reason why he becomes so agitated when he sees that his dear little angel is going to be stolen away from him. Because from his point of view, as he says, she is already his wife,

and he has already socially established her as such, the one to whom he says: "you are my wife."

And he has resolved the question in an elegant fashion. He is a man, his partner Chrysalde tells him, who has illuminations. This is said somewhere, and in fact he has so many illuminations that he has formulated the following: he has no need to be the monogamous personage that we spoke about at the outset. Away with monogamy, he is an educator. Old men have always been preoccupied with the education of girls, and have even set out principles for it. Here he has found a very happy principle, he says himself that he has taken the necessary steps to ensure that she is kept in a state of complete idiocy. You cannot imagine, he tells his friend, the extent of it: there she was asking me the other day if children were conceived through the ear.

This is something that should have made him prick up his own ears, because if the girl had in fact a more healthy notion of physiology she would perhaps have been less dangerous.

"You are my wife", a full word, and metonymy. Everything that he gets little Agnes to read, namely the duties of marriage, is well and truly explained in a proper manner. She is completely idiotic, he says, and he believes that he can found on that, like all educators, his confidence of being able to construct her.

What does the whole development of the story show us? It could be called: "How wit (*l'esprit*) comes to girls". This is how wit comes to girls: the particularity of Agnes' character seems to have set a real enigma for the psychologists and the critics: is she a woman, a nymphomaniac, a flirt, a this, a that? Certainly not, she is a creature who has been taught to speak, and who speaks out. She is taken by the words of a character, who incidentally is a complete dimwit, this is the character of the young man, Horace, who comes into question when in the major scene in which Arnolphe proposes to tear out his hair, she coolly replies:

"With two words, Horace could do more than you."

She stresses what has been stressed all through the play, namely that what has come to Agnes from her encounter with the character in question, is precisely this, that the person says things that are witty and ravishingly sweet to hear. What it is he says, she is quite incapable of telling us, or even of telling herself; but it is through the word, namely through something that breaks with the whole system of the word she has learned, the educative word, that she is captivated, and the kind of ignorance which is one of the dimensions that Molière had already linked to the fact that precisely for her there is nothing other than this system of the word, when Arnolphe explains to her that he has kissed her hands, her arms. She asks: "Is there anything else?" She is very interested. She is a goddess of reason this Agnes; and so it is the term reasoning, reasoner that comes to suffocate Arnolphe at a given moment when he tries to reproach her for her ingratitude, her lack of dutiful feelings, her betrayal of him. She very pertinently replies: "But what do I owe you? If it is only the fact that you have made me stupid, you will get your recompense." And the words reasoner and reasoning are what come to Arnolphe's lips.

In other words, we find ourselves at the outset with a reasoner confronting an innocent, and the source of the comic is that we see emerging, once wit has come to the girl, a new reasoner in the presence of a person who has himself, become an innocent, because now, in completely unambiguous words, he says that he loves her, and he tells her it in all sorts of ways, telling her up to the point that the culmination of his declaration consists in saying

more or less the following: You can do exactly whatever you want, namely you can also have Horace on occasion if you wish, namely that the character overturns the very principle of his system, namely that in the final analysis he would still prefer to be cuckolded, which was the principal starting point of the whole affair, rather than to lose the object of his love.

Love, this is the point at which I said the summit of classical comedy is situated. There is love here, and it is very curious to see the degree to which we no longer perceive it except through all sorts of partitions that stifle it, romantic partitions. Love is an essentially comic motive. It is precisely in this that Arnolphe is a true lover, much more authentic a lover than Horace who is always vacillating in this area. Love is comic precisely in that it is the love that is most authentically love that declares and manifests itself.

A whole change of perspective had to occur round the term love, for us not to have been able to think about it so easily. Because it is a fact: the more the play is acted, the more Arnolphe is played with the characteristics of Arnolphe, and the more people bow down and say: "Ah! that Molière so noble and so profound, you laugh, when you should really weep"; namely the whole romantic change of perspective which means that people almost no longer find the comic compatible with the authentic and absolutely overwhelming expression of love as such.

Here then is the outline of the story that after all I had to give you. What completes it is this, that thanks to the stupidity of the third character, namely the character of Horace who at times behaves like a proper baby, even to the point of placing the girl he has kidnapped into the hands of her legitimate possessor, without even having up to then identified the jealous man who tyrannizes Agnes, with the very person that he is entrusting himself to. It does not matter, this character is altogether secondary. Why is he there? So that the problem can be posed in these terms, namely, that Arnolphe at every instant is kept up to date, hour by hour, minute by minute, with what is really happening, by the very man who is his rival, and on the other hand in an equally entirely authentic manner by his pupil herself, Agnes, who hides nothing from him. Effectively, as he wishes, she is completely idiotic, but only in the sense that she has absolutely nothing to hide, that she tells all, that she says it simply and in the most relevant manner, but that from; the moment that she is in the world of the word, this is open to her that whatever the power of educational formation, her desire is beyond, her desire is not only with Horace whom we can be sure she will in the future make endure the fate that Arnolphe was so much in dread of, but simply because of the fact that she is in the domain of the word, she knows that her desire is beyond that word. She is charmed by words, she is charmed by wit, it is in so far as something goes beyond the metonymical present that they tried to impose on her, that she escapes, that while continuing to tell Arnolphe the truth, nevertheless everything that she does is equivalent in fact to deceiving him. Horace himself perceives it and when he tells the story of the gravel and the stone, namely the girl who throws a stone out the window at him saying: "Go away! I do not want to listen to your discourses any more, and here is my reply," and who appears to be saying: Look at this stone that I am throwing at you, but which also carries a little letter, this is something in fact, Horace stresses it very well, which for a girl who had been kept in the most extreme ignorance up to then, is not badly constructed as an ambiguity. It is the beginning of those double meanings, of all the games from which we can in the future expect a good outcome.

This then is the point at which I wished to leave you for today. The self of its nature goes beyond the hold that language has on desire. The relationship to the other is essential, in so far as the path of desire passes necessarily by way of the other, not in so far as the other is

the unique object, but in so far as the Other responds to language, and by itself submits it to all its dialectic.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 8 January 1958.

I have the impression that last trimester - I had some feedback - I left you a little bit out of breath. I did not notice, otherwise I would not have done it. I also have the impression that I have been repeating myself, that I have not been making much progress. However this did not prevent perhaps some things that I wanted to tell from getting lost along the way.

It is worthwhile perhaps to go back a little, to take a look at the way that I tackled things this year. What I am trying to show you in connection with the witticism, of which I separated out a certain schema whose usefulness may perhaps not be immediately apparent to you, is its unity, how things fit together, how they mesh in with the preceding schema.

When all is said and done it is a question of something which you should perceive as a constant in what I teach you. Again it would be appropriate that this constant should not simply be something like a little flag on the horizon, with regard to which you take your bearings. It is necessary that you should understand where this is leading you, into what detours it leads you. This constant is the remark which I believe to be absolutely fundamental for understanding what is in Freud, that of the importance of language, as we said first, and then of the word. And the more we approach our object the more we perceive where the difference is of the importance of the signifier in the economy of desire, or let us rather say in the formation, the informing of the signified.

You were able to see it last night, in listening to the interesting things Madame Pankow contributed to our scientific meeting. It happens that in America people are concerned with the same thing as I am explaining to you here. They are trying to introduce as essential into the determination of these psychic disturbances, these economic disturbances, the fact of communication and what they call in this instance the message. You were able to hear Madame Pankow telling you about someone who did not come down in the last shower, namely Mr. Bateson, an anthropologist and ethnographer, who has contributed something which makes us reflect a little bit beyond the tips of our noses about therapeutic action. He tries to formulate something which is at the source of the genesis of psychotic problems, in something which is set up between the mother and the child, and which is not simply an effect of tension, or retention, of defence, of ratification, of frustration in the elementary sense that I am specifying, of interhuman relationships, as if it were something which happened at the end of a piece of elastic, who tries from the beginning to put the notion of communication in so far as it is centred not simply on a contact, on a relationship, with an entourage, but on a signification, to put it at the origin of the originally discordant, disruptive thing which has happened in what links the child in his relationships with the mother, and when he designates, when he denotes as being the discordant element of this relationship, the fact that communication presents itself in the form of the double relationship as Madame Pankow told you very clearly last night, by telling you that in the same message which is the one in which the child has deciphered the behaviour of his mother, in the same message there are two elements which are not defined with respect to one another, in this sense simply that one presents itself as forbidding (*défense*) the subject what the other means, which is the usual notion that we have in what happens at the level of the mechanism of the defence that you analyse.

You can say what the subject says, in order to overlook that there is some share of signification in him. He misleads himself just as he misleads you.

This is not what is in question. It is a question of something which concerns the other and which is received by the other in such a way that if he responds on one point, he knows by that very fact that he is going to find himself caught in the other. As Madame Pankow told us last night, if I respond to the declaration of love which my mother makes to me, I will provoke her withdrawal, and if I do not hear her as such, namely if I do not respond to her, I will lose her.

You see therefore that we are thus introduced into this dialectic of double meaning, in the fact that already it involves a third element. It is not one behind the other, namely something which is beyond meaning, a meaning which would have this privilege of being the more authentic of the two simultaneous messages in the same emission, as one might say, of signification which creates in the subject a position such that he is in an impasse. This proves to you that even in America, enormous progress is being made.

Does that mean that it is fully sufficient? Madame Pankow last night underlined very well the basic, empirical nature of this attempt. Naturally it is not at all a question of empiricism. If in America there were not also studies which are very important, which are conducted on the plane of what is called games strategy, they would not even have dreamt of introducing this something into analysis, which is all the same here a reconstruction of something which is supposed to have happened at the beginning, and determines this profoundly painful position of the subject who is in a false position *vis-à-vis* precisely what is constitutive in the message for the subject. If this position does not imply that the message is something constitutive for the subject, one can scarcely see how it would be possible to attribute such enormous effects to this primitive double relationship.

Thus the question which arises is that of knowing what will be the situation, what will be the process of communication in so far as it does not succeed in being constitutive for the subject. It is another reference point that must be sought. Up to the present when you read and when you hear what Mr. Bateson means, you see that everything in fact is centred on the double message, no doubt, but on the double message *qua* double signification.

It is precisely here that the system fails, and precisely in what? In the following: it is that there is another way of conceiving things, of presenting them, than this one which precisely neglects the constitutive role of the signifier in signification.

Last night I took a note in passing, which I do not have now, which I gathered from the very remarks of Madame Pankow, and which amounts to more or less this: There is no word, she said, which can ground the word *qua* act. And this is right along the path of what I am approaching now.

Among these words, there must be one which grounds the word *qua* act in the subject. It is in this sense that she showed her exactingness, her feeling that the system was insufficient. It is in this that Madame Pankow showed an exigency for the stabilisation of the whole system, from the fact that within the word there is somewhere something which grounds the word *qua* true. She addressed herself therefore in this sense to having recourse to the perspective of personality. This is what she contributed last night, and it is indeed something which has at least the merit of witnessing to a certain exigency corresponding to

something which, in the system, leaves us uncertain, does not permit us a sufficient construction, or deduction.

I absolutely do not think that this is the way in which it can be formulated. I do not believe that this personalist reference is psychologically founded except in this sense that we cannot but sense that in this impasse which the significations create, in so far as it is supposed to trigger off a profound disturbance in the subject when he is schizophrenic, we cannot help sensing that there is something which must be at the origin of this deficit. It is not simply the established, grasped, imprinted, experience of these impasses of meanings, but also something which is the lack of something which grounds signification itself, and which is the signifier, and something still more which is precisely what I am going to approach today, namely something which is grounded, not simply as personality, as something which grounds the word *qua* act, as Madame Pankow was saying last night, but something which is posed as what gives authority to the law.

We call law here, precisely what is articulated strictly at the level of the signifier, namely the text of the law.

It is not the same to say that there is a person who must be there to sustain as one might say the authenticity of the word, and to say that there is something which authorises the text of the law, because this something which authorises the text of the law is something which is sufficient in itself at the level of the signifier, namely the name of the father, what I call the name of the father, namely the symbolic father. This is something which subsists at the level of the signifier. It is something which in the other in so far as it is the seat of the law, represents this other in the other, the signifier which gives support to the law, which promulgates the law.

It is precisely what is explained by the myth that is necessary for Freud's thought, the myth of Oedipus. The reason why - pay very careful attention to this - it is necessary that he obtain for himself in this mythical form, the origin of the law, is so that there should be something which ensures that the law is grounded in the father. There must be the murder of the father. The two things are closely linked, namely that the father in so far as he promulgates the law is the dead father, namely the symbol of the father; the dead father is the name of the father, which is here constructed on the content.

This is altogether essential. I am going to take the opportunity of reminding you why.

Around what did I centre everything that I taught you about psychosis two years ago? Around something which I called *Verwerfung*. I tried to make you see it as something which is different to *Verdrängung*, namely the fact that the signifying chain continues, whether you know it or not, to be unfolded, to be arranged in the other, this being essentially the Freudian discovery.

But I told you that the *Verwerfung* was something which was not simply beyond your reach, namely in the Other *qua* repressed and *qua* signifier. That is what *Verdrängung* is. But it is the signifying chain, the proof of this is that it continues to act without you giving it the least signification. It determines the least signification without your knowing it as signifying chain.

I also told you that there is something else which in this instance is *Verwerfung*. There can be in the chain of signifiers a signifier or a letter which is missing, which is always

missing in the typography, because it is a question of a typographical space. The space of the signifier, the space of the unconscious is a typographical space. We must try to define typographical space as something which constitutes itself in a line, in little squares. There are topological laws of the typographical space.

There is something missing in this chain of signifiers. You should understand the importance of the lack of the particular signifier that I have just spoken to you about, which is the name of the father in so far precisely as it grounds as such the fact that there is law, namely the articulation of the signifier in a certain order; the Oedipus complex, or the oedipal law, or the law of the prohibition of the mother, for example the signifier which signifies that within this signifier, the signifier exists.

That is what the name of the father is, and as you see, it is an essential signifier within the other, it is around this that I tried to centre for you what happens in psychosis, namely how the subject must make up for the lack of this signifier, for the essential signifier which is the name of the father, and it is around this that I tried to order for you everything that I called the chain reaction, or the dispersal which occurs in psychosis.

What should I do here? Should I get involved right away in this reminder of what I told you about President Schreber? Or should I show you in a still more precise fashion what I am articulating, what I have just simply announced here, by showing you in detail what relationship I should articulate for you at the level of this year's schema, which to my great surprise, does not interest everybody; but which all the same interests some of you, and at the level of this year's schema, to try to articulate for you what I have just tried to indicate to you?

Do not forget that this schema was constructed to portray for you what happens at the level of something which deserves the name of technique, the technique of the witticism, which is something particular, quite singular because obviously it can be carried out in the most unintentional way in the world by the subject, that as I showed you, the witticism is sometimes only the other side of a parapraxis and that experience shows that many witticisms arise in that way, you realize afterwards that you were witty. It happened all by itself. At first it could be taken in certain cases as being exactly the contrary, a sign of naiveté. I made an allusion the last day to the naive witticism.

It was around the witticism and its result which is the satisfaction which is peculiar to it, that I tried last trimester, to organise this schema for you, to try to locate how we could conceive the origin of this special satisfaction that it gives. This made us go back to nothing other than the dialectic of the demand beginning from the ego.

Remember the schema of what I can call the primordial symbolic ideal, which is quite inexistent at the moment of the satisfied demand in so far as it is represented by the simultaneity of the intention, in so far as it is going to be manifested in a message, and the arrival of this message as such at the other, I mean the fact that the signifier, because this chain is the signifying chain, reaches the other. He sees as such whether there is a perfect identity, simultaneity, exact superposition between the manifestation of the intention, in so far as it is that of the ego, and the fact that the signifier is as such ratified in the other, this something which is at the source of the very possibility of the satisfaction of the word. We suppose therefore - this is what I call the ideal primordial moment - that if this moment exists, it must be constituted by this simultaneity, this exact co-extension of the desire in so far as it is manifested and the signifier in so far as it carries and implies it. If this moment exists, what

follows, namely something which here is going to succeed to the message, is something which is going to succeed to its passage over into the other, which is going to correspond to what is necessary, and to what is realised in the other and in the subject in order that there should be satisfaction.

This is very precisely the necessary point of departure for you to understand that this never happens. Namely that it is of the nature and the effect of the signifier that what arrives here, is presented as signified, namely as something which is made up of the transformation, of the refraction of his desire by its passage through the signifier, and why? Because this is the reason why the two lines are intersecting; it is to make you see the fact that desire is expressed by and passes through the signifier, namely that it crosses the signifying line, and that at the level of this intersection of desire and the signifying line, it encounters what? It encounters the other.

We will see later, because it will be necessary to come back to it, what this other is in this schema. It encounters the other, I did not say to you as a person - it encounters the other as the treasury of the signifier, as the seat of the code. In other words, this is where the refraction of desire by the signifier happens. Desire arrives therefore as signified different from what it was at the beginning, and this is why not that your daughter is mute, but why your desire is always cuckolded.

It is because in the interval, what is in question shows you that it is rather you who are cuckolded; you are yourself betrayed in that your desire has slept with the signifier. This is essential. I do not know how I can articulate things better, to make you understand them. This is because of the fact that desire *qua* emanation, springs from a moment of this radical ego, from the very fact that it is this path here.

This is where the signification of the schema lies. It is there to visualise for you this concept that the passage across the chain of the signifier introduces of itself this essential change into the dialectic of desire.

So it is quite clear that for the satisfaction of desire, everything depends on what happens at that point first defined as the locus of the code, as this essential something which already by itself from the beginning, *ab origine*, by the very fact of its structure as signifier, brings about this essential modification of desire at the level of its crossing of the signifier. Here everything else is implied, because there is not just the code, there is indeed something else. I am situating myself here at the most radical level, but of course there is the law, there are prohibitions, there is the super-ego, etc. But to understand how these different levels are built up, you must understand that already at the most radical level, in so far as once you speak to someone there is an other other in him, *qua* subject of the code, already we find ourselves subjected to this dialectic of the cuckolding of desire.

Therefore everything depends, it appears, on what happens at this crossing point, at this level of breaking through.

It emerges that every possible satisfaction of human desire is thus going to depend on the harmony of the signifying system in so far as it is articulated in the word of the subject, and Monsieur de la Palice would tell you, of the system of the signifier *qua* reposing in the code, or at the level of the other *qua* locus and seat of the code. A little child hearing that would be convinced of it, and I do not claim that what I have explained to you makes us take one step further. Still it must be articulated.

It is here that we are going to approach the connection that I want you to make between this schema and the essential things that I announced to you above concerning the important question of the name of the father. You are going to see it being prepared, being delineated, and not being generated, or especially not being generated by itself, but rather the jump that it must take to arrive, because not everything happens at the level of continuity, the characteristic of the signifier being precisely to be discontinuous.

What does the technique of the witticism contribute to our experience? This is what I am trying to make you see, in all sorts of ways, it is something which while not involving any particular immediate satisfaction, consists in the fact that something happens in the other which is equivalent, which represents, which symbolises what can be called the necessary condition for every satisfaction, namely that you are precisely heard beyond what you say, because in no case can what you say really make you understood.

The witticism as such, develops in the dimension of metaphor, namely that it is beyond the signifier, in so far as through it you seek to signify something, that despite everything you always signify something else. It is precisely in something which is going to present itself as a stumbling of the signifier, that you are satisfied, simply in this that in that sign the other recognises this dimension beyond where there should be signified what is in question, and what you cannot as such signify.

This is the dimension that the witticism reveals to us, and it is important, it grounds in experience this schema because we necessarily had to construct it, to account for what happens in the witticism, namely that this something which substitutes to the point of giving us a sort of happiness at the failure of the communication of desire by way of the signifier, is something which, in the witticism, is realised in the following fashion: the fact is that the other ratifies a message as interrupted, as having failed, and by this very interruption as recognising the dimension beyond in which the true desire is situated, namely what does not manage to be signified because of the signifier.

You see that the dimension of the other here extends however little, because it is no longer simply here the seat of the code - here it intervenes as subject, ratifying a message in the code, complicating it, namely that here already it is at the level of the one who constitutes the law as such, because it is capable of adding to it this trait, this message as supplementary, namely as itself designating the beyond of the message.

That is why I began this year, when what was in question were the formations of the unconscious, by talking to you about the witticism.

Let us try to look more closely in a less unusual situation than that of the witticism, at this other in so far as we seek to discover in its dimension the necessity of this signifier, in so far as it grounds the signifier, namely in so far as it is the signifier which establishes the legitimacy of the law or of the code.

To take up again our dialectic of desire, we are not always going to be expressing ourselves in witticisms, when we address ourselves to the other. If we could do so, we would be happier in a certain way. This is, for a short part of the discourse that I address to you, what I try to do. I do not always succeed. It may be your fault or it may be mine, but it is absolutely indistinguishable from that point of view.

But in fact on the down to earth plane of what happens when I address the other, there is a dimension which allows us to ground it in the most elementary fashion at the level of the conjunction of and this signifier of the other. It is a word which is absolutely marvellous in French, because of all the equivocations that it allows, and for all the puns that I myself blush at having made use of, even though in the most discrete fashion. Once I have said the word, you will remember immediately, the sort of evocation that I am referring to. It is the word *tu*.

This *tu* is absolutely essential in what I called on many occasions the full word, the word in so far as it grounds something in history, the *tu* of "thou are my master", or "thou art my wife". This *tu*, is the signifier of the appeal to the other, this other whom I showed you - and I remind those who followed the whole chain of my seminars on psychosis the use that I made of it - the demonstration that I tried to bring to life before you in terms of the distance between *tu es celui qui me suivras*, and the *tu es celui qui me suivra*. In other words, what I was already at that time approaching for you, what I was trying to get you to practice, is precisely what I am alluding to now, and what I had already given a name to.

There is in these two terms, with their difference, and more in one than in the other, and even completely in one and not at all in the other, an appeal. In the *tu es celui qui me suivras*, there is something which is not in the *tu es celui qui me suivra*. And this is called invocation. If I say *tu est celui qui me suivras*, I invoke you, I designate you, I designate you as being the one who follows me, I stimulate in you the "yes" which says "I am for you", "I dedicate myself to you", "I am the one who shall follow you". But if I say: *tu est celui qui me suivra*, I do nothing of the kind. I announce, I affirm, I objectify, and even on occasion I reject. That can mean: "You are the one who is still following me, and I am fed up with it". It is even in the most ordinary fashion, the most important in which this is pronounced, a refusal. Invocation is something which of course requires a whole other dimension, namely precisely that I should make my desire depend on your being, in this sense that I call on it to enter onto the path of this desire whatever it may be, in an unconditional way.

It is this process of invocation, in this sense that it means that I appeal to the voice, namely to what supports the word, not to the word, but to the subject, precisely in so far as he carries it, and that is why at this level I am at the level of what I called above, in speaking about Madame Pankow, the personalist level. This indeed is why the personalists repeatedly put the *tu, tu, tu* before you all day long. Mr. Martin Buber for example, whose name Madame Pankow pronounced in passing, is in effect an eminent name in this register.

Of course there is here an essential phenomenological level, and we cannot avoid it. But neither must we yield to its mirage alone, namely prostrate ourselves, because it is here that effectively we encounter a little of this danger at the level of this personalist attitude which leads easily enough into mystical prostration. And why not? We do not refuse any attitude whatsoever to people, we simply demand the right to understand them, which moreover the personalists do not refuse us, but which is refused by the scientists, because if you begin to attach an authenticity to the subjective structure of what a mystic tells you, the scientist considers that you are also falling into a ridiculous complacency.

While it seems to me that every subjective structure, whatever it is, in the measure that we can follow what it articulates, is strictly equivalent from the point of view of subjective analysis to any other, namely that only cretinous imbeciles of the style of Mr. Blondel (the psychiatrist), can bring forward as an objection, in the name of a so called ineffable, experienced "morbid consciousness" of the other, something which appears to be

not ineffable, but articulated. This ought to be refused as such, because of the confusion which comes from the fact that it is believed that what is being articulated is precisely what is beyond, although it is nothing of the kind. It is what is beyond that articulates it.

In other words, it is wrong to talk about ineffable as regards this subject, whether he is deluded or mystical. We are at the level of the subjective structure of something which as such cannot present itself in a different way from the way that it does present itself, and which as such in consequence, presents itself with its entire value at its level of credibility.

If there is something ineffable in either the deluded or the mystical person, by definition he does not speak about it because it is ineffable. Therefore we do not have to judge what he articulates, namely his word on what he cannot talk about it. If it is supposable, and we are quite willing to suppose it, that the ineffable does exist, we would never refuse in the name of the ineffable to grasp what appears as structure in a word, whatever it is. We can get lost in it, and then we give up on it; but if we do not get lost in it, the order that it demonstrates and that it unveils is to be taken as such, and we perceive in general that it is infinitely more fruitful to take it as such and to try to articulate the order that it poses, on condition that you have the proper reference points. This is what we are trying to do here: we start from the idea that it was essentially made to represent the signified. We are immediately swamped, because we again fall into the preceding oppositions, namely that we do not know the signified.

This *tu* that is in question is what we invoke, but in invoking it is all the same this personal subjective impenetrability which of course will be involved, but it is not at this level that we try to reach it. We try to give it what is involved in every invocation. The word invocation has a historical usage, it is what made its appearance in a certain ceremony among the ancients, who had more wisdom on certain matters, that they performed before battle. This ceremony consisted in doing what was necessary, they probably knew it, to get the gods of the others on their side. This is exactly what invocation means, and it is in this that there resides the essential relationship to which I now lead you, of this necessary second stage, of the appeal in order that desire and demand should be satisfied. It is not enough simply to say to him: *tu, tu, tu*, and to have it accompanied by a thrill, it is a question precisely of giving him the same voice that we desire him to have, to evoke this voice which is present precisely in the witticism, at least as its proper dimension. The witticism is a provocation which does not succeed by a great display of force, by the great miracle of invocation. It is at the level of the word, and in so far as it is a matter of this voice being articulated in conformity with our desire, that the invocation is situated.

We then rediscover at this level, the following which is that every satisfaction of demand, in so far as it depends on the other, is thus going to depend on what is happening here, namely in this revolving coming and going from the message to the code, and from the code to the message, which permits my message to be authenticated in the code by the other. We come back to the preceding point, namely to what constitutes the essence of the interest that together we are giving this year to the witticism.

I would just simply point out to you in passing that had you had this schema, namely if I had been able not to present it to you, but to construct it for you at that time, in other words, if we had come together at the same time to this same witticism, I would have been able on this schema to picture for you what essentially is happening to President Schreber, in so far as he had become the prey of, the subject absolutely dependent on his voices.

If you observe attentively the schema which is behind me, and if you simply suppose that there is *Verwerfung*, everything that can respond in the other in any way at all at this level, which I call the level of the name of the father, which incarnates, specifies, particularises, I know, but particularises what? What I have just delineated for you, which in the other should present the other, *qua* giving its import to the law.

If you suppose that it is absent, which is the definition that I gave you of the *Verwerfung* of the name of the father, you would perceive that the two meeting points that I circled here, namely the going and coming of the message to the code and of the code to the message, are by that very fact destroyed and impossible, and that this allows you to carry forward to this schema the two fundamental types of voice phenomena which appear as a substitution for this fault, for this lack in so far precisely as it was once evoked.

Here is the balancing point, the turning point which precipitates the subject into psychosis, and I am leaving to one side for the moment how and at what time, and why it is subsequently, in the emptiness, in the vacuum brought about by the fact that precisely what is called for at a given moment at the level of the *Tu es - nom du Père*, and that this name of the father, in so far as it is capable of ratifying the message, is the guarantor, that there appears what you can then see on this schema, namely what is produced as autonomous, and because of this fact, that the law as such appears as autonomous.

I began my discourse on psychosis that year in connection with a sentence in one of my case presentations which I told you about, in which one could grasp very well the moment at which the sentence murmured by the patient: "I have just come from the pork butcher", afterwards tipped over into these appositions which were no longer assumable by the subject, with the word "sow", which could no longer be integrated by the subject beyond, and by its own movement, through its own inertia as signifier, tipped over to the other side drawn by the reply, into the other. It was purely and simply elementary phenomenology.

It is a question of seeing why, and moreover after all one fails to see what it is a question of by excluding what happens between the message and the other, is going to have as a result the two major categories of voices and hallucinations which Schreber has, namely the emission here at the level of the other, of signifiers of the fundamental tongue, namely of what presents itself as such, therefore as the broken and original elements of the code, which can be articulated only with respect to one another, because this fundamental language is organised in such a way, that literally it covers the world with its network of signifiers, without anything else being sure and certain there, except that it is a question of the total essential signification. Every one of these words has its own weight, its own accent, its importance as a signifier. The subject articulates them with respect to one another. Whenever they are isolated, the properly enigmatic dimension of signification, in so far as it is infinitely less evident than the certainty that it involves, is something quite striking.

In other words, the other only emits, as I might say, beyond the code without any possibility of integrating into it this something which can come from here, namely from the place where the subject articulates his message. And from another angle, especially provided that you replace the little arrows here, there is going to come this something which would not be in any case the authentication of the message, namely the return from the other *qua* support of the code regarding the message, in order to integrate, to authenticate it in the code with any intention whatsoever, but which of course will also come from the other like every message, because there is no way that a message can start, except from the other, even though

it begins from us as a reflection of the other, because it is constructed with a tongue which is the tongue of the other. This message therefore will begin from the Other here, and will leave this reference point in order to be articulated in this sort of remark: "And now I want to give you"; " Specifically I want myself"; "And now this should nevertheless....".

What is lacking in all of this? The principal thought which is expressed at the level of the fundamental tongue, the voices themselves who understand all the theory, the voices themselves who also say: "We need to reflect more." That means that from the other there begin in effect messages of the other category of messages. It is properly speaking a message which as such, is not possible to ratify, a message which manifests itself also in the pure and broken dimension of the signifier, something which only implies its signification beyond itself, something which because of the fact of not being able to participate in this authentication by the "thou", presents itself as something which has no other object than to present as absent this position of the "thou" in which signification is authenticated, because of course the subject tries to complete this signification. He therefore gives the complements of his sentences: "I do not now want", say the voices, that is situated elsewhere. It is said elsewhere that he, Schreber, cannot admit that he is a whore, *eine Hure*.

Not everything is pronounced, the message remains broken here in so far as precisely it cannot pass through the voice at all, it can only come to the level of the message as an interrupted message.

I think that I have sufficiently indicated to you that the essential dimension which develops and which imposes itself on the other, in so far as he is the resting place, the treasury of the signifier, involves in order that he can fully exercise his function as other the following, that in the passage of the signifier, there should be this signifier of the other, *qua* other.

Why? I mean in so far as the other also has precisely beyond him this other, in so far as it is capable of giving a basis to the law. But it is a dimension which is of the order of signifier of course, which is incarnated in people who will or will not support this authority. But the fact for example that on occasion the people are missing, that there is a paternal lack in the sense for example that the father is too inept, is something which in itself is not the essential thing. What is essential, is that the subject, from somewhere or other, should have acquired the dimension of the name of the father.

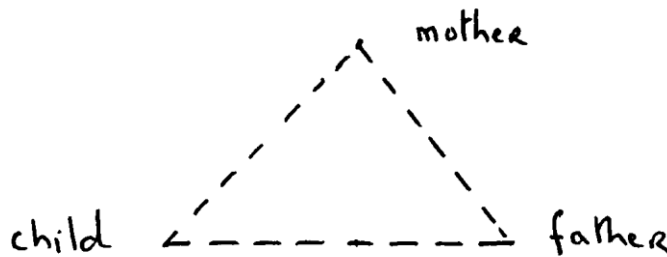
Of course, what happens effectively, what you can pick up in biographical details, is that the father precisely is often there to do the dishes in the kitchen, wearing his wife's apron. This is not at all the kind of thing that is enough to determine a schizophrenia.

I am going to put forward to you the little schema by means of which I want to introduce for the next time the following: it is what is going to enable us to make the connection between this distinction which may appear to you a bit academic between the name of the father, and the real father, between the name of the father in so far as it may on occasion be lacking, and the father who does not appear so much to need to be there in order not to be missing. I am going therefore to introduce what will be the object of my lecture the next day, namely what I entitle from today, the paternal metaphor.

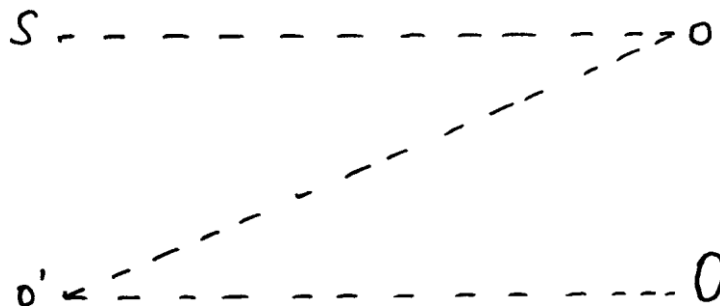
The fact is that of course a name is never just a signifier like the others. It is very important to have it, but that does not mean for all that that one accedes to it any more than to the satisfaction of desire which in principle is cuckolded, about which I spoke to you above.

That is why in the act, this famous act of speech that Madame Pankow spoke to us about yesterday, it is in the dimension that we call metaphorical, that there is going to be realised concretely, psychologically the evocation that I spoke to you about above.

In other words, it is necessary to have the name of the father, but it is also necessary to know how to use it, and it is from this, it is on that that the fate and the outcome of the whole affair may depend to a large extent. The real words which take place around the subject, specifically in his childhood, but the essence of the paternal metaphor that I am announcing to you today, we will speak about it at greater length the next time, consists in a triangle:



And we have the schema:



and everything which is realised in the S, depends on the signifiers that are posed in O. The O, if it really is the locus of the signifier, must carry some reflection of this essential signifier which I represent for you here in this zig-zag, and which I called elsewhere (in my article on "The Agency of the Letter") the schema L.

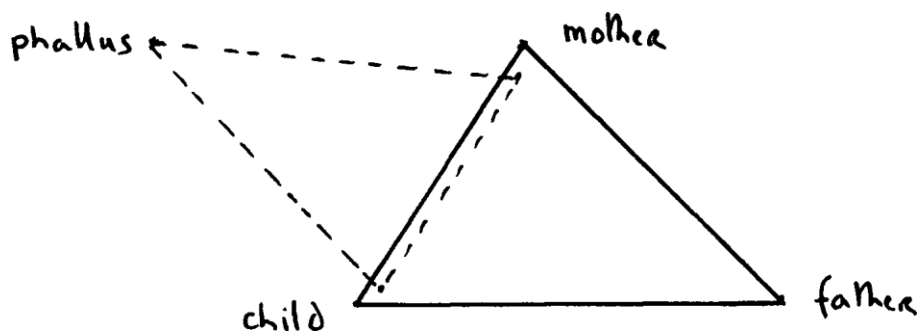
It is necessary that something at least should be distinguished here, something which distinguishes at least these four cardinal points. We have three of them which are given by the three subjective terms of the Oedipus complex *qua* signifier, at each vertex of the triangle. And this is what I will come back to the next time. I am asking you for the moment, this is just a question of whetting your appetite, to accept what I am saying to you.

The fourth term, is in effect the S. But because it is him, and because he - not only do I grant it do you, but this is our starting point - is in effect unspeakably stupid, he does not have his own signifier. In the three vertices of the oedipal triangle he is outside, he depends on what is going to happen in this interplay, and he is the *mort* in the game. It is even because the game is structured like that, I mean that it is carried on not just as a particular game, but as a game establishing itself as the rule, that the subject is going to find himself depending on the three poles which are called the ego ideal, the super-ego, and reality.

But to understand this transformation of the first reading into the other, it is necessary to see that no matter how *mort* the subject is, because there is a subject, he is going to pay the price of this game, namely that at this unconstituted point that he is, it is going to be necessary for him to participate in it, if not with his money, perhaps he does not have any yet, at least with his hide, with his images, with all the consequences, with his imaginary structure. And the fourth term, the S, is going to be represented in something which is opposed, in the ternate to the signifiers of the Oedipus complex, namely in something which, in order for it to stick, must itself be ternary, because of course in the inventory and the baggage of images - to realise this open the books of Mr. Jung and his school - you will see that there are an endless number of them, because they sprout and they grow everywhere, there is the serpent, the dragon, tongues, the flaming eye, the green plant, the flower pot, the *concièrge*; all of these are really quite fundamental images, and undoubtedly full of signification.

Only there is nothing to be done about it, if you wander around at this level, except to get lost with your little candle in the vegetating forest of primitive archetypes, and to understand something about it, it is necessary to know that for this to involve us, namely the intersubjective dialectic, it is in so far as there are three chosen images - I am articulating my thought a little strongly - which take the role of guide in all of that, which is very precisely not difficult to understand, because we have already something absolutely all prepared, and all prepared in a way to be not only the homologue, but to be confused with the base of the mother-father-child triangle, it is the relationship between the fragmented body enveloped at the same time by many of the images that we were talking about above, with the unifying function of the total image of the body, in other words the relationship of the ego and the specular image.

This already gives us the base of the imaginary triangle. The other point, it is here precisely that we are going to see the effect of the paternal metaphor, the other point, I told you about it last year in my seminar on object relations, but you are going to see it taking its place now in what we are entering into this year, namely in the formations of the unconscious, this point, I think that you have recognised it from the very fact of seeing it here in the third position with the mother and the child, but you see it in another relationship which moreover I did not mask from you at all last year because it was on that that we ended, namely the relationship with the name of the father, namely that which gave rise to the birth of the phantasy of the little horse in little Hans, this third point I finally name it, I am sure that you all have it on the tips of your tongue, is nothing other than the phallus, and this is why the phallus occupies such a central place as object in the Freudian economy,



which of itself is enough to show us that contemporary psychoanalysis is getting further and further away from it, and that precisely this phallus *qua* fundamental function to which the

subject imaginarily identifies himself, is completely avoided, by being reduced to the notion of partial object, which is absolutely not, in the Freudian economy, its original function.

This phallus will bring us back at the same time to something which was not completely understood at least that is what I believe I have heard, at the end of my discourse the last time, namely to comedy.

I will leave you on this theme today. In ending I simply wanted to show you in what direction and along what path this complex discourse by which I am trying to assemble all the things that we have said, is harmonised and holds together.

THE PATERNAL METAPHOR-I*Seminar 9: Wednesday 15 January 1958*

I announced that I would speak to you today about something to which I have, by way of exception, given a title called: "The Paternal Metaphor".

Not long ago, someone who was a little bit uneasy, I imagine, about the direction things might take asked me: "What are you going to talk to us about for the rest of the year?" And I replied: "I'm planning to approach some questions of structure." That way, I was not compromising myself.

Nevertheless, this is really what I intend to talk to you about this year in connection with the formations of the unconscious, questions of structure, namely, to give things a simple name, questions that try to put things in their place, the things you talk about every day and in which you also get mixed up every day in a fashion that in the end does not even embarrass you.

The paternal metaphor, then, is something that will concern the examination of the function of the father, if you like, as it might be put in terms of inter-human relationships, and precisely the complications that you encounter, I mean every day, in the way you may have to use it, use it as a concept of something that has even taken on a familiar aspect ever since I began to speak to you about it. It is really a question of knowing whether you are talking about it in terms of a discourse that is sufficiently coherent.

This function of the father has its place in the history of analysis, even a quite big place. It is at the heart of the question, needless to say, of the Oedipus complex. As a result, in the history of analysis, it is around the place given to the Oedipus complex that you see it appearing. Freud introduced it at the very beginning. The Oedipus complex appears with the *Interpretation of Dreams*. What reveals the unconscious there, at the beginning, is first and foremost the Oedipus complex; the importance of the revelation of the unconscious, is infantile amnesia relating to what? Relating to the fact of infantile desires for the mother and to the fact that these desires are repressed, namely not only that they have been suppressed, but that the fact that they are primordial has been forgotten, and it is forgotten not only that they are primordial but that they are still there. It must not be forgotten that it was from here that analysis began and that it was around it that a certain number of questions were introduced by clinical work.

I tried to organize for you a certain number of directions of questions that had been posed in the history of analysis in connection with the Oedipus complex. The first ones mark an epoch, it is when the question arose of whether precisely this Oedipus complex which had first been put forward as fundamental in neurosis about which Freud's work plainly showed the thinking of its author by making of the Oedipus complex something universal, namely something that exists not only in neurotics but also in normals, and for the good reason that

this Oedipus complex, if it fails in neurosis, it fails in function of the fact that it is essential as a normalising function, that it is an accident in the Oedipus complex that provokes neurosis; this first question, around which I can centre one of the poles of the history of analysis concerning the Oedipus complex, is this: are there neuroses without the Oedipus complex?

It would appear, in fact, that certain observations presented themselves in such a way that the oedipal conflict, drama, had not played the essential role, that, for example, the exclusive relationship of the child to the mother was what was given in analysis as having to be accepted from experience, namely that there could be subjects who presented neuroses where there was no Oedipus complex whatever. "*Névrose sans oedipe*" is the title of an article by Charles Baudoin.

This notion of neurosis without the Oedipus complex, you know that it is essentially correlative in history to questions posed on the subject of what has been called the maternal super-ego - is the super-ego uniquely as Freud, already at the time when the question of neurosis without the Oedipus complex was posed, had formulated it at that time, namely that the super-ego has a paternal origin - the question was being posed: has it really got a paternal origin, is there not behind the paternal super-ego, this maternal super-ego which is even more exigent, even more oppressive, even more destructive, even more Insistent in neurosis than the paternal super-ego? I do not want to go into this too much, we have a long journey before us.

The other centre around which things turn is this, it is the centre of the Oedipus complex, I mean the exceptional cases and the relationship between the paternal super-ego and the maternal super-ego.

There was then the open question whether the whole field of our pathology, of the pathology that falls under our jurisdiction, which is presented to us, for our treatment, for our care, could not be dealt with independently of the question: whether the Oedipus complex is present or lacking in a subject, to what we shall call the pre-oedipal field. If the Oedipus complex exists, if this Oedipus complex is considered as representing a phase, if maturity occurs at a certain essential moment in the evolution of the subject, this Oedipus complex is always there. Which is what Freud had himself very quickly proposed in the first phases of his work, five years after the *Interpretation of Dreams*, which may mean that everything that comes out of the *Three Essays on Sexuality* was designed to make us understand that what happens before the Oedipus complex is also important.

Of course, in Freud, it takes on an importance, in the measure that it takes on an importance through the Oedipus complex. But already, or more exactly never, never, at this époque, does the notion of the retroaction of an Oedipus complex, to which as you know I continually call to your attention here in an insistent fashion, never is it given importance. It is a thing that seems to escape from the thought of the requirements of the temporal past of thought, from the moment that there were things that existed before the oedipal complex and if particular parts of our field referred especially to what was happening in our field of experience, in this field of the development of the subject, there was then really a question that was posed about pre-oedipal stages as such, and of their relationships with what? You know what: on the one hand perversion; this is what I might call the primary state, the state of the notion of perversion left fallow by some - we are, thank God, no longer quite at that point - but all the same for a certain time, and initially it was legitimate because it is only an approximation to the question, it is less so now, perversion was considered essentially as

something whose aetiology, whose cause, is to be specifically referred to the pre-oedipal field. It was from an abnormal fixation that perversion took on its conditioning, its root. This is the reason, moreover, why perversion was therefore nothing but inverted neurosis, or more exactly the neurosis that had not been inverted, the neurosis that remained open to view; what was inverted in the neurosis could be seen openly in the perversion, the unconscious was there open to the skies; what was involved in perversion had not been repressed in the sense of not having passed through the Oedipus complex. This is a conception that nobody gives any weight to today.

This does not mean that for all that we are more advanced than it, but I would like to indicate, to point out, that therefore around the question of the pre-oedipal field are placed on the one hand, the question of perversion, on the other hand, the question of psychosis. Everything can become clearer for us now in different ways. For the moment, it is simply a matter of situating for you in what zone, from what angle of interest the questions around the Oedipus complex can be posed.

It is always a matter of the function of perversion on psychosis, in which the imaginary function, imaginary relationships, even without being especially introduced to the way we make use of it here for each of them, everyone will see that it is a matter of imaginary relationships, precisely in this sense that what concerns the image very especially in perversion just as much as in psychosis, is of course from different angles something else, is a more or less endophasic invasion, composed of words that are more or less heard, and is no doubt something different, with a burdensome, parasitic, character, from an image in a perversion. But it is a matter here, in both one case and the Other, of pathological manifestations in which it is by the image that the field of reality is profoundly disturbed.

And the history of analysis also bears witness to this, it is therefore in a certain relationship with the Oedipus complex as such because it is especially with regard to the pre-oedipal field that experience and the concern for coherence, the way that theory is constructed, hold together, it is thought to be precisely for this reason that the field of reality is disturbed for a time, sometimes profoundly, by the invasion of the imaginary, this seems to be a term that is more useful here than the phantastical, which would be equally inappropriate for talking about either psychosis or perversion. Here you have the orientation, in the sense of the exploration of the pre-oedipal field, of a whole direction in which analysis engaged itself, to the point that it could even be said that it is in this direction that all the essential advances since Freud have been made.

And I would like to point out that as regards this paradox, I mean the essentially paradoxical character of what we are approaching today is constituted by the testimony of the work of Mrs. Melanie Klein. In a work, as in everything produced in words, there are two planes, there is what she says, what she formulates in her discourse as such, what she wants to say (*veut dire*) because, in their meaning, separating the want and the saying, there is her intention. And then, it seems, we would not be analysts in the sense that I am trying to get you to understand here, if we did not know that she sometimes says a little bit more about it that goes further. It is even in this that our approach usually consists, it is to see what she says beyond what she means to say. The work of Mrs. Melanie Klein says things that are moreover very important, and that are also even in their text, in their internal contradictions, from this fact alone subject to criticisms that have been made. Then there is also what she says without meaning to say it, and one of the most striking things in this connection, is that this woman who has brought us such profound, such illuminating perspectives on what

happens not only in the pre-oedipal epoch, but on the children that she examines, that she analyses at a supposedly pre-oedipal stage, I mean through a first approximation of theory and in the measure that she approaches in these children themes that moreover necessarily lie behind, at the moment that she approaches them because it is often as verbal or preverbal in the history that she approaches them, almost at the moment speech appears, or just a little bit later, it is very striking that it in the very measure that she goes back to the supposedly pre-oedipal time of the history that she always sees the whole time the permanence of oedipal questions.

If you read her article precisely concerning the Oedipus complex, you will be surprised to see that she admits and even shows us by evidence in the equivocation of her experience, childrens' drawings that are extremely precious, where it is just at the stage described as that of the formation of bad objects, at the stage when it is within the body of the mother, which seems in listening to her to play the predominant role in the evolution of the child's first relations to objects, where the child is entirely centred on the interior of the mother's body, and even at an earlier stage, the so-called paranoid phase, at the very precise phase linked to the the appearance of the body of the mother in its totality. It is at a still earlier phase that basing herself on the drawings, on the statements, on a whole reconstruction of the psychology of the child at this stage, Mrs. Melanie Klein attests that among the bad objects present in the body of the mother, among which, as you know, there are all the rivals, the bodies of the brothers, the sisters, past, present and to come, there is very precisely the father represented in the form of his penis.

Here is something that makes it worthwhile for us dwell on the moment of the connection of the imaginary function in the first stages at which properly schizophrenic, psychotic functions in general and the Oedipus complex may come to be attached, I mean that it is curious to end up with this contradiction in Mrs. Melanie Klein's intention of first of all exploring the pre-oedipal states. The further back she goes, the more she finds herself on the imaginary plane, the more she recognises the precocity, a precocity, that if we keep to a purely historical notion of the Oedipus complex is very difficult to explain, the precocity of the appearance of the ternary paternal term, and this from the first imaginary phases of the child. It is in this sense that I say that the work says more than she intends it to say.

Here then are two terms, two poles already defined of this evolution of interest in the Oedipus complex: which was at first concerned, as we said, with the question of the super-ego and of neuroses without an Oedipus complex, and then what centred the question of the Oedipus complex around the acquisition or more exactly the perturbations that are produced in the field of reality.

There is a third moment which is no less worthy of comment and is going to open our next chapter. It is the relationship of the Oedipus complex with something which is not the same thing, with genitalization, as it is called. The Oedipus complex, let us not forget it in the midst of so many explorations, questions, discussions, this has almost been pushed into the background in the history though it still remains implicit in all clinical work, the Oedipus complex has a normative function not simply in the moral structure of the subject nor in his relationships, but in his assumption of his sex, namely something which, in analysis, as you know, still remains somewhat ambiguous. There is the properly genital function and this function is quite obviously the object of a maturation, of a maturation as such. It is implicated as fundamental in the analysis of a first phase, a first blossoming of maturation which is, it, properly organic, and is produced in childhood.

The question of the liaison of this first sexual surge for which, as you know, an organic, I mean anatomical, support has been sought in the double surge, for example, and which is produced at the level of the testicles in the formation of spermatozoa, the question of the relation of this and the existence in the human species of the Oedipus complex has remained a phylogenetic question that remains very obscure, to the point that nobody would any longer take the risk of writing articles on the subject.

However this has nevertheless been part of the history of psychoanalysis. The question of genitalisation is, therefore, a double one, it is that which on the one hand involves, of something which involves, an evolution, a maturation, and on the other hand involves something in the Oedipus complex that is realized, which is the assumption by the subject of his own sex, to call things by their name, which is the fact that a man assumes a virile type, that a woman assumes a certain feminine type, recognizes herself as a woman, identifies herself with her womanly functions. Virility and feminisation, here are the two terms that are essentially the function of the Oedipus complex.

I should say that we find ourselves here at the level where the Oedipus complex is directly linked to the function of the ego-ideal. There is no other meaning. Here then are the three chapters in which you can classify all the discussions that have taken place in the course of the Oedipus complex, and at the same time around the function of the father, because it is one and the same thing. There is no question of an Oedipus complex if there is no father, there is no Oedipus complex; inversely, to speak about the Oedipus complex is to introduce as essential the function of the father.

Therefore, for those who are taking notes, on the subject of the historical evolution of the Oedipus complex, everything turns around three chapters: the Oedipus complex in connection with the super-ego, in connection with reality, in connection with the ego-ideal. The ego-ideal always containing genitalisation in so far as it is assumed, becomes an element of the ego-ideal. Reality, as a chapter heading, implies the connection between the Oedipus complex and the affections that involve an overwhelming of the relation to reality, perversion and psychosis.

Let us now try to go a little further. It is clear that here in the third chapter, namely around what concerns the function of the Oedipus complex in so far as it has a direct influence on the assumption of sex, there is the whole question of the castration complex in those aspects that are not all that elucidated, this is where we are going to advance.

In any case, then, since these broad, global, connections underlined by history are sufficiently present in all your minds, the question will now be asked: "And the father, what was the father doing all this time? How is the father implicated in the affair?" It is a matter of a real observation of each subject.

The question of the presence or absence of the father, of the beneficial or harmful character of the father is, as you know, a question that is certainly not concealed. We have even seen recently the emergence of the term paternal lack, which was not an easy subject to tackle. The question of what was said about it and whether it stands up, is another question. But in fact, this paternal lack, whether it is called that or not called that, is in some way a subject that is on the agenda, precisely and above all in an evolution of analysis that is becoming more and more environmentalist, as it is elegantly called. Namely, what is in question?

Naturally, thank God, not all analysts fall into this trap. Many analysts to whom you bring such interesting biographical details as the following: "But the parents did not get on well, there were misunderstandings in the marriage, that explains everything!" will reply - even those that I do not always agree with, will reply: "So what? That proves absolutely nothing, we should not expect any particular kind of effect." And in this they would be correct.

Having said this, when one inquires, what is it in the father that one is interested in? When you talk about paternal lack, that can be grouped in a sort of biographical register. Was the father there or was he not there? Did he travel, was he away? Did he come back often? Questions that represent the absence of the father. Can an Oedipus complex be properly constituted for example when there is no father? These are questions that are certainly very interesting in themselves, and I would even go further, that it is here that there are introduced, in fact, the first paradoxes, those that made you ask the subsequent questions. It was seen that it was not so simple, that an Oedipus complex could be quite well constituted even when the father was not there.

At the beginning even, it was still believed that it was through some excess, you might say, an excessive presence of the father that all the dramas were engendered, at the time when the image of the terrifying father was considered to be the damaging element. In neurosis, it was very quickly seen that it was still more serious when he was too nice. These lessons were learned slowly, and it is in this context, first of all, that I am talking to you about the question of where things are now, and it is in this context that I will try to bring a bit of order to see where the paradoxes are. We are now at the other end, as we question ourselves about paternal lacks.

There are what are called weak fathers, submissive fathers, battered fathers, fathers castrated by their wives, and finally, sick fathers, blind fathers, bankrupt fathers, everything you want.

It would be necessary all the same to see what can be separated out from a situation like that. We will try to find the minimal formulae that will enable us to go forward. Firstly, the question of presence or absence, I mean in the concrete. If we place ourselves precisely at the level of these researches, namely at the level of reality, that is what is meant by environment, *qua* element of the environment one could say, one could say that it is quite conceivable, realized, touchable in experience, that he may be there even when he is not there. And this, already, should encourage in us a certain prudence concerning the function of the father, in using purely and simply the environmentalist point of view. Quite normal Oedipus complexes, normal in the two senses, normal in so far as they are normalizing on the one hand, and normal also in so far as they denormalize, I mean by their neurotogenic effect, for example, establish themselves in a way that is exactly homogeneous with other cases, even in those cases where the father is not there; I mean that the child was left alone with his mother. This is the first thing that should attract our attention.

As regards the lack, I would just like to remark that when the father is lacking, and to the extent that one talks about lack, one never knows of what. Because if, in certain cases, one says that he is too nice, that would seem to mean that he should be cross. On the other hand, the fact that, manifestly he can be too cross implies that it might be better from time to time to be nice. For a long time now, after all, we have gone full circle on this little merry-go-round. The problem of his lack was glimpsed not directly, directly concerning the subject, the

child in question, but as was evident from the first approaches, it is as a member of the fundamental, ternary, trio of the family, namely as holding his place in the family, that one could begin to say something more effective about the lack.

But this did not mean that things were formulated any better. I do not want to spend too long on this. But we already spoke about it last year, in connection with little Hans, we saw the difficulties we have from the uniquely environmentalist point of view to be precise about what the lack was in a person who was far from lacking. We are going to be able to go further in the sense that this person was indeed far from being lacking in the family, he was there, alongside his wife, he played his role, he discussed things, his wife was just a little bit dismissive of him, but he gave a lot of time to the child, he was not absent, indeed he was so little absent that he had his child analysed. It is the best point of view that one can hope for from a father, at least in that sense.

I believe that we are going to come to this question of the lack of the father, we are going to come back to it, but one enters here into a world that is so much in movement that it is necessary to make the distinction that will allow us to see where the research misses out. The research misses out not because of what it finds but because of what it seeks. I think that the mistake in orientation lies in this: that two things are confused which are connected but should not be confused. It is the connection between the father as normative and the father as normal. Of course, the father can be treated as normativizing in so far as he himself is not normal, but this is to push back the question to the level of the neurotic, psychotic structure of the father. Therefore, the question of the normal father is one question, the question of his normal position in the family is another.

And this other question is still not to be confused, this is the third point I am putting forward, which is important, is not to be confused with an exact definition of his normativizing role, because I will tell you something: to talk about his lack in the family is not the same as talking about his lack in the complex.

Because, to talk about his lack in the complex, it is necessary to introduce a dimension other than the realistic dimension, if I might put it that way, that which is defined by the characterological, biographical or other mode describing his presence in the family. This is the direction in which we will take the following step.

Let us come now to some remarks, some reminders which may allow us to introduce more correctly the question of the role of the father. If it is in his place in the complex that we can find the direction to advance, the direction to pose a correct formulation, let us now question the complex and let us begin from the beginning, from the $b a = b a$.

At the start, as I told you: the terrible father. All the same, the image resumes something much more complex, as the name indicates. The father intervenes on several planes. Firstly, he prohibits (*interdit*) the mother. Here we have the foundation, the principle of the Oedipus complex, this is where the father is linked to the primordial law, the law prohibiting incest. It is the father, we are reminded, who is charged to represent this prohibition. He sometimes has to manifest it in a direct fashion, when the child gives himself over to his effusiveness, his manifestations, his tendencies. But he exercises his role far beyond this, it is by his whole presence, by the effects in the unconscious, that he exercises this prohibition of the mother. You are waiting for me to say "under threat of castration". True, true, this must be said, but it is not all that simple. Agreed, castration comes in in an obviously manifest way and one moreover that will be more and more confirmed. The link

between castration and the law is essential, but let us see how this is presented clinically, how the Oedipus complex first presents itself to us. I am obliged to recall it to you because it should evoke for you all sorts of textual evocations.

The relationship, let us take the boy first, between the child, the boy and the father, is determined, we all agree, by the fear of castration. What is this fear of castration? How, from what end will we approach it? First of all in the first experience of the Oedipus complex under the form of what? Of a retortion. I mean that it is in the context of an aggressive relationship in so far as this aggression begins from the child, from the boy, in so far as his privileged object, the mother, is prohibited to him, it is in so far as the aggression is directed towards the father that the child then, on the imaginary plane in the dual relationship in the measure that he imaginarily projects into the father the aggressive intentions that are equivalent or reinforced compared to his own but whose origin is in his own personal aggressive tendencies. In short, the fear experienced before the father, is clearly centrifugal, I mean that it has its centre in the subject. This is in conformity both with experience, and the history of analysis. It is from this angle that, very soon, experience taught us that the fear of the father experienced in the Oedipus complex should be measured.

Castration, therefore, in so far as it is on the one hand profoundly linked to the symbolic articulation of the prohibition of incest and on the other hand, and this is much more in the foreground in all our experience, naturally, in the case of those who are its privileged objects, namely neurotics, is something that manifests itself on the imaginary plane, and where it has here a beginning which is not a beginning of the type of commandment, namely as is said in the law of Manou: "He who sleeps with his mother shall cut off his genitals and holding them in his left or right hand" - I do not remember very clearly - "shall go off towards the west until he drops dead." That is the law. But this law has not come specially as such to the ears of our neurotics. In general it is even left a little bit obscure.

There are moreover other ways of solving the problem, but I have no time to expand on them today. Therefore, the way that neurosis embodies this castration threat is linked to the imaginary aggression of the subject, it is a retortion, in the sense that just as Jupiter is quite capable of castrating Chronos, our little Jupiters fear that Chronos himself will begin to do the work.

And then there is something else that the examination of the Oedipus complex contributes from the beginning, I mean the fashion in which it is articulated, presented by experience, by theory, by Freud, it is the delicate question of the inverted Oedipus complex. I do not know whether this appears to you as self-evident, but read Freud's article or any other article by any author, each time that the question of the Oedipus complex is approached, one is always struck by the extremely mobile, nuanced, disconcerting role played by the function of the inverted Oedipus complex.

This inverted Oedipus complex is never absent from the function of the Oedipus complex, I mean that the component of love for the father cannot be avoided, which means that it is what brings the end of the Oedipus complex, the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, that it is a dialectic of love and identification that remains very ambiguous, namely of identification which is rooted in love, while not being the same thing. It is not the same thing. Nevertheless the two terms are closely linked and can in no way be dissociated.

Read the article that Freud wrote on "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex" with the explanation that he gives of the terminal identification that is its solution, it is in so far as the father is loved that the subject identifies with him and that he finds the solution, the term of the Oedipus complex, in this composition of amnesic repression; and on the other hand this acquisition in him of this ideal term thanks to which he becomes the father, he can become himself someone who, I will not say here and now, is a little male who - if I may say - has already got the deeds in his pocket, has a reserve on the business. When the time comes, if things go well, if the little pigs do not eat him up, at the moment of puberty, he has his penis all ready with his certificate: "Daddy is the one who has conferred it on me at the right time."

It does not happen like that if a neurosis breaks out because precisely there is something irregular in the deeds in question. Only the inverted Oedipus complex is not so simple either in that if it is in this way, by way of love, that the inverted position properly so called can be produced, namely that the subject also finds himself in the same way, on a given occasion not with a healthy identification, but with a nice little passive position on the unconscious level, which will also reappear in due time, namely which will make him a kind of bissector of the squeeze-panic angle, which will mean that he will find himself caught in a position that he has discovered all by himself, which is quite advantageous.

It is this father who is so formidable, who has prohibited so many things but who is also very nice, it is a matter of putting oneself in the right position to enjoy his favours, namely to be loved by him, but since to be loved by him consists apparently, consists first in joining the ranks of the women and one still keeps one's little virile pride, this is what Freud explains to us; making yourself loved by the father involves the danger of castration, from which comes the form of unconscious homosexuality that puts the subject in this essentially conflictual position, which has multiple consequences, and which is on the one hand the continual return of the homosexual position with regard to the father, and on the other hand of its suspension, namely of its repression because of the threat of castration that it involves. This is not all that simple. For what we are trying to do, is to approach something that will allow us to conceptualize it in a more rigorous fashion, which will mean that afterwards we will be able in each observation and in each particular case, to pose our questions better and more rigorously.

To resume then. Just as above, the *resumé* will consist in introducing a certain number of distinctions that are, I believe, a prelude to centering on the point that is going wrong. A little while ago we had already approached the following, that it was there, around the ego-ideal that the question had not been posed. 'Here, let us try to carry out the reduction that we have just recalled and approached. I propose the following to you: here and now, I do not think that it is going too far to say that the father comes in here all the same as an intruder who is not only in the way because of his volume, but is in the position of an intruder because he prohibits. What does he prohibit?

Let us go back and distinguish: he first of all prohibits the real satisfaction of the impulse. If we should bring into play the appearance of the genital impulse, that it is not there because it appears to intervene well before. But it is also clear that something is articulated around the fact that he prohibits the little child from making use of his penis at the moment when the aforesaid penis begins to manifest what we can call its velleities. This is the relationship of the father's prohibition with regard to the real impulse.

Right away let us make a remark at this level: why the father? Experience proves that the mother does it just as well, remember the case of little Hans. The mother says: "Put that thing away, that's not done." And it is even most often the mother who says: "If you go on doing that, we'll call the doctor and he'll cut it off you."

Therefore, let us then clearly indicate that what happens is that the father, in so far as he prohibits at the level of the real impulse, is not all that necessary. Now, if you remember my table from last year - you see that these things are always useful in the long run - let us take up what I put forward then, the table with three levels: castration, frustration, privation.

What is in question here? I will draw your attention to it. It is a question then of the real intervention of the father about what? An imaginary threat because it is clear that it very rarely happens that it is really cut off. Therefore, we find what is happening precisely at the level of the threat of castration. I would like to point out that castration is a symbolic act, whose agent is someone real: the mother or the father who tells him: "It's going to be cut off", and whose object is an imaginary object. If the child feels himself cut, it is because he imagines it.

Now, I would like to point out, it is paradoxical because you could say to me: "This is properly speaking the level of castration, and you say that the father is not all that useful." That indeed is what I am saying. It is indeed. On the other hand what does he prohibit, the father? Well, it is the point that we began from, namely: the mother, as object, she is his, she is not the child's.

It is on this plane that there is established, at least at one stage, in boys as well as in girls, that rivalry with the father that all by itself engenders aggression. It is because the father well and truly frustrates the child with respect to the mother.

This is another stage, another level if you wish, I would like to point out that here the father intervenes then in virtue of his rights and not as a real person, namely that even if he is not there, if he calls the mother on the telephone for example, the result is the same. It is the father here *qua* symbolic who intervenes in a frustration, an imaginary act concerning an object that is real, who is the mother, to the extent that the child needs her.

Then there is the third stage that intervenes in this articulation of the Oedipus complex which is the father in so far as he makes himself preferred to the mother, because you are absolutely required to bring this dimension into the terminal function, that which is completed by the formation of the ego-ideal. It is in so far as the father becomes, from whatever aspect, the aspect of strength or of weakness, an object who is preferable to the mother that the final identification can be established. The question of the inverted Oedipus complex and of its function is established at this level. I would say more, it is even here that there is centred the very important question of the difference of the effect of the complex on the boy and on the girl.

It is obvious that at this level there is no problem as far as the girl is concerned, and that is why it is said that the function of the castration complex is asymmetrical for the boy and the girl. It is at the entry that this question is important and that at the end it facilitates the solution because the father has no trouble making himself preferred to the mother as the bearer of the phallus. For the boy, it is a different matter, and you see that it is always here that the gap remains open. Namely that to make himself preferred to the mother in so far as it is in this way that the Oedipus complex can find its issue, it so happens that we find ourselves

confronted with the same difficulty of the establishment of the inverted Oedipus complex, and it then seems to us therefore, that for the boy the Oedipus complex must be something that always, and in every case is everything that is the least normativizing, even though it is nevertheless implied that it is the most, because it is by this identification with the father that we are told in the final analysis virility is assumed.

In the final analysis, the problem is to know how it comes about that this father who is essentially a prohibitor does not end up here at what is the very clear conclusion of the third plane, namely that it is in so far as the ideal identification is produced, that the father becomes the ego-ideal, that something happens, which is what? Which, in any case, tends to be for the boy as well as for the girl. But for the girl, it is a good thing that she should recognize that she has no phallus, whereas for the boy, this would be an absolutely disastrous outcome, and it sometimes is.

In other words, what we come to focus on as being the normativizing outcome of the Oedipus complex produced at a point and in a relationship like this (formula written on the board)..... Namely that the child recognizes that he did not choose. He did not really choose what he has, as I told you.

What happens at the level of the ideal identification, the level at which the father makes himself preferred to the mother, an essential point and the exit point from the Oedipus complex, is something that must literally culminate in privation. While all of this is quite admissible and quite conforming, even though it is never completely realized in a woman as the outcome of the Oedipus complex because she always keeps a little hankering, what is called *Penisneid*, which proves therefore that it does not work out really rigorously, but in the case that it should work out, if we keep to this schema, the boy should always be castrated. Therefore there is something wrong, something lacking in our explanation.

Let us now try to introduce the solution. This is the solution: it is that the father, I am not saying in the family - in the family, he is whatever he likes, he is a shadow, he is a banker, he is or he is not everything that he should be, that is sometimes important but it may also not be - the whole question is to know what he is in the Oedipus complex. Well, the father is not a real object even though he must intervene as a real object to embody castration. He is not a real object, so what is he? He is not a just an ideal object either, because accidents can arise from that object. Now, all the same, the Oedipus complex is not simply a catastrophe because it is the foundation and the basis of our relation to culture, as they say.

Now, naturally, you will tell me: "The father is the symbolic father, as you already said." But if I had only that to repeat to you, I have already said it often enough not to have to propose it again to you today. That which I propose to you today and that which, precisely, allows a little more precision to be brought to the notion of the symbolic father, is this: the father is a metaphor.

A metaphor, what is that? Let us say it right away in order to put it onto this table, and allow us to rectify the difficult consequences of the table. A metaphor, as I already explained to you, is a signifier that comes in place of another signifier. I say the father in the Oedipus complex, even if this may bewilder some who hear it. I am saying exactly that the father is a signifier substituted for another signifier. And this is the source, and the only essential mainspring of the father, in so far as he intervenes in the Oedipus complex. And if it is not here that you seek paternal lacks, you will find them nowhere else.

The function of the father in the Oedipus complex is to be a signifier substituted for the signifier, that is for the first signifier introduced into symbolization, the maternal signifier. It is to the degree that the father comes according to the formula that I explained to you once as being that of the metaphor, comes in place of the mother: S in place of S', which is the mother as being already linked to something which was x, namely something which was the signified in the relationship of the child to the mother. (Explanation of the formula on the blackboard.)

This is the mother who comes, who goes, because I am a little being already caught up in the symbolic, it is because I have learned to symbolize that one can say that she comes and goes. In other words, I sense her or I do not sense her. In fact, the world changes with her arrival and can then vanish. The question is: where is the signified? What does she want, that one, I would really like it to be me that she wants, but it is quite clear that it is not only me she wants, there is something else at work in her. What is at work in her, is the x, the signified.

In brief, to resume last year's seminar for you, the question is not in object relations, to put that at the centre of object relations is pure stupidity. The child himself is the partial object. It is because, at first, he is the partial object that he is led to ask himself: what does this mean, her coming and her going? This signified of the comings and goings of the mother, is the phallus. The child, with more or less astuteness, with more or less luck, may succeed very quickly in making himself a phallus, once he has understood. But the imaginary way is not the normal way, this is why moreover it involves what are known as fixations. It is also not normal because in the last analysis, as I will tell you, it is never pure, it is never completely accessible, it always leaves something approximate and unfathomed, even something dual, which results in all the polymorphism of perversion. But through the symbolic way, namely by the metaphorical way, I pose this first, I will explain how to you later, because we cannot go any quicker, but I pose this for you right away, because we are almost coming to the end of our conversation for today, it is the schema that will be our guide: it is in so far as the father is going to be substituted for the mother as signifier that this ordinary result of metaphor is going to be produced, that which is expressed in the formula on the board.

I am not saying that I am presenting the solution to you here in a form that is already transparent because I am presenting it in its final form, in its result, to show you where we are going. We are now going to see how to get there and what use it is to have gone there, namely all the things that it resolves.

Now, we have a choice between two things, either I leave you there, holding onto this crude affirmation: the intervention of the father, I pose it, and I claim that by this everything can be resolved as being the following: the substitution of a signifier for another signifier, and you are going to see all the impasses of the Oedipus complexes clarifying themselves, or else I begin to explain the thing a little for you.

I will introduce the thing to you, I will make a remark that will, I hope, leave you an object for your dreams for this week because the next day, to tell you about the metaphor and its effect, I will have to tell you, I will have to recall, where it is situated, namely in the unconscious. I would like to point out this, that there is something really surprising, which is that the unconscious was not discovered sooner, because of course, it was always there and

besides it is still there. It was necessary to know what was happening within to know that this locus existed.

But I would like simply to give you something so that you who go out through the world as - I hope - apostles of my word, will be able to introduce the question of the unconscious to the people who have never heard it spoken of. You will say to them: is it not astonishing that since the world began none of those people who call themselves philosophers dreamt of producing, at least in the classical period - now we have spread the news a little but there is still a long way to go - this essential dimension which is the one I spoke to you about under the name of what can be called: something other (*autre chose*).

I already said to you "the desire for something other". All the same you should sense that the desire for something Other is often there, not perhaps in the way that you feel it at the moment, the desire to go and eat a *saucisson* rather than listen to me, but in any case and no matter what it involves, the desire of something other as such.

Now, this dimension is not uniquely, simply present in desire. I would simply like to evoke the fact that it is present in many other states that are absolutely constant, permanent. Watching, for example, what is called a vigil. Not enough thought is given to this. Watching, you will ask me for what? Watching, is the thing, you know, that Freud does in the case of President Schreber, it is just the type of thing that reveals the extent to which Freud lived in this "something other". He talks to us about "Before Sunrise", if you have referred back to it, I spoke to you about the day, about the peace of the evening, and some other things like that which more or less got through to you, it was all completely centred around this indication. Before sunrise, is it properly speaking the sun that is going to appear? It is something other that is latent which is awaited, when you are keeping watch.

And then, clausturation. It is all the same a dimension that is absolutely essential. Once a man arrives somewhere, in the virgin forest or in the desert, he begins by closing himself off, if necessary, as they say, he will bring two windows to have a draught between them, even if that is all he has. This clausturation is also a dimension that is also absolutely essential, it is a matter of establishing an interior, and then it is not simply a notion of interior and exterior, it is the notion of "the other", of that which is other as such, of what is not the place where one is nice and snug, and I would even say more, if you were to explore a little bit more profoundly the phenomenology, as they say, of clausturation, you would see how absurd it is to limit the function of fear to what is called a relationship with a real danger.

The close liaison between fear and security should have been manifested to you in the clearest fashion through the phenomenology of phobias. You see that, in the phobic person, his moments of anxiety, are when he perceives that he has lost his fear, at the moment when you begin to remove his phobia a little. It is then that he says to himself: "Oh! la, la! this won't do, I don't know any longer where the places are that I must stop at. In losing my fear, I have lost my security", in fact, all the things I told you last year about little Hans.

There is a moment that I am sure you do not think about enough, because you live in it, I might say, as in your native air, which is called: boredom. You have perhaps never thought out the degree to which boredom is something that comes to formulate itself in the clearest fashion, that one would like "something other". One may well eat muck everyday but not always the same muck. These are sorts of alibis, alibis that are formulated, already symbolized, of what is this essential connection with "something other".

I would like to end on that. You may think that I am, suddenly, falling into romanticism and sentimentality, you can see that: desire, clausturation, vigiling, I was almost going to say prayer while I was at it, and why not? Boredom, where does it lead to, what does it slide towards?

But no. What I wanted to draw your attention to, is to these different manifestations of the presence of "something other" in so far as - think about it - they are institutionalized. You can classify all human formations in so far as they make people feel settled wherever they may go, what are called collective formations, according to the satisfaction they give to the different modes of the relationship to "something other".

Once man comes to a place he makes, that is the place where desire really is, once he comes to a place he is waiting for something, a better world, a future world. He is there, he watches, he waits for the revolution, but above all and above all when he arrives somewhere, it is extremely important that all his occupations should be steeped in boredom, in other words, an occupation only becomes serious when what constitutes it, namely in general regularity, has become utterly boring. And in particular, think of all the things that in your analytic practice, are very precisely made to ensure that you will be bored at it.

It is all there. A large part, at least, of the prescriptions, of what are called the technical rules to be observed by the analyst are fundamentally nothing other than what gives to this occupation all the guarantees of what is called its professional standard. If you look at things deeply enough, you will see that it is in the measure that they create, sustain and maintain at their core the function of boredom.

This is in a way a little introduction that does not allow you to really get into what I will tell you next day. I will take things up again next day to show you precisely that it is at the level of this "other" as such that the dialectic of the signifier is situated and how it is from there that it approaches the function, the incidence, the precise pressure, the inductive effect of the name of the father, also as such.

THE PATERNAL METAPHOR - II

Seminar 10: 22 January 1958

We are going to continue our examination of what we have called "the paternal metaphor".

We had arrived at a point in it where I affirmed that it was in this structure, that we have put forward here as being the structure of the metaphor, that there resides any possibility of articulating clearly the Oedipus complex and its mainspring, namely the castration complex.

To those who may be astonished that we should have taken so long to articulate a question so central in analytic theory and practice, I would reply that it was impossible to do so without having proved to you in different areas, theoretical as well as practical, how inadequate are the formulae currently used in analysis, and above all without having shown you the way in which one can produce more adequate formulae, as I might say, to begin to articulate the problems first of all by getting you used to thinking in terms, for example, of "subject".

What is a subject? Is it something that is purely and simply confused with the reality in front of you when you say "the subject"? Or is it the case that from the moment you get him to speak, something other is necessarily implied? I mean, whether speech is yes or no something that floats above him like an emanation or whether it develops of itself, whether it imposes of itself, a structure such as the one that I commented on at length, to which I accustomed you, and which says that once there is a speaking subject, it can never be a matter simply of reducing for him the question of his relationships in so far as he speaks to an other. There is always a third, this big "other" that we talk about and which is constitutive of the position of the subject in so far as he speaks, namely also of the subject in so far as you analyse him. This is not just one more theoretical necessity. It makes things much easier when it is a question of understanding where the effects you are dealing with are situated, I mean what happens when you encounter in the patient, in the "subject", exigencies, desires, a phantasy, which is not the same thing, and also something that appears to be in fact the most uncertain, the most difficult to grasp, to define: a reality.

We shall have the opportunity of seeing it at the point that we are now advancing to in order to explain how the term "paternal metaphor", namely, in that which had been constituted from a primordial symbolization between the child and the mother, is properly the substitution of the father *qua* symbol, *qua* signifier in place of the mother. And we shall see the meaning of this "in place of", which constitutes the pivotal point, the motor nerve, I might say, the essence of the progress constituted by the Oedipus complex.

Let us recall that this is what is in question. Let us recall the terms that I proposed to you last year, concerning the mother-child relationship. But let us also recall first of all, over against this imaginary triangle, which I taught you to handle last year, with regard to the mother-child relationship, let us recall over against this that to admit the child-mother-father

triangle as fundamental, is to bring in something that is real, no doubt, but which, already poses in the real, I mean as instituted, a symbolic relationship, the child-father-mother relationship (sketch of the triangle on the board) and if I may say, objectively, to make you understand, in so far as we can, ourselves, make an object of it, look at it.



The first relationships to reality takes shape between the mother and the child. It is there that the child will experience the first realities of his contact with the living milieu, the triangle, in so far as it has this reality only because we bring in, in order to begin to outline the situation objectively, we bring the father into it. For the child the father has not yet made his entry. On the other hand, for us, the father "is", he is real. But let us not forget that, for us, he is only real because the institutions confer on him, I will not even say his role and his function as father, it is not a sociological question, but confer on-him his "name" as father. I mean that we have to admit this: that the father, for example, is the true agent of procreation, something which is never a truth of experience, because at the time when analysts still discussed serious matters, it came to be remarked that, in some primitive tribe or other, procreation was attributed to something or other, a fountain, a stone, or the encounter with a spirit in a deserted place, to which Mr. Jones contributed this very pertinent remark: that it is quite unthinkable that intelligent beings - and we suppose that every human being has this minimum of intelligence - this truth of experience, it is clear, unless by way of exception, but a really "exceptional" exception, that a woman does not give birth if she has not had intercourse, and again within a very precise time span. But, in making this remark which, I repeat, is very pertinent, Mr. Ernest Jones simply left to one side everything that is important in the question.

Because, what is important in the question, is not that people know perfectly well that a woman cannot give birth unless she has had intercourse, it is that they sanction in a signifier that the one with whom she has had intercourse is the father. Because, otherwise, given the way in which the order of the symbol, of the signifier is of its nature constituted, there is absolutely no objection to the fact that, nevertheless, the something which is responsible for procreation should not continue to be maintained in the symbolic system as identical to whatever you like, as we said above: namely a stone, a fountain, or the encounter with a spirit in a deserted place.

The position of the father as symbolic is something that does not depend on the fact that people have more or less recognised a certain sequence in events as different as intercourse and giving birth. The position of the name of the father, as such, the qualification of the father as procreator, is a matter that is situated at the symbolic level and which can serve, can again be connected up in accordance with cultural forms, because it does not depend on the cultural form; it is a necessity of the signifying chain as such; from the fact that you institute a symbolic order, something responds or not to this function defined by the name of the father, and within this function, you put the significations that can be different in

different cases, but which, in no case depend on any other necessity than the necessity of the function of the father, which the name of the father occupies in the signifying chain.

I think I have insisted enough on this. Here therefore is what we can call the "symbolic triangle" in so far as it is instituted in the real, from the moment that there is a signifying chain, that there is the articulation of a word.

I say that there is a relationship between this symbolic ternate and the ternate that I put forward here last year in the form of the imaginary ternate, which, it, is made up of the relationship of the child to the mother, in so far as the child finds himself depending on the desire of the mother, on the first symbolization of the mother as such, and on nothing other than that, namely that he separates out his effective dependence on her desire from the pure and simple living experience of that dependence, namely -that, by this symbolization something is instituted which is subjectified at a first, primitive level; this subjectification consists simply in posing her as the primordial being who can be there, or not be there. Therefore, in desire, the desire for "her", for that being, is essential. This means that what the subject desires, is not simply the craving for her care, for her contact, even for presence, it is the craving for her desire.

In this first symbolization, the desire of the child is affirmed, begins all the future complications of symbolization in the following: "that he is desire of the desire of the mother" and that, because of this, something opens out, by which virtually what the mother herself objectively desires *qua* being who lives in the world of the symbol, in a world where the symbol is present, in a speaking world, and even if she only lives in it in a quite partial manner, if she is herself, as sometimes happens, a being badly adapted to this world of the symbol, or who has refused certain of its elements, nevertheless opens up to the child beginning with this primordial symbolization, this dimension, that even on the imaginary plane the mother can, as they say, desire "something other" on the imaginary plane.

It is in this way that there enters in a still confused and completely virtual way this desire for "something other", that I talked about the other day, but not in a way that is in some way substantial so that we could recognize it as we did in the last seminar, in all its generality, but in a concrete fashion. There is in her the desire for something other than to "satisfy me, my desire as I begin to pulsate with life."

And, in this way, there is at once access and lack of access. How can we conceive that in some way, in this mirage-relationship by which a being first reads or anticipates the satisfaction of his desires in the incipient movements of the other, in this "dual" adaptation of image to image that occurs in all inter-animal relationships, how can it be conceived that one can read as in a mirror - as scripture says - this something "other" that the subject desires?

It is undoubtedly both difficult to conceive of and accomplished with great difficulty because here is precisely the whole drama of what happens a certain level of the switching of points at the primitive level, which is called "the perversions". It is difficult to accomplish in the sense that it is accomplished in a faulty manner, but all the same it is accomplished, it is certainly not accomplished without the intervention of a little more than the symbolization which does not allow it to be constituted; the primordial symbolization of this mother who "comes and goes", who is called for when she is not there and who, as such, is pushed away again when she is there, so that she can be called back; there must be something more. This something more, is precisely the existence behind her of the whole of this symbolic order, on which she depends and which, since it is always more or less there, allows a certain access to

this object, her desire, which is already an object so specialized, so marked by the necessity established by the symbolic system, whose prevalence is otherwise absolutely unthinkable and which is called the phallus. This phallus around which last year I made the whole of our dialectic of object-relations revolve.

Why? Why this privileged object, if is not because of something that it makes necessary there, in its place, in so far as it is privileged in the symbolic order? It is into this that we now want to enter in more detail, and that we are going to see how, not just simply by a simple symmetrical relationship, the one explained in this drawing and which means that here "phallus" is at the vertex of the imaginary ternate (schema R on the board), just as here, "father" is at vertex of the symbolic ternate, how it comes about that there should be this liaison between the two and how it comes about that I can already advance that this liaison is of the metaphorical order?

Well, this is precisely what draws us into the interior of the dialectic of the Oedipus complex. It is in the Oedipus complex that we can become aware, I mean can try to articulate step by step - and this is what Freud does, and what others did after him, and is the thing that, in it, is not always altogether clear, nor altogether clearly symbolized - can try to push further along for you, not just simply for our intellectual satisfaction but because, if we articulate step by step this "genesis" which ensures that the position of the signifier of the father in the symbol is fundamental for the position of the phallus in the imaginary plane, if this demands one, two, three stages - as one might say - of the logical moments of the constitution of this phallus in the imaginary plane as prevalent privileged object, if these moments are clearly distinguished and if from their distinction it comes about that we can orientate ourselves better, better question the patient when we are examining him and the meaning of our clinical experience and the conduct of the treatment, this then will justify our efforts and it seems to me that given the difficulties we encounter, precisely in clinical work, in assessment, in examination and in the handling of therapy, these efforts are here and now justified in advance.

Let us observe this "desire of the other", which is the desire of the mother, which involves this "beyond". I am saying that to reach this "beyond" - and already even to reach this beyond of the mother, the desire of the mother as such, a mediation is necessary - that this mediation is precisely given by the position of the father in the symbolic order.

Rather than proceeding dogmatically ourselves, let us question ourselves about the way in which, for us, the question is posed in the concrete. We see that there are states, cases, stages too in very different states, when the child identifies himself with the phallus. This was the whole object of the path we travelled along last year. We showed fetishism to be an exemplary perversion in the sense that, there, the child has a certain relationship with this object of the beyond of the desire of the mother, and in having remarked its prevalence and the mark of excellence - as one might say - that is attached to it, by way in short, of an imaginary identification with the mother; we have also seen indicated that, in other forms of perversion, and notably in transvestism, that it is in the contrary position that the child will assume the difficulty of the imaginary relationship to the mother, namely that he identifies himself, it is said, with the phallicized mother. I believe that, more correctly, you should say that it is properly speaking with the phallus that he identifies himself in so far as this phallus is hidden under the mother's clothes.

I remind you of this to show you that this relationship of the child to the phallus is essential since the phallus is the object of the mother's desire. In addition experience also proves to us that this element plays an active essential role in the relations that the child has with the parental couple. Already, the last day, we recalled this on the theoretical plane in the account of the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, in relation to the Oedipus complex that is called inverted. Freud underlines the cases, where in order to identify himself with the another, I mean to the degree that he identifies himself with the mother, the child dreads, that having adopted this position which is at once meaningful and promising, dreads the consequences, therefore the privation that will result for him, if he is a boy, of his virile organ.

It is a path pointing to something, but which goes much further. Our experience proves that the father considered *qua* depriving the mother of this object, namely the phallic object, of her desire, plays an absolutely essential role in, I will not say the perversions, but in all the neuroses, and I would say in the whole course, even the easiest, the most normal one, of the Oedipus complex. With experience you will find in analysis that the subject has taken up a position in a certain way on this point at a moment in his childhood, on this point of the role of the father, in the fact that the mother does not have a phallus. This moment is never elided, this moment which is the one which, in our reminder the last time, left open the question of the favourable or unfavourable outcome of the Oedipus complex suspended around the three planes of castration, of frustration, of privation exercised by the father. It was at the third level, that which at the same time posed the question for us, because it is the one at which it is most difficult to understand anything, and the one in which, nevertheless, we are told there lies the whole key to the Oedipus complex, namely its outcome, namely finally the identification of the child to the father. This level is that of the father who deprives someone of what, after all, she does not have, namely deprives her of something which exists only in the measure that you make it emerge into existence as a symbol.

It is quite clear that the father does not castrate the mother of something that she does not have. For it to be posed that she does not have it, it is necessary that, already, what is in question should be projected onto the symbolic plane as a symbol. But it is well and truly a privation, and all real privation is something that necessitates the symbolization of what is patently lacking, it is therefore on the plane of the mother's privation that, at a given moment of the evolution of the Oedipus complex, a question is posed for the subject of accepting, of enregistering, of himself symbolizing, of making significant this privation of which the mother appears to be the object. This privation, the childish subject either assumes or does not assume it, accepts or refuses it. This point is essential, you will find it at every cross-roads, every time you are lead by your experience to a certain point that we will now try to define as "nodal" in the Oedipus complex.

Let us call it the "nodal point", because that has just come to me, I do not hold on to it as essential, I mean by that that it does not coincide, far from it, with the moment whose key we are searching for, which is the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, its result, its fruit in the subject, but there is a moment when the father takes on the function of depriving the mother, namely appears behind this relationship of the mother to the object of her desire as something, if you will, which "castrates", but I put it there only in quotation marks, because what is castrated, as it happens, is not the subject, it is the mother.

This point is not very new. What is new, is to focus it precisely, it is to turn your regard towards this point in the measure that it allows us to understand from it what has gone

before, something that we already have some illumination on, and what is going to come after.

Experience, in any case, you can be sure, and you can test it, confirm it, every time you have the opportunity to see it, experience proves that in the measure that the subject does not surmount this nodal point, namely does not accept the mother's privation of the phallus brought about by the father, one observes that as a rule, and I underline this "as a rule" because here, it does not simply have an importance as an ordinary correlation, but of a correlation founded on structure, it is to the very degree that the child maintains for himself a certain form of identification with this object of the mother, with this object that I represent for you from the beginning, to use the word that arises here, as "rival" object, as one might say, always in some way whether it is a question of phobia, neurosis or perversion, you will touch a link; it is a reference point (*repère*) - there is perhaps no better word - around which you can regroup the elements of observation beginning with this question which you will pose for yourselves in the particular case. What is the special configuration of this relationship to the mother, to the father, and to the phallus, which brings it about that the child does not accept that the mother should be deprived by the father of something that is the object of her desire, and in what measure, in a particular case, must it be accentuated that correlatively with this relationship, the child, for its part, maintains its identification with the phallus?

There are degrees, of course. This relationship is not the same in neurosis and psychosis as it is in perversion. But this configuration is nodal, as you can see. At this level the question that is posed is: "to be or not to be" the phallus. On the imaginary plane, it is a matter for the subject of being or of not being the phallus, and the phase that has to be traversed is this: the subject will choose at a moment; when I say "will choose", put that will choose too in quotes, because, of course, the subject here is as much passive as active for the good reason that it is not he who pulls the strings of the symbolic order; the sentence was begun before him, was begun precisely by his parents, to which I am going to lead you, it is precisely to the relationship of each of his parents to that sentence that has begun and to the way in which it is required that the sentence should be sustained by a certain reciprocal position of those parents with respect to this sentence.

But let us say, because we have to express ourselves, that there is here, if you wish, in the neutral, an alternative: to be or not to be this phallus. You can easily see that there is here a considerable step to be taken to understand simply what is involved between this being or not being the phallus, and what is involved at a particular moment, must all the same be waited for and discovered, something completely different, which is "to have or to have not", as can also be said, basing oneself on another literary quotation, in other words, to have or not to have the phallus.

It is not the same thing, between one and the other something must have been surmounted, and let us not forget, that what is involved in the castration complex, is that something which is never articulated, which makes itself almost completely mysterious, because we know that it is on the castration complex that these two happenings depend: that, on the one hand, the boy becomes a man, on the other hand, that the girl becomes a woman; but that this question of having or not having one is settled even for the one who, in the end, is entitled to have one, namely the man, through the intermediary of something that is called the castration complex, which consequently presupposes that, to have it, there must have been a moment when he did not have it. Namely that it would not be called the castration complex

if, in some way, the following were not put in the foreground: that, in order to have it, it must first be posed that it is possible not to have it, that this possibility of being castrated is essential in the assumption of the fact of having it, the phallus.

This then is the step that must be surmounted, it is here that at some moment the father must intervene, efficaciously, really, effectively, because you see that up to the present I was able - the very thread of my discourse showed it - I was able to speak to you about things just from the point of view of the subject; he accepts or he does not accept. In the measure that he does not accept, he is led, man or woman, into being the phallus.

But now, for the next step, it is essential to make the father effectively intervene, I am not saying that he does not already intervene effectively before this, but that my discourse, up to the present, was able to leave him in the background, or even to dispense with him. But from now on when there is a question of having or not having it, we are forced to take "him" into account, he who first of all must, I underline it for you, be already constituted as symbol outside the subject. Because if he is not constituted as symbol outside the subject, no one is going to be able to really intervene as vested with this symbol, but it is as a real person *qua* vested with this symbol that he is going to intervene now in an effective manner at the next stage.

This is where in the agency of the real father there are situated the different phases which we evoked the last day, namely the real father, to the degree that he can impose a prohibition: and we pointed out that, in the matter, for example, of prohibiting the first manifestations of the sexual instinct which begins to reach its first maturation in the subject, the first occasions that the subject makes something of his instrument, even exhibits it, puts it at the service of the mother, for this there is no need for the father. I would even go further on this point, what usually happens, which is something still very close to imaginary identification, namely that the subject shows himself to the mother, makes her offers, most of the time what happens is something which, as we saw last year in connection with little Hans, happens on the level of comparison, of imaginary disparagement. The mother is quite sufficient to show the child the extent to which what he offers, is insufficient, and she is also sufficient to prohibit his use of the new instrument.

The father comes into play, it is quite certain, as bearer of the law, as prohibiting the object which is the mother. This, we know, is fundamental, but it is completely outside the question as it is effectively brought into play in regard to the child. We know that the function of the father, the name of the father is linked to the prohibition of incest, but no one has ever dreamt of putting in the forefront of the castration complex, the fact that the father, effectively, promulgates the law of the prohibition of incest. It is sometimes said, but it is never articulated by the father, if I may say, as a legislator speaking *ex cathedra*. He is an obstacle between the child and the mother, he is the bearer of the law, if I may say, by right, but in fact, he intervenes in a different way, and I would say his lack of intervention is also manifested in a different way; this is what we are circumscribing more closely. In other words, the father in so far as he is the bearer, culturally, of the law, the father in so far as he is invested by the signifier of the father, intervenes in the Oedipus complex in a fashion that is more concrete, more graduated, I might say, which it is now a matter of articulating and which is what we wish, to articulate today.

And it is here that it appears that the "non-uselessness" of the little schema that I commented for you for the whole of the first trimestre, to the enormous weariness of some, it seems,..... does not seem however to be completely useless.

I recall for you what we must always return to, that it is because and in so far as the intention, I mean "the desire that has passed to the state of demand" in the subject, has gone through something which, here and now, is constituted, namely that as regards that to which he addresses himself, namely his object, his primordial object, the mother, the desire is something that articulates itself, and in a way its whole progress, its whole entry into this world, this lower world which is not simply a world in the sense that one can find in it ways of saturating one's needs, but a world where the word reigns, in that it submits the desire of everyone to the law of the desire of the other, but by this very fact, in so far as it breaks through more or less successfully this line of the signifying chain, in so far as it is there, latent and already Structuring the mother, that the demand of the young subject, the first test he undergoes of his relationship to a first "other", she who is his mother in so far as he has already symbolized her, it is in so far as he has already symbolized her that he addresses her in a way that is more or less of a wail, but which is already articulated because this first symbolization is linked to the first articulations, it is therefore in so far as this intention, this demand, has crossed the signifying chain that it can assert itself with regard to the maternal object.

In this measure, the child who has constituted his mother as subject, on the basis of the first symbolization itself, finds himself entirely subjected to what we can call, but only by way of anticipation, "the law", but it is only a metaphor, I mean that the metaphor that is in the term "law" must be unfolded, to give its true position to this term at the moment that I am using it.

The law of the mother, is, of course, the fact that the mother is a speaking being and this suffices to legitimate my saying "the law of the mother". Nevertheless, this law is, if I may say so, an uncontrolled law. This law is in addition, in any case for the subject, simply the fact that there is "law", namely that something in his desire is completely dependent on something which, without any doubt is already articulated, namely as such, and is of the order of law. But this law is entirely in the subject who is its support, namely in the good or bad will of the mother, the good or bad mother. And this is why I propose this new term which, you will see, is not all that new, it is enough to push it a little to rediscover in it something which the tongue did not find by chance. The principle that we put forward here, is that there is no subject if there is no signifier to ground him. It is in the measure that there have been these first symbolizations constituted by the signifying couple, the first subject and the mother that it is necessary to know what, with reference to these terms, is meant by reality or non-reality at the start of the child's life, autoerotism or non-autoerotism, you will see that things will become particularly clear from the moment that you ask these questions, therefore, with reference to this subject, the child, the one from whom the demand emanates, the one in whom desire is formed, and the whole of analysis is a dialectic of desire.

The subject delineates himself, sketches himself, as "a-subject"; he is an a-subject because he first experiences and senses himself as profoundly subjectivities (*assujetti*) to the whim of the one he depends on, even if this whim is an articulated whim. What I am putting forward to you is required in all our experience.

For example, I take the first example that occurs to me, you were able to see last year that our little Hans who found such an atypical outcome for his Oedipus complex, who namely did not find the outcome that we are now going to try to sketch out, who only finds a substitute, which requires this all-purpose horse, to make use of for everything that will be lacking for him at the moment of break-through which is properly speaking the stage of the assumption of the symbolic as Oedipus complex, where I am leading you today, who makes up therefore by means of this horse which is at once the father, the phallus, the little sister, anything you like, but which is essentially something which, precisely, corresponds to what I am going to show you now. Remember how he gets out of it and how it is symbolized in the last dream; what he summons in place of the father, namely this imaginary and all-powerful being who is called the "plumber"; this plumber is there, precisely, to "de-subjectivate" something. Because little Hans' anxiety, and it is essentially, I told you, the anxiety of being subjectivated in so far as, literally, he realizes, from a certain moment, because one does not know where he could be lead to, by being subjectivated in that way. You remember the schema, the schema of the cart that begins to move, which embodies the centre of his fear; it is precisely from that moment that little Hans sets up in his life a certain number of centres of fear, these centres of fear around which precisely there will pivot the reestablishment of his security, fear, or something that has its source in the real. Fear is an element of the child's security, in so far as it is thanks to these fears, that he gives to the other, to that anxiety-making a-subjectivation that he experiences when there appears the lack of the external domain of the other plane, where it is necessary that something should appear so that he will not be purely and simply an a-subject.

This is where we have got to in it, it is here that there should be placed the remark that this "other" to whom he addresses himself, namely "the mother", has a certain relationship - this again, is said by everyone, has been said by everyone - a certain relationship which is a relationship with the father, and everyone has noticed that a lot depends on these relationships with the father. Experience has proved that the father, as they say, does not play his role, does not play his role - I do not need to recall that the last day I spoke to you about all the forms of paternal lack concretely designated in terms of inter-human relationships - experience proves, in fact, that this is the way it is, but nothing articulates sufficiently that what is in question, is not so much the relationships of the mother to the father in a vague sense, where it would be a question of something that is of the order of a kind of rivalry of prestige between the two, which has, of course, come to converge on the subject of the child. This schema of convergence is not false. The duality of the two agencies is absolutely necessary, without it this ternate could not exist, but that is not enough, and, everyone agrees, that what happens between the two is what is essential.

And here, we come to what are called "the bonds of love and respect", the position of the mother - and we fall back into the rut of the sociological analysis of the environment - around which some particular authors make revolve the whole analysis of little Hans, namely if the mother had been nice enough, affectionate with the father, etc...

Without articulating what is essential, it is not so much a matter of personal relationships between the father and the mother, and of knowing if one or other is up to it or not, it is properly a matter of a moment that should be lived as such and which concerns the relationships not just of the person of the mother with the person of the father, but of the mother with the word of the father, with the father in so far as what he says is not absolutely equivalent to nothing.

The function in which: 1) the name of the father intervenes, the only signifier of the father; 2) the articulated word of the father; 3) the law in so far as the father is in a more or less intimate relationship with it, that is also very important. In other words the relationship within which the mother grounds the father as mediator of something that is beyond her own law, and her whims, which is purely and simply the law as such, the father therefore *qua* name of the father, namely as the whole development of the Freudian doctrine introduces and promotes him, namely as closely bound up with this enunciating of the law, that is what is essential and it is in this that he is accepted or not accepted by the child as the one who deprives or does not deprive the mother of the object of her desire.

In other words, we should, in order to understand the Oedipus complex, consider three moments that I will try to schematize for you with the help of our little diagram from the first trimestre. (Drawing on the board)

The first moment: What the child seeks, namely the desire of a desire, 'to be able to satisfy his mother's desire, namely "to be or not to be" the object of the mother's desire, and in the measure that he introduces his demand and where, here, there is going to be something that is its fruit, its result, and on the path of which there is posed this point that corresponds to what is the "ego", and which is here his other "ego", that which he identifies himself with, this something "other" that he will try to be, here, namely the satisfying object for the mother. Once something begins to stir at the bottom of his tummy he will start showing it to her, namely, "am I indeed capable of doing something", with the disappointments that follow, he seeks it and he finds it in the measure and to the extent that the mother is questioned by the demand of the child. She is also something, herself, who is pursuing her own personal desire, and situates its constituents somewhere here (on the board).

In the first moment and at the first stage, this is what happens: it is in a way in a mirror that the subject identifies himself with what is the object of desire of the mother, and this is, what I might call, the primitive phallic stage, that in which the paternal metaphor acts of itself, in so far as, already, in the world, the primacy of the phallus is established by the existence of the symbol, of discourse and of the law.

But the child, himself, only grasps the results; to please the mother - if you will allow me to go quickly and to use picture words - it is necessary and sufficient to be the phallus and, at this stage, many things point in a particular direction, it is in the measure that the message here is realized in a satisfying fashion that a certain number of problems and disturbances may take root, among them those identifications that we have qualified as perverse.

Second moment: I have told you that, on the imaginary plane, the father intervenes well and truly as one who deprives the mother, namely that what is here addressed as a demand to the Other is referred on to a higher court, as I might put it, because in some ways that about which we question the other, always encounters in the other this other of the other, namely her own law in so far as it traverses every part of her. And it is at this level that something occurs which means that what comes back to the child is purely and simply the law of the father in so far as it is conceived imaginarily by the subject as depriving the mother. It is, I might say, the nodal and negative stage by which this something that detaches the subject from his identification attaches him at the same time to the first appearance of the law in the shape of this fact: that the mother is dependent on it, dependent on an object, on an

object which is no longer simply the object of her desire, but an object that the other has or does not have.

The close liaison between this reference by the mother to a law that is not her own with the fact that in reality the object of her desire is sovereignly possessed by that same other to whose law she refers, here is the key of the relationship of the Oedipus complex and what constitutes the character which is so essential, so decisive of this relationship of the mother in so far as I ask you to isolate it as a relationship not to the father, but to the word of the father.

Remember little Hans last year. The father is the nicest man imaginable, he is as present as you could wish, he is as intelligent as you could wish, he is as friendly with Hans as you could wish, he does not seem to have been in any sense a fool, he brought little Hans to Freud, which in those days was proof of how enlightened he was; nevertheless the father is totally inoperative, in so far as there is one thing that is completely clear, whatever the relations between the two parental figures, that whatever the father says he might as well be whistling, I mean as far as the mother is concerned. Note that, as regards little Hans, the mother is at the same time the one who prohibits, namely plays the castrating role which might be seen as attributed to the father, but on the plane of reality she says to him: "Don't touch that, it's disgusting", which does not stop her, on the practical plane, from completely admitting little Hans into her intimate life, namely that she permits him, encourages him to hold onto the function of imaginary object which is the way little Hans, effectively, is of the greatest use to her. He well and truly embodies her phallus for her and little Hans is as such maintained in the position of a-subject (*assujet*). He is subjectivated (*assujetti*) and this is the whole source of his anxiety and his phobia. It is in so far as and essentially in so far as the position of the father is put in doubt by the fact that it is not his word that lays down the law for the mother that the problem is introduced. But that is not all, it seems that in the case of little Hans, what is going to come now, namely the third moment, this third moment is essential and is also missing. This is why I stressed last year that the outcome of the Oedipus complex in the case of little Hans is a flawed outcome, that little Hans, even though he got out of it thanks to his phobia, will have a love life that is completely marked by a particular style, an imaginary style whose prolongations I indicated for you in connection with the case of Leonardo da Vinci.

This third stage is the following, and it is as important as the second, because it is on it that the outcome of the Oedipus complex depends; that which the father testified that he gave it in so far as, and only in so far as he is the bearer of the "law", it is on this that there depends the possession or non-possession of this phallus by the paternal subject. It is in so far as this second stage has been traversed that, in the second moment, that which the father, I might say, as "supporter" of the law, that which the father promised, he must keep to, he may give or refuse in so far as he has it, but he must prove at a given moment the fact that he has it, has the phallus; it is in so far as he intervenes at the third moment as the one who has the phallus and not as the one who is it, that something can be produced that reinstates the agency of the phallus as the object desired by the mother and no longer just as an object of which the father can deprive her, the all-powerful father is the one who deprives, moreover it is on this level that up to a certain time the analyses of the Oedipus complex dwelt, at the time when it was thought that all the ravages of the Oedipus complex depended on the omnipotence of the father, this was the only moment that was considered, except that it was not underlined that the castration that was carried out there, was the privation of the mother, and not of the child.

The third moment is the following: It is in so far as the father can give the mother what she desires, can give it because he has it, and here there intervenes the fact precisely of power in the genital sense of the word, let us say that the father is a potent father, that, in this third moment, there is produced the restitution, if you like, of the relation of the mother to the father on the real plane, that the relation as such of the other Who is the father with the ego (schema) of the mother and the object of her desire and that with which one can identify oneself at the lower level where the child is in the position of demander, that the identification can be made with this paternal agency which was realized here in these three moments:

- 1) In a veiled form where as not yet manifest, but a father existing in the realities of the world; I mean in the world, because of the fact that, in the world, the law of the symbol reigns, already the question of the phallus is posed somewhere else in the mother, where the child must locate it.
- 2) By his privative presence in that he is the one who supports the law, and this occurs no longer in a veiled fashion but in a fashion mediated by the mother, who is the one who put forward as the one who, for her, lays down the law.
- 3) The father in so far as he is revealed - he is revealed in so far as, he, "has it" - is the way out of the Oedipus complex and a favourable way out in so far as the identification with the father happens at this third moment, the moment that he intervenes as the one who "has it". It is an identification that is called the "ego-ideal", and which appears at this level in the symbolic triangle, precisely there, at the pole where the child is, and in the measure that it is at the maternal pole that everything that from now on will be reality begins to be constituted. And it is at the level of the father that everything that from now on will be the "super-ego" begins to be constituted.

It is in so far as the father intervenes as real and as a potent father in a third moment, that which succeeds the privation or the castration inflicted on the mother, on the mother as imagined at the level of the subject, in her own imaginary position of dependency, it is in so far as he intervenes at the third moment as the one who, for his part, has it, that he is interiorized as ego-ideal in the subject and that, as I might say, let us not forget, at that very moment the Oedipus complex dissolves.

What does that mean? It does not mean that at that very moment the child is going to take up the exercise of all his sexual powers, as you know well. Quite the contrary. He does not exercise them at all. The way out of the Oedipus complex consists in this: in fact, one could say that apparently, he is stripped of the exercise of the functions which had begun to awaken.

Nevertheless, if everything that Freud articulated has a meaning, it means that he has in his pocket all the title-deeds for him to make use of in the future. Here the paternal metaphor plays a role that is really the one we could expect from a metaphor; it is to end up with the establishment of something which is of the order of the signifier which is there in reserve; its signification will develop later. The child has every right to be a man and what will later be contested in those rights at puberty, will be to the extent that there is something which has not completely fulfilled this metaphorical identification with the image of the father, in so far as it will have constituted itself, but through these three moments.

I will take this opportunity to remark that this means that in so far as he is virile a man is always more or less his own metaphor. This is even what attaches to the term virility a certain shadow of ridicule, which must after all be taken into account.

I would also like to point out that the outcome of the Oedipus complex is different as everyone knows for the woman, because for her, this third stage, as Freud underlines - read his article on "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex" - for her things are much simpler, she does not have to make this identification nor keep these title-deeds to virility; she, she knows where it is, she knows where she has to go to get it, it is towards the father, towards the one who has it, and that also shows you how it is that what is called femininity, a true femininity always has also a little dimension of alibi, real women always have something a little bit astray (*égaré*) about them, this is a suggestion I make simply to stress for you the concrete dimension in which this development is situated.

To come back and to conclude by justifying my term metaphor, you have gathered that today it is only a diagram. We will come back to each of these stages and we will see what is attached to it. Pay careful attention to the fact that what is in question here, is at the most fundamental level exactly the same thing as what is called on the maniac and common terrain in the study of the long metaphor, because the metaphor with the formula of it that I gave you means nothing but this: that the two chains, of S S S, S' S' S', S'' S'' S'' (writing on the board) which are signifiers which are connected with all the walking signifieds that are in circulation because they are always on the point of slipping; the pinning down that I talk about or again the buttoning point is only a mythical business, because nobody has ever been able to pin a signification to a signifier; but, on the contrary, what you can do, is pin a signifier to a signifier and see what that produces.

But, in this case, something new is always produced which is sometimes as unexpected as a chemical reaction, namely the emergence of a new signification; in so far as the father is in the signifier, in the other, in the signifier which simply represents this: the existence of the link of the signifying chain as such; in that he places himself, as I might say, above the signifying chain, in a metaphorical position, it is to the degree that the mother makes of the father the one who sanctions by his presence the existence as such of the locus of the law, it is to the degree that she does this and only in that measure. And this then leaves an immense latitude as to the ways and means in which this can be realized, and this is also why it is compatible. It is in this measure that the third moment of the Oedipus complex can be gone through, namely in the identification stage, in which it is a question for the boy of identifying himself with the father *qua* possessor of the penis, for the girl, of recognizing the man *qua* the one who possesses it.

We will see what follows the next time.

Seminar 11: Wednesday 29 January 1958

I am talking to you about the paternal metaphor. I hope you have realized that I am talking to you about the castration complex. This is important, because the fact that I am talking about the paternal metaphor does not mean that I am talking to you about the Oedipus complex. If it was centred on the Oedipus complex, it would give rise to an enormous number of questions. I cannot say everything at once.

The schema that I brought forward, particularly the last day, as constituting what I tried to make you understand regarding the three moments of the Oedipus complex, this is something which I continually stress as being constituted elsewhere than in the subject's adventure, in the way that the subject has to introduce himself into this something which is constituted elsewhere, and which may be of interest under different headings, to psychologists, namely those who project individual relationships into what can be called the inter-human, or inter-psychological, or social field, or group tensions can try to inscribe this on their schema if they are able.

Likewise for the sociologists, I have said enough to indicate that even they must take something else into account, and in particular structural relationships, which in this instance are what we have in common, for the simple reason that it is the ultimate root of social existence itself, because it is unjustifiable socially, I mean that it cannot be based on any social finality for even the social existence of the Oedipus complex.

But for our part, we find ourselves in the position of seeing how a subject has to introduce himself into the relationship which is that of the Oedipus complex.

It was not I who perceived, who invented, who began to teach that he does not introduce himself into it without the male sexual organ playing a role of the first importance as the centre, the pivot, the object of everything that is related to this order of events, called the castration complex, which, it must be said, is very confused, very badly circumscribed. It continues nonetheless to be referred to in case studies, and elsewhere, in terms which, it must be said, are surprising in that they do not evoke more dissatisfaction in readers and listeners.

I am trying in this sort of psychoanalytic fulmination, to give you a letter that will not become lost in the fog, I mean to distinguish in concepts the different levels of what is involved in the castration complex; this castration complex which will also be brought into play at the level of a perversion which I would describe as primary, on the imaginary plane, or of a perversion which we will, perhaps, be able to talk about a little more today, but which is as intimately linked to the completion of the Oedipus complex, as the word sexuality.

In order to see things more clearly, I will all the same take up again, because it is fairly new, the way in which I articulated the Oedipus complex for you the last day, taking as centre this phenomenon linked to the particular function as object which the male sexual organ plays in it. I think it is appropriate to go over these steps again, to make sure they are clear; and also, in this connection, I will try to show you, as I promised, how it throws at least some light on the well-known, but badly situated, phenomena of homosexuality for example.

You have to start with schemas directly extracted from the pith of experience. Once you start trying to establish moments, they are not necessarily chronological moments, but all the same there must be some reference to them, because chronological moments also can only occur in a certain sequence.

You have then, as I told you, in a first moment, the relationship of the child, not as is said to the mother, but to the desire of the mother, a desire of desire. I had an opportunity to become aware of the fact that this is not a very usual formula, and that some people had some difficulty in accommodating themselves to this notion, that it is different to desire something and to desire the desire of the subject.

What you have to understand, is that of course this desire of desire, undoubtedly implies that one is dealing with something, with the first primordial object, which is in fact the mother. I mean that she has been constituted in such a way that her desire is something that can undoubtedly be another desire, specifically in the desire of the child.

Where is the dialectic of this first stage to be situated? Where you see that the child is particularly isolated, stripped of everything except the desire of this other whom he has already constituted as being the other, who can be present or absent.

Let us try today to circumscribe very exactly what the relationship is with what is involved. What is introduced here, namely the object of the mother's desire, what must in fact be surmounted, is this; it is something that we are going to call *d*, namely the mother's desire, and it must be seen that this desire which is desired by the child, let us provisionally call it (*d*), is going to be able to rejoin this something which is constituted at the level of the mother in an infinitely more elaborated fashion. The mother is a little bit further advanced in existence than the child who is the object of her desire.

We have already posed that this object *qua* pivot of the whole subjective dialectic, is the phallus; the phallus *qua* desired by the mother, which supposes moreover different states from the point of view of the structure of the relationship of the mother to the phallus, because behind this phallus, in so far as it is for the mother an object linked to a primordial role in the structuring of her subjectivity, it can be, this is the very thing that is going to complicate everything that follows, in different states *qua* object, but for the moment let us be content with taking it.

I consider that we can only introduce some order, in the sense of correct and normal perspective into all analytic phenomena, in so far as by starting from the structure and the circulation of signifiers, we always have stable and secure reference points, because they are structural references linked to what could be called the paths of signifying construction. This is what serves us as guide, and that is why here we do not have to worry any further about what this phallus is for the mother, the real mother in a particular case. There is perhaps something here, and we will come back to it, but by simply relying on our usual little schema, the phallus is situated here, it is a metonymical object.

In the signifier, we can content ourselves with situating it like that. It is a metonymical object essentially in this respect that it is in any case that which, because of the existence of the signifying chain, will circulate like a ferret everywhere in the signified. It is what results in the signified from the existence of the signifier, experience discovers, shows us that this signified plays a major role, and is in a way that of universal object for the subject.

This is the really surprising thing, this is what scandalizes those who would like the situation concerning the sexual object to be symmetrical; just as the man has to discover, and then adapt to a whole series of adventures, the use of his instrument, it would be the same for the woman, namely that in her case it would be the vagina that is at the centre of the whole dialectic.

It is nothing of the kind, and this is precisely what analysis discovered. In the same way we could say that it is the best sanction that there is a field in man which is the field of analysis, and which is not simply that of the discovery of a more or less vigorous instinctual development, but of everything that is superimposed on anatomy, namely on the real existence of individuals.,

How can one conceive what is at stake, namely that the child, who has the desire to be the object of the mother's desire, reaches satisfaction? Obviously there is no other way than that of coming to the place of this object of her desire.

What does this mean? Here is the child whom we have had several occasions to represent in the form of this schema: the relationship of his demand to this something which is not only in him, but which is first of all an encounter essentially in its first role, namely the existence of the signifying articulation as such.

Here there is still nothing, at least in principle. I mean that the constitution of the subject as "I" - I am talking about discourse - is not yet necessarily differentiated at all, it is already implied by the first signifying modulation. The "I" is not obliged to designate itself as such in the discourse, in order to be the support of that discourse. In an interjection, in an order: "come", in an appeal: "you", there is an "I", but there *qua* latent, this is what we will express here by putting simply a line of dots, just as the metonymical object is not yet constituted for the subject.

Here is the desire expected from the mother, and there what is going to be the result of the encounter between the child's appeal and the existence of the mother *qua* other, namely a message.

It is clear that in order for the child to arrive at this, to coincide with the object of the mother's desire, namely with something that we can already at this level here represent as what is immediately within her reach, to be reached with, let us draw a dotted line, but for different reasons because that which is beyond the mother is completely inaccessible to him.

It is necessary and sufficient that this "I" which here in the child's discourse comes to be constituted at the level of that other who is the mother, that this "I" of the mother should become the child's other, and that what circulates here at the level of the mother in so far as she herself articulates the object of her desire, should come to fulfil here its function as message for the child. Namely in the final analysis that the child momentarily renounces anything whatsoever that might be his own word; it is not difficult for him, because his own word is at that time still very much at a formative stage, that the child should in fact receive in the form of a message, which is produced here, which is the completely raw message of the mother's desire, should receive here at a level which is metonymical compared to what the mother says absolutely, should receive at the metonymical level his identification with the mother's object.

This is extremely theoretical, but if it is not grasped from the start, it is altogether impossible to understand what must happen afterwards, namely precisely the coming into play, the introduction of this beyond of the mother which is constituted by her relationship to another discourse which must be on this occasion that of the father.

Therefore it is to the degree that the child assumes, and he must assume it, but on the other hand he only assumes it in a sort of raw fashion in the reality of this discourse, first assumes the mother's desire, that he is open to being able himself to become master in place of the metonymy of the mother, namely to become what I called the last day her "a-subject".

You have seen in some way on what displacement this is based, precisely on what will be called by us on this occasion primitive identification, and which consists precisely in the sort of exchange which ensures that the "I" of the subject has arrived at the place of the mother *qua* other, while the "I" of the mother has become his other.

This is indeed what has happened in this sort of raising by a notch in the little ladder of our schema, which has just taken place in this second moment.

The central point, the pivotal point, the mediating point, or more exactly the moment when the father appears as mediated by the mother in the Oedipus complex, is very precisely that in which he now makes himself felt as prohibitor. I said that here he is mediated; he is mediated because it is as prohibitor that he is going to appear. Where? In the mother's discourse. I would like to point out to you here, that just as a little while ago this discourse of the mother was grasped in the raw state in this first stage of the Oedipus complex, to say here that he is mediated, does not mean that we are again bringing into play what the mother as subject makes of the father's word, it means that this word of the father intervenes effectively in what results in the form of the mother's discourse. He appears therefore at this moment less veiled than in the first stage, but he is not completely revealed. This is what the use of the term mediated means on this occasion.

In other words, he intervenes at this stage here in terms of message for the mother, he is the one who is speaking now, and what he says, is a prohibition, it is a "not to" which is transmitted here at the level at which the child receives the expected message from the mother. It is a message about a message, and this particular form of a message about a message which I will tell you that, very surprisingly, the linguists do not distinguish as such; which shows us how important it is that we should perform our function with the linguists; a message about a message, is the message of prohibition. It is not just one for the child, and already at that époque "Thou shalt not sleep with thy mother", is also for the mother: "Thou shalt not re-establish all the well known forms of what is called the maternal instinct", which here encounters an obstacle: "Thou shalt not resume possession of what you yourself have produced". Everyone knows that the primitive form of the maternal instinct is manifested in certain animals, perhaps even more than in man, by resuming possession orally of what, as we so elegantly put it, has come out of the other end.

This is very precisely what is in question. This prohibition arrives here as such, just as one could say here that something appears which is precisely the father *qua* other, and in principle it is from this that there exists the potentiality, the virtuality which in the last analysis is salutary, which comes from the fact that because of this the child is profoundly questioned, disturbed in his position as a-subject.

In other words, it is in so far as the object of the mother's desire is put in question by the paternal prohibition, that the paternal prohibition prevents the circle from closing in on him completely, namely that he should become purely and simply the object of the mother's desire, that the whole process which normally should stop there, namely that the symbolic relationship to the other has already implicitly the threefold aspect, that there exists in the child-mother relationship, because it is not her that he desires, but her desire. There is already this ternate. It is already a symbolic relationship. Nevertheless, everything about this desire of desire is put in question, from the moment that its first completion, its first success, namely his discovery of the object of the desire of the mother has completely escaped because of the paternal prohibition, and leaves the child's desire of the mother's desire in the lurch.

This second stage, which contains somewhat fewer potentialities than the first, is quite observable and perceptible, but essentially one might say instantaneous, transitory, is nevertheless capital, because in the last analysis it is what is at the heart of what can be called the moment of privation of the Oedipus complex. It is to the degree that the child is himself ousted, and for his own greater good, that this ideal position which his mother and himself might be satisfied with, that he should fulfil this function of being her metonymical object. It is to the extent that he is ousted from it, that the third relationship, the following stage, can be established, the fruitful one in which he becomes something else. He becomes this something else that I told you about the last day, that which involves the identification with the father and the virtual title to have what the father has.

If I gave you the last day a kind of rapid sketch of the three moments of the Oedipus complex, it was in order not to have to begin again today, or more exactly to have plenty of time today to take it up again step by step.

Let us pause here for a moment, and then we will get to homosexuality. It is almost a parenthesis, but it is still important.

The way that the father intervenes at that particular time in the dialectic of the Oedipus complex, is extremely important to reflect on, because it is there - and you will be able to see it more clearly in the last article that I wrote for the next issue of *La Psychanalyse*, which gives a summary of what I said the year we spoke about the Freudian structures of psychosis. The level of publication involved did not allow me to give this schema because it would have required far too many explanations in the article, but when you have read the article, in the not too distant future I hope, you can take up again in your notes what I am going to show you now, which consists in the following: that in so far as the name of the father, the father *qua* symbolic function, the father at the level of what happens here between message and code, and between code and message, is precisely *Verworfen*, there no longer exists here what I represented by the dotted line, namely that by which the father intervenes *qua* Law, as a message of "not to" onto the mother's message to the child, but in a pure and simple, raw, fashion, and also as a completely raw source of a code which is beyond the mother, which you can see as tangible and perfectly localizable on this schema of the conduction of the signifiers, what happens when having been appealed to at an essential, vital, turning point to respond with the name of the father where it ought to be, namely at the place where it cannot respond because it has never been there. President Schreber sees arising instead very precisely this structure realized by the real, massive, intervention of the father beyond the mother, but not absolutely supported by him *qua* supporter of the Law, which ensures that President Schreber hears at the major, fruitful moment of his psychosis, what?

Very exactly two fundamental kinds of hallucination- which are of course never isolated as such in the classical manuals.

To understand something about hallucination, it would be better to read what is no doubt a remarkable and exceptional work by a psychotic like President Schreber, than to read all the best psychiatric authors who have approached the problem of hallucination, with already in their heads the famous academic series they learnt in philosophy: sensation, perception, perception without an object, and other idiocies, while President Schreber himself distinguishes very well two orders of things: the voices that speak in the fundamental tongue, and whose proper role it is, by speaking this fundamental tongue, to teach the subject its code by this very word. This means that everything that concerns, everything that relates to the messages he receives in the fundamental tongue, is at the same time made up of words which neological or not, they are that in their own way, consist in teaching the subject what they are in a new code, one which literally teaches him a new world, a signifying universe.

In other words, there is a series of hallucinations that are messages about a neo-code, something therefore that presents itself as coming from the other. It is hallucinatory in a really terrible way, and in the form of a message about the code constituted as such in this other, and on the other hand, another type of message which presents itself essentially as interrupted messages, you remember these little bits of sentences ; "He must namely", "Now I wish", etc. You might say the beginnings of commands, and precisely in certain cases, even veritable principles: "Finish something when you have started it", and so on.

In short, these messages which essentially present themselves as pure messages, orders, or interrupted orders, as pure inductive forces in the subject, and also perfectly localizable from two dissociated aspects, message and code, into which the intervention of the father's discourse is resolved when-this something is abolished at its origins, and has never been in any way integrated into the life of the subject which is very precisely what gives its coherence, its self-sanction to the father's discourse, namely that by which having finished his discourse, he comes back on it, he sanctions [it] as Law.

For the following stage which supposes in normal conditions that the father can come into play, we said the last day what was involved, namely that it is in so far as the father is going to intervene to give, in so far as he has it, what is in question in the privation of the phallus, which has intervened as a central term of the evolution of the Oedipus complex, the three moments of the Oedipus complex. It is to the extent that he is going effectively to appear as an act of giving, no longer in the acts of the mother and therefore still half-veiled, but in discourse. The mother herself, in so far as the message of the father becomes the message of the mother, becomes the message which authorizes and permits, which will produce this something which you see clearly that my schema from last day means nothing other than this, that in so far as this message of the father is incarnated as such, it is able to produce something that is the raising of the schema by a notch, namely that the subject can receive from the father's message what he attempted to from the mother's message. But here, through the mediation, through the intermediary of the gift or the permission given to the mother, namely that what he has when all is said and done, and this is effectively realized by the phase of the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, what he has is that he is allowed to have a penis for later on.

It really consists, as we said the last day, in having the title deed in his pocket. It is also, to evoke an amusing historical reference: a woman whose husband wanted to be sure

that she was faithful to him, had given him a certificate in writing that she was faithful to him, and then she went off wherever she liked saying: "Oh, what a fine letter La Châtre has!". Well this man Le Châtre and our castrated little man are of the same order, they also have at the end of the Oedipus complex this fine letter which is not nothing, because it is on this fine letter that there will consequently rest the fact that he can assume in all tranquillity, that is in the most successful case, the fact of having a penis, in other words of being someone identical to his father.

But it is precisely at this quite ambiguous stage, whose two aspects, as you can see, are always in a way likely to be turned one into the other, that there is something rather abstract, which is nonetheless dialectical in this relationship that exists between the two moments that I have just spoken to you about, that in which the father intervenes as prohibiting and depriving, and that on the other hand where he intervenes as permissive and giving, but giving at the level of the mother. He can skip everything else.

To see what can happen, we must now put ourselves at the level of the mother. At the level of the mother we must pose again for ourselves the question of the paradox that is represented by this central character of the phallic object, of the imaginary object as such. The mother for her part, is a woman whom we suppose to have arrived at the plenitude of her capacities of feminine voracity, and it is quite clear that the objection which is made to this imaginary function of the phallus is quite valid, is the mother, and this - but the phallus is not purely and simply that, this fine imaginary object - she has had a strong liking for some time already; in other words, that the phallus at the level of the mother is not just a phallic object, it is also quite certainly something that has fulfilled its function by then at the instinctual level, at the level of its function as a normal instrument of an instinct, which it is, in other words, considered by the mother as the "inject" (*I'injet*), if I can express myself thus by a word that does not simply mean that she introduces herself to it, but that it is introduced into her, but that this "in" also indicates the relationship of this object to its function at the instinctual level. It is an object which has its instinctual function.

It is because man has to pass through the whole forest of signifiers to rejoin these primitive and instinctively valid objects, that we are confronted with this whole dialectic of the Oedipus complex. All the same, thank God, he gets there from time to time. Otherwise the whole thing would have died out long ago for lack of combatants, given the excessive difficulty of reaching the real object.

This is one of the possibilities from the mother's point of view. For the others, we must try to see, in order to be able to distinguish from this, to see what is the meaning for her, of this something that consists then in her relationship to the phallus, in so far as like every human being, it is what is closest to her heart.

We can very easily distinguish alongside this inject function, the "adjunct" (*adjet*) function, namely the imaginary adherence of something which is or is not conferred on her as having permission to desire it as such at the level that we have got to, namely as something which, at the imaginary level, is given or not given to her, is lacking to her, and therefore intervening as lack, as something of which she has been deprived, as the object of that *Penisneid*, of that continually felt privation whose incidence we recognize in feminine psychology, or on the contrary as something that is all the same given to her from the place where it is, and you can clearly see that this is another function, that it is something different, even though it may be confused with the primitive inject in question, and which can already

enter into the reckoning by itself in what I might call a fashion that is in a way very symbolic, and to the extent that the woman as such, while she has all the difficulties involved in the fact of seeing herself being introduced into the dialectic of the symbol in order to succeed in being integrated into the human family, has on the other hand complete access, this is absolutely certain, to this primitive and instinctual thing which establishes her in a direct relationship with what is the object, no longer here of her desire, but of her need. Having elucidated this, let us talk now about homosexuals.

Homosexuals are talked about. Homosexuals are cared for. Homosexuals are not cured, and the most extraordinary thing, is that they are not cured, despite the fact that they are absolutely curable. Because there is something that emerges in the clearest fashion in case studies, it is that what is called masculine homosexuality, is very properly an inversion with respect to the object which is motivated, which is structured at the level of a full and completed Oedipus complex, namely at the level of an Oedipus complex that has arrived at this third stage that we spoke about just now, or more exactly at something which, in this third stage, while realizing it, noticeably modifies it so that it can be said that the male homosexual - the other one too, but today for reasons of clarity we are going to limit ourselves to the male - the male homosexual has fully realized his Oedipus complex, and you will tell me: "We knew that already. He has realized it in an inverted form". If you are satisfied with this way of putting it, you can always stay with it, I am not obliging you to follow me, but I consider that we have a right to be more exigent, than simply to say that the reason why your daughter is mute, is that the Oedipus complex is inverted. We have to explore in the very structure of what clinical practice shows us about homosexuals, whether we cannot understand much better at what precise point this completion of the Oedipus complex takes place,

- 1) his position with all its characteristics,
- 2) the fact that he holds in a very extreme way to this position, in the sense that the homosexual, if one gives him the slightest angle or opportunity, holds fast to his homosexual position, that his relationships with the feminine object are far from being abolished, but are on the contrary profoundly structured.

It is precisely this difficulty of disturbing his position, but even more the reason why analysis in general fails, and has thus been ousted, not because of an impossibility internal to his position, but precisely because of the fact that all kinds of conditions are necessary, of travelling along the detours by which his position has become essentially precious and primordial for him, that I believe only this conception and this way of schematizing the problem, allows us to point up.

There are a certain number of traits that can be seen in the homosexual. From the first it was said: a profound and perpetual relationship with the mother. The mother is described, in the average case, as someone who, in the parental couple, has a directive function, a superior function, who has looked after the child more than the father. This is already something different; who has looked after the child, we are told, in a very castrating fashion, who is supposed to have taken very very great, meticulous care, for too long a time, of his education.

Nobody seems to suspect that in all of this not everything points in the same direction. We have to add some little supplementary links to be able to conceive that the effect of such a castrating intervention, for example, should be in the child the overvaluing of the object,

especially in this general form in which it appears in the homosexual, that no partner likely to be of interest to him can be deprived of it.

I do not want to keep you on tenterhooks, nor to appear to be posing you riddles. I think that the key to the problem of the homosexual is this; the homosexual being homosexual, with all the nuances that this implies, accords this predominant value to the blessed object, makes it a characteristic that is absolutely required in the sexual partner, in so far as in some form or other it is the mother who, in the sense that I have taught you to distinguish it, lays down the Law for the father. I have told you that the father intervened in the dialectic of desire in the Oedipus complex, in so far as the father lays down the Law for the mother. Here something which can appear in different forms, always comes down to this, that it is the mother who is found, at a decisive moment, to have laid down the Law for the father.

That means what? You are going to see, that that means very precisely the following, that at a moment when through the intervention of the father, there should have occurred the phase of the dissolution of the relationship of the subject to the object of the mother's desire, namely because of the fact that for him the possibility of identifying himself with the phallus had in fact gone, had been cut off at the root by the prohibiting intervention of the father, at that very moment he finds, in the structure of the mother, the reinforcement, the support, the something that ensures that this crisis does not happen; namely, if you wish, that at the ideal time, at the dialectical moment at which the mother should be taken as deprived of that *adjet* as such, namely that the subject in this respect does not know where to turn, at that very moment he finds security.

It holds up perfectly, because of the fact that he feels that in fact it is the mother who is the key to the situation, that she does not allow herself to be either deprived, or dispossessed. In other words, that the father can always say whatever he likes, but for some reason or other this does not have the slightest effect on them.

This does not mean then that the father has not come into play. Freud, for a very long time - I would ask you to consult the *Three Essays on Sexuality* - had said: it is not rare, and when he says it is not rare, he is not making a random remark, it is not because he is undecided that he says that it is not rare, it is because he has frequently seen it. Let us take it then in the sense of: it frequently happens, it is one of the possibilities that inversion may be determined by the downfall of an excessively prohibiting father.

In this there are two moments:

- 1) The prohibition, but also
- 2) that this prohibition has failed, in other words that here it is the mother who in the last analysis has laid down the Law.

This also explains that in every other case, when the stamp of this prohibiting father is broken, the result is always the same, and in particular that in the case where the father loves the mother too much, when he appears because of his love to be too dependent on the mother, the result is exactly the same.

I am not telling you that the result is always the same, but that in certain cases it is the same. What is involved, is not to differentiate what happens when, because the father loves

the mother too much, that gives a result other than homosexuality. I simply remark in passing that on such occasions I do not at all take refuge in the constitution, because there are differences to be established, for example of an effect of the obsessional neurosis type, and we will see it on another occasion, but for the moment I simply want to group together that different causes may have a common effect, namely that in the cases where the father loves the mother too much, he in fact finds himself in the position of being the one for whom the mother lays down the Law.

Again there are cases, and this is the interest of adopting this perspective, it is to see how it can gather together different cases, cases in which the father, the subject will testify, has always remained a sort of very distant personage, whose messages only came through the intermediary of the mother. This is what the subject testifies to.

But in reality the analysis shows that he is far from being absent, namely in particular that behind the tense relationship, often marked by all sorts of accusations, of complaints, of manifestations of aggression, as they say, concerning the mother, which constitute the text of the analysis of a homosexual, one perceives that the presence of the father as rival, namely not at all in the sense of the inverted Oedipus complex, but of the normal Oedipus complex, is uncovered, and that in the clearest fashion, and in such cases one is satisfied to say that the aggressivity against the father has been transferred onto the mother.

Here we still do not have something which is altogether clear, but all the same we have the advantage of saying something that at least sticks to the facts. What has to be discovered is why it is like that. It is like that because in the critical position in which the father was effectively a threat for the child, the child has found his solution. But notice that in this schema, it appears to be the same as the one that consists in the identification represented by the homology, the similarity between the two triangles. He reckoned that the way to hold on, because it was the best way, because the mother did not allow herself to be shaken, was to identify himself with the mother. So that it is very precisely by being in the position of the mother, but as defined in this way, that he will find himself on the one hand, in so far as he addresses himself to a partner who is then the substitute for the paternal figure, namely, as frequently appears in the phantasies, the dreams of homosexuals, that the relationship with him will consist in disarming him, in bringing him to heel, or even in a way that is quite clear in certain homosexuals, in making this substitute figure for the father, incapable of asserting himself with a woman or with women.

That on the other hand this phase contained in the requirement of the homosexual, of encountering the penile organ in his partner, corresponds very precisely to this that in the primitive position, that occupied by the mother who lays down the Law for the father, what precisely is put in question, not resolved but put in question, is namely whether the father really has or does not have one, and it is very precisely this that is demanded by the homosexual of his partner, before anything else whatsoever, and in a fashion that predominates compared to anything else. This comes before anything else, after that he will see what is to be made of it, but above all to show that he has one.

I would even go further, I would even go as far as to point out here that the note of dependency that the excessive love of the father for the mother represents for the child, consists precisely in something that you might remember, and that I hope you do remember, chosen out for you: it is namely that to love, is always to give what one does not have, and not to give what one does have. I will not go back to the reasons why I gave you this formula,

but you can be sure of it, and take it as a key formula, as a little rail, which if you keep your hand on it, will guide you, even if you do not understand a thing about it, and it is much better if you do not understand anything about it, which will guide you to the right level: to love is to give to someone who himself may or may not have what is at stake, but certainly to give what one does not have. To give on the other hand, is also to give, but it is to give what one has. That is the difference.

In any case, it is to the degree that the father shows himself to be truly loving towards the mother, that he is suspected of being suspect, of not having it, and it is from this angle that the mechanism comes into play. It is moreover the real reason for this remark I make to you: truths are never completely hidden, nor unknown when they are not articulated, we always have some inkling of them. I do not know to what degree you have noticed that this burning topic is never approached by analysts, even though it is at least as important to know whether the father loved the mother, as to know whether the mother loved the father. The question is always posed from this angle: the child had a castrating phallic mother, and all the rest, and she had an authoritarian attitude *vis-à-vis* the father: lack of love, of respect, etc.... But it is very curious to see that we never stress the relationship of the father to the mother. It is precisely in the measure that we do not know very well what to think of it, and where in short it does not appear possible for us to say anything very normative on this subject. So, at least for today, let us carefully leave this aspect of the problem to one side. I will very probably have to come back to it.

Another consequence: there is something which also appears very frequently, and which is not one of the lesser paradoxes in the analysis of homosexuals, it is something which at first sight, appears to be very paradoxical with respect to this demand for penis in the partner. It appears in the clearest fashion that there is one thing of which they are absolutely terrified, are told that it is the sight of the female organ, because it suggests ideas of castration to them. This may be true, not in the way you think, because what brings them to a halt when confronted with the female organ, is precisely that it is thought, in many cases - you come across this - to have ingested the father's phallus; that what is dreaded and feared in penetration, is precisely the encounter with this phallus.

There are dreams some of which I will cite for you, which are well recorded in the literature, and also in my practice, where it appears in the clearest fashion that at the turning point at which one can succeed in articulating what is involved in the relationship with women, it is this that emerges from time to time with regard to the possible encounter with a female vagina. It is very precisely a phallus in fact which develops as such, and which represents this insurmountable something before which the subject must not only pause, but encounter all his fears, and which gives to the danger of the vagina a completely different meaning than the one it was thought necessary to put under the rubric of the *vagina dentata* which also exists, but which with regard to the vagina, in so far as it contains the hostile phallus, the paternal phallus, the phallus which is at the same time phantastical, present and absorbed by the mother, whose real power is held by the mother herself, is there precisely in the feminine organ, this being an adequate articulation for all the complexity of the relationships of the homosexual with the different terms which in a way, and it is precisely because we have here, one might say, a stable situation, not at all a dual one, a fully secure situation, a situation with three legs, that it is never envisaged, except as being sustained, I might say, from the point of view of a dual relationship, that never in the labyrinth of the positions of the homosexual, and in consequence through the error of the analyst, the situation never succeeds in being entirely elucidated.

In other words, it is through a miscognition that the situation, while having of course the closest links with the mother, only takes on importance with reference to the father in the way that the message of the law should be, and exactly completely the contrary, namely this something which, ingested or not, is definitively in the mother's hands, something that the mother holds the key to, but in a way, as you see, that is much more complex than simply by means of the global and massive notion that she is the mother, furnished with a phallus, that the homosexual is found to be identified with the mother, not at all in so far as she is purely and simply this something who has or does not have the *ad jet*, but someone who holds the keys to this particular situation which is at the outcome of the Oedipus complex, namely that point at which a judgment must be made as to which of the two, when all is said and done, holds the power, not just any power, but very precisely the power of love, and in so far as the complex links constructing the Oedipus complex, as they are presented to you here, allow you to understand how this relationship to the power of the Law, corresponds to, metaphorically echoes, the relationship to the phantastical object which is the phallus *qua* object to which at a certain moment the identification of the subject as such must take place.

I will continue the next day with something that imposes itself here as a little appendix, namely the commentary on what have been called passivity states of the phallus, the term is Loewenstein's, as motivating certain disturbances of sexual potency. This fits in here too naturally for me not to do so.

Then I will take up again in a general fashion how we can, through these different avatars of the same object, from the origin, namely its function as the mother's imaginary object, up to the moment when it is assumed by the subject, how we can delineate the definitive classification of the different forms in which it intervenes. This is what we will do the next time, namely the 5th of next month.

And the following time, the 12th, after which I will leave you for a fortnight, we will conclude with something which will properly concern, in a way that will interest you less directly perhaps but to which I am very attached, the relationship of the subject to the phallus. I ended my last trimester on what I proposed to you about comedy. It was not assimilated very well, when I told you that the essential in comedy, was when the subject took the whole dialectical affair in hand, and said: after all, all this dramatic stuff, the tragedy, the conflicts between the mother and the father, all that is not as good as love, and now let us amuse ourselves, let us have an orgy, let us put an end to all these conflicts. After all, all of this is made for man, for the subject. I was really astonished to have surprised some people who were scandalized at it. I will let you into a secret: it is in Hegel.

On the other hand, the new thing that I can contribute, and which appears to me to be much more demonstrative than all that has been able to be elaborated by the diverse phenomena of the spirit, is that by taking this path, one discovers a surprising confirmation of what I am in the process of putting forward, namely the crucial character for the subject and for his development, of the imaginary identification with the phallus, and it is there therefore on the last day of this period, that I invite you to show you how far this can be applied, how well it demonstrates, how remarkable it is for giving a key, a unique term, a univocal explanation of the function of comedy.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 5 February 1958

Everybody is preoccupied by symbolization. An article by Charles Rycroft appeared in May-June 1956, entitled "Symbolism and its Relationship to the Primary and Secondary Processes", in which he tries to give a contemporary meaning to the point that we are at in the analysis of symbolism. Those of you who read English, would obviously do well to read an article like this, because it will show you the difficulties that have always presented themselves about the meaning to be given in analysis, to the word symbolism, and I mean not simply to the word, but to the use that is made of it, to the way that the process of symbolism is conceived.

It is true that since 1916, when Mr. Jones wrote the first important comprehensive work on the subject, the question has passed through different phases, and it has encountered, and it still encounters, very great difficulties in what today constitutes the most articulated position on the subject, namely that which emerges from the reflections of Mrs. Melanie Klein on the role of the symbol in the formation of the ego.

This has the closest bearing on what I am in the process of explaining to you, and I would like to make you aware of the importance of the point of view that I am trying to make you understand, for clarifying a little some obscure perspectives. I do not know what angle I am going to take it from today; I have no plan as regards the fashion I am going to present things to you. I would like, since it is a kind of ante-penultimate session that I had announced to the next seminar, devoted precisely to the phallus and comedy, I would like today simply to mark a sort of stopping place by showing you some important directions about which what I recounted to you at the beginning of this trimestre with regard to the castration complex, allows some questions to be asked.

I will begin then by taking the theses as they come. Today, with respect to this subject, a strict order cannot always be observed in something which should be considered above all today as a kind of crossroads.

In Rycroft's title you have just seen mentioned the primary and the secondary process. This is something that I have never spoken about in your presence, even though some time ago, some of you expressed their astonishment at the fact. They came across this primary and secondary process in connection with a vocabulary definition, and they found themselves a little bit surprised.

The primary and secondary process dates from the time of the *Traumdeutung*, and it is something which is not completely identical, but which overlaps the opposing notions of the pleasure principle and the reality principle.

I have alluded more than once in your presence to the pleasure principle and the reality principle, always in order point out to you that the use made of them is incomplete if they are not related to one another, that is to say if one does not sense the liaison between them, their opposition, as being constitutive of the position of each one of these terms.

I would like to tackle immediately the central core of what I have just stated.

The notion of the pleasure principle as principal sustenance of the primary process, when it is taken in an isolated fashion, ends up as follows: it is from this that Rycroft thinks he has to begin in order to define the primary process. He thinks he has to put aside all its structural characteristics, to put in the background the fact that dominates one of the constitutive elements, which are effectively condensation, displacement, etc., everything that Freud began to tackle when he defined the unconscious, and he characterizes it fundamentally by what Freud put forward in the final elaboration of this theory in connection with the *Traumdeutung*, namely that the pleasure principle is essentially constituted by this: that there is a mechanism that originally and primordially, whether you understand the thing from the point of view of the historical stage or from the point of view of the underlay of a foundation upon which something of another kind had to develop, a type of base, of psychic depth, or even if you understand it as a sort of logical relationship, that it is from there that one has to start, there is supposed to be, we can say, in the human subject, there is evidently no question it seems, of anything else, but the point is not too well defined, there is supposed to be, in response to an instinctual stimulus, always the virtual possibility which is constitutive of the source of the position of the subject with regard to the world, a tendency to the hallucinatory satisfaction of desire.

I think that this does not surprise you. Abundantly expressed by all the authors, this reference to the fact that because of a primitive experience, and based on a model which is that of the reflection of every internal stimulus of the subject, there corresponds, before there corresponds in it something which is the instinctual cycle, the movement, even though it may be uncoordinated, of appetite, then of searching, then of locating in reality what satisfies need through mnemonic traces of what has already answered desire, this brings satisfaction, satisfaction purely and simply tends to be reproduced itself on the hallucinatory plane.

This [notion] which has become almost consubstantial with our analytic conceptions, so that if needs be we make use of it, I would almost say in an implicit fashion, every time we talk about the pleasure principle, does it not appear to you to a certain degree to be something exorbitant enough to deserve clarification, because after all, if it is in the nature of the cycle of psychic processes to create its own satisfaction for itself, I could almost say: why are people not satisfied by it?

Of course, it is because need continues to insist, because phantasy satisfaction is not able to satisfy every need, but we know only too well in the sexual order, that it is assuredly capable in every case of facing up to need, if it is a question of instinctual (*pulsionel*) need. For hunger it is a different matter, and after all we can begin to glimpse on the horizon that it is about that, it is about the very possibly illusory character of the sexual object that, when all is said and done, there is question here.

This conception exists, and in a certain fashion it is in fact motivated by the possibility of sustaining oneself at least at a certain level, at the level of sexual satisfaction. This is something which has so profoundly impregnated all analytic thinking, that in the measure that this relationship of need to its satisfaction, namely the primitive, primordial gratifications or satisfactions, or frustrations also which are considered as decisive at the origin of the subject's life, namely in the relationships of the subject to his mother, has come into the foreground, namely that in its totality, it is into a dialectic of need and of its satisfaction, that psychoanalysis has gone more and more in the measure that it became more and more interested in the primitive stage of the development of the subject, namely the

relationship of the child to the mother. We have arrived at something whose significant, and also at the same time necessary character I would like to point out to you.

This is in the Kleinian perspective which is the one that I am designating for the moment, namely where all learning as one might say of reality by the subject, is in a way primordially prepared and sustained by the essentially hallucinatory and phantastical constitution of the first objects classified as good or bad objects, in so far as they fix in a way a first absolutely primordial relationship which will provide, for the rest of the subject's life, the principal types of the modes of relationship of the subject to reality. We arrive at a sort of composition of the world of the subject which is constituted by a kind of fundamentally unreal relationship of the subject with objects which are only the reflection of his fundamental drives.

It is around the fundamental aggressivity, for example, of the subject that everything will be ordered in a series of projections of the needs of the subject. This world of phantasy, as used in the Kleinian school, is fundamental, and it is at its surface, that by a series of more or less successful experiences it is desirable for this purpose that they should be successful that the world of experience will permit a certain reasonable mapping-out of what in these objects is, as they say, objectively definable as corresponding to a certain reality, the texture of unreality remaining in a way absolutely fundamental.

It is, I might say, this sort of construction that one can really call a psychotic construction of the subject, which ensures that in fact a normal subject is, in this perspective, a psychosis which has turned out well, a psychosis in a way successfully harmonized with experience, and this is not a reconstruction. The author about whom I am now going to speak about, Mr. Winnicott, expresses it precisely in this way in one of the texts that he wrote on the utilization of regression in analytic therapy.

The fundamental homogeneity of psychosis with the normal relationship to the world, is there absolutely affirmed as such. This does not prevent very great difficulties from arising in this perspective, if only that of arriving at a notion of what is, because phantasy is only in a way the texture underlying the real world, to see what might be the function of phantasy recognized as such by the subject at the adult, fully grown state, when he has succeeded in constituting his real world. This is also indeed the problem that confronts every self-respecting Kleinian, I mean any avowed Kleinian, and also indeed one could say today almost every analyst, in so far as the register in which he inscribes the relationship of the subject to the world, becomes more and more exclusively that of a series of learning experiences about the world, constructed on the basis of a series of more or less successful experiences of frustration.

I would ask you to refer to Mr. Winnicott's text, "Primitive Emotional Development", which is to be found in Volume 26 of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, in order to be able to motivate the emergence, to conceive how this world of phantasy in so far as it is consciously experienced by the subject, and gives an equilibrium to his reality, as we can see from experience, and this has to be ascertained in his own text. Those of you who are interested in this, can rely on a remark whose necessity you will perceive in so far as it culminates in a quite curious paradox.

The emergence of the reality principle, in other words the recognition of reality, starting from the primordial relationships of the child with the maternal object, the object of his satisfaction, but also of his dissatisfaction, in no way allows us to see how there can

emerge beyond the world of phantasy in what we could call its adult form, except by an artifice noticed by Mr. Winnicott, which certainly permits a coherent enough development of the theory, but whose paradoxical nature I would simply like you to grasp. It is this: he remarks that if fundamentally the hallucinatory satisfaction of need lies in the discord between this satisfaction and what the mother brings to the child, it is in this discord that there will open up the gap in which the child can constitute in some way a first recognition of the object, the object which is found despite appearances, one might say, to be disappointing.

So that to explain how there can in fact come to birth this something which resumes for the modern psychoanalyst everything that relates to the world of phantasy and imagination, namely what in English is called, he makes this remark: let us suppose that the maternal object arrives to fill in just at the right moment, scarcely has the child begun to react in order to have the breast, than the mother gives it to him. Here Mr. Winnicott quite rightly pauses, and poses the following problem: in these conditions, what permits the child to distinguish between hallucination, the hallucinatory satisfaction of his desire, and reality?

In other words, with this point of departure we end up strictly speaking by stating the following equation: the fact is that at the beginning, hallucination is absolutely impossible to distinguish from fulfilled desire; it cannot but appear to you that the paradox of this confusion can scarcely fail to be striking.

In a perspective that rigorously characterizes the primary process as having to be naturally satisfied in a hallucinatory fashion, we end up with this: that the more satisfying reality is, as one might say, the less does it constitute a testing of reality, and that the origin of omnipotent thinking in the child, is essentially founded on everything that may have succeeded in reality.

This may hold up in some way, but you must admit that in itself it presents a somewhat paradoxical aspect, and that the very necessity of having to have recourse to something so paradoxical to explain in fact a pivotal point of the development of the subject, is something that may give rise to reflection, or even to questions.

I will go right away in the opposite direction, to what can be presented over against this conception which I think you will not fail to see, while being quite paradoxical, and frankly paradoxical, is also bound to have certain consequences. It certainly has all sorts of consequences, I already pointed them out to you last year when I made an allusion to this same article by Mr. Winnicott, namely that the effect it has in his subsequent anthropology, is none other than to make him classify in the same order as the phantastical aspects of thinking, pretty well everything that can be called free speculation. I already told you last year, that there is here a complete assimilation between phantasy life and everything no matter how extraordinarily elaborated, from a speculative point of view, namely all the things that can be called convictions no matter what they are, political, religious or other. Which indeed is a sort of point of view that one can see fitting into a sort of Anglo-Saxon humour, in a certain perspective of mutual respect, of tolerance, and also of non-involvement. There are series of things which one only speaks about in quotation marks, or which are not spoken about at all among well brought up people, and they are nevertheless things that matter because they form part of the internal discourse which we are far from being able to reduce to

But let us leave aside the end products of this approach. I would like simply to show you that over against this, another conception can be posited.

First of all, is it so obvious that one can purely and simply describe as satisfaction, what appears at the level of hallucination, namely in the different registers in which we can embody in some way this fundamental thesis of the hallucinatory satisfaction of the primordial need of the subject at the level of the primary process?

On this point I have already on many occasions introduced the problem. We are told: look at the dream, and people always refer to children's dreams. It is Freud himself who on this point showed us the way in the perspective that he had explored, namely by showing us the fundamental character of desire in the dream, he was led to give us purely and simply the example of children's dreams as the type of hallucinatory satisfaction.

Starting from there, everyone knows that the door is quickly opened. Psychiatrists had for a long time been trying to form an idea of the subject's disturbed relationships to reality in desire, by referring it for example to structures analogous to those of the dream. The perspective that we are introducing here does not permit us to contribute an essential modification to this. I think that it is very important at the point that we are at, and in the very presence of the impasses and the difficulties that arise from this conception of a purely imaginary relationship of the subject to the world as being at the very source of the development of his relationship to a so-called opposing reality; this is something whose place I will show you in the little schema which I will not cease to make use of, which is this. I shall take it up again in its simplest form regarding which I recall, even though I may seem to be playing the same tune too often, what is in question: namely something here which can be called need, but which I here and now call desire, because there is no state of original or pure need, and because from the start need is motivated on the plane of desire, namely from something which in man is destined to have a certain relationship with the signifier, and because it is in the traversing by this desiring intention of what is posed for the subject as the signifying chain, either because the signifying chain has already imposed its requirements in his subjectivity, or because right at the beginning he only encounters it in this form, that it is here and now constituted in the mother, that it already imposes on him in the mother its necessity and its barrier; and you know that he first encounters it here in the form of the other, and that it culminates at this barrier in the form of the message, where in this schema it is naturally only a question of seeing its projection there, and where the pleasure principle is situated on this schema, namely this something which in certain cases, under certain incidences, gives a primitive trait in the form of the the most primitive, the most confused dream, that/which we can see in the dog. We see that from time to time, when he is sleeping, a dog moves his paws: he must then indeed be dreaming, and he also has perhaps a hallucinatory satisfaction of his desire.

How can we conceptualize them? In the same way, how can we situate them, and precisely in man? I propose the following to you, so that at least it exists as a term of possibility in your minds, and that when the opportunity arises you may realize that it can be applied in a more satisfactory manner.

The hallucinatory response to need is not the emergence of a phantastical reality at the end of the circuit inaugurated by the exigencies of need; it is the appearance at the end of this exigency, of this movement which begins to be stimulated in the subject, towards something which must for him have some outline features. It is the appearance at the end of this of something which, of course, is not unrelated to the need that he has; a relationship with what is called an object, but which is fundamentally, I would say, the origin, has this character of being something which has a relationship of such a kind with this object, that it deserves to be

called a signifier, I mean something that has essentially a fundamental connection with the absence of this object, which has already the character of being a discrete sign-element, and Freud himself can do nothing other than, when he articulates this mechanism, this birth of unconscious structures - you can already read the letter I already cited, 'Letter 52 to Fliess' - at the moment at which a model of the psychic apparatus begins to formulate itself for him, which allows him to account for precisely the primary process. He has to admit from the beginning that this type of mnemonic inscription which will respond in a hallucinatory fashion to the manifestation of need, is nothing other than this: a sign, namely something that is not just characterized by a certain relationship with the image in the theory of instincts (*instincts*), and by this sort of lure which can suffice to awaken need, and not to fill it, but something which *qua* image, is already situated in a certain relationship with other signifiers, with the signifier for example, that is directly opposed to it, which signifies its absence with something that is already organized as signifier, already structured in that properly fundamental relationship which is the symbolic relationship in so far as it appears in this conjunction of an interplay of presence with absence, of absence with presence; an interplay that is itself ordinarily linked to a focal articulation which already constitutes the appearance of discrete elements of signifier.

In fact what we find in experience, what appears at the level of the simplest rules in the case of the child, is not a satisfaction, in a way, when it is simply a question of hunger, of the needs of hunger, it is something that already presents itself with what I might call an excessive, exorbitant, character, it is just what the child has already been forbidden. The dream of the young Anna Freud: "Cherries, strawberries, raspberries, flan" everything that has already made its entry into a properly signifying mode because it is already what has been prohibited, and not just simply something that corresponds to a need, if needs be to the total satisfaction of hunger, which consists in presenting itself as a feast of things which precisely go beyond the limits of what is the natural object of the satisfaction of need.

This quite essential trait is found at absolutely every level, at whatever level you take what presents itself as hallucinatory satisfaction. And indeed inversely, if you take things from the other end, when you are dealing with a delusion where you might be tempted, for lack of anything better, for a time before Freud, I might say to also search for something that might be something that corresponds to a kind of desire of the subject, you will arrive through some glimpses, some sidelong flashes, like this in which something may seem to represent the satisfaction of desire.

But is it not obvious that the major, most striking, most massive, most intrusive phenomenon of all delusional phenomena, must not be just any phenomenon at all, must not be just something or other which is related to a type of reverie of the satisfaction of desire? It is something as clearcut as verbal hallucination, and before anything else, before thinking about whether this verbal hallucination takes place at this or that level, whether there is here in the subject something like a kind of internal reflection in the form of psycho-motor hallucination which is extremely important to determine, whether there is projection or something else, does it not appear from the first, that in the structuring of what presents itself as hallucination, that which dominates, and dominates from the first, and that which should serve as first element of classification, is its structure in the signifier? It is that they are phenomena structured at the level of the signifier, it is that the very organization of these hallucinations cannot even be thought about for an instant, without seeing that the first thing to be brought forward in this phenomenon, is that it is a signifying phenomenon.

Here then is something that should always remind us that if it is true that one can approach from this angle the characterization of what can be called the pleasure principle, namely the fundamentally unreal satisfaction of desire, the differentiation, the characteristic that the hallucinatory satisfaction of desire exists, is that it is absolutely original, that it proposes itself in the domain of the signifier, and that it implies as such a certain locus of the other which is not moreover necessarily an other, but a certain locus of the other in so far as it is required by the positing of this agency of the signifier.

You will note that in such a perspective, that of this little schema here, it is therefore here that we see coming into play in this kind of external part, when all is said and done, of the circuit which is constituted by the right-hand side of the schema, namely the need which is something that here is manifested in the form of a sort of end or tail of the signifying chain; something which of course only exists at the limit, and in which nevertheless you will still recognize, every time something gets to this level of the schema, the characteristic of pleasure as being attached to it.

If it is at a pleasure that the witticism culminates, it is very precisely in so far as the witticism requires that something should be realized at the level of the other, who has a sort of virtual finality towards a sort of beyond of meaning, which nevertheless is something which in itself includes a certain satisfaction. If therefore it is in this external part of the circuit that the pleasure principle can in some way be schematized, it is here likewise in this part here that we find the reality principle. It is not conceivable otherwise, as regards a human subject, in so far as we are dealing with him in our experience; there is no other possible apprehension or definition of the reality principle for the human subject, and in so far as he has to enter into it at the level of the secondary process, in so far as the signifier at the origin of the chain effectively comes into play in the human real as an original reality. There is a dimension of language, speech occurs in the world, and because of that there are a whole series of things, of objects, which are signified, which would absolutely not be otherwise. I mean if there were not in operation, if there were not in the world the dimension of the signifier.

And the introduction of the subject to any reality whatsoever, is absolutely not conceivable in terms of a pure and simple experience of whatever it is that is in question, a frustration, a discordance, a knock, a burn, of whatever you like. There is no step by step spelling out by man of an *Omwelt*, which is supposed to be explored in an immediate, and if I may say tentative fashion, except that for an animal, thank God, instinct comes to his aid, because if it were necessary for an animal to reconstruct the world, his whole life would not be long enough to do it, so that why would you want man, who has instincts that are very badly adapted, to experience the world, as it were, manually? The fact that there is a signifying dimension is absolutely essential, and the principal mediation of his experience of reality is reduced almost to a banality, to ridicule, if we say that is at this level. It intervenes all the same by the voice, it is naturally quite clear from the teaching he receives, from what the word of the adult teaches him, but the important margin that Freud conquers over this element of experience is this: it is that here and now, even before language-learning is elaborated on the motor plane, and on the auditory plane, and on the plane that understands what he is being told, there is already from the beginning, from his first relationships with the object, from his first relationship with the maternal object, in so far as it is the primordial, primitive object, the one on which depends his first survival, subsistence, in the world, this object is already introduced as such into the process of symbolization, it already plays a role that introduces into the world the existence of the signifier, this at an ultra-precocious stage.

You can be sure of this: once the child begins simply to be able to put two phonemes in opposition to one another, they are already two vocables, and with two, the one who pronounces them and the one to whom they are addressed, namely the object, namely his mother, there are already enough in four elements to contain virtually in itself the whole combinatory from which the organization of the signifier will emerge.

I will now move on to a new and different little schema, which moreover was already outlined here, and which will show you what its consequences will be, at the same time as you recall what I tried to get you to see in the last lecture.

We have said that primordially we had the relationship of the child to the mother, and it is true that it is along this axis that there is constituted the first relationship to reality, I mean that this reality cannot be deduced, and can only be reconstructed in our experience by means of perpetual sleights of hand, if we make its constitution depend solely on the relationships of the desire of the child to the object in so far as it satisfies or does not satisfy his desire.

If one can, at the extreme limit, find something that corresponds to that in a certain number of cases of early psychosis, it is always, in the final analysis, the so-called depressive phase of the development of the child that is referred to each time this dialectic is invoked. What is in question in reality, in so far as this dialectic involves a subsequent development that is infinitely more complex, is something quite different, namely that the relationship at the beginning is not simply that of the desire of the child to the object that does or does not satisfy him, but thanks to something which has only a minimum of density, of unreality, that the first symbolization gives a mapping-out if you like of the child, that is already triangular, not at all in relation to what will contribute to the satisfaction of his need, but in relation to the desire of the maternal object that he has before him.

It is this, and solely in so far as something is already inaugurated in this dimension, represented here in terms of the axis which is called the ordinate axis in mathematical analysis. We have the dimension of the symbol, and because of this it can be conceived that the child, in the measure that he has to locate himself with respect to these two poles, and it is moreover around this that Mrs. Melanie Klein tries to feel her way, without being able to formulate it, it is in fact around a double pole of the mother - she calls it the good and the bad mother - that the child begins to take up his position. It is not the object that he situates, it is himself first of all that he situates, so that he will situate himself at all sorts of points which are along here in order to try to rejoin what is the object of the desire of the mother, to try to respond himself to the desire of the mother. This is the essential element, and it can last for an extremely long time.

From that moment on, there really is no kind of dialectic possible. It is here that we must necessarily introduce, it is altogether impossible to consider the relationship of the child to the mother, first of all because it is impossible to think and not to deduce anything from it, but it is equally impossible, going on experience, to conceive that the child is in this ambiguous world that the Kleinian analysts present to us, for example in which there is no reality other than that of the mother, and which allows them to say that the primitive world of the child is at once suspended from this object, and entirely auto-erotic in so far as the child does not wish to differentiate here in any way between an interior and an exterior for an object to which he is so closely bound that he literally forms a closed circle with it.

In fact, everyone knows - you only have to look at the life of a little child - that the little child is not at all auto-erotic, namely that he is normally interested like every other little animal, and a little animal after all more especially intelligent than the others, that he is interested in all sorts of other things in reality, obviously not in just any old thing, but there is all the same one to which we attach a certain importance, and which - because here the axis of the abscissa is the axis of reality - appears altogether at the limit of this reality. It is not a phantasy, it is a perception. I leave to one side a particular enormity in Kleinian theory; I mean that for her - since she is a woman of genius - we can forgive her everything, but for her pupils who are particularly well informed on psychological matters, for someone like Suzanne Isaacs for example, who is a psychologist, it is unforgiveable. Following Mrs. Melanie Klein, she nonetheless manages to articulate a theory of perception such that there is no means of distinguishing a perception from an introjection in the analytic sense of the term. In this cursory account I cannot point out to you all the impasses of the Kleinian system; I am trying to give you a model which will allow you to articulate more clearly what is happening.

What happens at the level of the mirror stage? It is that the mirror stage, namely the encounter of the subject with something which is properly a reality, and at the same time not one, namely a virtual image playing an altogether decisive role in a certain crystallization of the subject that I call and which manifests itself - I put it in parallel with the relationship that manifests itself between the child and the mother. Broadly speaking, this is what is in question: the child conquers here a bridge-head in this thing at the limit of reality which presents itself for him one might say, in a perceptual mode; which can on the other hand be called an image in the sense that this word has, in so far as the image has this property in reality, of being this captivating signal that is isolated in reality, which attracts on the part of the subject the capture of a particular libido, of a particular instinct thanks to which there are in fact a certain number of reference points, of psychoanalytic points in the world, around which the living being more or less organizes his behaviour.

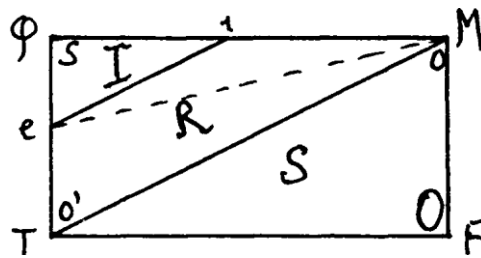
For the human being, it seems indeed in the last analysis to be the only reference point that exists. It has a role here, and it has a role in so far as it is precisely and properly speaking luring and illusory. It is in this respect that it comes to the assistance of an activity which is here and now for the subject in so far as he has to satisfy the desire of the other, an activity which already proposes itself in the perspective of itself deluding the desire of the other. The child, in so far as he will now constitute himself as the whole jubilatory activity of the child in front of his mirror, and at the same time conquer himself as something which at the same time exists and does not exist, and with reference to which he locates at the same time both his own movements and also the image of those who accompany him in front of the mirror.

It is around this possibility which is opened up for him by a certain privileged experience of reality, which has precisely this privilege of being an unrealized virtual reality, and grasped as such, that the child is going to be able to conquer this something around which literally every possibility of human reality can be constructed.

It is not yet the case that the phallus, in so far as it is the imaginary object with which the child has to identify himself to satisfy the desire of the mother, can here and now be situated in its place, but the possibility of such a situating is greatly enriched by this crystallization of the ego in terms of a particular mapping out which, it, opens up the whole possibility of the imaginary.

And what in fact do we see happening? What we see happening is something which is a double movement, a movement through which the experience of reality has introduced in the form of the body-image, an illusory and alluring element as the fundamental basis of the mapping-out of the subject with regard to reality, and in all that measure, in the measure of that space, of that margin which is offered to the child by this experience, the possibility in the opposite direction for his first identifications of the ego, of entering into another field which is defined as homologous, and is the inverse of the one constituted by the triangle e-i-M, which is this one, the enigmatic one between e-M-I, which is the subject in so far as he has to identify, to define, to conquer, to subjectify himself and also the pole of the mother.

And what is that triangle? And what is that field? And how will this journey which starts from the *Urbild* of the ego, permit the child to conquer himself, to identify himself, to make progress? How can we define it? In what way is it constituted?



It is very precisely constituted by this, that this *Urbild* of the ego, this first conquest or mastery of self that the child accomplishes in his experience, starting from the moment when he has reduplicated the real pole with respect to which he has to situate himself, makes him enter into this trapezium e-i-M-I, in so far as he identifies himself with the multiplied signifying elements in reality; I mean, where by means of all these successive identifications he is himself, he himself takes on the function, the role of a series of signifiers, which means: of hieroglyphs, of types, of forms and of presentations which are going to punctuate his reality with a certain number of reference points which already makes of it a reality shot through with signifiers.

In other words, what is here going to constitute the limit, is this formation which is called the ego ideal. You will see why it is important that I situate it for you like that, namely that with which the subject identifies himself by going in the direction of the symbolic, by starting from the imaginary, and in a way, instinctually preformed mapping-out of himself with respect to his own body, and in so far as he is going to engage himself in a series of signifying identifications in the direction defined as such, as opposed to the imaginary, namely as using the imaginary as signifying. And the identification which is called ego ideal, is made at the paternal level. Why? Precisely because at the paternal level there is a greater detachment with respect to the imaginary relationship, than at the level of the relationship to the mother.

This little construction of schemas one upon the other, these little dancers standing astride, the legs of one on the shoulders of the other, this indeed is what we are dealing with, it is in so far as the third in this little scaffolding, namely the father in so far as he intervenes to prohibit, namely to make precisely what is the object of the mother's desire pass over to the properly symbolic status, namely that it is not only an imaginary object, but that it is also destroyed, prohibited, it is in so far as he intervenes as a real person, as "I" to perform this function, that this "I" will become something eminently signifying, and allow to be the kernel of the identification which is, when all is said and done, the last, supreme result of the

Oedipus complex which ensures that that it is to the father that there is referred the formation called the ego ideal, and these oppositions of the ego ideal compared to the object of the mother's desire are expressed on this schema in that if the virtual and ideal identification of the subject with the phallus, in so far as it is the object of the mother's desire, is situated there at the vertex of the first triangle of the relationship with the mother, it is situated there virtually, at once always possible and always threatened, so threatened that effectively it is necessary that it be destroyed at a given moment by the intervention of the pure symbolic principle represented by the name of the father, which is there in the state of veiled presence, but a presence which unveils itself, and unveils itself not at all progressively, unveils itself by an intervention decisive first of all in so far as it is the prohibiting element, and precisely of this type of tentative search of the subject which would have culminated, and which culminates in certain cases in this exclusive relationship of the subject with the mother, not in a pure and simple dependency, but in something which manifests itself in all sorts of perversions, by a certain essential relationship with the phallus, either that the subject assumes it in different forms, or that he makes of it his fetich, in other words that we may be here at the level of what can be called the primitive root of the the perverse relationship with the mother. It is to the degree that in this identification beginning with the ego, the subject who can in a certain phase make in effect a movement of approach, of identification of his ego with the phallus, is essentially carried in the other direction, namely a structured one, constitutes a certain relationship which, it, is marked by end points which are expressed there in a certain relationship with the image his own body, namely the imaginary pure and simple, namely the mother.

On the other hand, as a real term, his ego in so far as it is able, not only to recognize itself, but having recognized itself, to make of itself a signifying element, and no longer simply an imaginary element in its relationship with the mother, that there can be produced those successive identifications about which Preud in his theory of the ego, articulates for us in the firmest fashion, that this is the object of his theory of the ego, it is to show us that the ego is made up of a series of identifications - see the schema - of a series of identifications to an object which is beyond the immediate object, which is the father in so far as he is beyond the mother.

It is essential to hold on to this schema, because it also shows you that in order that this should be produced correctly, completely and in the right direction, there should be a certain relationship between its direction, its rectitude, its accidents, and thus the ever increasing development of the presence of the father in the dialectic of the relationship of the child with the mother.

This schema is, with its double to and fro motion, namely that reality is conquered by the human subject in so far as it arrives at a certain one of these limits in the virtual form of the body image, that in a corresponding fashion, it is in so far as the subject introduces into his field of experience the unreal elements of the signifier, that he succeeds in enlarging to the measure that it is for the human subject, the field of this experience.

This is something that can be constantly utilized, and unless you refer to it, you will find yourself perpetually slipping into a series of confusions which involves making major mistakes, and in taking an idealization for an identification, an illusion for an image, all sorts of things which are far from being equivalent, and to which we will subsequently have to return, and by referring to this schema.

It is quite clear for example, that the conception that we can construct for ourselves of the phenomenon of delusion, is something which should easily indicate by means of the structure inscribed, put forward, manifested in this schema, in so far as we always see in delusion something which assuredly merits the term regressive, but not in the fashion of a type of reproduction of an earlier state which would really be totally excessive. To confuse with this phenomenon the notion that the child lives in a world of delusion for example, which seems to be implied by the Kleinian conceptions, is one of the things which it is hardest to accept, for the good reason that this psychotic phase, while it is required by the premisses of the Kleinian articulation, we have no experience of any kind in the child of anything at all which represents a transitory psychotic state. On the contrary, one can very well conceive on the plane of a regression which is structural, and not genetic, that the schema allows to illustrate precisely by an inverse movement to that described here by the two arrows, the invasion into the world of objects of the body image which is so manifest - I am talking about delusions of the Schreberian type - and inversely here this something which assembles around the ego all the phenomena of the signifier, to the point that the subject is no longer in a way supported *qua* ego, except by this continual web of signifying verbal hallucinations, which then constitute a sort of retreat to an initial position of the genesis of his world of reality.

Let us see in sum what our project today has been, our project is to situate definitively the meaning of the question that we pose regarding the object. The question of the object, for us analysts, is fundamentally this, because we experience it constantly, it is all we have to do, to busy ourselves with it: what is the source and the genesis of the illusory object? It is a matter of knowing whether we can construct an adequate conception of this object *qua* illusory, simply by referring ourselves to the categories of the imaginary.

My answer is no, it is impossible, because the illusory object, and this is the case because we know about it for a very long time, since there have been people who think, and philosophers who try to express what everybody experiences, everyone knows that the illusory object, it has been talked about for a long time, is the veil of Maya, it is the reason why it appears that a need such as the one that is called sexual need, clearly realizes aims that are beyond one might say anything whatever that is within the subject. We did not have to wait for Freud, already Mr. Schopenhauer and many others before him, saw in it that ruse of nature which ensures that the subject believes he is embracing a particular woman, and that he is purely and simply submitted to the necessities of the species.

This aspect of the fundamentally imaginary character of the object, very specially in so far as it is the object of sexual need, was recognized for a long time, and did not help us take a single step in the direction of this problem which is nonetheless the essential problem. Why does this same need which is supposed to be made up of what in fact broadly speaking, apparently, which indeed appears to be reality by its character of lure, from the fact that the subject is only susceptible to the image of the female of his species, at least generally speaking; why does this not help us take a single step in the sense that for man a woman's slipper may very precisely be that which provokes in him this surge of energy supposedly destined for the reproduction of the species? That is where the problem lies.

That is the problem, and the problem is only soluble to the degree that you perceive that the object in question in so far as it is an illusory object, performs its function in the human being, not *qua* image no matter how luring, no matter how well naturally organized as

a lure you may suppose it to be, but in its capacity as a signifying element in a signifying chain. I will come back to it.

We are at the end today, of a lecture that is perhaps particularly abstract. I beg your pardon for that, but if we do not pose these terms, we can never succeed in understanding what is here and what is there, what I am saying and what I am not saying, what I am saying to contradict others, and what others say in all innocence, without seeing their contradictions. We must pass this way, through the function that is played by such and such an object of fetishism or not, but even simply all the instrumentation of a perversion. You really would have to have your head in the clouds to be content with terms like masochism and sadism for example, which of course naturally furnish all sorts of admirable considerations on the stages, the instincts, on the fact that there is some aggressive motor need or other required by the fact of being able to simply arrive at the aim of the sexual embrace.

But after all, why is it that in this sadism and in this masochism the fact of being beaten - there are other ways of exercising sadism or masochism - the fact of being beaten very precisely with a cane, or something analogous, plays an essential role, and to minimize the importance in human sexuality of that very instrument especially which is usually called the whip, in a way that is to a greater or lesser extent elided, symbolic, generalized? This is all the same something deserving of some consideration.

Mr. Aldous Huxley depicts for us a world in the future where everything will be so well organized as regards the reproductive instinct, that one will purely and simply bottle the little foetuses after having chosen those who will be destined to provide them with the best seeds. Everything is going very well, and the world becomes something particularly satisfying, which Mr. Huxley because of his personal preferences, declares to be fundamentally boring. We are not taking sides, but what is interesting, is that an author who engages in these sort of entifications to which we do not attach any kind of importance for our part, causes the world that he and we know to be reborn, through the mediation of a girl who manifests her need to be whipped. It seems to him without any doubt that there is there something which is closely linked to the human character of the world.

This is simply what I want to point out to you. I want to point out to you that what is accessible to a novelist and to someone who without any doubt has some experience of sexual life, is all the same also for us analysts, something we should dwell on, namely that if the whole turning-point for example of the history of perversion in analysis, namely the moment when we got away from the notion that perversion is purely and simply the drive emerging, namely the contrary of neurosis, we waited for the conductor's signal, namely the moment when Freud wrote "A child is being beaten", and that it is around this study of an absolutely total sublimity, because obviously everything which was said afterwards is only the small change of what is in it; if it is around the analysis of this phantasy of the whip that Freud really at that moment introduced perversion into its true analytical dialectic, there where it appears to be, not the manifestation of a pure and simple drive, but to be attached to a dialectical context just as subtle, just as composite, just as rich in compromises, just as ambiguous as a neurosis, it is starting with something which is going, not to classify perversion in a category of the instinct, of our tendencies, but in something which articulates it precisely in its detail, in its material, and let us say the word, in its signifier. Every time moreover that you are dealing with a perversion, there is something which corresponds to a sort of *méconnaissance* of what you have before you, if you do not see the extent to which the perversion is attached in a fundamental fashion to a kind of web of a plot which moreover

is essentially liable to be transformed, modified, developed and enriched. It is even the whole history of perversion, the fact that the perversion on the other hand is linked in certain cases in the closest fashion, I mean clinically in our experience, to the appearance, to the disappearance, to the whole compensatory movement of a phobia which it, evidently shows the term of back and front, but in quite a different sense, in the sense that two articulated systems are composed and are compensated, and alternate with one another. It is also something which is very appropriate to make us articulate the drive in a completely different domain to the pure and simple one of the tendency.

It is to this, it is to the accent of signifier to which the elements, the material of the perversion itself responds, that I draw your attention in particular, because for the moment it is a question of the signified, of what is involved as regards the object.

What does all of this mean? The fact is that we have an object, a primordial object, which remains without any doubt to dominate the subsequent life of the subject. We have also certainly and without any doubt certain imaginary elements which play the crystallizing role, and particularly everything involving the material of the bodily apparatus, the members, and the reference of the subject to the domination of its members, the total image.

But the fact that the object is caught up in a function which is that of the signifier, and which ensures that in this relationship constituted by the existence of a signifying chain such that we symbolize it by a series of S, S', S", and that there are underneath this series significations which ensure that just as the the upper chain progresses in a certain direction, the something which is in the significations or underneath progresses in the opposite direction, it is a signification which always slides, slips away and conceals itself, ensuring that when all is said and done, the fundamental relationship of man to any signification is, because of the fact that the signifier exists, an object of a special type.

I call this object the metonymical object. I am telling you that its source in so far as the subject has a relationship with it, is to the extent that the subject himself, identifies himself imaginarily in an absolutely radical fashion, not to one or other of its functions as object which would correspond to this or that partial tendency as is said, but to the extent that there is something which requires that there should be somewhere there a pole, namely in the imaginary something which represents what always conceals itself, namely that which is induced by a certain current of the flight of the object into the imaginary, from the fact of the existence of the signifier.

That object there, it has a name, it is pivotal, it is central in the whole dialectic of the perversions, the neuroses and even purely and simply of all subjective development. It is called the phallus, and this is what I shall have to illustrate for you the next time.

Seminar 13: Wednesday 12 February 1958

References: Ernest Jones "The Phallic Phase" *IJP* Vol 14; Otto Rank "Perversions and Neuroses", *Papers on Psychoanalysis*, Vol 4, part III.

This is in connection with the initial article on the theoretical development of analytic thinking on neuroses which followed on "A Child is Being Beaten". This article is the signal given by Freud to an about face, or to a step forward in his own thinking, and at the same time to everything that followed concerning the study of perversion.

You will see that if one looks closely at what is happening at this time, the best formula that can be given for it is the one which alone allows to be given the register whose essential agency in the formation of symptoms I am trying to show you here, namely the intervention of the notion of the signifier.

It appears clearly, once Freud had shown it, that in perversion, the instinct, the drive, have absolutely no right to be put forward or declared as more exposed as one might say, in perversion than in neurosis.

The whole of Hans Sachs' remarkable article on the genesis of perversions, shows that in any so-called perverse formation whatsoever, there is exactly the same structure of compromise, of evasion, of the dialectic of the repressed, and of the return of the repressed as there is in neurosis. This is the essence of the article and he gives absolutely convincing examples of it. There is always in perversion something that the subject does not want (*veut*) to recognize with all that this *veut* involves in our language, something which is not to be conceived of as being articulated there and nevertheless not just fundamentally overlooked by the subject, but repressed by the subject for reasons in fact of an essential articulation.

Here we have the source of the analytic mechanism, which would bring it about that were the subject to recognize it, he would be forced at the same time to recognize a series of other things, which are properly intolerable for him, and which is the source of repression, repression only being conceivable *qua* linked to an articulated signifying chain. Whenever you have repression in neurosis, it is in so far as the subject does not want to recognize something which would necessitate - and this term necessitate always involves an element of signifying articulation which is absolutely not conceivable otherwise than in the coherence of a discourse.

For perversion, it is exactly the same thing. Here is what, in 1923, following on Freud's article, all the psychoanalysts perceive: that perversion, essentially, if one looks closely at it, involves exactly the same mechanisms of the evasion of something which is fundamental to him, which forms part of the relationships of the subject to a certain number of essential terms which are well and truly the fundamental terms that we find in the analysis of neuroses, which are oedipal terms.

If there is, after all, some kind of difference, this difference deserves to be extremely closely circumscribed. It cannot in any case be content with an opposition so summary as that

which would say that in neurosis, the drive is avoided, that in perversion it shows itself openly.

The drive appears, but it never appears except in a partial manner. It appears in something which, in relation to the instinct, is quite striking as being a detached element, a sign, properly speaking, and we could even say a signifier of the instinct. That is why the last time in leaving you, I insisted for example on the instrumental element that there is for example in a whole series of so-called perverse phantasies, to limit ourselves for the moment to those, because it is best to begin with the concrete and not from a certain general idea that we may or may not have of the instinctual economy of an aggressive tension, of its reflections, of its ins and outs, of its refractions. This will still not account to us for the prevalence of certain elements whose character really not only emerges, but is properly speaking isolated in the prevalent, insistent, predominant form taken by these perversions in the form of phantasies, namely in the form of that through which they involve imaginary satisfaction.

These elements which have this privileged place - I spoke the last day about the shoe, I also talked about the whip - why are we not able to attach them purely and simply to something which arises from a pure and simple sort of biological economy of the instinct? The prevalent character of these elements which are isolated, of these instrumental elements which take a too obviously symbolic form for it to be overlooked for an instant, once one approaches the living reality of perversion, and this constancy throughout the transformations in the course of the subject's life, shows the evolution of the perversion.

This constancy of a term which it, is always to be found, a point on which Hans Sachs also insists, is well of a nature to underline again for us the necessity of admitting as a final, irreducible element, an element whose place we must see in the subjective economy, but an element which must be retained as primordial, as essential to this signifier element in perversion.

So that, it is beginning with a phantasy isolated by Freud in a set of eight patients, six girls and two boys, with fairly nuanced forms of neurosis, not all moreover neuroses, but a fairly important proportion statistically, it is beginning from the systematic and extremely careful study, followed step by step, with a scrupulousness which is precisely what distinguishes from all others, these investigations of Freud himself, when it is he who carries them out. It is through these subjects, however diverse they may be, by a search for the transformations of the economy, through the stages which are the stages of the Oedipus complex, of a particular phantasy, of the phantasy: a child is being beaten, that Freud begins to articulate fully what will subsequently develop as being the moment of the proper investigation of perversions in his thinking, and I insist on it, which will show us more and more the importance in this economy, of something which is properly speaking, and as such, the operation of the signifier.

Moreover, there is something I can only point out in passing: I do not know if you have noticed that the last writings of Freud, one of his last articles, "Constructions in Psychoanalysis", shows the central importance of the notion of the relationship of the subject to the signifier as being absolutely fundamental in forming a conception of everything that we are able to put together; and it is one of the last articles that Freud wrote, about what, when all is said and done, the mechanism of remembering represents as such in analysis, which is essentially linked as such to the signifying chain. It is quite clearly stated in this article, and

the last article of Freud's that we have, the one which, in *The Collected Papers*, was translated under the title of "The Splitting of the Ego" - which I translate as division, or the break-up (*éclatement*) of the ego in the mechanism of the analytic symptom, the one on which it can be said that Freud stopped with the pen falling from his fingers; this article is unfinished, it is the last work that he bequeaths to us - closely links everything that is the economy of the ego with this dialectic of what we might call the perverse recognition of a certain theme with which the subject finds himself confronted, closely links in an indissoluble knot, the function of the ego and the imaginary relationship as such, in the relationships of the subject to reality, and in so far as this imaginary relationship is utilized and integrated into the mechanism of the signifier.

Let us now take up the phantasy of "A child is being beaten".

Freud dwells on the subject of the meaning of this phantasy in which there appears to be absorbed, if not the entirety, at least an important part of the libidinal satisfactions of the subject. He insists, he saw it in the great majority of cases in feminine subjects, in fewer cases in masculine subjects.

It is not a question of just any sadistic or perverse phantasy, it is a question of those which culminate and are fixed in this form whose theme is approached by the subject in a very reticent fashion. It seems that a fairly large charge of guilt is linked for the subject, even to the communication of this theme which, once she has revealed it, given it, cannot for her be articulated differently, or otherwise than as: "a child is being beaten". Is being beaten. This means that for the subject, it is not she who is beating, she is there as a spectator. Freud begins by analysing the matter as it occurs in the imagination of girls, in the feminine subjects who had to reveal this to him. It is a question of a person who considered in the totality of his characteristics, can be considered in the series of the successors of the person who has authority. It is not the father, it is at times a primary school teacher, an all-powerful person, a king, a tyrant. Sometimes it is very romanticized; one recognizes, not the father, but something which is in a way the equivalent for us. We will be very easily able to situate him, and this really allows us to situate him right away in the completed form of the phantasy, not to content ourselves with this sort of homology with the father, not to assimilate him to the father, to place him in a certain point which is the beyond of the father, to situate him somewhere in this category of the name of the father which we take care to distinguish from the incidences of the real father.

It is a question of several children, of a kind of group, of a crowd, and they are always boys. This is something that gives rise to problems, and certainly so numerous that I could not even dream of covering them today. I ask you simply to refer to this article of Freud's. The first and fundamental of the readings that are involved, is the reading of Freud's own article, which appeared in the old *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* (Tome 6, nos. 3 & 4).

That it should finally for example always be boys who are beaten, namely subjects of a sex opposite to that of the subject of the phantasy, here is something on which one can speculate indefinitely, try to refer in a way directly to themes like that of the rivalry between the sexes. For example it is on this that Freud will finish his article to show the apparent justifications of the profound incompatibility of theories, like for example that of Adler, to explain such a result. We are certainly not going to involve ourselves in this here, Freud's argumentation being purely and amply sufficient, and this is not where our principal interest lies. What interests us, is the way that Freud proceeds to tackle the problem. He gives us the

results of his analyses, and he begins by talking about what happens in the girl because of the requirements of the presentation, in order not to have continually to state the two positions: this for the girl, this for the boy; then afterwards he takes up what moreover he has less material for, what happens in the case of the boy.

What does he tell us? He establishes invariabilities (*constances*). These invariabilities, he reports them to us. What seems essential to him, is the avatar of this phantasy, I mean the transformations that analytic investigation, the antecedents also that analytic investigation allows to be given to this phantasy, in fact the history of this phantasy, the underpinnings of this phantasy, and there he recognizes in it a certain number of states in which something changes, something remains constant. It is a question of drawing a teaching from this, of seeing what can represent for us this sort of result from this meticulous investigation, which also carries the same brand of precision and insistency, of coming back to work on his material, until he has really separated out what appear to him to be the irreducible articulations, which gives its originality to almost everything that Freud wrote.

But we especially, what we see in the five great psychoanalyses, in that admirable *Wolfman* in which he ceaselessly returns to the same theme which is to search out strictly the share of what can be called the symbolic origin and the real origin of what is the primitive chain in the history of the subject, is a very good example of it.

Here likewise, he separates out for us three stages, three moments. A first stage, he tells us, that one always finds on this occasion in girls, which is the following: the child who is beaten at a given moment of the analysis, unveils in every case, he tells us, its existence and its true features. It is a sibling, namely a brother or a sister. Therefore it is a little brother or a little sister whom the father beats. The signification of this, Freud tells us, is situated very clearly on two planes.

What is the signification, he says to us, of this phantasy? It is very striking to see coming at this moment from Freud's pen this affirmation that there is here something of which we cannot say whether it is a question of something sexual, or of something sadistic. It is, he tells us, evoking there as he does, a literary reference, that of the response of one of the witches in *Macbeth* to Banquo, it is something which is composed in the same manner from which both, the sexual and sadistic, emerge.

We find ourselves well and truly here in the midst of what, in an article which will appear shortly afterwards, "The Economic Problem of Masochism", Freud defines for us as really linked to this first step in which we must conceive that there is somewhere - this is absolutely required by the point that we are at, we are in 1923, namely after *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* - something like this point at which we must assume that there is primitively, at least for a major part, fusion of the instincts, liaison of the libidinal instincts, the life instincts with the death instincts ; that this fusion is something whose primitive state we must admit, so that we are lead to conceive instinctual evolution as involving a more or less precocious element of defusion of this instinct, that it was to the precocity of the defusion of this instinct, of the isolation for example of the death-instinct, that we should attribute certain prevalent trends or certain stopping points in the evolution of the subject.

But at the same time Freud underlined that it is at the level of that the signification of this primitive phantasy is situated. It is in so far as of the father, and of the part of the father, he does not discover a higher stage of the phantasy; I mean a more archaic earlier stage; it is to the extent that on the father's part something is refused, denied to this

child, to the little brother or to the little sister who undergoes in the phantasy, the punishment on the part of the father, it is to the degree that there is a denunciation of the relationship of love, humiliation, that this subject is attacked in this phantasy in his existence as subject, that he is the object of a punishment and that this punishment consists in denying him as subject, in reducing to nothing his existence as desiring, in reducing him as such to something which *qua* subject, tends to abolish him.

This is the meaning of the primitive phantasy: my father does not love him; and this is what gives pleasure to the subject: the fact that the other is not loved, namely is not established in the relationship, which it, is properly symbolic. It is along this nerve, by this angle that the intervention of the father here takes on its primary, essential value for the subject, that on which everything that follows will depend.

The second moment, Freud tells us - and this is no less important to consider than the articulation of the first moment (this first moment is discovered in the analysis, the other, he tells us, never is) - must be reconstructed.

What I put the accent on, and what I would ask you to dwell on, are the enormities of the Freudian deduction, of Freud's assertion, because that is the important thing. It is not simply to allow ourselves to be led, to follow him more or less blindfold, it is for us to grasp the importance of what he says.

This second moment must be reconstructed.

For the moment let us not stop to ask whether it is legitimate or not. It is very important for us to perceive what Freud is doing, and what he tells us to do, thanks to which the whole of his own construction can continue.

The second moment is this: the phantasy which is thus born in this triangular relationship, which I repeat, must be considered as archaic, primitive, and nevertheless is not between the subject and the mother and the child, but between the subject, the little brother or little sister, and the father. We are before the Oedipus complex, and nevertheless the father is there.

The second moment is linked to the relationship of the Oedipus complex as such, I mean for the little girl, and has this meaning of a privileged relationship of the little girl to her father. She is the one who is beaten and around this, the convergence of the analytic material which requires the reconstruction of this state of the phantasy, but this phantasy has never emerged, Freud tells us, in the memory. On the contrary, the moment in the little girl, of the desire to be the object of desire of her father, with what that involves in terms of guilt, Freud admits that this could be the guilty return of this Oedipal desire which requires that she herself uniquely reconstructs the object of the punishment in this phantasy.

Freud speaks also in this connection of regression, namely that in so far as this message cannot be rediscovered in the memory of the subject, in so far as it is repressed, a correlative mechanism that in this connection he calls regression, can bring it about that it is to this previous relationship that the subject has recourse to express in a phantasy which is never brought to light, this relationship which the subject has at this moment with the father, a frankly libidinal relationship, already structured according to the oedipal mode.

In a third moment, and after the emergence from the Oedipus complex, there will remain nothing other than this general schema into which a new transformation will be introduced which is double: the figure of the father is superseded, transposed referred to the general form of the person who can beat, who is in a position to beat, an omnipotent and despotic person, and the subject herself will be presented there in the form of these multiple children who are no longer even of her own sex, who are a kind of neutral series of children

Something which is in a way maintained, fixed, memorised one could say, in this last form of the phantasy, is this something which will subsequently remain for the subject invested with this property of constituting the privileged image upon which what the subject may experience properly speaking as genital satisfactions, will find their base, their support.

Here, it seems, is something which all the same merits our attention and our reflection.

What, in this schema, may the terms whose first usage I have tried to teach you here, come to represent?

I take up again my imaginary triangle and my symbolic triangle. The whole first dialectic of the symbolization of the relationship of the child to the mother, is essentially accomplished in terms of what is signifiable, that is in terms of what interests us. There are other things beyond, there is the object in fact which may present the mother as being as bearer of the breast, and the one who may bring certain immediate satisfactions to the child. But if there was only this, there would be no kind of development or of dialectic in the relationship of the subject to the child, nor any opening in the edifice. Subsequently, the relationship of the subject to the child is not simply made up of a relationship of satisfaction or of frustration, it is constituted by this discovery of what is the object of the desire of the mother. It is essential for any understanding, and everything that I will subsequently tell you, will be there to demonstrate it. It is constituted at first from a recognition of what is the desire of the mother. It is to the degree that in a fashion which for the whole history of analysis, for the theory as for the practice, creates a problem, of knowing why at this privileged point of what constitutes the object of the desire of the mother, namely the world of the signified as it appears from the point of view of the subject, of the one who has to constitute himself in his human adventure, of this little child we are speaking about, of the discovery that he has to make, which is about the privileged function in that which for the mother signifies her desire, the privileged function of the phallus. When you read Jones' article on "The Phallic Phase", you will see the profound difficulties which arise from this affirmation of Freud's, that for both sexes there is something like an absolutely original, essential stage of what is closely linked to their sexual development, this stage at which for one and the other sex, the theme of the other as desiring other, is absolutely linked to the possession of the phallus.

This is what literally cannot be understood in a certain register by almost all the people in Freud's entourage, even though they get into all sorts of contortions to admit it all the same, because the facts impose it on them in their articulation of something that happens in the history of the subject. It is because of the failure to understand that what Freud is posing here, is a pivotal signifier around which turns the whole dialectic of what the subject must conquer in himself, in his own being, because of which, for want of understanding that what is in question here is a signifier, and nothing else, the commentators exhaust themselves in rediscovering in the form of a thousand traces which of course correspond to their diverse experiences, something which is its equivalent, namely the reality against which, somewhere,

the subject defends himself in the form of this belief in the phallus, and of course in this connection they collect an amount of extremely valuable facts, but never make of them any more than a particular case or a particular journey which still does not explain why this privileged, special element is taken as the centre and the pivot of the defence.

If you read particularly what Jones gives as the function of this belief in the phallus in the development of the boy, you will perceive that what he does in this connection, is very specially what happens at the level of the development of the homosexual, namely far from being the general development. It is the question here in effect of the most general form, and this most general form is only conceivable to the extent that one gives to this phallus the function - allow me a formula which is going to appear to you to be quite audacious, but we will never have to retract it, if you are willing to admit it for the moment in its condensed form for its operational use - I have told you that in a way within the signifying system, the name of the father has the function of the whole of the signifying system, the one who signifies, who authorises the signifying system to exist, who establishes its law. I am saying to you that frequently in the signifying system, we should consider that the phallus comes into play from the moment that the subject has to symbolize as such in this opposition of the signifier to the signified, the signified, I mean the signification.

What is important for the subject, what he desires, the desire *qua* desired, what is desired by the subject, when the neurotic or the pervert has to symbolise it, when all is said and done, it is literally with the help of the phallus. The signifier of the signified, is in general the phallus. This is essential. If you begin from there, you will understand a lot of things. If you do not start from there you will understand much less, and you will be forced to make considerable detours to understand extremely simple things.

This phallus is, here and now, what comes into play as such from the first approach of the subject to the desire of the mother. This phallus is veiled and will remain veiled until the end of time for a simple reason, it is because it is a final signifier in the relationship of the signifier to the signified. There is in fact little chance that, when all is said and done, it will unveil itself otherwise than in its nature as signifier, namely that it will never really reveal itself, except *qua* signifier. It signifies.

Nevertheless we arrive at this: think of what happens in this case which is properly the one envisaged by Freud, and which we have not envisaged up to now, if at this place there intervenes something that is much less easy to articulate, to symbolize than anything imaginary, namely at this first phase which is indeed the one Freud designates for us, a real subject.

The desire of the mother is no longer simply the object of an enigmatic research in which the subject has, in the course of his development, to trace the sign, the phallus, so that subsequently of course this phallus enters into the symbolic dance, namely must subsequently be the precise object of castration, then is restored to him in another form, namely ensures that, first of all, there is a question about whether it is. It is, but we are right at the origin here, we are at the moment when he is confronted with the imaginary place in which the desire of the mother is situated, and this place is occupied.

We cannot speak about everything at the same time, and besides it was a very good thing that we did not think of this from the beginning; if we had thought of this from the beginning, of this role which we all know to be decisively important in the onset of neuroses, it is enough to have the slightest experience in analysis to know how often the appearance of

a little brother or a little sister has a really crucial role in the evolution of any neurosis. Only, if we stop first at this, that has exactly the same affect for us on our thinking as it has for the subject in his neurosis, namely that if we stop right away at this real relationship, this completely masks from us the function of this relationship, the namely that it is to the extent that this relationship comes in the place of what requires a quite different development, a development of symbolization, and that this complicates it and that this requires a quite different solution. That is the reason why this relationship to the brother or to the little sister, to any rival whatsoever, takes on its decisive value.

While here, what do we see in the case of the phantasy solution linked to the phantasy which on this occasion is called masochistic?

We see something whose nature Freud has articulated for us. This subject is abolished on the symbolic plane. It is in so far as he is nothing at all that he is something to which one refuses any consideration as a subject, that the child finds in this particular case the beating phantasy. It is in this guise, and in so far as the child is going to achieve this solution of the problem at this level.

We only have to limit ourselves to the case in which this is what occurs, but to understand what happens in the case where it is like that, it is effectively a question of a symbolic act, and Freud firmly underlines it: what happens to this child, happens to the subject himself who believes himself to be someone in the family. A single smack, Freud tells us, often suffices to dislodge him from his belief in his omnipotence. It is indeed a question of a symbolic act, and I would say that the very form which comes into play in the phantasy, namely the whip, the cane, has something which in itself carries itself the character and the nature of something or other which, on the symbolic plane, is expressed by a stroke, by something which bars the subject.

Before being anything else, or some , something which can be attributed to some sort of physical relationship of the subject with the one who opens himself; it is above all from something which strikes him out, which bars him, which abolishes him, that something of the signifier intervenes.

This is so true, that when the child later on - all of this is in Freud's article, I am following it line by line - effectively encounters the act of beating, namely when at school she sees before her a child being beaten, says Freud, and simply on the basis of his experience of the same subjects from whom he extracted the story of this phantasy, she does not find this in the least bit funny. I mean that this inspires in her something of the order of indignation, (it is badly translated in French), namely an aversion, she turns her head away. The subject is obliged to put up with it, but she has nothing to do with it, she keeps herself at a distance from it. The subject is far from participating in what really happens when she is confronted with an actual scene of beating. So that in the phantasies - Freud comes to this also, and indicates it very precisely - the very pleasure of this phantasy is manifestly linked to its unserious, inoperative character that it does not touch what one might call the real or physical integrity of the subject. It is indeed its symbolic character as such which is eroticised, and this from the beginning.

Here the second moment, and this has its importance in order to give its value to this schema which I introduced to you the last time, is this: this phantasy in the second moment will take on a completely different value, and it is this indeed which is the enigma, which is the whole enigma. It is the essence of masochism, it is in the change of meaning of this

phantasy as such, namely how this thing which served to deny love, is the very thing which will serve to signify it.

When it is the subject that is in question, there is no way of getting out of this impasse, and I am not telling you that this is something which is easy to grasp as it is explained, as it is unfolded. We must hold on first of all to the fact, namely that this is the way it is, and after that we will try to understand why it should be that way; in other words, why the introduction of this radical signifier which divides into two things, a message: a child is being beaten, the subject receives the news, the little rival is a beaten child, namely a nothing at all, something that one can treat with contempt and then from this a signifier that must be isolated as such, namely with what this is done.

The fundamental character in this effective existence of the masochistic phantasy in the existing subject, is not some kind or other of model, of ideal reconstruction of the evolution of the instincts. The fundamental character is the existence of the whip, it is something which in itself deserves to be stressed for us so that we may make of it something which is a signifier, which is something which in the series of our hieroglyphs, deserves to have a privileged place, for a simple reason, first of all it is because if you pay attention to hieroglyphs, you will see that there is a privileged place: the one who holds the whip was from the earliest times the director, the governor, the master, and this is what is in question, it is a question of not losing sight of the fact that this exists, and that this is what we have to deal with.

This, at the second moment, also manifests therefore in its complicity a message, but a message which does not arrive. It is this: "my father beats me", does not reach the subject. This is how what Freud says at that moment must be understood: the message which at a moment meant: "the rival does not exist, he is nothing at all", is the same as that which means: "you exist and you are even loved." This is what emerges at this moment, in what we can call a regressive or repressed form. But it does not matter, it is this all the same which serves as a message, but as a message which does not arrive.

It is right that we should dwell on this enigmatic moment, because as Freud tells us, it is the whole essence of masochism, and from the moment when Freud tackled, fundamentally attacked, the problem of masochism as such, namely the beyond of the pleasure principle, from that moment when he searched for what was the radical value of masochism, of this masochism which he encounters as an opposition and a radical enemy, he was obliged to pose it in different terms, and we find there something in which it is certainly not for nothing that three years after writing *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he says that here is the whole essence of masochism. It is worth our while to dwell on this, even if we go at it precisely step by step. One must begin by seeing the paradox, and by seeing where it is. Here therefore we have the message, the one that does not come to the place of the subject, and the only thing which on the contrary remains as a sign, is the material of the signifier, this object, the whip, remains. It remains as a sign to the end, and to the point of remaining as a sign, of becoming the pivot, I would almost say the model of the relationship with the desire of the other, because subsequently the last phantasy, that which remains, whose character of generality is very well indicated to us by the indefinite multiplication of subjects at that moment, means this: namely my relationship with the other, the others, the little others, with the little o, my relationship with those, in so far as this relationship is a libidinal relationship is linked to this, it is that human beings are as such all under the rod, that to be a human being who has entered into the world of desire, it is well and truly and in the first place to suffer from this something which

exists beyond - that we should call it the father has no longer any importance here, it does not matter, it is the law.

Here is what in a particular subject, no doubt getting into the affair by particular pathways, how a certain line of evolution is defined, and what is the function of the final phantasy, for manifesting an essential relationship of the subject to the signifier.

And now let us go a little further, and let us recall what Freud puts forward about masochism. Let us recall what the new thing introduced by *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* consists in, in the evolution of Freudian thought. It rests essentially on this remark that if we consider the mode of resistance or of inertia of the subject to a certain curative, normative, normalising intervention we are led to articulate in an absolute fashion the pleasure principle as this tendency of everything which is life, to return to the inanimate. The last resort of libidinal evolution, is to return to the stillness of the stones.

Here is what Freud, to the great scandal moreover of all those for whom the notion of libido had up to then been the law of their thought, brings forward, which presents itself as both paradoxically new, and even scandalous when it is expressed as I have just done, as not presenting itself otherwise than as a kind of extension of that which had been given as the very law of the pleasure principle, namely pleasure being characterised by the return of tension to zero. There is in fact no more radical return to zero than death. Simply you can notice, at the same time, that here, it is this formulation that we give to the first source of pleasure. We are all the same forced to call it a beyond of the pleasure principle, in order to distinguish it.

One of the most unusual problems of his life and of his person, is the relationship Freud had to women, which perhaps we will one day have occasion to come back on, a fairly deplorable tendency to receive from the feminine constellation, which he had around him, in the females who continued or who helped his thought, a constellation which moreover is indeed in conformity with his very existence, therefore very deprived of women or depriving itself of them. We scarcely know more than two women connected with Freud: his wife and then his sister-in-law who lived in the shadow of the couple. We really do not have any trace of anything else which might be a properly love relationship. On the other hand, it is enough for a person like Barbara Low to propose a term, I might say, so poorly adapted as the term Nirvana Principle, for Freud to give it his sanction.

The relationship between the Nirvana Principle and this notion of returning to inanimate nature, is pretty approximate, and Freud was satisfied with it. Let us be also satisfied with it.

If the Nirvana Principle is therefore the very rule and law of vital evolution as such, Freud recognises it. There must therefore be somewhere a device so that from time to time at least it is not the falling off of pleasure which is pleasurable, but on the contrary its increase. It is here therefore that he expresses himself. He says the following: we are absolutely unable to say why. It must be something along the lines of a temporal rhythm, of a kind of agreement between terms. He allows there to appear at the horizon possibilities of recourse to explanations which, if they could be given, would certainly not be vague, but which are in any case well outside our reach. In fact, it is rather in the sense of the music, of the harmony of the spheres and of its pulsations. In any case it must be remarked, that it is all the same necessary from the moment that we have admitted that the principle of pleasure is to return to death, that effective pleasure, that with which we have to deal concretely, therefore requires

another order of explanations which can only be in some device of life, namely to make subjects believe one might say, that it is indeed for their pleasure that they are there, namely that one goes back to the greatest philosophical banalities, namely that the veil of Maya only keeps us in existence thanks to the fact that it lures us, and then beyond the possibility of attaining, either this pleasure, or the pleasure of making all sorts of detours, the reality principle.

This, is the beyond of the pleasure principle, and it requires nothing less for Freud than that to modify, to justify the existence of what he calls the negative therapeutic reaction. But nevertheless here we should all the same stop for a moment, because in fact the negative therapeutic reaction does not appear at the level of a kind of stoical reaction of the subject, it manifests itself in all sorts of things which are extraordinarily awkward, burdensome, and articulated, of extra trouble that it gives to us and to his entourage.

In other words, this "better not to have been born" (?) still appears to be one of the better fates which could befall a being, this "better not to have been born" on which the Oedipal drama terminates. It is something articulated. I would say that at the moment that Oedipus finishes by articulating it as the term and the end of his tragedy, to give us the meaning at which in the final analysis the whole tragic adventure culminates, it is all the same something which, very far from abolishing him, makes him eternal for the simple reason that if Oedipus had not been able to pronounce it, he would not have been this supreme hero that he is, and it is precisely in so far as he finally articulates it, that he is this hero, namely in so far as one might say he eternalises himself.

What is at stake in what Freud discovers as the beyond of the pleasure principle, is that perhaps there is in fact this final term of the aspiration for repose and for eternal death. But I would point out to you, and this was the whole meaning of my second year of seminars, that the way in which we have to deal with this, is in so far as it makes itself recognised, that it articulates itself in the final resistances with which we have to deal in these subjects who are more or less characterized by the fact of having been unwanted children, in this irresistible slide towards suicide, in this quite specific character of the negative therapeutic reaction, because of the fact that it is in the very measure that there is better articulated for them that which should make them approach their own history as subjects, they more and more refuse to play the game, they literally want to get out of it. They do not accept being what they are, and they do not want anything to do with this signifying chain into which they were only reluctantly admitted by their mother.

But this is something which is only there for us analysts, as being exactly that which is in the remainder. It is there, not just as the desire for recognition, but as the recognition of a desire, something that is articulated. The signifier is its essential dimension, and the more the subject affirms himself with the help of the signifier as wanting to get out of it, the more he enters and integrates himself into this signifying chain and becomes himself a sign of this signifying chain. If he abolishes himself, he is more of a sign than ever, for the simple reason that it is precisely from the moment when the subject is dead that he becomes an eternal sign for others, and suicides more than anybody else. This is indeed the reason why suicide has at once this horrific beauty which makes it so terribly condemned by men, and this contagious beauty which brings it about that epidemics of suicide are something which are very obvious and very real in experience. Once again therefore, that on which Freud puts the accent in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, is the desire for recognition as such, as being the basis of what constitutes our relationship to the subject. And after all, is there even anything other

than this in what Freud calls the the beyond of the pleasure principle, namely this fundamental relationship of the subject to the signifying chain? Because, if you even think about it, at the point at which we are, this idea tends to the pretended inertia of inanimate nature in order to give us the model of that to which life aspires, and this is something which should make us smile. I mean that as a model of returning to nothingness, nothing is less assured, and Freud himself moreover on occasion, in a small little parenthesis which I would ask you to find in "The Economic Problem of Masochism", when he evokes his own *Beyond the pleasure principle*", indicates to us that in so far as inanimate nature, is this something which is effectively conceivable as the return to the lowest level of tension and of repose. In fact, at the point at which we are, we know a little bit about it: this pretended point of view which is supposed to be the reduction to nothing of this thing which is supposed to have arisen and which is supposed to be life, there is nothing to indicate to us that in it too one might say, it is not active and that the pain of being which is there as its basis, I do not give rise to it, I do not extrapolate it. It is indicated by Freud as being that something which must be considered as the last residue of the liaison of Thanatos with Eros. Without any doubt Thanatos manages to liberate itself by the motor aggressiveness of the subject *vis-à-vis* his entourage. Nature is there, but there is something which remains well linked within it, this pain of being is something which appears really fundamental to him, as being linked to the very existence of the living being.

There is nothing to prove to us that this pain of being is something which is limited to living beings, after all that we know about a nature which is fermenting, stagnating, bubbling, animated, and even explosive as we can up to now imagine it.

But the relationship of the subject to the signifier, in so far as he is called on to constitute himself in the signifier, and that from time to time he refuses it, he says no, I will not be an element of the chain, this on the contrary is something which is tangible for us, and which is well and truly the foundation, but the foundation, the bottom here is exactly the same thing as the top, because what does he do every time that he refuses in some way to pay a debt that he has not contracted? He does nothing other than to perpetuate it, namely by his successive refusals to make emerge again the chain of what is always still more linked to this signifying chain. It is well and truly through the eternal necessity of repeating the same refusal, that Freud shows us the final role of everything which from the unconscious, manifests itself in the form of symptomatic reproduction.

Therefore we see there, and nothing less than this is necessary, to understand why from the moment that the signifier is introduced, its value is fundamentally double, I mean how the subject can as himself, feel himself affected as desire, because after all here it is himself, it is not the other, the other with the whip, and he is abolished, but in contact with the whip he is imaginary, of course signifying, he feels himself as desire up against that which as such consecrates him and gives him a value in profaning him. There is even always in this masochistic phantasy this degrading aspect, this profaning aspect which at the same time indicates a dimension of recognition, and this mode of relationship with the forbidden subject, with the paternal subject. This is indeed what constitutes the basis of the unrecognised part of the subject's phantasy.

Let us observe that this is going to have this radically double meaning aspect of the signifier, from the moment that it is introduced, and here again facilitated for the access of the subject by the following which I neither took into account, nor brought into play up to now in the schema in order not to stretch your minds too much. Because the last time there were

terrible complications from the moment that I introduced the parallel line i-e namely the existence at some given moment of the proper image of the body with the ego of the subject. It is however quite certain that we cannot overlook it, it is namely that of course this rival here has not intervened purely and simply into a triangular relationship, the radical obstacle to the mother of this something which, in *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, provokes in the young suckling who sees his milk brother with the mother, this deadly pallor that St. Augustine tells us about.

There is in fact there something radical, something really deadly for the subject, which is well expressed in this passage. But there is also the term of identification with the other. In other words, the fundamentally ambiguous character which links the subject to every image of the other, forms there the quite natural introduction for the subject to this introduction to the place of the rival at the same place, or after him, in so far as it is he who is there. From that moment, the same message will arrive with a completely opposite sense in so far as it simply is the message.

What we will then see, is something which will make us better understand what is in question, it is that to the extent that a part of the relationship enters into liaison with the ego of the subject as such, that the subsequent phantasies can take on their organisation and their structure. I mean that it is not for nothing that it is here in this dimension, that which is the whole range of intermediaries in which there is constituted the reality between the primitive maternal object and the image of the subject, that all the others come to situate themselves in so far as they are the support of the significant object, namely of the whip. At that moment, the phantasy in its signification, I mean the phantasy *qua* beaten child, in so far as it becomes from that moment the relationship with the Other, with the Other that one must be loved by, in so far in fact as he himself is not recognised as such, situates himself somewhere here in the symbolic dimension between the father and the mother, between whom besides he effectively oscillates.

Today I have made you follow a path which was not less difficult than the path I made you take the last time. To test its value and its validity, wait for what I will have to tell you later. To end with something which may introduce a little suggestive note in the applications of these terms, I would like to point out this to you, it is that it is taken as something common in analysis, that the relationship of the man to the woman and of the woman to the man especially, is a relationship which is said without going any further to involve on the part of the woman a certain masochism. This presents one of the characteristic errors of perspective to which we are led all the time by some slippage or other into a sort of confusion or rut of our experience. It is not because masochists manifest in their relationships with their partner certain signs or phantasies of a typically feminine position, that inversely the relationship of the woman to the man is a masochistic relationship. By that I mean that the notion of the relationship of the woman to the man as being someone who is beaten, is something which may well be a perspective of the masculine subject, in so far as the feminine position interests him. But it is not because the masculine subject in certain perspectives, whether they are his own or whether they are those of his clinical experience, perceives a certain liaison between the taking up of the feminine position, and something which has more or less relationship with the signifier of the position of the subject, that effectively there is there a position that is radically and constitutionally feminine.

This remark I make to you in passing, only in connection with what is called and with what Freud himself in the article on the economic problem of masochism introduces under the name of feminine masochism. It is very important to make such a correction.

I did not have time to approach what I had to say to you about the relationships of the phallus to comedy. I regret this, but I will put it off to our next meeting.

Seminar 14: Wednesday 5 March 1958

My dear friends,

To take up again our discourse which has been interrupted for three weeks, I will begin with what we were quite rightly recalling last night, that our discourse should be a scientific discourse.

This having been said, it appears that to attain this end, the ways are not so easy when it is our object that is in question.

Last night I simply pointed out the originality of the moment that is constituted in the examination of human phenomena, by the putting in the foreground, the focussing constituted by the whole Freudian discipline on this privileged element which is called desire.

I pointed out to you that up to Freud, this element was in itself always reduced, and in some way prematurely elided, and this is what allows us to say that up to Freud, the whole study of human affairs began to a greater or lesser extent from a concern about morality, about ethics, in the sense that it is less a question of studying desire than here and now of reducing and disciplining it. Now, it is with the effects of desire in a very broad sense, desire is not one of the ancillary effects, the effects of desire, that we have to deal in psychoanalysis.

This is the meaning of everything that I try to recall to you here, about what manifests itself in these phenomena of human desire, namely its fundamental subduction, even subversion, by a certain relationship which is the relationship of desire to the signifier.

Today it is not so much this that I will be recalling to you again, even though we should go back to it to begin again from it, but I will show you what it signifies in a rigorous perspective, that which maintains the originality which conditions the desire of man, one that represents for him this something which is always for you more or less implicated in the way you handle this notion of desire and which deserves to be distinguished from it; I would say further: which cannot begin to be articulated except from the moment that we are sufficiently imbued with the notion of the complexity in which there are constituted this desire and this notion which I am talking about, which is going to be the other pole of today's discourse. It is called *jouissance*. Taking up again briefly that which constitutes as such this deviation, alienation of desire in the signifier, we will try to end up with what can constitute in this perspective, this end-term which consists in the fact that the human subject in his world, tackles these very conditions which are imposed on him, as if these conditions were made for him, and as if he should be satisfied by them.

This, I indicate it to you right away, will make us end up - I hope to arrive at it today - at that which I already indicated at the beginning of the year, in taking things from the perspective of the witticism, at the nature of comedy.

Let us recall this briefly, that desire is essentially set up in a relationship to the signifying chain, that desire poses itself and proposes itself first of all in the evolution of the

human subject as demand, that frustration in Freud is *Versagung*, that is refusal, or more exactly still, retraction.

No matter how far back we go with the Kleinians into genesis, observe that this exploration which certainly was a progress, which leads us in the majority of the problems of the evolution of the neurotic subject to the so called oral-sadistic satisfaction, observe simply that this satisfaction takes places in a phantasy, here and now and right away, in retortion to the phantasised satisfaction.

We are told: everything begins from the need to bite, which is sometimes aggressive, of the little child with respect to the body of the mother. Let us all the same not forget that all this never consists in a real biting, that what we have here are phantasies and that none of this deduction can take even a step forward except by showing us that the fear of being bitten in return is here the essential core of what is involved, of the very thing that it is a question of demonstrating.

So that when I was talking last night with one of you who is trying to take up, after Susan Isaacs, some worthwhile definitions of the terra phantasy, he told me quite rightly of his complete failure to make any deduction whatsoever from it which was founded purely and simply on the imaginary relationship between the subjects. It is absolutely impossible to distinguish in a valid way unconscious phantasies from this formal creation which is the operation of the imagination, if we do not see here and now that, the unconscious phantasy is dominated, structured by the conditions of the signifier.

The good and bad primordial objects, the primitive objects beginning from which the whole analytic deduction is remade, constitute a sort of battery in which there are outlined several series of substitutes here and now destined to equivalence: milk and the breast, subsequently become, on the one hand sperm and on the other hand, the penis. Here and now objects are, if I may express myself in this way, made into signifiers (*signifiantisés*).

What is produced from the relationship with the most primordial object, the maternal object, operates right away, here and now, by means of signs, by means of what we could call to give an Image to what we mean, the small change of the desire of the other. And what I indicated to you the last time by looking as closely as was necessary in order to see it properly, this work which Freud considers as decisive, I underlined for you that it marked the inaugural step in the understanding by analysts, a real, authentic comprehension, of the problem of perversion; what we did then the last time, was of a nature to make you perceive that in these very signs, a division can take place. All these signs are more complicated, more exactly the totality of signs is not reducible to what we could call what I already indicated to you as being titles, kinds of the fiduciary values: to have this or that. They are not purely and simply representative values, small change as we just said above, and as it were signs constituted as such. There are among these signs which are constituting signs, I mean through which the creation of value is assured, I mean by means of which this something real which is engaged at every instant in this economy, is struck by this bar (*balle*) which makes of it a sign.

This bar constituted the last time by this sign of the handle of a whip or of anything else that strikes, is this something through which even a disagreeable effect becomes the distinction and the establishment of the very relationship by which the demand can be recognised as such, that by which what was at first a means of cancelling out the rival reality of the brother, becomes secondarily this something through which the subject herself finds

herself distinguished, through which she herself is recognised as something which can be either recognised, or cast into nothingness, this something which here and now presents itself therefore as the surface on which can be inscribed everything that can be subsequently given, a sort of blank cheque, I might say, with which every sort of gift is possible. And you can of course see that because all gifts are possible, it is just as well that it is not even a question of what can or cannot be given, because here it is question of this relationship of love which I tell you is constituted by what the subject essentially gives her, namely what she does not have. Everything that is possible in terms of this introduction to the order of love, supposes this fundamental sign by the subject, which can be either cancelled out, or recognised as such. I asked you during this interval to do some reading. I hope that you have done it, I mean that you have at least occupied yourselves a little with "The Phallic Phase" by Mr. Jones, and with the early development of feminine sexuality.

I only want, because I must advance to-day, to punctuate for you in connection with an example which is an altogether localised example, I discovered it in looking at what had been said for a certain anniversary commemorating Jones's fiftieth birthday, and which coincided with the epoch when this phallic phase came to the forefront of the interest of English psychoanalysts, and in this number I re-read once more with great interest this article by Joan Riviere in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Vol. X entitled: "Womanliness as a Masquerade".

Pursuing the analysis of a specified case which is not the general case of the function of femininity, Joan Riviere shows how in a case that she situates with respect to diverse branches, the pathways that are possible in the accession to femininity, how one of these cases demonstrated for her, presented herself as having a femininity all the more remarkable in its apparently absolutely complete assumption, in that it was precisely in one of those subjects whose whole life could seem otherwise to be at the time, even much more than in our day, showed the assumption of every masculine function. In other words, it is a question of someone who had a perfectly independent, well-developed, free, (professional life and who nevertheless, which I repeat, was more striking at that time than in our own, manifested by a sort of correlative and maximal assumption, to the highest degree, what one can call her feminine functions; this not only in the open, public form, the functions of mistress of the house, in her relationships with her spouse, as everywhere showing the superiority of qualities which in our social situation are necessarily univocal cases, in all the social situations of what is the responsibility of women, and particularly in another register, very especially on the sexual plane, something entirely satisfying in her relationships to men, in other words in the *louissance* of that relationship.

Now, this analysis highlights behind this apparently total satisfaction with the feminine position, something very hidden which nevertheless constitutes its basis, something which without any doubt is what one discovers after one has been pushed towards it all the same by some tiny, some infinitely tiny discordance appearing at the surface of this state which in principle is completely satisfying.

This something hidden, it is interesting to show it, because you know the importance, the stress, which our experience has put on *Penisneid*, the exigency for the penis, in many of the disturbances of the development of feminine sexuality. Here what is hidden, is indeed the complete opposite, it is namely that this phallus is called for - I cannot go through the whole story of this woman, that is not our objective today - but the source of the fundamental

satisfaction supports what apparently flourishes in this happy libido, is the hidden satisfaction of her supremacy over her parents.

This is the very term used by Joan Riviere, and it is considered by her to be at the very source of what appears with a character which is not all that certain in the evolution of feminine sexuality, because it is not noticed in this case. The source of the satisfying character of the organ itself, is the proof that precisely from the detection of this hidden source of the personality in the subject herself, procures, if only in a transitory fashion, this effect of profoundly disturbing what had been acquired or appeared in the subject as a complete, mature and happy relationship, having even brought about for a time the disappearance of the favourable outcome of the sexual act.

Therefore what we find ourselves in the presence of, underlines Joan Riviere, is this: that it is in function of the need in the subject to avoid on the part of men the retortion for this surreptitious subtraction from the other of the source and very symbol of their power, which to the degree that the analysis unfolds, that the analysis advances, appears to be more and more obviously guided, and dominated, and given the meaning of the relationship of the subject with persons of either sex. It is in the measure that this is necessary in order to avoid the punishment, the retortion on the part of the men who are aimed at here, that the subject in a scansion which is very subtle, but which appears all the more clearly as the analysis advances, which however was already perceptible in these little anomalous features of the analysis, every time in fact that the subject gave proof of her constituted phallic power, she precipitates herself into a series of steps, either of seduction or even of sacrificial procedures, to do everything for others, and precisely apparently adopting here the most elevated forms of feminine devotedness, as something which consists in saying: "but look, I do not have the phallus, I am a woman, and purely a woman", masking herself especially in the measures which immediately follow with regard to men, in those professional duties for example, in which she shows herself to be highly qualified, suddenly adopting by a sort of avoidance, the attitude of someone extremely modest, even anxious, about the quality of what she does, and in reality playing a completely coquettish role, as Joan Riviere puts it, which at that moment serves, not so much to reassure as to deceive in her mind what might often be offended at this something which in her appears essentially and fundamentally as aggression, as the need and *jouissance* of supremacy as such, as profoundly structured on a whole history which is that of rivalry with her mother first of all, and then with her father.

In short, in the case of an example like this, however paradoxical it may appear, we can indeed see that what is at stake in an analysis, in the understanding of a subjective structure, is always something which shows us the subject engaged as such in a process of recognition, but of the recognition of what? Let us understand it properly, because the subject is unconscious of this need for recognition, and this is why we must situate somewhere this other necessity in every relationship of recognition,, situate it in the alterity of a quality which we have not known up to now, nor up to Freud, that which makes of it the pure and simple place of signifier by which a being is divided from her own existence, which makes of the fate of the human subject something essentially linked to her relationship with this sign of being which is made up of this sign of being the object of all sorts of passions which make death present in this very process, in that it is in her link to this sign that the subject is sufficiently detached from herself to have this relationship apparently unique in the creation to her own existence, which is the final form of that which in analysis, we call masochism, namely this something through which the subject apprehends the pain of existing.

This division in which the subject finds himself constituted from the first as existence. Why? Because elsewhere his being has to represent itself in the sign, and the sign itself is in a third place. This is what from the unconscious level, structures the subject in this decomposition of himself without which it is impossible for us to ground in any valid way what is called the unconscious.

Take the smallest dream you like, you will see, on condition that you analyse it correctly, by referring to the *Traumdeutung* that it is not in what presents itself in the dream as articulated signifier, even when the first decipherment has been done, that the unconscious is embodied. In every case Freud comes back to it, and underlines it. There are dreams, he tells us, which are hypocritical, they are nonetheless the representation of a desire, even if it is only the desire to deceive the analyst. Remember what I underlined for you from this fully articulated passage in the analysis a case of female homosexuality.

But this discourse, itself unconscious, but which is not the last word on the unconscious, is supported by what is really the final source of the unconscious. It cannot be articulated otherwise than as desire for recognition by the subject, even if it is through a lie articulated here and now at the level of mechanisms which escape from consciousness, a desire for recognition which the lie itself sustains on this occasion, which may present itself in a false perspective as a lie of the unconscious.

This gives you the meaning and the key to the necessity in which we find ourselves of posing at the origin of every analysis of the complete subjective phenomenon, as it is given to us by analytic experience, this schema in terms of which I try to advance the authentic pathway of the experience of the formations of the unconscious, and it is the one which I put forward before you recently in this form which I can today present for you in fact in a more simple fashion. It is of course the simplest forms which should be the last to be brought forward.

Here what have we got in this triangle (*angle*) with three poles which constitutes the position of the subject?

The subject in so far as in his relationship with a triad of terms which are the signifying foundations of his whole progress, namely the mother in so far as she is the first object to be symbolized, as her absence or her presence are going to become for the subject the sign of the desire onto which his own desire is going to fasten, in other words what is going to make or not make of him, not simply a child who is satisfied or not, but a child who is desired or not desired.

This does not constitute an arbitrary construction. You should recognize that I am setting up here something that our experience has taught us to discover step by step. We have learned by experience the cascading consequences, the almost infinite déstructuration, that is involved in the fact for a subject of having already been, before his birth, a child who was or was not desired.

This term is essential, it is more essential than to have been at one or other moment a more or less satisfied child. The term "desired child" is the one which responds to the constitution of the mother as locus of desire. To this there corresponds all this dialectic of the relationship of the child to the desire of the mother, which I tried to show you, and which can be resumed, which can be concentrated in this, in the primordial fact of the symbol of the desired child, and here the term "father", in so far as it is in the signifier, this signifier by

which the signifier itself is posed as such, and it is for this reason that the father is essentially creator, I would even say absolute creator, the one who creates with nothing. It is in so far as he can contain in himself the signifier in its original dimension, that he can define himself as the emergence of this signifier.

It is with respect to this that something essentially confused, indeterminate, not separated out from its existence, and nevertheless made to be separated out from it, this subject in so far as he must be signified, has to locate himself.

If identifications are possible, it is always in the measure in that something is structured for the subject within this triadic relationship constituted at the level of the signifier, and if he can manage within his own lived experience to give such and such a meaning to this something which is given to him by his particular human physiology, it is in this relationship that this is constituted. Now, I do not need to come back to the fact of the homology of terms of what constitutes this homology at the level of the signified, from the aspect where the subject is in relation to these three symbolic terms. I demonstrated it in part; when all is said and done, that is in part all that I am doing here. I would ask you until you have fuller information, a fuller demonstration, to follow me on this. It is in the relationship to his own image that the subject rediscovers the duplicity of the maternal desire for him as a desired child, who is only symbolic. He feels it, he experiences it in this relationship to the image of himself onto which so many things can come to be superimposed, this something which can be illustrated by an example. I will do it right away.

Last night I alluded to the fact that I had looked rather closely at the history of the childhood of Gide as Jean Delay presents it to us in a really exhaustive fashion, in the pathographical study that he has published on this case. It is quite clear that Gide, the unfortunate child as the author says somewhere at the sight of a photograph before which he felt himself trembling, that Gide, the unfortunate child, the child given over in his eroticism, primitive autoeroticism, to the most disorganised images, because he tell us, he was able to have orgasm by his identification with situations that were in some way catastrophic, very early on he found his enjoyment in the reading of some terms, in reading Madame de Ségur for example, whose books are really fundamental in terms of the ambiguity of primordial sadism, but in which the sadism is not perhaps very elaborated, in which he took the form of a beaten child, of a servant girl who lets something fall with a great crash and destroys what she was holding in her hands; or the identification with the character Gribouille in an tale by Andersen, who lets himself be swept away by the river and ends up by arriving at a distant bank, transformed into a dead rat, that is to say in the least humanly constituted forms of this pain of existing. Undoubtedly we can learn here nothing other than this bottomless thing which is constituted in his first relationship with a mother who we know had both very high and very remarkable qualities, and also something totally elided in her sexuality, in her feminine life, which assuredly places the child in her presence in his first years in a totally unsituated position.

The turning point, the point at which the life of the young Gide takes on what one might call a human meaning and organization, is in this crucial moment of entification which is given to us as clearly as it is possible to be, in his memory, and which leaves in an undoubted fashion its mark on all his existence, because he also conserved its pivotal point and object throughout his whole existence, in this identification to his young cousin whose term it is not enough to give in this vague form. It is certainly identification, he tells us as much. When? At this moment whose singular character is not sufficiently dwelt on, when he

discovers his cousin in tears on the second floor of this house where he has hurried, not so much drawn by her as by his taste, by his love for the clandestine which is rampant in this house, after having crossed the first landing where he sees the mother of this cousin, his aunt, or more exactly glimpses her more or less in the arms of a lover, he finds his cousin in tears and then it is all intoxication, enthusiasm, love, distress and devotion. He devotes himself to the protection of this child, he tells us later. Let us not forget that he was older than her; at that time Gide was thirteen years old and Madeleine was four.

At that moment there happens something whose meaning we can absolutely not understand if we do not situate it in this third relationship in which the young André find himself, not just with his cousin, but with the person who on the floor below is in the midst of a passionate scene, and if we do not remember the previous event that André Gide tells us about in *La Porte étroite*, namely an attempt at seduction carried out by the aforesaid mother of his cousin.

What then happens, is something which can be described how? He, André Gide, has become the desired child at the moment of this seduction from which moreover he fled in horror, because in effect there is nothing there to bring in this element of mediation, this element of approach which makes of it something other than a trauma, he found himself for the first time nevertheless in the position of a desired child. This moment produces as an outcome this new situation, which in a certain way is going to be salvific for him, which is going nevertheless to fix him in a profoundly divided position because of the tardy, and I repeat unmediated way in which this encounter occurs.

What will he hold onto in the constitution of this symbolic term which up to then was lacking for him? He will hold on to nothing other than the place of the desired child which he will finally be able to occupy through the intermediary of his cousin, at that place where there was a hole there is now a place, but nothing more, because at that place of course he refuses, he can not accept the desire of which he is the object, but on the contrary his ego incontestably is not to identify itself, and this without ever knowing it, to the subject of the desire on which he is now dependent, it is for himself to be always in love, and until the end of his existence, to be always in love with this little boy that he was for a moment in the arms of his aunt, of this aunt who caressed his neck, his shoulders and his chest. And we will see that his whole life is in what we can affirm, namely in what he admits to us, namely that beginning with his honeymoon, everyone is amazed at this and is scandalized by it, and almost in front of his wife, he thinks of the tortured delight - as he expresses itself - of the caressing of the arms and the shoulders of young boys that he meets on the train. Here we have a celebrated piece of writing, which forms part of literature, in which Gide shows what for him remains the privileged point of every fixation of his desire.

In other words, that which at the level of what becomes for him his ego ideal, that which was withdrawn here, namely the desire of which he is the object and which he cannot bear, he assumes for himself, he becomes forever and eternally in love with this same caressed little boy that he himself had not wanted to be. In other words what we grasp here is this: that between this term of desired child where something must be elaborated, where it is necessary to rejoin this signifier which primordially constitutes the subject in his being, it is necessary that this .ego, this point X where it is, rejoins it in some way or other, that there should be constituted here this ego ideal which marks the whole psychological development of the subject. This ego ideal is marked:

1) by the sign of the signifier;

2) by the knowledge that it can start from, namely by progression beginning with the ego, or on the contrary without the ego being able to do anything other than to submit through a series of accidents, given over to adventures which begin with the signifier itself, in other words to recognise that what happens without the subject knowing it, by a simple succession of accidents, from what allows him to subsist in his signifying position of a child who is more or less desired, this something is there which shows us that it is at the same place depending on whether this is produced by way of consciousness or by way of unconsciousness, it is at the same place that there is produced what we call in one case, the ego ideal, and in the other case, perversion.

André Gide's perversion does not depend so much on the fact that he can only desire little boys, only the little boy that he had been. André Gide's perversion consists in this: it is that here he can only constitute himself by perpetually telling himself, by submitting himself in this correspondence which for him is at the heart of his work, to being the one who can only assert himself in the place occupied by his cousin, the person whose every thought is turned towards her, the person who gives her literally at every moment everything that he does not have, but nothing more than that, who constitutes himself as a personality in her, by her, and with reference to her, which puts him with respect to her, in this sort of fatal dependency which makes him cry out somewhere: "You cannot possibly know what the love of a clerk (*un buraliste*) is like! It is something like an embalmed love."

This entire projection of what is his very essence into what is the basis, is in fact the heart and the root in him of his existence as a man of letters, a man who is entirely in the signifier, and in its relationships, and in what he communicates, this is how he is seized in his interhuman relationships, that for him this undesired woman can in effect be the object of the supreme love which is essentially bound to her, and that when this object with which he has filled this hole of love without desire, when this object has disappeared, he emits this miserable cry whose relationship with the comic cry par excellence I showed, indicated last night in what I said to you: "My money box! My lovely money box!" - the money box of the miser. All the passions in so far as they are alienations of desire in an object, are on the same footing. Of course the money box of the miser makes us laugh more easily, at least if we have in us some note of humanity, which is not always the case, than the disappearance of Gide's correspondence, of this correspondence of Gide with his wife. Obviously it would have been for all of us something of eternal value. It remains nevertheless that fundamentally it is the same thing, and that the cry of Gide at the disappearance of this correspondence, is the same cry as the one in the comedy, as that of the miser Harpagon.

This comedy that we are talking about, what is it?

Comedy is something which comes to us from a thousand different angles. Comedy is not the comic. Every comedy should be able, if we give a correct theory of comedy, if we believe that at least for a time comedy was the production before the community, before the community in so far as it represents a group of men, namely as constituting above itself the existence as such of a man, if comedy has been what it seems to have been at a time when the representation of the relationship of man to woman was the object of something which had a ceremonial value, of something which means that I am not the first to compare theatre to the mass; everyone who has approached the question of the theatre has noticed that undoubtedly in our epoch, only the drama of the mass essentially represents that which at a

certain moment of history, was represented by the complete development of the functions of the theatre.

If on the one hand therefore, at the time of the great epoch of Greek theatre, tragedy presented this relationship of man to the word in so far as it takes him up into its fatality and into a conflictual fatality, and in so far as the chain and the link of man to the signifying law, is not the same at the level of the family and at the level of the community. This is the essence of tragedy.

Comedy represents the following: that it is, and not without a link with tragedy because as you know, a comedy always completed the tragic trilogy, we cannot consider it independently, and this comedy, I will show you that we will find its trace and shadow to the fore right up to the marginal commentary on the Christian drama itself. Of course, not at our epoch of constipated Christianity where one would not dare to accompany the ceremonies with these robust farces which were constituted by what was called the *risus pascalis*. But let us leave this to one side.

Comedy presents itself as the moment at which the subject and man try to take up this relationship to the word as no longer being its engagement, its disguise in these opposing requirements, but as being after all not only his affair, but something in which he has to articulate himself as one who profits from it, who enjoys it, who consumes it, and who in fact, is the one who is destined to absorb substance and matter from this communion.

Comedy, one might say, is something like the representation of the end of the communion meal by which the tragedy had itself been evoked. It is man, when all is said and done, who consumes what was presentified there in terms of its common substance and flesh and it is a question of knowing what will result from this.

To understand what will result from this, I think that there is absolutely no other way than to refer to ancient comedy, of which all the comedies which have followed are only a sort of degradation where the traits are always recognisable, to the comedies of Aristophanes, to those comedies like *The Assembly of Women*, like *Lysistrata*, like the *Thesmophoriazusaë*, which you must refer to to see where this leads us, and of course it was to these that I referred when I began to indicate to you in what sense comedy manifests by a sort of internal necessity, this relationship of the subject, from the moment that it is his own signified, namely the fruit of the result of this relationship to the signifier, which must effectively come onto the stage of the fully developed comedy. It is this term which necessarily designates him *qua* signified, that is to say in so far as he gathers, as he assumes, as he enjoys the relationship to a fact, which it is fundamentally in a certain relationship with the signifying order, the appearance of this signified which is called the phallus.

It happens that since I put forward this term for you, I had only to open something which in the days which followed the rapid sketch that I gave you of Molière's *The School for Wives*, as representing this essentially comic relationship as something which I believe can be considered as a very special resurgence of a really extraordinary masterpiece of comedy, if what I believe I can read in the comedy of Aristophanes is correct, and which is nothing other than *Le Balcon* by Jean Genêt.

What is Jean Genêt's *Le Balcon*?

You know that there was some fairly lively opposition even to the fact that it should be put on. We should not of course be surprised at such things given a state of the theatre where one can say that its substance and its interest consist principally in that on the stage actors should assert themselves in different ways, and which of course fills the audience with comfort and pleasure by identifying themselves with this sort of exhibition; you have to call things by their name.

If the theatre is something other than that, I think that a play like that articulated by Jean Genêt is undoubtedly just the thing to make us realise it, but it is not certain either that the public is in a condition to hear it. It appears to me to be difficult nevertheless not to see its dramatic interest, which I will try to expose to you.

You see, Genêt speaks about something which means more or less the following. I am not saying that he knows what he is doing, it is absolutely unimportant whether he knows or whether he does not know. Corneille probably did not know either what he was writing as Corneille, nevertheless he did it with a very great rigour. Here human functions in so far as they refer to the symbolic, the power of the one who as they say, binds and unbinds, namely what was conferred by Christ on the posterity of St. Peter and on all the bishops, binds and unbinds the order of sin, of transgression, or the power of the one who condemns, who judges and punishes, namely that of the judge, or the power of the one who assumes command in the great phenomenon which goes infinitely further, that of war, and who therefore is the commander-in-chief, more commonly the general, if all these persons represent therefore functions with respect to which the subject finds himself in some way alienated with respect to this word of, which he finds himself to be the support, in a function which goes well beyond his particularity, if these persons are going all of a sudden to be submitted to the law of comedy, namely if we try to represent for ourselves what it is to enjoy (*jouir de*) these positions, disrespectful positions no doubt, to pose the question in that way, but the disrespectfulness of comedy is not something you should stop at without trying to see what results from it a little further on.

Of course it is always in some period of crisis, it is at the supreme moment of distress for Athens precisely because of the aberration of a series of bad choices and by a submission to the law of the city, which seem literally to be leading it to its destruction, that Aristophanes sets off this alarm which consists in saying that after all people are exhausting themselves in this pointless war, that there is nothing like staying nice and warm in one's own house and going back to one's wife. This is not something which is properly speaking posed as a morality, it is a restatement of the essential relationship of man to his condition which is suggested, without our having to know moreover whether the consequences are more or less salubrious.

Here then we see the bishop, the judge and the general put forward before us beginning with this question: what can it really mean to enjoy one's state of being a bishop, a judge or a general? And indeed this explains to you the artifice by means of which this *Balcón* is nothing other than what is called a house of illusions, namely that if effectively what is produced at the level of the different forms of the ego ideal that I situated here somewhere, is something which effectively is not the way one believes it to be, the effect of a sublimation in the sense that this would be the progressive neutralisation of functions rooted within, but quite the contrary something which is always more or less accompanied by an eroticisation of the symbolic relationship, the assimilation can be made of the person who in his position and in his function as bishop, as judge or as general, enjoys his position and you

get this something which all the proprietors of houses of illusion know, namely the little old man who comes to satisfy himself from a strictly calculated position, which will put him for a moment in the strangest diversity of positions assumed with respect to a complicitous partner who is willing to take on the role of being his partner for the occasion.

Thus we see someone who is employed in some financial institution, coming here to don priestly vestments in order to obtain from a compliant prostitute a confession which of course it is only an imitation, and which it is necessary for him that to some degree, it should approach the truth, in other words that something in the intention of his accomplice allows him to see in it this relationship to a guilty *jouissance* in which it is necessary at least to believe that she participates, and it is not the least singularity of the art, of the lyricism with which the poet Jean Genêt is able to pursue before us this dialogue of the character who is certainly more grotesque than can be expressed, by enlarging him to dimensions which are even more grotesque: he puts him on skates in order that his caricatural position is still more heightened, and without which we see the perverse subject certainly satisfying himself by looking for his satisfaction in this something with which he puts himself in relationship, with an image, with an image however in so far as it is the reflection of something essentially signifying.

In other words. Genêt, in three major scenes. Genêt makes present for us, incarnates for us on the plane of perversion, that which from that moment takes its name, namely that in crude language we can on the day of general disorder call the whole *bordel* in which we live, in so far as it is like any other society, always more or less in a state of degradation, because society cannot define itself otherwise than by a more or less advanced state of degradation in the culture; the whole *bordel*, namely all this confusion which is established in the relationships which are supposed to be sacred and fundamental to man and to the word; the whole *bordel* is represented here in its proper place, and we know what it is averting its gaze from.

So what is involved? It is a question of something which embodies for us the relationship of the subject to the functions of faith in their diverse forms and in their most sacred forms, as being themselves something which is carried on by a series of degradations in which the jump is made for a moment, namely that it is nothing other than the bishop himself, the judge and the general that we see here in the position of specialists, as is said in terms of perversion, and who put in question the relationship of the subject with the function of the word.

What happens? What happens is that this relationship, is an adulterated relationship, since it is a relationship in which everyone has failed and where no one can locate himself, it remains nevertheless that this relationship continues to be sustained, however degraded it may be, to be presented here before us, it nevertheless remains this relationship, namely purely and simply to subsist, if it is not as legitimate dependence and recognition of this relationship, at the very least as something which is linked to the fact that it exists, to what is called its order.

Now, this relationship to the maintenance of order, to what is it reduced if a society has come to its most extreme state of disorder? It is reduced to something which is called the police. This sort of last recourse, of the ultimate law, of the last argument of order which is called the maintaining of order, which is created by establishing as being, when all is said and done, at the centre of the community what appears also at its origin, namely the three crossed

pikes, and at the centre of the store, this reduction of everything in the matter of order to its maintenance, this is embodied in the pivotal character, central to Genêt's drama, namely the chief of police.

This is the hypothesis, and it is really a very attractive one: it is that the chief of police, namely the one who knows essentially that it is on him that there reposes this maintenance of order, and that he is in a way its final term, the last resort of all power, the image of the chief of police has not yet been raised to a sufficient nobility for any of the little old men who come to the brothel to demand to have the uniform, the attributes, the role and the function of chief of police. There are those who know how to play the judge, before a little prostitute, so that she will admit that she is a thief, and who go to great lengths to obtain this avowal, because "how would I be a judge if you were not a thief?" says the judge. But I pass over what the general says to his mare. On the contrary no one has asked to be the chief of police.

This of course is pure hypothesis, I do not have enough experience of brothels to know whether effectively the chief of police has for a long time been elevated to the dignity of those characters in the role of whom one can take enjoyment. But the chief of police, because here the chief of police is a good friend of the proprietress of the whole brothel - here I am not at all trying to construct a theory, any more than I have said that it is a question here of concrete things - the chief of police comes and then asks anxiously: "Is there even one person who has asked to be the chief of police?"

And this never happens. Just as there is no uniform for a chief of police. We have seen the clothes spread out, the judge's wig, the general's kepi as well as his trousers, but there is no one who has got into the role of the chief of police in order to make love.

It is this that is the pivot of the drama. Now you should know that everything that happens inside the brothel happens while all around there is a revolution raging. Everything that happens, and I will spare you the details, you will have a lot of the pleasure of discovery in reading this comedy, everything that is happening inside - and it is far from being as schematic as what I am telling you, there are cries there are blows, in short everyone is having great fun - is accompanied by the stutter of machine guns on the outside, and the town is in revolt, and of course all these women are waiting to die a beautiful death, massacred by the dark and virtuous workers who are here supposed to represent the whole man, the real man, the one who does not doubt that his desire can arrive at completion, namely assert itself as such and in a harmonious fashion. Proletarian consciousness has always believed in the success of morality; it may be right or it may be wrong. It does not matter, what matters is that Jean Genêt shows us the outcome of the adventure - I am forced to go a bit quickly - in this that the chief of police, himself, has no doubts, because it is his function, just as it is his function it is because of this that the play develops as it develops, the chief of police has no doubts that .after just as before the revolution, it will always be a *bordel*. He knows that the revolution in this sense is a game, and in fact with a clever knack that I will not describe to you, because there is here again a very fine scene, in which the true blue diplomat comes to throw light for the amiable group which is found here at the centre of the house of illusion, on what is happening at the royal palace, namely in the most legitimate part of the state; the queen is embroidering or she is not embroidering; the queen is snoring, she is snoring or she is not snoring; the queen is embroidering a little handkerchief. It is a question of knowing what there will be in the middle of all this, namely a sign, a sign about which one does not yet know whether it will be on the sea, on a lake or in a cup of tea. I will pass over therefore what

concerns the final vanishing of the symbol, but what appears and the one who makes herself the voice, the word of the revolution, namely one of the prostitutes who had been kidnapped by a virtuous plumber and who finds herself filling the role of the woman in the phrygien bonnet on the barricades, with in addition the fact that she is a sort of Joan of Arc, namely that she will know, she knows her way around the intricacies of masculine dialectic, because she has been there where one hears it being developed in all its phases, she knows how to talk to them and to reply to them our Chantal, because that is her name in this play, and she is removed by a piece of trickery, that is to say that she is shot and that immediately afterwards power appears embodied by the mistress of the house in question, Irma, the proprietress of the brothel who assumes, and with what superiority, the functions of the queen.

Is she not also someone who has passed over to the pure state of symbol, because as is said somewhere, nothing about her is real, except her jewels?

And from that moment on we come to something which is the incorporation of the characters, the perverts whom we have seen exhibit themselves throughout the first act, well and truly into the authentic, integral role, into the assumption of the reciprocal functions that they incarnated in their different little loving transports.

At that moment a dialogue of considerable political immaturity takes place between the character of the chief of police who naturally needs them to represent what must be substituted for the preceding order which has been overthrown, and to make them assume their functions, which moreover is not something they do without repugnance, because they understand very well that it is one thing to enjoy when you are nice and warm and protected by the walls of one of those houses about which it is not sufficiently realised that it is the very place where order is most meticulously observed, namely in order to put them at the mercy of the winds, even indeed the responsibilities that these functions involve when they are really assumed.

Here obviously we are involved in open farce, but it is the theme, it is the conclusion of this high class farce, which I would finally like to stress.

.It is that in the middle of all this dialogue, the chief of police keeps on worrying: "Has anyone come to ask to be the chief of police? Has anyone sufficiently recognised my greatness?" It must be recognised that there perhaps, for a moment at least, his imaginary place in this encounter has a satisfaction that is difficult to obtain.

What happens? What happens first of all is this: it is that discouraged by waiting indefinitely for the event which would be for him the sanction of this accession to the order of functions which are respected, because they are profaned, the chief of police first of all refers to what he has now come to demonstrate: that he alone is the order and the pivot of everything, namely that, when all is said and done, this means that nothing else matters when it comes down to it except the fist, and here we find something which does not lack signification, in so far as the discovery of ego ideal coincided more or less in Freud with the inauguration of the type of person who offers to the political community a unique and simple identification, namely the dictator.

The chief of police consults his entourage on the subject of the suitability of a sort of uniform, and also the symbol which will be the symbol of his function, and not without shyness in this case; in fact he shocked the ears of his listeners a little: he proposes a phallus. Would the church have any objection to it, and he bows towards the bishop who in fact nods

his head a little and shows some hesitation, but suggests that after all if it was changed into the dove of the Holy Spirit, it would be more acceptable. In the same way the general proposes that the figure should be painted in the national colours, and some other suggestions of this kind make us think that of course we are going to come pretty quickly to what is called on this occasion a concordat.

It is at this moment that the *coup de theatre* erupts. One of the girls whose role I passed over in this play which is really swarming with significations, appears on the stage her voice still broken by the emotion of what has just happened to her, and which is nothing less than the following: the character who was the friend - and this turns out to be very significant - of the saviour of the prostitute, who has come to be a revolutionary symbol, the character therefore of the plumber, who is known in the house, has come to her and has asked her what is required to resemble the character of the chief of police.

Generalised emotion. Tightness of the throat. We are at the end of our troubles. We have everything, up to and including the wig of the chief of police which falls off: "How did you know?" He is told: "You are the only one who believed that no one knew that you wore a wig", and the character once invested with all the attributes of the one whose figure is really the heroic figure of the drama, sees this gesture which the prostitute makes, of throwing in his face, after having cut it off, that with which, she says modestly, he will never deflower anybody again.

At that moment the chief of police who was just ready to reach the peak of his happiness, all the same rapidly moves to control what still remains to him. Something in fact still remains for him, and his passage to the state of a symbol in the form of the proposed phallic uniform, has now become useless. In effect it becomes clear from this that the one who represents simple desire, pure and simple desire, this need that man has to rejoin in a fashion that can be authenticated and directly assumed, his own existence, his own thought, a value which is not purely distinct from his flesh, it is clear that it is in so far as this subject who is there representing man, the one who has fought so that something which we have called up to the present the *bordel*, rediscovers its foundation, its norm and its reduction to something which can be accepted as fully human, that this very person cannot be reintegrated into it, that he can only offer himself to it when he has passed the test, on condition precisely that he is castrated, namely ensures that the phallus is something which is once again promoted to the state of signifier, to this something which can or not give or take away, confer or not confer, the thing which at that moment is confused, and in the most explicit fashion, namely that it is on this that the comedy ends, is confused with and rejoins the image of the creator of the signifier of our father, of our father who art in heaven.

It is on this that in a fashion which we can of course if we like describe as blasphemous, or as properly speaking comic, that the comedy ends.

I will take up again and I will refer again to these terms. You will see how for us it can serve in what follows as a reference, as a reference point in this essential question of desire and of *jouissance* the first little morsel of which I wanted to give you today.

Seminar 15: Wednesday March 12 1958

You know that what we are trying to do here, namely in the difficulties, in the impasses, in the contradictions which are the fabric of your practice - it is the most elementary presupposition of our work that you should be aware of it - is to try to bring you back always to the point where these impasses and these difficulties can also show themselves to you with their full significance, and because of this elude you if you refer to these partial theories, indeed these avoidances, these slippages of meaning in the very terms that you employ, which are also the locus of all sorts of alibis.

The last day we spoke about desire and about *jouissance*. Today I would like to show you, by going further in the very text of what Freud puts forward on a point, when he sees the difficulties that this creates for those who follow him, and the way in which in trying to circumscribe things more closely, beginning moreover from certain preconceived exigencies, something emerges which goes further in the sense of the difficulty, and how perhaps we can take a third step. It is a question about Freud, regarding the phallic position in women, or more exactly about what he calls the phallic phase.

I remind you of the point that we have got to, what we have been stressing, what the meaning is of what in our last three or four sessions, we have begun to articulate, this desire which as such and by name, is placed at the heart of the meditation of analytic experience. We have formulated it here in order to gather together, to concentrate what we have said as a signified demand. Here are two terms which are really only one: when I demand, I signify my demand to you, as we say, I signify an order to you, I signify a decree to you. This demand therefore, implies the other, the one from whom it is demanded, but also as the one for whom this demand has a meaning, an other who among other dimensions, has that of being the locus in which this signifier has its effect.

We know this, already: the first term, signified demand, in the sense that I signify something to you, I signify my will to you, here is the important point that I was especially thinking about.

Now this signified implies in the subject the structuring action of the signifier established with respect to need, with respect to this desire, in an essential alteration. In comparison with need, this alteration is constituted by something which is the entry of desire into the demand.

I pause for a moment to make a parenthesis. We have up to the present, for reasons of time and economy, left to one side this year, in which nevertheless we are talking about formations of the unconscious, the dream. You know that the essential of Freud's affirmation about the dream, is that the dream expresses a desire. But after all we have not even begun to ask ourselves what this desire of the dream is, whether this desire of which we speak, and there is more than one in the dream, it is the desires of the day which provide them with their opportunity, with their material, and everyone knows that what is important for us, is unconscious desire.

Why in fact did Freud recognise this unconscious desire in the dream? By what authority? In what respect is it recognised? There is nothing in the dream apparently,

manifestly, which corresponds grammatically to that by which desire manifests itself. There is no text in the dream, except apparently, namely requiring to be translated into a more - profound articulation, but at the level of this articulation, which is masked, which is latent. What is it that distinguishes, what is it that puts the accent on what the dream articulates? Of course nothing, apparently. Observe that when all is said and done, in the dream, what Freud recognises as desire, is indeed [recognised] by means of what I am telling you about, namely it is by the alteration of need that it signals itself, it is in so far as what is fundamental is masked, articulated into something which transforms it, which transforms it into what? Into the fact that it passes through a certain number of modes, of images which are there *qua* signifiers. It is therefore through the coming into play of a whole structure which no doubt is the structure of the subject, in so far as there must operate a certain number of agencies.

But this structure of the subject, we only recognise it through the fact that what happens in the dream, is submitted to the modes and to the transformations of the signifier, to the structures of metaphor and metonymy, of condensation and of displacement. Here what gives the law of the expression of the desire in the dream, is indeed the law of the signifier, it is through an exegesis of what is particularly articulated in a dream that we uncover this something which when all is said and done is what? Something which we suppose as wanting to bring to recognition something which participates in a primordial adventure which is inscribed there, and which is articulated, since we always refer it back to something original which happened in childhood and which has been repressed.

It is to this when all is said and done that we attribute the primacy of meaning, in what is articulated in the dream. It is that here something appears which is absolutely fundamental as regards the structuring of the desire of the subject. From now on we are able to articulate it, it is the desire, the primordial adventure of what has happened in connection with a desire which is the infantile desire, its essential desire which is the desire of the desire of the other, or the desire to be desired. This is what has been marked, inscribed in the subject in connection with this adventure which here remains permanent, underlying, and which gives the last word to what in the dream, interests us as an unconscious desire which expresses itself through what? Through the mask of what will on some occasion have given its material to the dream, with something which here is signified for us by means of the particular conditions which always impose on desire the law of the signifier.

What I am trying to teach you here, is to substitute for everything that in the theory, is more or less confused because it is always partial, namely for the mechanics, for the economy of gratifications, of care, of fixations, of aggressions, this fundamental notion of the primordial dependence of the subject with respect to the desire of the other, with respect to what has always structured itself through the intermediary of this mechanism which ensures that the desire of the subject is already as such modelled by the conditions of demand, inscribed throughout the history of the subject in its structure, the wanderings, the vicissitudes of the constitution of this desire, in so far as it is submitted to the law of the desire of the other, makes one might say of the most profound desire of the subject, of the one that remains suspended in the unconscious, the sum, the integral we might say, of this capital D, of this Desire of the other, is what alone can give a meaning to the evolution of analysis, which has, as you know, ended up by putting such a stress on this primordial relationship to the mother, to the point of apparently avoiding the whole subsequent dialectic, even the Oedipal dialectic. There is here something which at the same time goes in the right direction and formulates it inexactly. It is not just frustration as such, namely something more or less in the real order which has been given or which has not been given to the subject, which is the

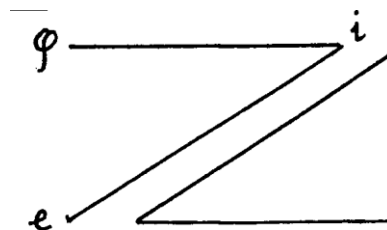
important point; it is the way that the subject has aimed at, has located this desire of the other which is the mother's desire, and with respect to this desire it is to make him recognise, or pass, or propose to become with respect to something which is an X of desire in the mother, to become or not the one who responds, to become or not the desired being.

This is essential, because by neglecting it while at the same time approaching it, by penetrating as closely as possible by ways which are first of all ways of access which are as close as possible to what happens in the child, Melanie Klein, as you know, discovered many things; but by formulating it simply as one might say in terms of the affronting, the confrontation of the subject, of the child, to the person of the mother, she ends up with this sort of really specular, mirror relationship, which ensures that the body as one might say, because it is already very striking, this is in the foreground, the maternal body becomes in a way the enclosure and the dwelling place of what can be localised in it, projected into it in terms of the drives of the child, these drives being themselves motivated by the aggression caused by a fundamental disappointment. And when all is said and done, in this dialectic, nothing can get us out of a sort of mechanism of illusory projection, of a construction of the world originating from primordial phantasies in a sort of autogenesis; the genesis of the exterior as locus of the bad remains purely artificial, and in a way submits every subsequent accession to reality, to a pure dialectic of phantasy.

To complete this Kleinian dialectic, it is necessary to introduce this notion that the exterior for the subject is given from the first, not as something which is projected from the interior of the subject, from his drives, but as the place, the locus in which is situated the desire of the other, and where the subject has to go to meet it.

This is essential, and it is the only way in which we can find the solution for the aporias which are engendered by this Kleinian way which has shown itself to be so fruitful in many respects, but which ends up by making disappear, by completely eluding, or by reconstructing in a more or less implicit fashion, which she herself does not perceive, but in a fashion that is equally illicit because it is not motivated, the primordial dialectic of desire, as Freud discovered it, which is in a third relationship, namely that which makes intervene beyond the mother, even through her, the presence of the desired or rival person, of the third person who is the father.

It is here after all that we find the justification for the schema which I tried to give you in telling you that it is necessary to pose the fundamental symbolic triad, namely the mother, the child and the father, in so far as the absence of the mother or her presence offers to the child posed here as a symbolic term, simply by the introduction of the signifying dimension, offers to the child, it is not the subject, it is by the simple introduction of the signifier and of the symbolic term, the fact that the child will be or not a wanted child (*un enfant demandé*).



And this third essential term which is in a way that which permits all of this, or prohibits it, that which poses itself beyond this absence or presence of the mother *qua*

present, signifying meaning, that which allows her to manifest herself, or not. It is with respect to this that once the signifying order comes into play, the subject has to situate himself; the subject offers to it his real concrete life, in something which of course here and now involves desires in the imaginary sense, in the sense of capture, in the sense that images fascinate him, in the sense that with respect to these images he has to feel himself as ego, as centre, as master, or as dominated by this imaginary relationship, in which as you know, in the case of man there enters into play with a primordial accent the self-image, the image of the body which comes in a way to dominate everything.

Of course this elective position of the image in the case of man is something which is profoundly linked to the fact that he is open to this dialectic of the signifier that we have been talking about. Here, the reduction as one might say of the captivating image to this central fundamental image which is the image of the body, is not unrelated to this fundamental relationship in which the subject is with respect to the signifying triad. But this relationship to the signifying triad introduces for the subject this third term, this third term by means of which the subject, beyond this dual relationship, of this relationship of captivation to the image, the subject if I may put it this way, demands to be signified.

It is for this reason that there are three poles on the imaginary plane, just as in the minimal constitution of the symbolic field beyond the ego and my image, because of the fact that I have to enter into the conditions of the signifier, there is a point, something which must mark that my desire must be signified, in so far as it necessarily passes through a demand that I signify on the symbolic plane. In other words, there is the exigency for a general symbol for this margin which always separates me from my desire, which ensures that my desire is always marked by this alteration by the entry into the signifier. There is a general symbol of this margin, of this fundamental lack that is necessary to introduce my desire into the signifier, to make of it the desire with which I have to deal in the analytic dialectic, this symbol by which the signified is designated in so far as it is always signified, altered, even inexactly signified.

This is what we see in the schema that I give you. This is in the subject at the level of the imaginary. Here is his image, here the point at which the ego is constituted. That is what I designate for you here by the letter Φ in so far as it is the phallus. It is impossible to deduce the constituting function of the phallus qua signifier in the whole dialectic of the introduction of the subject purely and simply to his existence, and to his sexual position, if we do not make of it the following: that it is the fundamental signifier through which the desire of the subject has to make itself recognised as such, whether we are dealing with a man or dealing with a woman.

This is expressed as meaning that, whatever the desire may be, there must be in the subject this reference that it is no doubt the desire of the subject, but in so far as the subject himself has received his signification, that the subject with his power as subject must hold this power from a sign, and that he only obtains this sign by mutilating himself of something through whose lack everything will take on a value.

This is not something that can be deduced. This is given by analytic experience. This is the essential of Freud's discovery. This is why Freud in writing "Feminine Sexuality" in 1931, affirms something which is no doubt problematic at first sight. which is no doubt inadequate, which no doubt demands an elaboration which calls forth responses from all the psychoanalysts, the women first, Helena Deutsch, Karen Homey, among others, and Melanie

Klein, and Josine Miller, and summarising all of this, and articulating it in a way that seems to be more or less compatible with Freud's articulation, Jones replies to all of this. This is what we are going to examine today.

Let us take up the question at its most paradoxical point. The paradox appears at first, one might say, on the plane of a sort of natural observation. It is as a naturalist that Freud says to us: what my experience shows me, is that in women also, and not only in men, this phallus which in the case of men he showed us in accordance with the general formula that I tried to give you a moment ago, that in the case of man the introduction of the subject into the dialectic that will allow him to take his place, take his position in this transmission of human types, which will allow him to become in his turn the father, that nothing will be realized without what I called a moment ago this fundamental mutilation thanks to which the phallus will become the signifier of potency, the signifier, the sceptre, but also that something thanks to which this virility will be able to be assumed.

Up to this of course we have understood Freud. But he goes further, and shows us how at the centre of the feminine dialectic the same phallus appears.

Here a gap appears to open up, in that up to now it was in terms of struggle, of biological rivalry, that we could at the limit understand the introduction of man by the castration complex, into his accession to the quality of manhood. In the case of women, this assuredly presents a paradox, and Freud says it to us first of all purely and simply as an observed fact; which would seem to coincide also with something supposedly presenting itself therefore like everything else that is observed, as being part of nature, as being natural. This is indeed the way that he seems in fact to present things to us when he tells us that the girl like the boy, first of all desires the mother; let us tell it the way it is written. There is only one way to desire. The girl thinks at first that she has a phallus, just as she thinks also that her mother has a phallus, and here is what that means: it is that the natural evolution of the drives ensures that from transference to transference throughout the instinctual phases, it is to something that has the form of the breast through the intermediary of a certain number of other forms, culminating in this phallic phantasy through which when all is said and done it is in a masculine position that the girl presents herself in relation to the mother, and that something complex, more complex for her than for the boy, must intervene for her to recognize her feminine position. She is presumed, not by anything that is there in principle, she is presumed in Freud's articulation, to lack at the beginning this recognition of the feminine position. It is no mean paradox to propose to us something that goes so much against nature, which after all would suggest to us that by a sort of symmetry, with respect to the position of the boy, it is as vagina, as someone has said, as a vaginal mouth. We have observations that even allow us to affirm, and I would say in contradiction to the Freudian data, that there are primitive living experiences whose primordial trace we can rediscover in the young subject, which show that contrary to the affirmation of this primitive miscognition, that something can as a consequence be known by the subject, at least as a consequence it seems, during the process of nursing, I mean in the little girl who is still at the breast, who shows some emotion, vague no doubt, but which it is not absolutely unreasonable to refer to a profound bodily emotion, which is no doubt difficult to localize by means of memories, but which in brief would permit the equation by a series of transmissions from the mouth involved in suckling, to the vaginal mouth, just as moreover at the fulfilled, developed state of femininity, this function of an absorbing, or even a sucking organ, is something that can be localized in experience, and which would provide in a way the continuity by which, if it were only a question of a migration as one might say, of the erogenous drive, we would see traced,

we might say, the royal road of the evolution of femininity at the biological level, and this is in fact the thing of which Jones makes himself the advocate, and the theoretician, when he thinks that it is impossible, for all kinds of reasons of principle, to admit that the evolution of sexuality in women should be something destined to this detour and this artificiality.

He proposes to us in a theory that is opposed in a way point by point to what Freud articulates for us as an observed datum, proposing that the phallic phase in the little girl reposes on a drive whose natural supports he explains and shows to us in two elements: the first element being the admitted one of primordial biological bisexuality, but which, it must be said, is purely theoretical and distant, and of which we could say, as Jones well says, that it is after all pretty far from being accessible to us.

But there is something else, the presence of a beginning of the phallic organ, of the clitoral organ of the first pleasures, linked in the little girl to clitoral masturbation, and which can give in a way the beginning of the phallic phantasy which plays the decisive role that Freud tells us. And it is in fact what Freud does: the phallic phase is a clitoral phallic phase; the phantastical penis is an exaggeration of the little penis effectively given in female anatomy.

It is in the disappointment and the outcome that as such is engendered by the disappointment of this detour, which is nevertheless founded for him on a natural mechanism, that Freud gives us the source of the entry of the little girl into the feminine position, and it is at this moment, he tells us, that the Oedipus complex plays the normative role that it must essentially play; but in the case of the little girl it plays it in a way that is the inverse of that in the boy. The Oedipus complex gives her access to this penis that she lacks, by the intermediary of the apprehension of the penis of the male, whether she discovers it in some companion, or whether she situates it, or also discovers it in the father.

It is through the mediation of the disappointment, of the disillusionment of something in herself compared to the phantastical phase of the phallic phase, that the little girl is introduced into the Oedipus complex, as Mrs. Lampl de Groot, one of the first analysts to follow Freud onto this terrain, theorised. She noted very pertinently: the little girl enters the Oedipus complex through the inverted phase of the Oedipus complex; she presents herself at first in the Oedipus complex in a relationship to her mother, and it is in the failure of this relationship to the mother that she discovers the relationship to her father, with what will subsequently become normativised for her by the equivalence, first of all of this penis that she will never possess, with the child. She can in fact have one, she from her own position can give.

Let us observe here a certain number of reference points with regard to what I have taught you, in order to distinguish this *Penisneid* which is found to be to be here the essential articulation of the entry of the woman into the oedipal dialectic; this *Penisneid* which as such, and therefore like castration in the man, is found at the heart of this dialectic, which no doubt through the criticisms that I will subsequently formulate for you, those put forward by Jones, will be put in question, and of course it seems from the outside, when one begins to approach analytic theory, that it is presented as something artificial.

Let us pause for a moment, first of all to underline, as we should, the ambiguity with which throughout the different moments of the girl's oedipal evolution - it is moreover highlighted by Jones' discussion - this *Penisneid* is employed: what is it?

There are three modes of going through the entry into and the outcome of the Oedipus complex, which Freud shows us in connection with the phallic phase.

There is *Penisneid* in the sense of the phantasy, namely this wish, this long-entertained wish, sometimes entertained all through life, and Freud insists sufficiently on the irreducible character of this phantasy when it is what is kept in the forefront; the phantasy that the clitoris is a penis. This is a first meaning of *Penisneid*.

There is another meaning: *Penisneid* as it intervenes when what is desired is the father's penis, namely the moment when the subject sees in the reality of the penis, the place where the possession of the penis is to be sought, that the Oedipus complex is not only the situation that is prohibited, but also the physiological impossibility of which the situation, the development of the situation has frustrated her.

Then there is the function of this evolution in so far as it gives rise in the little girl to the phantasy of having a child by the father, namely of having this penis in a symbolic form.

Remember now the distinctions I taught you to make in connection with the castration complex: between castration, frustration and privation.

In these three forms, which corresponds to each of these three terms?

I have told you. A frustration is something imaginary directed towards an object that is quite real. This is really why the fact that the little girl does not receive her father's penis is a frustration.

A privation is something quite real, and which is only directed towards a symbolic object, namely that when the little girl does not have a child by the father, after all there was never any question that she would have had it. She is quite incapable of having one. Besides the child is only there as a symbol, and the symbol precisely of what she is really frustrated, and it is in fact really under the heading of privation that the desire for the father's child intervenes at a moment in the evolution.

There remains then what corresponds to castration, namely to what symbolically cuts the subject off from something imaginary, and in this instance from a phantasy, corresponds well. In any case, Freud is on the right track here, when he tells us that the position of the little girl in relation to her clitoris, is in so far as at a given moment she must renounce this clitoris, at least in so far as she held on to it as a sign of hope, namely, that sooner or later it would become something as big as a penis.

It is indeed at this level that what corresponds structurally to castration is found, if you remember what I thought it necessary to articulate when I spoke to you about castration, at the point where it is particularly manifest, namely in the boy.

It can be argued whether everything in the girl effectively revolves around the clitoral drive. One can explore the detours of the oedipal adventure, as you are now going to see it through Jones' critique that the whole affair appears to be artificial. But we cannot fail to remark from the beginning the rigour, from the structural point of view, of the point that Freud designates as being that which corresponds to castration. It is really something that must be found at the level of what is happening, of what can happen in terms of relating to a

phantasy, and in so far of course as this relation to a phantasy takes on a signifying value. It is at this point here that the point of symmetry should be found.

It is a matter now of understanding how this happens. It is not of course just because this point is used that it is the point that gives us the key to the whole business. It does apparently give it to us in Freud, in so far as Freud gives the impression of showing us here a history of instinctual (*pulsionelle*) anomaly, and this is what is going to outrage, to make a certain number of people revolt, precisely in the name of biological pre-conceptions. But you are going to see what, in the very articulation of their objections, they come to say. They are forced in the nature of things to articulate a certain number of points, of features which are precisely those that will allow us to take the step forward, to understand properly what is in question, to go beyond the natural drive theory, to see that the phallus well and truly effectively intervenes in what I said to you here at the beginning, in what I could call the premises of today's lecture, and which is nothing other than the reminder of what we have come to circumscribe by other routes, namely that the phallus intervenes here *qua* signifier.

But let us now come to the response, to the articulation given by Jones. There are three important articles by Jones on the subject: one called "Early Female Sexuality" written in 1935, which we are going to talk about today, and which had been preceded by the article on "The Phallic Phase", presented at the Innsbruck Congress eight years earlier (September 1927), [Tr: The Wiesbaden Congress, September 1932] and finally: "Early Development of Female Sexuality", [Tr: The Innsbruck Congress, September 1927).

It is to the latter that Freud, in his article of 1931, makes allusion when he refutes in a few lines, and I must say very disdainfully, the positions taken by Jones. Jones replies in "The Phallic Phase", and tries to respond and to articulate his position, in short, against Freud, while at the same time trying to remain as close as possible to the letter of Freud. The third article on which I am going to base myself today, is extremely significant for what we want to demonstrate. It is also the most advanced point of Jones' articulation, it is situated in 1935, four years after Freud's article on feminine sexuality. It was delivered at the request of Federn who was at that time vice-president or president of the Viennese Society, and it is in Vienna that it was pronounced in order to propose to the Viennese circle what Jones formulated simply as being the point of view of the London analysts, namely what already was centred around the Kleinian experience.

Jones tells us that it would be well to begin with the experience of the London analysts, which is the only opposing one, and he draws the oppositions in a more definite fashion so that the account gains in purity, in clarity, as a basis for the discussion. He makes a certain number of remarks, and we have every interest to dwell on them, by referring as much as possible to the text.

It must be remarked from the start that experience shows us that it is difficult, when one approaches the child, to grasp this so called masculine position which is supposed to be that of the little girl with respect to her mother at the phallic phase. The more one goes back towards the origin, the more we find ourselves confronted with something that is critical here. I apologise if in following this text, we are going to find ourselves before a certain number of objects which appear to be, with respect to the line that I am trying to sketch out for you here, among positions which are sometimes a little bit marginal, but which are worth while raising because of what they reveal.

The suppositions of Jones, I mention it right away, are essentially directed towards something which he clearly articulates at the end of the article: Is a woman a being who is born, namely born as such, as a woman? Or is she a being who is made, constructed as a woman? And it is here that he situates his interrogation. It is here that he rebels against the Freudian position.

There are two terms which are going to be, in a way, the point towards which his journey advances, something which has come out of a sort of resume of the facts which, in the concrete experience of the child, allows him, either to object to, or sometimes also to confirm, but in every case to correct the Freudian conception.

But what animates his whole demonstration, is what he poses at the end as a question, a type of yes or no which for him is absolutely redhibitory of even a possible choice. There cannot be in his perspective a position such that half of humanity is made up of beings who in some way are "made", that is to say constructed in the defiles of the Oedipus complex.

He does not seem to notice that the oedipal defiles, after all, do not construct any the less, if this is what is in question, men. Nevertheless the fact precisely that women enter it with a baggage which in fact is not theirs, appears to constitute for him a sufficient difference from the boy, for him to claim something which in substance will consist in saying: it is true that we observe in women, in the little girl at a certain moment of her evolution, something which represents this putting into the forefront, this exigence, this desire which manifests itself in the ambiguous form of *Penisneid*, and which for us is so problematic.

But what is it? It is in this that there will consist everything that he has to say to us. It is a defensive formation, it is a detour, it is something, he explains, comparable to a phobia and the emergence from the phallic phase, is essentially something which should be conceived of as being the curing of a phobia which is, it is claimed, in fact a very widespread phobia, a normal phobia, but essentially of the same order and with the same mechanism.

There is something here, you see it because in fact the approach I am taking is to plunge right into the heart of his demonstration, there is something here which for us is all the same extraordinarily favourable for our reflection, in the measure that you still remember perhaps the fashion in which I tried to articulate for you the function of the phobia.

If effectively it is indeed in this way that the relationship of the little girl to the phallus should be conceived, surely we are getting closer to the conception that I try to give you, namely that it is in the name of a privileged signifying element, that there intervenes in the Oedipus complex the relationship of the little girl to the phallus.

Does that mean that with this we are going to rally to Jones' position? Surely not. If you remember the difference that I drew between phobia and fetich, we would much rather say that here the phallus plays the role of fetich, rather than the role of phobia. But we will come back to this later.

Let us take up the start of Jones' criticism, his articulation, and let us say where he begins from, where this phobia is going to be constituted from. This phobia, for him, is a defensive construction against something, against a danger engendered by the primitive drives of the child, of the child whom he follows here at the level of the little girl, but who finds herself at this level in the same position and who has the same destiny as the little boy. But here it is a question of the little girl, and he remarks therefore that originally the

relationship of the child - and it is on this that I dwelt a little while ago in telling you that we would encounter quite exceptional things - to the mother, is a primitive masculine position. He says she is far from being the way a man is with respect to a woman: "Her mother she regards not as a man regards a woman, as a creature whose wishes to receive something it is a pleasure to fulfil."

It must be recognised that to bring to this level a position as elaborate as the relationships of man to woman, is to say the least paradoxical. It is quite certain that when Freud speaks of the masculine position of the little girl, he does not in any way take into account this most completed effect, if in fact it is really reached, of civilisation where the man is there to fulfil all the desires of the woman. But from the pen of someone who proceeds in this domain with such naturalist pretensions at the beginning, we cannot fail to notice this as being what I might call one of the difficulties of the terrain, for him to stumble at this point in his demonstration, and this is right at the beginning of his demonstration, namely to oppose in it rather the position of the child, and doubtless not correctly, not at all therefore as a man here, but it is a question of the mother as the child regards her.

You will have recognised here the milk jug of the mother, and the child as she is seen by Melanie Klein, namely - I translate Jones - as "a person who has been successful". This "successful" is very important because it implies in the maternal subject this something, and Jones does not perceive it, that by aligning things with the text of what we find in the child, that it is indeed a desiring being that is in question here. It is the mother because she has been successful enough to succeed in filling herself, with just the things that the child desires so badly, namely with this pleasant material of both a solid and a liquid kind.

One cannot fail to see that just by representing to us that in a primitive experience of the child, namely one to which one has access no doubt with a magnifying glass, but by getting as close as possible to the place by analysing children of three or four years old, which is what Melanie Klein does, at that time we already discover a relationship to the object which is structured in this form that I called the empire of the maternal body, that something which you find in connection with what Melanie Klein calls in her "Contributions", the ultra-precocious Oedipus complex of the child, with the drawings that she gives us, this something which I called both the field of the maternal empire and what it involves within in terms of what I called, with a reference to Chinese history, the warring kingdoms, namely what she shows us, that the child is capable of drawing as signifiers in the interior that she locates, the brothers, the sisters, the excrements, everything which cohabits in this maternal body with in addition everything which already is within the maternal body. What she allows us to distinguish, is what effectively the dialectic of the treatment allows to be articulated as the paternal phallus, namely this something which here and now appears to be introduced there as an element which is both particularly harmful, and particularly rivalling with respect to the exigency for possession of this child with respect to the contents of this body. It also appears very difficult for us to see here something other than data which accentuate, which deepen for us the problematic character of the so-called natural relationships, in so far as we do not see them here and now as structured, by what I called the last day a whole signifying battery already showing a relationship between them, which is articulated in such a fashion that no natural biological relationship can really motivate them.

So the very fact that Melanie Klein could introduce into the dialectic of the child, namely into that which constitutes the entry on the scene of the phallus at the level of this primitive experience, this reference which is really given by her as being in a way read in

what the child offers, but which nevertheless remains fairly stupefying, the introduction of the penis as being a breast that is more accessible, more convenient and in a way store perfect, here is something to be admitted as a datum of experience.

Of course if this is a datum, it is valid. But it remains nonetheless that it is not at all something which one might say is self-evident, that it is something which precisely in itself allows us to pose the question of who can offer this penis, as something which is effectively more accessible, more convenient more pleasurable than the primordial breast? This indeed is the question of what this penis signifies, namely of the implication here and now, through the intermediary of what? It is this of course which is going to be put in question, namely the introduction of the child already into a signifying dialectic.

So that moreover everything that follows, in Jones' demonstration will only pose in an ever more urgent fashion, this question, in so far as he explains to us that if the little girl after therefore having possibly, he does not settle the question, but it is required by the very data from which he starts, and he settles the question all the same simply in this respect, by telling us that the phallus can only intervene as the means and the alibi of a kind of defence. He presupposes therefore that at the origin it is with respect to a certain primitive apprehension of her own organ, of her own feminine organ, that the little girl finds herself involved from a libidinal point of view. But he will try to explain to us why it is necessary that this apprehension of her vagina is repressed by her. He tells us of course, that this is of a nature to evoke in the relationship of the feminine child to her own sex, a greater anxiety than that evoked in the little boy with regard to his sex, because the organ is more interior, more diffused, at a deeper level the proper source of these first movements. The clitoris will therefore play, he articulates - I am sure that he articulates it to show you the necessities implied in what he articulates in a relatively naive fashion, namely that the clitoris in so far as it is exterior, serves the anxieties that are projected on to it, is not moreover any more easily an object of reassurance on the part of the subject, by the fact that she can test by, for example, her own manipulations, even at a push by looking, the fact that it is still there.

This is what Jones means. And he will show that subsequently it will always be towards more exterior objects, namely towards her appearance, towards her clothes, that the woman in her subsequent evolution, will direct what he calls the need for reassurance, this something which is displaced, in other words in the anxiety which can be tempered by directing its object onto something which is not the point, very especially in that it is for that very reason overlooked in its origin.

You can see clearly, that what is in question, is that we should find there once more the implied necessity that it is indeed in the name, says Jones, of something that can be exteriorised, represented, that the phallus comes to the forefront in the guise of an element, of a limiting term, of a point at which anxiety stops, and of course this is where its dialectic is. We are going to see if this is sufficient. It is by this dialectic that he admits that the phallic phase should be presented as a phallic position, as something that permits the child in a way to distance, by centering them on something accessible, the fears and the anxieties of retortion that her own oral or sadistic desires have directed towards the interior of the mother's body, and which immediately appear to her as a danger capable of threatening herself within her own body.

Such is the genesis that Jones gives for what he calls the phallic position *qua* phobia. It is certainly as a phantasied, but accessible, exteriorised organ, that the phallus comes into

play, that subsequently moreover it is also capable of disappearing again from the scene, because the fears linked to hostility can be tempered, also referred elsewhere, onto other objects, that the mother for example, that the erotogeneity and the anxiety in so far as they are linked to deep seated organs, may also by the very process of a certain number of masturbatory activities, also be displaced, and that in the last analysis, he says, the relationship to the feminine object will become less partial, that it can be displaced onto other objects, that subsequently the anxiety which is in fact unnameable, the original anxiety, linked to the feminine organ, which is what in the child, in the last analysis, in the girl child, what corresponds to the castration anxieties of the boy, can subsequently vary through this fear of being deserted, which according to Jones' statements, will become what is most characteristic of feminine psychology.

This then is what we find ourselves confronted with. To resolve it, look at Freud's position, the position of an observer, which presents itself therefore as a natural observation. The liaison with the phallic phase is of an instinctual (*pulsionelle*) nature. The entry into femininity is produced from a libido which of its nature, let us say to specify things exactly, and not at all in the rather caricatural criticism that Jones makes of it, is active, and which will culminate in the feminine position in the measure that this disappointed position will come by a series of transformations and equivalences to make of the subject a demand, and accept from someone other than the paternal person, something which will succeed in fulfilling her desire.

When all is said and done, the presupposition moreover fully articulated by Freud, is that the primordial infantile exigency is, as he says without an aim. What it requires, is everything, and it is by the disappointment as one might say of this requirement, which of course is impossible to satisfy, that the child enters little by little into a more normative position.

There is here undoubtedly something which however problematic it may be, includes this openness which is going to allow us to articulate the problem in terms of desire and demand which are those on which I myself am trying here to lay stress for you.

To this, Jones replies: this is natural history, an observation by a naturalist which is not all that natural, and I, I am going to make it more natural for you.

He says this explicitly. The business about the phallic phobia is only a detour in the passage to a position already primordially determined. The woman is "born", she is born, she is born as such, into a position which already in advance is that of the position of a mouth, of an absorbing mouth, of a sucking mouth. She will rediscover this after the reduction of her phobia, which is only a simple detour with respect to her primitive position. That which you call phallic drive is purely and simply the artificiality of a contradicted phobia, evoked in the child by her hostility and her aggression towards the mother. All that we have here is a pure detour in a cycle that is essentially instinctual (*instinctuel*), and the woman will afterwards re-enter as of right into her position which is a vaginal position.

To reply to this, I try to articulate for you that the phallus is absolutely inconceivable in terms of Kleinian dynamics or mechanics, unless it is implied in advance as being the signifier of a lack, the signifier of this distance of the demand of the subject from her desire, which means that in order that this desire should be rejoined, a certain deduction must always be made from this necessary entry into the signifying cycle, that if the woman must pass by way of this signifier, however paradoxical it may be, it is to the degree that what is involved

for her, is not purely and simply to realize a sort of primitive datum of a position that is purely and simply female, but to enter into a dialectic which is excluded for the man by the existence of signifiers, by all the prohibitions that constitute the oedipal relationship; in other words, to make her enter into the cycle of exchanges of alliance and of kinship, namely to become herself in it this object of exchange.

The fact that what is demonstrated effectively for us, because every correct analysis of what fundamentally structures this oedipal relationship, is that the woman should propose herself, or more exactly accept herself as an element of this cycle of exchanges, is something which is in itself in fact something infinitely more outrageous from the natural point of view than anything that we have been able to remark up to the present in terms of anomalies of her instinctual (*instinctive*) evolution, and which in this respect fully justifies in fact our finding for it at the imaginary level, at the level of desire, a sort of representative in the fact of the complicated pathways by which she herself must enter it.

That which punctuates in her case the fact of having, just like a man, to inscribe herself in the world of the signifier, is this need directed towards a desire, directed towards something which *qua* signified, must always remain at a certain distance, at a certain margin from anything that can be referred to a natural need, in so far as precisely in order to be introduced into this dialectic, something of this natural relationship must be amputated, must be sacrificed, and to what end? Precisely so that it can become the very signifying element of this introduction into the demand.

But something is at once rather, I would not say surprising, but is going to show us the return of this observed necessity which I have just expressed to you with all the brutality that this sociological remark founded on everything that we know, more recently articulated on the necessity for a part, effectively half, of humanity to become the signifier of exchange. This is indeed the way that Lévi-Strauss articulates in the *Elementary structures*, that by which women, through the diversely structured laws in the elementary structures that are assuredly much more simply structured, but involving much more complex effects in the complex structures of kinship.

What we observe in the dialectic of the entry of the child into the system of the signifier, is in a way the other side of this passage of the woman as such, as signifying object, into what we can call in quotation marks "the social dialectic", because of course the term social should be placed here with the whole accent which shows it as depending precisely on the signifying and combinatory structure. What we see on the other side, is this result that for the child to enter into this signifying dialectic, what do we observe? Very precisely this: that there is no other desire on which she depends more closely and more directly, than the desire of what? Of the woman, of the desire of the woman in so far as it is precisely signified by what she is lacking, by the phallus.

What I have shown you, is that everything that we meet in terms of a stumbling, of an accident, in the evolution of the child, and this goes for the most radical of these stumblings and these accidents, is linked to the fact that the child does not find herself alone before the mother, but before the mother and something which is precisely the signifier of this desire, namely the phallus. We find ourselves here confronted with something which will be the object of my lecture the next time. It is this: it is that you have to choose: either the child enters into the dialectic, namely that she makes herself an object in this current of exchanges, namely at a given moment renounces her father and her mother, namely the primitive objects

of her desire, but it is to the whole extent that she keeps her objects, namely where she maintains this something which is for her much more important than their value, because value precisely is what can be exchanged and what exists, from the moment she reduces them to signifiers, but to the full extent that she holds onto these objects *qua* objects of her desire, it is always here in so far as the oedipal attachment is maintained, namely where the Oedipus complex, or the infantile relationship to the parental objects does not pass away, it is in the measure that it does not pass away, and strictly in this measure that we see happening, what? In a very general form, let us say these inversions or these perversions of desire which show that within the Imaginary relationship to the oedipal objects, no normatization is possible, there is no normatization possible very precisely for this reason, that there is still whole and entire with respect even to the most primitive relationship, the relationship of the child to the mother, this phallus *qua* object of desire for the mother, namely that which confronts the child with this sort of uncrossable barrier to the satisfaction of its own desire, which is to be the exclusive desire of the mother.

It is this therefore which pushes it towards a series of solutions which will always be the reduction or the identification of this triad, from the fact that it is necessary that the mother should be phallic, or that the phallus should be put in the place of the mother herself, as in the case of fetishism; or that he himself should reunite in himself in a way in an intimate fashion, this joining up of the phallus and of the mother, without which nothing for him can be satisfying, and this is transvestism. In short, it is precisely in the measure that the child, namely the being in so far as he enters with his natural needs into this dialectic, does not renounce his object, that his desire cannot find a way to be satisfied and it can only find its satisfaction in renouncing in part, the need, the desire for everything, which is essentially what I articulated at the beginning, in saying that he must become demand, namely desire *qua* signified, signified by the intervention and the existence of the signifier, namely in part alienated desire.

Seminar 16: Wednesday 19 March 1958

I would like today to begin to introduce the question of identifications. For those who were not there the last time, and also for those who were here, I recall the meaning of what was said. I tried to direct your attention to the difficulties that are posed by the notion of the phallic phase, to show that what Freud separated out from experience, even though one experiences some difficulty in including it in a biological rationality, immediately takes on more clarity, if we pose that the phallus is taken up into a certain subjective function which must fulfil a certain role, which I call a role of signifier. Of course this phallus *qua* signifier does not come straight down to us from heaven. On the other hand it is necessary that there should be at its origin, which is an imaginary origin, some property for fulfilling this signifying function which is not an indifferent one, which is a function of the signifier more especially adapted than another to what happens in the hooking up of the human subject into the totality of the signifying mechanism.

It is in a way a crucial signifier, a signifier towards which converges more or less what happens in the insertion of the human subject into the signifying system, in so far as it is necessary for his desire to pass through this system in order to make itself recognised, and that it is profoundly modified by it. This is an experimental datum; from this it emerges that we encounter this phallus in literally every corner of the field of our experience, of our experience of the oedipal conflict, of the oedipal drama. It is its entry into the oedipal drama and the outcomes of the oedipal drama, and even in a certain problematic fashion, overflowing this oedipal drama because also one cannot help being struck by the problem that is posed by the presence of this phallus, and of the paternal phallus, namely in the primitive Kleinian phantasies, in so far as it is precisely its presence which poses the question of knowing in what register we are going to insert these Kleinian phantasies?

In the register of the way that Melanie Klein herself has proposed it, namely in the admission of a sort of ultra-precocious type of oedipal conflict, or on the contrary by admitting its primitive imaginary functioning which we are going to classify as pre-oedipal?

One could almost say that the question can be left in suspense, at least provisionally.

To clarify this function which presents itself here in a quite general fashion, precisely because it presents itself essentially as a function of the signifier, as a symbolic function, we should, even before pushing forward our formulae to their final term, see in what signifying economy this phallus is implicated, in other words, this something which Freud's exploration articulated under this form of the emergence from the Oedipus complex, after the repression of oedipal desire, the subject emerges new, provided with what? The answer is: with an ego ideal.

In the normal Oedipus complex, the repression which results from this breakthrough, from the "passing" to the beyond of the Oedipus complex, from the emergence from the Oedipus complex, there is constituted in the subject something which is in a properly speaking ambiguous relationship vis-à-vis himself.

On this, it is still appropriate for us to proceed step by step, because one always goes too quickly. There is a thing in any case which separates itself out in a univocal fashion, I

mean in one way only, from what Freud approaches, and on this all the authors cannot but pose it as a minimal formula: it is that it is an identification distinct from the identification of the ego, in so far as here it is in a certain relationship of the subject to the image of his counterpart that we see being separated out the structure which is called the ego.

That of the ego-ideal poses a problem which is proper to itself: the ego-ideal is not proposed - it is almost banal to say it - as an ideal ego. I have often underlined that the two terms are distinct in Freud in the very text on narcissism, and this is something that we should closely examine under a microscope: we perceive that in the text it is very difficult to distinguish. First, it is not correct, but even if it were, that we should perceive by convention that there is no synonymy between what is attributed from experience in Freud's texts to the function of the ego-ideal, and the meaning that we can give to the image of the ego however exalted an idea we may have of it, when we make an ideal image of it, that to which the subject identifies himself as a successful composition of himself, a model, as one might say, of himself, that with which the subject is confused, is himself reassured about his wholeness. For example, [we must distinguish] what is threatened, what is affected when we allude to the necessities of narcissistic reassurance, to the fears of narcissistic injuries to his own body, something that we can place in the register of this ideal ego; we know the ego-ideal because it intervenes in functions which are often depressive, indeed aggressive functions with regard to the subject. Freud brings it into different forms of depression. You know that he has an agency (tendance) at the end of the chapter which in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* is called an *Ich-ideal* which is precisely the first time he introduces in a decisive and articulated fashion this notion of the ego-ideal. He has a tendency to put all depressions under the heading and in the register, not of the ego ideal, but of some vacillating relationship, of some conflictual relationship between the ego and the ego-ideal.

Let us admit that one can take everything that will happen under this depressive register, or on the contrary relationships of exaltation, from the angle of a hostility opened up between the two agencies, as one might say, from whatever agency the declaration of hostilities begins, whether it is the ego which revolts, or that the ego ideal becomes too severe with what is involved in the consequences and repercussions of every disequilibrium in this excessive relationship.

Therefore this ego ideal in any case is something which has its problems for us. We are told: the ego ideal emerges from an identification, from a late identification linked to the relationship, threefold in every case which is that of the Oedipus complex, a relationship in which there are mixed up in a complex fashion the relationships of desire with the relationships of rivalry, of aggression, of hostility. Something is at stake, and the outcome of the conflict is an object which is in the balance. It is certain that the outcome of the conflict appears in any case as having brought about a subjective transformation: that the introduction, the introjection as is said, within a certain structure, of this something which is found with respect to the subject to be in future a part of himself, has nevertheless conserved a certain relationship with an external object. If the two things were not there, if here we could not put our finger on what analysis teaches us that intrasubjectivity and intersubjectivity cannot be separated, namely that within the subject, in the functions that he carries everywhere with himself, whatever may be the modifications that intervene in his entourage and his milieu, what is acquired as ego ideal is indeed something which is in the subject as the exile carries his native soil on the soles of his shoes; his ego ideal really belongs to him, it is something acquired. It is not an object, it is something additional in the subject. I mean then that this insistence on the notion that intrasubjectivity and

intersubjectivity should remain linked in every correct analytic procedure, means that the relationships between the agencies in question, and this is proved by current usage, by the least necessities of language when we speak of the relationships between the ego and the ego ideal, these are relationships, let us say, ordinarily in analysis, and they are spoken of as relationships which can be good or bad, conflictual or harmonious. What is left in parenthesis, or what is not completely formulated in what should be formulated: this is that these relationships between the two agencies are Structured, articulated like intersubjective relationships.

Within the subject there is reproduced, and of course as you well see, can only be reproduced from a signifying organisation, the same mode of relationships as exists between subjects. We cannot think, even though we say it, and you can get by with saying it, that the superego is effectively something severe which spies on the ego at every turning, to inflict atrocious miseries on it. It is not a person, it functions within the subject as a subject behaves with respect to another subject, and precisely in this that there is a relationship between the subjects which does not imply for all that the existence of the person. The conditions introduced by the existence, the functioning as such of the signifier, are sufficient for intersubjective relationships to be established.

It is this intersubjectivity therefore within the living person which is the thing we have to deal with in analysis. It is in this intersubjectivity that we should get an idea of what is this function of the ego ideal. As you know, you will not find this function in a dictionary, and you will not get a univocal response for it, you will find there the greatest confusion. This function is assuredly not confused with that of the super ego, it came almost at the same time, it is certainly in the terminology, but it is by this very fact distinguished from it, it is also in part confused, it can have the same agencies. Nevertheless it is more oriented towards something which, in the desire of the subject, plays a typifying function which perhaps appears to be altogether linked to neither more nor less than the assumption of the sexual type in so far as it is implied in a whole economy, which on this occasion here we can call, social, in the assumption of the masculine and feminine functions, not just simply in so far as they culminate at the act necessary for reproduction to occur, but for a whole mode of relationships between men and women.

What is the interest of what analysis has learned on this subject?

It is to have been able to penetrate into something which only shows itself in a certain way at the surface, and by these results to have penetrated into it from the angle of cases where the result is missing, and it is precisely the well known method called psychopathological, which consists in deconstructing for us, in disarticulating a function by grasping it where it is found to be slightly off course, deviant, and from this very fact, that which is usually inserted more or less normally as a complement into the entourage, appears to us as having its roots, its framework.

I would like to deal with the experience that we have grasped of the incidence which is lacking, or that we suppose provisionally to be lacking, of the identification of a certain type of subject with what one can call their regular type, their satisfactory type. We will see here how we can choose, because we must choose, a particular case. Let us take therefore the case of women, of what has been called the "masculinity complex", the masculinity complex in the fashion that it is articulated with the existence of the phallic phase. We can do it,

because I have shown you first of all the problematic aspect of the existence of this phallic phase.

Is this something instinctual? A sort of flaw in instinctual development, one which means that in a way we might be told, the existence of the clitoris would by itself alone be responsible, be the cause of what might be expressed at the end of the chain by the existence of the masculinity complex?

Here and now we are prepared to understand that it must not be so simple, and that also indeed if one looks closely at it, in Freud it is not so simple, and in any case the debate which followed is there to show us that it is not so simple, even if the debate was badly inspired, namely even though it began in a way by begging the question, namely that it could not be like that. It nevertheless remains a question that it saw that it was not like that, that it was not purely and simply a question of a detour which is required in feminine development because of a natural anomaly, or simply because of the famous bisexuality that there is question of, that it is undoubtedly more complex, that we are not for all that capable of immediately and simply formulating what it is, but that undoubtedly what we see, is that in the vicissitude of what appears as the masculinity complex in the woman, there is something which shows us here and now a connection with this phallic element, an operation, a usage of this phallic element which in every case deserves to be held onto, because in any case the reason why an element may be put to use is all the same something which can clarify for us what this element is, fundamentally.

What then do the analysts tell us, especially the feminine analysts who have tackled this subject?

We will not say today all that they tell us. I refer very especially to two of these analysts who are in the background of Jones' discussion of the problem, who are Helene Deutsch and Karen Horney. Those of you who read English can on the one hand consult an article by Helene Deutsch which is called: "The Significance of Masochism", (*IJP*, January 1930, Part 1, Vol.13), on the other hand an article by Karen Horney (Vol.5, January 1924) .

Let us take Karen Horney. What does Karen Horney tell us?

Karen Horney, whatever one might think about the formulations of the final terms at which she ended up, both in theory and in technique, was on the clinical level, from the beginning and up to the middle of her career, without question a creator, and one who saw things which conserve all their value however poor the value of what she deduced from them concerning the anthropological situation of psychoanalysis. It nevertheless remains that her discoveries conserve all their value.

What does she highlight in this article on the castration complex?

What she highlights can be expressed in a brief fashion as follows: it is that she remarks the liaison, the clinical analogy between the formation in the woman of everything that is organized around the idea of castration, with all that this involves in terms of resonances, of clinical traces in that which the subject in analysis articulates in terms of claiming, properly speaking, the organ as something which she lacks.

She shows by a series of clinical examples, and it would be well for you to refer to this text, that there is no difference in nature, the cases continue on imperceptibly from those

which appear as certain types of feminine homosexuality, namely those in which what the subject identifies herself with in a certain position with respect to her partner, is the paternal image. The moments are composed in the same fashion, the phantasies, the dreams, the inhibitions, the symptoms are the same. It seems to be only a form, one cannot even say an attenuated one, of the other, simply which has or has not gone past a certain frontier, which itself remains uncertain.

The point which in this connection Karen Homey finds herself accentuating, is the following: what happens in these cases encourages us to concentrate our attention on a certain moment of the Oedipus complex which is not the first, which is not even the middle, which is very far towards the end because it supposes that there is already reached this moment in which not alone is the relationship to the father constituted, but at which it is so well constituted that it takes form in the little girl subject under the guise of an express desire for the paternal penis, of something, we are told, and it is very properly underlined for us, which implies therefore a recognition of this reality of the penis, not even phantastic, not even in general, not in this ambiguous half-light which makes us ask ourselves at every instant what is the phallus, on this plane, on the plane of the question: is it imaginary or is it not? And of course in its central function it implies this imaginary existence, this phallus which at different phases of the development of this relationship, the feminine subject can despite everything maintain that she possesses it, while at the same time knowing very well that she does not possess it. She possesses it simply *qua* image, either because she might have had it, in what she says, or that she should have it, as is frequently the case.

It is a question here of something quite different, we are told. It is a question of a penis realised as real, as being waited for as such. I would not even be able to advance this, if already in modulating the three moments of the Oedipus complex, I had not pointed out to you that it happens in different ways in each of these three moments, and that the father *qua* possessing the real penis, is something which intervenes at the third moment. I told you this especially with regard to the boy. Here then things are perfectly well situated for the little girl.

What happens, according to what we are told?

We are told that in the cases in question, it is from the privation of, what is expected here that there will result this phenomenon which was not invented by Karen Homey, which is put into operation the whole time in the text of Freud, which is this transformation, this change of direction, this mutation which brings it about that what was love is transformed into identification, that it is in the measure that the father disappoints an expectation oriented therefore in a certain fashion, which already involves an advanced maturation of the situation, that it is in the measure that this exigency of the subject who has in fact arrived one might say in a certain fashion at the acme of the Oedipal situation - if precisely its function did not consist in the fact that it should be superseded, namely that it is in superseding it that the subject must find this satisfactory identification, that of her own sex - there appears this something which is revealed (*qui rêve*) and which is articulated as such, as a problem, as posing a mystery. In Freud himself it is underlined that this interplay that we admit as being the possibility *par excellence* of the transformation of love into identification, is something which is not self-explanatory.

Nevertheless it is this that we admit in this case for a first reason initially that we affirm, that it is at this moment that there is a question of articulating it, of giving a formula

which allows us to conceive what this identification is as such linked to a moment of privation.

It is for this that I would like to try to give you some formulae, because I think that they are useful to distinguish what is that from what is not that; in other words to introduce this essential element of dialectic, of signifying articulation which I am not giving you here for the fun of it, as I might say, because of a taste for finding ourselves lost in words, but on the contrary so that the use that we habitually make of words and of signifiers, is not a usage like that which could be called taking illusion for reality, namely things that are insufficiently articulated for things sufficiently illuminating in themselves. It is by articulating them properly that we can effectively measure what is happening, and what happens in one case from what happens in another.

What happens when the subject in question, the feminine subject has taken up a certain position of identification to the father?

The situation, if you like, is the following: here is the father here, something was expected here at the level of the child, in fact the paradoxical, unusual result is that from a certain angle and in a certain fashion, we are told that the child becomes *qua* ego ideal, this father. Of course she does not really become the father, and here always a woman in this case can really talk about her relationships to her father, it is sufficient to hear her in the most open way, saying, for example, "I cough like him". What is involved is certainly something which is an identification. Let us try to see then what is happening, let us try to see step by step the economy of the transformation.

The little girl is not for all that transformed into a man. What we find as signs, as stigmata of this identification, are things which are expressed in part, which can emerge like these, which may even be noticed by the subject, of which the subject may boast in a certain fashion. What is it?

Indeed here there is no doubt. They are signifying elements. If a woman says: "I cough like my father", or: "I am putting on weight or a tummy like him", it is all the same signifying elements that are provisionally in question. More exactly, to separate out what is in question, we will give them a special term because they are not signifiers which are themselves put into operation in a signifying chain. We will call them the "insignia" of the father.

The psychological attitude here shows the following on the surface: it is that the subject in fact, to call things by their name, presents herself under the mask, or bases herself on something which is the partially undifferentiated side that there is in every subject as such, bases herself on the insignia of masculinity.

It is perhaps necessary to pose the question, with the slowness which is always that which here should protect us from error, of what becomes of desire when this step is taken? Where did all of this begin? The desire, after all, was not itself a virile desire. What becomes of the desire, in so far as the subject has taken on here at this level the insignia of the father? These insignia are going to be employed *vis-à-vis* whom? *Vis-à-vis* some third thing, *vis-à-vis* something of which we will be told that it takes, because experience proves it to us, the place of that which in the primitive evolution of the Oedipus complex, was at that third place, namely the mother. Even the analysis of a case like this one, will show us that which from the moment of the identification, namely from the moment when the subject invests herself with

the insignia of that with which she is identified, there is therefore a transformation of the subject in a certain sense which, is of the order of a passage to the state of a signifier, of something which is that, the insignia. But the desire which comes into play is no longer the same as if it were what was expected in this relationship to the father, if it was something that we can suppose at the point that things have got to, at this point that we are at in this moment in the Oedipus complex, something extremely close to a passive genital position, to a passionate desire, to a properly feminine appeal. It is quite clear that it is no longer the same thing that is there after the transformation.

We leave in question for a moment how to know what has happened to this desire. A little while ago we have said privation. It is worth our while to come back to this because one could just as well say frustration. Why privation rather than frustration? I am pointing out here that we are leaving this loose thread.

In any case, what is going to be established in so far as the subject who here has also come there, in so far as there is an ego ideal, that something could have passed to within herself, which is structured as it is in intersubjectivity, this subject is going to exercise a certain desire which is what? On this schema, what appears, are the relationships of the father to the mother. It is quite clear that what we find in an analysis, in the analysis of a subject like this at the moment that we are analysing here, is not the double, the reproduction of what has happened between the father and the mother, for all sorts of reasons, if it is only because the subject only acceded quite imperfectly to it, that experience shows on the contrary that what is going to come into the relationship, is the whole past, all the vicissitudes of extremely complex relationships which up to then have modulated the relationships of the child to the mother, namely everything which from the origin, from the frustrations, the disappointments linked to what necessarily exists in terms of mishaps, hiccups in the relationships of the child to the mother, with everything that it brings with it in terms of an extraordinarily complicated relationship, and namely let us bring in with a very special accent aggressive relationships, the aggressive relationships in their most original form, the relationships also of rivalry, all the incidences for example of the arrival of elements foreign to the trio, namely of all the brothers or sisters who may have intervened more or less inopportunistically in the evolution of the subject and in her relationships to her mother.

All of this will contribute its trace and its reflection to temper or to reinforce what will then be presented as a claim for the insignia of masculinity. This is what is going to be projected into the relationships to her object which, in the young subject, will from then on be determined from this point of identification where the subject in fact takes on the insignia of that with which she is identified, in so far as it has become or that it plays for her the role and the function of ego ideal.

Of course this is a way of imagining the places that I am speaking about, but that presupposes obviously, if you wish to understand it, a sort of coming and going. These insignia, the subject brings them with her in accordance with the oscillatory movement that is in question. She finds herself constituted in a certain fashion and with a new desire.

This formula, this mechanism of transformation, with therefore what it involves, namely the intervention at the beginning of an element which must first of all be libidinal, and secondly of the existence to one side of a third term with which the subject is in a relationship which the distinction of this third term permits, and which for this requires in any case that in the past of the relationship with this third term, there has intervened this radically

differentiating element which is called competition, and thirdly this something which ensures that a sort of exchange is produced. That which was the object of the libidinal relationship becomes something else, is transformed for the subject into signifying functions, and her desire passes onto another plane, on to the plane of the desire previously established with this third term, this emerges in the operation as basically the same, I mean the other desire, that which comes to substitute for the repressed desire. The same and none the less transformed. This is what constitutes the process of identification.

It is necessary that there should be first of all the libidinal element pointing to a certain object *qua* object. This object becomes in the subject a signifier to occupy the place which will henceforth be called the ego ideal. The desire on the other hand undergoes this something which involves a It is another desire that comes in the place of the first. This other desire is not a desire which comes from nothing, it is not nothingness, it existed before, it concerned the third term, and it emerges from that transformed.

Here is the schema that I ask you to keep in mind, because it is in a way the minimal schema for any process of identification in the proper sense, of identification at the secondary level, of identification in so far as it grounds the ego ideal. None of these three terms is ever lacking, and the formal dance as I might call it, which results from the transformation on the one hand of a transignifying object, of the taking up of a place that this signifier realises at that moment in the subject, and which constitutes properly speaking the identification, is this something that we find at the basis of what constitutes an ego ideal, and this is always also accompanied by this thing that we can call transference of desire, namely that another desire arrives from elsewhere which is in relationship with a third term which had nothing to do with the first libidinal relationship that was called into question, and that this desire which comes to substitute for the first is in this substitution and by this substitution, transformed.

This is absolutely essential. We can explain it again, but in a different way.

Let us say to take up our schema in the form that we present habitually, the child in a first relationship with the primordial object - this is the general formula - finds herself taking the position symmetrical to that of the father. She enters into rivalry; she situates herself at the opposite with respect to the primitive relationship to the object, at a point X. It is to the degree that there she becomes something which can take on the insignia of that with which he enters into rivalry, that she rediscovers afterwards the place where he necessarily is, namely opposite this point X where the things happened, and where she comes to constitute herself under this new form which is called the ego ideal. She retains something of this passage in the most general form.

There it is a question of something where you see well that it is no longer a question either of father, nor of mother, it is a question of relationships with the object. The mother, is the primitive object, the object par excellence. What she retains in this case, in this coming and going which makes her enter into rivalry with a third term, with respect to the object, is something which is characterized by what one can call the common factor which results from the existence of signifiers, from the fact that in the human psyche, in so far as people have to deal with the world of the signifier, and that it is the signifiers themselves which are the necessary condition, the defile through which their desire must necessarily pass; in this coming and going there is always something which will imply this factor common to the incidence of the signifier in desire, to that which signifies it, to that which makes of it necessarily a signified desire. This common factor, is precisely the phallus. It is because it is

always part of it, that it is the lowest common denominator of this common factor, that we always find it there in every case, whether it is a question of man or woman.

In other words, this is why we place here, in this X, the phallus, the small o; the fact is as you see, what results from it, is that it is always in relation to the ego, namely this something which is established there in a relationship of the subject to itself, and always more or less fragily constituted, compared in fact to primitive identification, and it in effect always more or less ideal, which the subject makes of himself with an image that is more or less always contested, which has nothing to do with this fundamental relationship that she has with that to which she has addressed her demands, namely the object.

The ego-ideal is constituted in this coming and going always in opposition, as one might say, to this virtual point where the competition, the contesting of the third term appears. It is opposing it that there is always a certain relationship with this common metonymical factor which is the phallus, which is found everywhere, and of course what happens at the level of the ego ideal consists essentially in having at least this common factor, and composed of course in a fashion which does not allow it to be seen, or which allows it to be seen only as something which always slips between our fingers, this something which exists at the basis of every kind of signifying assumption.

There is this fact: it is that this signifier in any case engages with the signified. The ego-ideal is constituted in this relationship with the father, it always implies the phallus. Here it is the father who is the third term, he always implies the phallus, he implies it always and uniquely in so far as this phallus is the common factor, is the pivoting factor of this agency of the signifier.

Once again, for example, what does someone like Helene Deutsch tell us?

Karen Homey has shown us the continuity of the castration complex with feminine homosexuality. Helene Deutsch will speak to us about something else, she too will tell us that the phallic phase does indeed play the role that Freud tells us about except for this, that what is important for her, is to also take note of its subsequent vicissitude, this vicissitude, she will see in this: it is that the adoption, she says, of the masochistic position which is essential, constitutive, she says, of the feminine position (*opposition*), is based on this plane that it is in so far as the clitoral *jouissance* is found to be prohibited to the little girl, that she will be found to find her satisfaction from a position which will no longer therefore be uniquely a passive position, but a position of *jouissance*, assured by this very privation which is imposed on her with respect to clitoral *jouissance*.

There is some paradox here, but a paradox that Helene Deutsch sustains on the basis of something which in her case carries over into technical precepts, affirmations drawn from experience and which go very far in their paradox. I mean that I am bringing you here the experiential data of an analyst submitted no doubt as such to a certain choice of material, but which is worthwhile dwelling on.

For Helene Deutsch, the question of feminine satisfaction is something which presents itself in a complex enough fashion, for her to consider that a woman in her womanly and feminine nature, can find a complete enough satisfaction in which nothing appears which presents itself as neurotic or atypical in her behaviour, in her adaptation to her functions as a woman, without there appearing for her, under any very accentuated form, properly genital satisfaction.

I repeat, this is the position of Mrs. Deutsch. Namely that in fact the accomplishment of the satisfaction of the feminine position, can entirely be found on the plane of the maternal relationship especially of what belongs to all the stages of the accomplishment of the function of reproduction, namely in the satisfactions proper to the state of pregnancy, of nursing and of the maintaining of the maternal position, the maturation of the satisfaction, linked to the genital act itself of orgasm, to call it by its name, being something which is sufficiently linked to this dialectic of phallic privation, for Helene Deutsch to formulate that in the subjects, she has encountered in a more or less advanced fashion, in a more or less extreme fashion, this involvement in the phallic dialectic, namely that it is with respect to the man, with respect to a certain degree of masculine identification, that there has been constituted an equilibrium of the personality that is necessarily conflictual and therefore precarious. A too extreme reduction of this complex relationship, an advance to a too extreme degree of analysis is likely to frustrate the subject of what she had up to then more or less successfully realized in terms of *jouissance* on the genital plane, and goes as far as involving for her the indication, in a way, of leaving to the subject the penis of her identifications which are more or less realised, in any case .acquired, on this plane; and not, through an analysis that is taken too far, to reduce as one might say, to deconstruct, to analyse these identifications, at the risk of putting her in the position of a loss with respect to what these analyses reveal as being the foundation, the structure, of the *jouissance* acquired, conquered up, to then, up to the analysis in so far as it is supposed to be linked, is acquired, on the plane of genital *jouissance*, to something which is precisely the past of the subject with respect to her identifications in so far as the *jouissance* may consist in the masochistic frustration of a certain position which was conquered at a certain moment, and in order that the frustration should be maintained necessitates at the same time the maintenance of positions from which this frustration can be exercised.

In other words, in certain conditions, the reduction of identifications which are properly masculine identifications, can constitute a danger for what has been conquered by the subject on the plane of *jouissance* in the very dialectic of this identification.

This is worth what it is worth. The question is simply here that this could have been put forward, that this was put forward, by someone who is certainly in no way inexperienced, and who even if it is only by her reflections, undoubtedly shows herself to be someone who reflects on her trade and on the consequences of what she does. On the contrary it is under this heading, and under this heading alone that this is worth maintaining in the question.

I repeat, and to resume the position of Mrs. Deutsch, it is in fact in the beyond of the genital act as it appears effectively in interhuman relationships, I am not saying that it appears in the same way in the robin or in the praying mantis, but in the human species it would seem that the centre of gravity, the major element of satisfaction of the feminine position would be found in this beyond of the genital relationship as such. In a way, everything that can be found there by the woman, would be essentially bound up to a dialectic which we do not have any reason to be surprised to see intervening here.

What does that mean?

That means that this something which is also well manifested in the position of man *vis-à-vis* the genital act, namely the extreme importance of what is called forepleasure, is here what gives perhaps simply in a more accentuated fashion, the libidinal materials to be put in question, but that these libidinal materials come into play effectively because of their hold on

the history of the subject, in a certain signifying dialectic implying the intrusion of the possible identification to the third object who is the father on this occasion, and that therefore everything that comes in under the title of phallic claims, and of identification to the father complicated by the relationship of the woman to her object, is simply only the signifying elaboration of that from which are found to be borrowed the satisfactions which appear properly in the genital act, namely that which I called just now: forepleasure; the orgasm itself, and as such, I mean in so far as it is identified with the high point of the act itself, posing effectively from experience the problem in the woman of something which deserves in effect to be posed, given everything that we know physiologically about the absence of a nervous organisation directly established to provoke pleasure in the vagina.

This leads us to try to formulate this question of the relationship of the ego ideal to a certain vicissitude of desire, and to formulate it like this: we have therefore both in the boy and in the girl at a given moment, a relationship to a certain object whatever it may be, to an object already constituted, constituted in its reality as object, and this object is going to become something which is the ego ideal. It is going to become it through its insignia.

Why has the desire which is in question in this relationship to the object been called on this occasion privation?

It has been called privation on this occasion, because what constitutes its characteristics is not, as they say, that it concerns a real object, it is of course necessary that the father at the moment that he intervenes in the first example that I gave in the evolution of the girl, should in effect be a real enough being in his physiological constitution, so that the phallus shall have passed to a stage of evolution which goes beyond the purely imaginary function, which it can conserve for a long time in *Penisneid*. This is certain.

What constitutes the privation of desire is not that it is aimed at something real on this occasion, but that it aims at something which can be demanded. There cannot be and be established properly speaking a dialectic of privation, except when it is a question of something that the subject can symbolize. It is in so far as the paternal penis can be symbolized, can be demanded, that there is produced what happens at the level of the identification that we are dealing with today.

There is here something which is altogether distinct from what intervenes at the level of the prohibition which is nevertheless constituted for example regarding phallic *jouissance*. Clitoral *jouissance*, to call it by its name is perhaps at a given moment of the evolution, prohibited.

What is prohibited throws the subject back into something where she no longer finds anything in which to signify herself. This is what gives it its properly speaking painful character, and it is to the degree that the ego can, for example, on occasion find itself in this position of being rejected by the ego ideal, that there is established properly speaking the melancholic state.

We shall return to the nature of this rejection, but you should understand here and now that what I am alluding to here can be put into relation with the same German term which is in our vocabulary what I related to this rejection, namely the term *.Verwerfung*. It is in so far as on the part of the ego ideal the subject in her living reality can find herself in this position of exclusion from all possible signification, of exclusion, that there is established the depressive state as such.

But what is in question in the formation in the ego ideal, is a quite opposite procedure: it consists in fact in this, that this object which finds itself confronted with something which we have called privation, in so far as it is a negative desire, that it is something that can be demanded, that it is on the plane of demand that the subject sees herself being refused this desire, this liaison between the desire *qua* refused, and the object. It is this which is at the start the constitution of this object as a particular signifier which takes a particular place, that there is substituted for the subject who becomes a metaphor of the subject, that which is produced in the identification to the object of desire, in the case where the girl identifies with her father. This is what it is: this father whom she has desired and who has refused her the desire of her demand, becomes something who is in her place. The metaphorical character of the formation of the ego ideal is an essential element, and just as in the metaphor what results, is the modification of something which has nothing to do with the desire which is involved in the constitution of the object, which is a desire which is elsewhere at that moment, the desire which had linked the girl to her mother, let us call it in comparison to the capital D, the little d. All the preceding adventure of the girl with her mother, comes here to take its place in the question and undergoes the consequences of this metaphor. It becomes bound.

We find there the formula of the metaphor that I have given to you, in so far as it is, as you know.

$$\frac{S}{S'} \sim S \left(\frac{I}{d} \right)$$

namely something which results from a change of signification. After the metaphor, this change of signification is something which is produced in the relationships established up to then by the history of the subject, because in fact we are still talking about the first example of the little girl to the mother. That which from then on will model her relationships with her object, will be this history, this history modified by the establishment of the new function in her which is called the ego-ideal.

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$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 d & \longrightarrow & \$ \diamond o & \rightleftharpoons & i(o) & \longleftarrow & e \\
 D & \longrightarrow & O \diamond d & \rightleftharpoons & s(O) & \longleftarrow & I \\
 \Delta & \longrightarrow & \$ \diamond D & \rightleftharpoons & s(\phi) & \longleftarrow & \Phi
 \end{array}$$

I am writing this on the board at the beginning, to avoid writing it incorrectly or incompletely when I have to refer to it. I hope at least to be able to clarify all three of these formulae between now and the end of our lecture today.

To take up things more or less where I left them the last time, I was able to ascertain not without satisfaction, that certain of my propositions did not fail to provoke some emotion, in particular because I seemed to endorse the opinions of one or other female psychoanalyst who believed she had to advance the opinion that certain analyses of women do not necessarily gain anything by being pushed to the very end, for the reason for example that the very progress of the analysis could deprive the aforesaid subjects in analysis, of a certain point that had been reached in their properly sexual relationships, I mean that the progress or the advance of the analysis could threaten a certain *jouissance* which had been conquered and acquired. Following on this I was asked if I endorsed this formula, namely whether the analyst should in fact stop at a certain point, for reasons which would in a way be situated outside the laws of its very progress.

I shall reply to this that everything depends on what one considers as being the aim of analysis, not its external aim, but that which regulates it as one might say theoretically. It is quite certain that a perspective on analysis which is that of an adjustment to reality, this adjustment to reality being considered as something which is implied in the very notion of the development of the analysis, I mean that it is supposed to be a given in the condition of the man or the woman that a full elucidation of this condition should necessarily lead them to an adaptation which is in a way preformed, harmonious.

This is a hypothesis, and a hypothesis which in truth nothing in experience appears to justify. In other words, to nail my colours to the mast and employ terms which are the very ones which will recur today, this time in a quite concrete sense, because it is a question of the woman, and in truth there is here an extremely sensitive point in analytic theory, namely that of her development, of her personal adaptation to a certain order, and which undoubtedly is pure as far as the human order is concerned. Does it not appear immediately quite certain that it is appropriate, as regards the woman, not to confuse what she desires - I give to this term desire its full meaning - with what she demands; not to confuse either what she demands with what she wants (*veut*), in the sense in which one says that what a woman wants, God wants (*Ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut.*)?

These simple reminders, which if they are not self-evident are at least derived from experience, may serve to show that the question that is being asked, namely what it is a question of realizing in analysis, is not a simple one.

The last time, even though this came in a sort of lateral fashion into our discourse, into what we were talking about, what I was trying to lead you to, that to which I am going to bring you back today in order to give it a more generalized formula, and which will serve me subsequently as a reference point in the critique of fundamental, normative identifications, precisely of man and woman, that to which I led you the last time, was a first glimpse of what we should consider as being this sort of identification which produces the ego-ideal; the ego ideal in so far as it is the point of emergence, the pivotal point, the culminating point of this crisis of the Oedipus complex around which analytic experience began, and around which it does not cease to turn, even though it is taking up positions which are more and more centrifugal. And I insisted on something which could be said this way: that every identification of the ego-ideal type of identification was a certain putting into relationship of the subject to certain signifiers in the Other, which I called insignia, and this relationship came in fact to graft itself onto a desire other than the desire which had confronted the two terms of the subject and the Other, in so far as he is the bearer of these insignia.

Here is how this could be summarized, more or less, and of course it did not satisfy everybody, even though speaking to one or other person I only gave as reference the following. Do you not see for example something which moreover is indicated as being in the foreground by Freud, as well as by all the authors, that it is in the measure that a woman identifies with her father, that in her relationships with her husband she gives him all the trouble that she had given to her mother?

Here is something where it is not simply a question of being fascinated by the example. There are of course other forms in which we rediscover the same formula. But here is something exemplary, which illustrates what I have just said to you: It is in the measure that the identification is made by the assumption of certain signs, of characteristic signifiers of the relationships of a subject with another.

This overlaps and implies the emergence into the foreground of the relationships of desire between this subject and a third. You find again the subject S, the capital O and the little o. Where is the capital O, where is the little o? Here. It does not matter! The important thing is that there are two of them.

Let us begin again from this remark which I try to bring you back to, which is something about which one could say that it shares in the maxim of La Rochefoucauld concerning the things that one cannot steadily regard: the sun and death. In analysis there are things like that. It is rather curious that it is precisely the central point of analysis that is looked at more and more obliquely, and that one looks at it by the intermediary which are more and more distant. The castration complex is one of those.

Look at what is happening, and what has happened since the first understandings that Freud had. There was here something pivotal, something essential in the formation of the subject, namely this strange thing, it must be said, and which had never been put forward until then, never articulated in the formation of the subject. This step, is something about a threat which is quite precise, particular, paradoxical, archaic, even properly speaking horror provoking, and a decisive moment, pathogenic no doubt, but also normative revolving around a menace which is not there all by itself, which is not there in isolation, which is coherent, with this relationship which is called the oedipal relationship, between the subject, the father, the mother, the father here acting as the bearer of the threat, the mother the object of the aim, of the goal of a desire itself profoundly hidden.

You will discover there right at the origin, that which precisely has to be elucidated. That it is in this third relationship that there is going to be produced the assumption of these relationships to certain insignia already indicated in fact in this castration complex, but in an enigmatic fashion because in a way these insignia are themselves placed in a special relationship with regard to the subject. They are, it is said, threatened, and at the same time they are the very things that it is a question of accepting, of receiving, and this in a relationship of desire concerning a third term which is that of the mother.

At the beginning this indeed is what we find, and when we have said that, we are precisely before an enigma, before something which is to be articulated, which is then to be coordinated by practitioners. We have this relationship which is complex by definition and in its essence, complex to grasp, to articulate, and we encounter it in the life of our subject.

What are we going to find? A thousand forms, a thousand reflections, a sort of dispersing of images, of fundamental relationships, to allow us to grasp all its incidences, all its psychological reflections, all the multiple psychological tasks which emerge in the experience of the neurotic subject. And then what happens?

What happens is this phenomenon which I would call that of psychologizing motivation, which will ensure that by looking into the individual, into the subject himself, for the origin, the meaning of this fear of castration, we arrive at a series of displacements, of transpositions in the articulation of this fear of castration which only more or less - I am going to resume what I said - measure out in this way this trace of castration which is first of all, in relation with the object of the father, the fear of the father. We are first of all led to consider it in its incidence, and to perceive its relationship with a tendency, a desire of the subject, that of his corporal integrity, and it is around this notion of narcissistic fear that that of the fear of castration is going to be put forward, then, still following a line which is necessarily genetic, namely which goes back to the origins, once we look into the individual himself for the genesis of that which develops afterwards, we find put forward, placed in the foreground, because one always has material which of course is clinical to grasp the incarnations, as one might say, of a certain effect, we find the fear of the feminine organ, in a fashion that is moreover ambiguous, either that it is it which become the locus of the threat against the incriminated organ, or on the contrary, that it is the model of the disappearance of this organ.

Further on, we are going to find at the origin of the fear of castration by a further withdrawal, where you are going to see, in the last analysis it seems to me quite striking and singular in its outcome, that what is going to be feared as having castration as a final term, is the term at which we have progressively arrived, and I will not go back over for you today the list of the authors that we find, but as regards the last you know that it is Melanie Klein; what is at the origin of the fear of castration, is the phallus itself which is hidden within the maternal organ, which is perceived by the child right at the beginning as being the paternal phallus, as having its locus within the maternal body, this is what is dreaded by the child, and by the subject. And believe me, it is already pretty striking to see appearing in a type of mirror reflection before the threatened organ, this threatening, and in a way, I would say more and more mythical organ, to the extent that it is pushed further and further back. But here for the last step to be taken, it is in fact necessary that the paternal organ within the maternal organ, should be considered as threatening. It is because the subject himself made of it at the sources of what are called his primordial aggressive tendencies, his primordial sadistic tendencies, made of it the ideal weapon, and everything comes back, when all is said

and done, to a sort of pure reflection of the phallic organ, being considered as the support for a primitive tendency which is that of pure and simple aggression, the complex of castration isolating itself in fact, reducing itself to the isolation of a primordial partial aggressive drive, at the same time disconnected, it then seems.

And in fact it is indeed the whole effort of the authors, that which gave them the greatest possible difficulty from then on, to reintegrate what concerns the castration complex into its context as a complex, namely what it set out from, and which profoundly motivated this central character in the subjective economy that was in question at the origin of the exploration of the neuroses, and of course we know the effort that the authors make to restore all the same, to resituate in its place which when all is said and done, appears in fact when we look at things as being a pure and simple and vain turning back on itself of a system, of a set of concepts, because when all is said and done, if we examine attentively the economy of what Melanie Klein articulates as happening at the level of this precocious Oedipus complex, which is still something of a sort of contradiction in its terms, it is a way of saying a pre-oedipal Oedipus complex, the Oedipus complex in so far as it is the Oedipus complex before any of the personages of the Oedipus complex have appeared. We simply find articulated in the interpretative signifiers that she makes use of to give a name to these drives that she encounters, or that she believes she encounters in the last analysis in the child, the fact is that she implies in her own particular signifiers, exactly the whole dialectic that there is question of at the beginning, namely the question that is at stake and that must be taken up from the start and in its essence, which is the following:

If castration has this essential character, if we take it in so far as it is put forward by analytic theory and experience, and by Freud, right from the beginning, let us now try to see what it means.

Before being feared, before being experienced, before being psychologized, what does it mean?

Castration is not a real castration. This castration is linked as we have said, to a desire. It is even linked to the evolution, to the progress, to the maturation of desire in the human subject. If it is castration, it is quite certain on the other hand that the link to this organ, so difficult moreover to properly centre in the notion of castration complex, because it has often been remarked what does that mean? It is not a castration addressed to the genital organs in their totality. This moreover is the reason why in the woman it does not take on the aspect of a threat against female genital organs, as such, but as something else, precisely *qua* phallus. In the same way in the case of the man, it was possible legitimately to pose the question of whether it was necessary in this notion of the castration complex to isolate the penis as such, or to include in it the penis and the testicles. In fact, of course this is precisely what indicates that what is in question is something other than this or that, it is something which has a certain relationship with the organs, but a certain relationship of whose precisely signifying character, already from the beginning, there can be no doubt, and it is this signifying character which dominates.

We can say that at the very least a minimum should be retained in what the castration complex is in its essence, the relationship to a desire on the one hand, and on the other hand to what I will call on this occasion a mark.

In order that desire, Freudian experience and analytic theory tell us, should successfully traverse certain phases, should reach maturity, it is necessary that something as

problematic to situate as the phallus, should be marked by this something which ensures that it is only maintained, conserved, to the degree that it has traversed the threat of castration properly speaking, and this must be maintained as the essential minimum beyond which we go off into synonyms, we go off into slippages, we go off into equivalences, we go off at the same time into obscurities.

We literally do not know any longer what we are saying if we do not retain these characteristics as essential, and is it not better first of all and above all to direct ourselves towards the relationship of these two poles, we say, of desire to the mark, before trying to go searching for it in the different ways in which this is incarnated for the subject in the reason for a liaison which from the moment that we leave this point of departure, is going to become more and more enigmatic, more and more problematic, and soon more and more evaded?

I insist on this character, this character of a mark which moreover has in all the other manifestations as well as the analytic, interpretative, significant manifestations, and quite certainly in everything that is embodied ceremonially, ritually, sociologically, this character of being the sign of everything that supports this castrating relationship whose anthropological emergence we began to perceive through the mediation of analysis.

Let us not forget that up to then the religious signs, incarnations, for example in which we recognize this castration complex, circumcision for example, to give it its name, or again one or other form of inscription, of mark in the rites of puberty, of tattooing, of everything which produces marks, impresses on the subject, in connection with a certain phase which in an unambiguous fashion is presented as a phase of accession to a certain level, to a certain stage of desire. All these things make their appearance always as a mark and an impression.

And you will tell me: there you are, we've got it! It is not difficult to encounter the mark. Already in our experience, when there are flocks, every shepherd has his little mark in order to distinguish his sheep from those of others, and it is not such a stupid remark. There is indeed a certain relationship, even if it only because of this: it is that in any case we shall already grasp in this that the mark presents itself all the same with a certain transcendence with respect to the constitution of the flock.

Should this satisfy us? It is quite true in a certain fashion, for example that circumcision presents itself as constituting a certain flock, the flock of the elect, of the sons of God.

Is all we are doing here rediscovering this? Surely not. What analytic experience, and what Freud from the beginning contributes, is that there is a close, intimate relationship between desire and the mark. The fact is that the mark is not there simply as a sign of recognition for the shepherd, whose position we would find it difficult to know in this instance, but that when we are dealing with man, this means that the marked living being here has a desire which is not without a certain intimate relationship with this mark.

It is not a question of advancing too quickly, nor of saying what this mark is which modifies desire. There is perhaps from the beginning in this desire a gap which permits this mark to take on its special incidence, but what is certain is that there is the closest relationship between that which characterizes this desire in the case of man, and the incidence, the role and the function of the mark. We rediscover this confrontation of the

signifier and of desire which is that on which we should here bring all our questioning to bear.

I do not want to get too far away, but here all the same a little parenthesis: let us all the same not forget that the question here leads on quite obviously to the function of the signifier in man, and that it is not here that you will be hearing is spoken of for the first time. If Freud wrote *Totem and Taboo*, if it was for him an essential need and satisfaction to articulate this *Totem and Taboo*, consult Jones' text to see the importance that this had for him, and which was not simply an importance in terms of applied psychoanalysis to rediscover enlarged to the dimensions of the heavens, the little human animal with whom he was dealing in his office, it is not the heavenly dog compared to the terrestrial dog like in Spinoza, it is a myth that is absolutely essential for him, it is such an essential myth that for him it is not a myth; what does it mean, this *Totem and Taboo*?

The fact is that we are necessarily led, if we wish to understand something which is the particular questioning of Freud, at the level of this experience of the Oedipus complex in his patients, the fact is that we are necessarily led to this theme of the murder of the father.

Of course you know that here Freud does not question himself. What can it really signify that to conceive in effect of a passage which is the passage from nature to humanity, it should be necessary that one passes through the murder of the father?

According to his method which is the method of an observer, of a naturalist, he groups, he multiplies around this sort of point of confluence, this crossroads at which he arrives, all the documents, everything that ethnological information brings to him, and of course what is it that we see multiplying in pride of place? The particular contribution of his experience, is the point at which his experience encounters the ethnological material. It does not matter that it is more or less out of date. Today it is of no importance, that it is the function of the phobia with the theme of the totem which is here the point at which he finds his bearings, where he is satisfied, where he sees being linked up the signs whose trail he is following.

All of this clearly shows that this is absolutely indistinguishable from a progress which puts in the foreground this function of the signifier.

The phobia, is a symptom in which there comes to the fore, in an isolated fashion and promoted as such, the signifier. I spent last year explaining it to you, showing you the degree to which the signifier of a phobia is something which has a thousand significations for the subject, it is the key point, it is the signifier which is lacking for the significations to remain a little bit peaceful, at least for a while. Without this the subject is literally submerged by them.

In the same way, this is what the totem also is, the all-purpose signifier, the signifier as key, the signifier thanks to which everything can be organised, and principally the subject, because in this signifier the subject finds what he is, and it is in the name of this totem that for him also an order is put on what is prohibited.

But what is it that this, as one might say, veils, hides from us, when all is said and done? It is this murder of the father itself, in order that around it there can be made the conversion, the revolution thanks to which the young males of the horde are going to see organized something which is going to be the primitive law, namely the prohibition of incest.

This hides from us simply the close link that there is between death and the appearance of the signifier, because all the same do not forget this, that in the ordinary course of events, everybody knows that life hardly pauses at the corpses that it produces. Big fish eat little fish, or even having killed them, do not eat them, but it is certain that the movement of life, I would say levels down what it must abolish in its path, and this is already the whole problem of knowing in what sense a dead person is remembered, even if this remembering is something which remains in some way implicit, namely if as everything makes it appear for us, it is in the nature of this remembering that it should be forgotten by the individual, whether it is a question of the murder of the father or of the murder of Moses. It is essentially and of its nature to forget what remains absolutely necessary as the key, as the pivotal point around which our spirit should turn. It is that a certain link has been made a signifier, which ensures that this dead person exists differently properly speaking in the real, in the burgeoning of life. There is no existence of death, there are the dead, and that is all, and when they are dead, the living person pays no further attention to them.

In other words, what is it that causes both Freud's passion when he is writing *Totem and Taboo*, and the devastating effect of the production of a book which appears and which is very generally rejected and vomited out? Namely that everybody starts saying: what is this man trying to tell us? Where is he from? By what right does he say these things to us? We ethnographers have never seen that. Which does not prevent it being one of the altogether capital events of our century, and that around it effectively the whole inspiration of critical, ethnological, literary, anthropological work has been profoundly transformed.

What does this mean, if not that Freud conjugates here two things: he conjugates desire with the signifier; he conjugates them as one says one says one conjugates a verb. He makes the category of this conjugation enter into the heart of a thinking which with respect to man, remained up to him a thinking which I would call academic thinking, designating by that a certain ancient philosophical affiliation which, from Platonism up to the Stoical and Epicurean sects, and passing through Christianity, profoundly tends to forget, to evade this organic relationship of desire with the signifier, to situate it, to exclude it from the signifier, to reduce it, to explain it, to motivate it in a certain economy of pleasure, to evade what there is in it of the absolutely problematic and irreducible and properly speaking perverse, to evade what is the essential, living character of the manifestations of human desire, in the foreground of which we should put this character not just of being inadapted, inadaptable, but fundamentally perverted, marked.

It is the situation of this bond between desire and the mark, between desire and the insignia, between desire and the signifier, that we are in the process here of struggling to make.

Here are the three little formulae that I have written out for you:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 d & \rightarrow & \$ \diamond o & \rightleftarrows & i(o) & \leftarrow & e \\
 D & \rightarrow & O \diamond d & \rightleftarrows & s(O) & \leftarrow & I \\
 \Delta & \rightarrow & \$ \diamond D & \rightleftarrows & s(\emptyset) & \leftarrow & \Phi
 \end{array}$$

Today I would simply like to introduce them, to tell you what they mean because we shall not be able to go any further. But these formulae are in my opinion those around which you will be able to try not only to articulate something about the problem that I have just

proposed to you, but even to articulate all the complications, and even all the vagaries of analytic thinking with respect to that which always remains our fundamental problem. Let us not forget that, when all is said and done, it is the problem of desire.

Let us begin first of all by saying what the letters which are there mean. The little d, is desire. The \$ is the subject, the little o, is the small other, it is the other in so far as he is our counterpart, it is the other in so far as his image holds us, captivates us, supports us, and around which we constitute this first order of identifications which I defined for you as being narcissistic identification which is the little e, the ego.

This first line puts you in a certain relationship which as the arrows indicate to you, cannot be taken to the end by beginning from each extremity, that it stops starting from each extremity at the precise point at which the directing arrow itself encounters another one with an opposite sign, but puts into a certain relationship egoistic or narcissistic identification with on the other hand the function of desire.

I will comment on it more fully later on.

The second line, that on which I articulated the whole of my discourse at the beginning of this year, in so far as I tried to make you see in the witticism a certain fundamental relationship of desire, not with the signifier as such, but with the word, that is to say with the demand. The D written here means the demand. The capital O which follows, is the big Other, the big Other in so far as it is the locus, the seat, the witness to whom the subject refers in his relationship with any little o whatsoever as being the locus of the word. There is no need to recall here how for such a long time, and by coming back to it incessantly, I articulated the necessity of this big Other as being the locus of the word which is articulated as such. Here we find again the little d. Here you encounter a sign for the first time, it is the little s(O). The little s has here the same signification that it usually has in our formulae, namely that of the signified. The little s(O) means that which is signified in the Other, and signified with the help of the signifier, that which in the Other will, for me the subject, take on the value of the signified, namely that which properly speaking we have called above the insignia. It is in relationship with these insignia of the Other that there is produced the identification which has as its fruit and result the constitution in the subject of the capital I which is the ego ideal.

Already with nothing more than by the constitution of these formulae, you have sensed that there is an accession of signs to the identification of the ego ideal, only when the term of the big Other has entered into the reckoning. You rediscover here the little d.

The third line, otherwise called delta, is that which concerns the problem that I am trying to articulate for you today, namely, that it tries to articulate in a reference chain like the preceding ones, the following; the delta, is precisely what we are questioning ourselves about, namely the very source by means of which the human subject is placed in a certain relationship to the signifier, this in his essence as subject, as total subject, as subject in its completely open, problematic, enigmatic character and this is what this formula expresses. You see here the subject returning again in his relationship with the fact that his desire passes through demand, that he speaks it, and that that has certain effects. This simply is what is symbolized here. Here you have the capital S which is as usual the letter by which we designate the signifier. This formula explains that capital S(\emptyset) is something which I am going to try to tell you, and precisely that which ϕ , the phallus, realizes, in other words that

the phallus is the signifier which introduces into O something new, and which only introduces it into O, and at the level of O, and which is the thing thanks to which this formula will become clear from the effects of the signifier at this precise point of incidence on the Other, namely what this formula will allow us to clarify from what comes about through the existence of the relationships which are thus articulated. Let us now take up again what we are dealing with. The relationship of man to desire is not a pure and simple relationship of desire, it is not in itself a relationship to an object. If this relationship to the object was here and now established, there would be no problem for analysis. Men, as the majority of animals are supposed to do, would go towards their object, there would be no secondary relationship, as I might say, of man to the fact that he is a desiring animal, and with regard to whom everything that happens at the level that we call perverse, consists in the fact that he enjoys (*jouit de*) his desire. If the whole evolution from the origins of desire revolves around these experiential facts that are called masochistic relationships, it is this which we are obliged in the genetic order to bring forward in the first place, but one comes to it by a sort of regression as I might say, that which offers itself as being the most exemplary, as being the most pivotal, it is the so-called sadistic relationship, or the scopophilic relationship. But if it is quite clear that it is by a reduction and a manipulation and a secondary artificial decomposition of what is given in experience, that we isolate them under the form of drives which are substituted one for the other, and which are equivalent, the scopophilic relationship, in so far as it combines exhibition and voyeurism, is always ambiguous: the subject sees himself being seen, or sees the subject as seen, but does not of course see him purely and simply. It is in *jouissance*, in the type of radiation or of phosphorescence which emerges from the fact that the subject finds himself, in a position coming from some primitive gap or other, in some way extracted from his relationship of implication to the object, and because of this he fundamentally grasps himself as undergoing this relationship, whence the fact that we find at the basis of this analytic exploration of desire, masochism. The fact is that the subject grasps himself as suffering, as one might say, his existence as living being, as suffering there, as being a subject of desire.

Where is the problem now?

This is the aspect which will forever remain only in its irreducible character, the altogether false aspect of human desire understood as any reduction and adaptation, and any analytic experience will go against it, the subject does not simply satisfy a desire, he enjoys desiring, and this is an essential dimension of his *jouissance*, and to omit this sort of primitive given on which I must say that the so-called existentialist investigation has thrown some light, has illuminated in a way what I articulate here for you as I am able, and simply thinking that you sufficiently refer to our everyday experience, for this to have a meaning, which is developed throughout unevenly magisterial pages by Mr. Sartre, in *Being and Nothingness*. It is not always absolutely rigorous from a philosophical point of view, but it certainly shows an undoubted literary talent. What is striking, is that things of this order could only be articulated and developed with such *éclat* since precisely analysis had in a way established the rights of this dimension of desire.

Mr. Jones in *L'Utilité et la fonction dans l'analyse*, would seem, in function directly proportional to what he did not understand, to have tried very quickly to articulate the castration complex by giving it an equivalent. To be honest, the phallic signifier was for him, throughout his existence as writer and analyst, the object of what one could call perhaps in his case a real phobia, because really the best thing that he wrote, which culminates in his article on the phallic phase, consists precisely in trying to articulate, to say why this blessed

phallus which is found there under our feet at every instant, why should we privilege this object which is moreover so inconsistent, when there are things that are just as interesting? The vagina for example. And in fact the man is right. It is quite clear that this object is no less interesting than the phallus, as we know. Only what astonishes me, is that the one and the other do not have the same function. He was strictly condemned to understand nothing about it, in the very measure that from the beginning, once he tried to articulate what this castration complex was for Freud, he felt the need to give it an equivalent.

Already one sees the start of the first impulse which arises here instead of retaining what is perhaps toughest, irreducible in the castration complex, namely the signifier phallus. He was not without a certain sense of orientation here. He made perhaps only one mistake, which was to think that this phrase on which he ends his article on "The Phallic Phase", namely that God created them man and woman, that is how he concludes, showing clearly the biblical origins of his conviction, because God created man and woman, therefore they are well made to go together, and it is necessarily at this that things should end up, or they should say why.

However, we are precisely in analysis in order to see that when one demands that it should say why, one enters into all sorts of complications, and this is the reason that at the beginning he substituted for the term castration complex, this term *aphanisis* which he went looking for in the Greek dictionary, and which, it must be said, does not appear as one of the words most utilized by the authors, and which means disappearance; disappearance of what? Disappearance of desire. This is what the subject is supposed to dread in the castration complex, according to Mr. Jones, and then nimble as a Shakespearean character, he does not seem to be at all aware that it was already an enormous problem that a living being could be in doubt about, be intimidated as by a danger, not by the disappearance, the lack, the weaning of his object, but of his desire, because there is no other means of making of *aphanisis* an equivalent of the castration complex, except to define it as he defines it, namely: the disappearance of desire.

Is there not here therefore something which is absolutely unfounded? But that it is already something of the third or the fourth degree compared to what we can call a relationship that is conceivable in terms of need, is what seems to be not in doubt, and that which he does not give the slightest appearance of being aware of.

This having been said, even if we admit already that all the complications which are suggested by the simple situating of the problem in these terms are resolved, it remains that the problem is to know how in this relationship of the subject to the other, in so far as it is in the other and in the gaze of the other - it is not for nothing that I put the scopophilic position at the heart of things, it is because effectively it is at the heart of this position, but just as much in the attitude of the other, I mean that there is no such thing as a sadistic position which in a certain way is not accompanied, in order to be qualified properly speaking as sadistic, by a certain masochistic identification.

Therefore the problem is to know that which, in this relationship to his being, itself detached, where the human subject is, which puts him in this quite special position *vis-à-vis* the other, where what he grasps, where what he enjoys, is something other than the relationship to the object, but a relationship with his desire. It is a question of knowing in the last analysis what the phallus as such is doing in all of this. This is where the problem lies, and before trying to engender, to imagine by a genetic reconstitution based on references

which are what I would call the fundamental references of modern obscurantism, namely formulae like the following, which are in my opinion much more imbecilic than anything that you can find in these little books that you are taught under the guise of religious instruction, or catechism, namely for example: "ontogenesis reproduces phylogenesis". When our great grandchildren come to realize that in our day this was enough to explain all sorts of things, they will say: "all the same man is a funny creature", and they will not notice moreover what they then will have in its place.

It is a question therefore of knowing what the phallus is doing here.

For today let us pose the following: that the existence of this third line, namely that the phallus in effect is something which plays a certain role, a role of signifier. What does that mean?

Let us begin from the second line which means this: that if there is a certain relationship of man to the little other which is structured, constituted like what we have just called human desire in the sense that this desire is already fundamentally something perverse, all his demands will be marked by a certain relationship. This is the meaning of what we see in this new little diamond-shaped symbol which you repeatedly find in this formula, and which simply implies that everything that is in question here is commanded by something that is precisely this quadratic relationship which we have always put as the basis of our articulation of the problem, and which poses S , which says that no S can be conceived of, or articulated, or possible without this ternary relationship $o' O$. That is all that this means: in order that the demand, as one might say, should exist, should have a chance, should be something, it is necessary that there should be therefore a certain relationship between O , *qua* locus of the word, and this desire as it is structured, $O \diamond d$, in so far as it is structured in the first line.

What the composition of these lines implies is this: that just as narcissistic identification, namely that which constitutes the ego of the subject, is constructed in a certain relationship of which we have seen all the variations, all the differences, all the nuances of prestige, of display, of domination in a certain relationship with the image of the other, there is here the correspondent, the correlative of that which from the other side of the turning point of this table, namely the line of double equivalence which is there in the centre, associates this very possibility of the existence of an ego with this fundamentally desiring character linked to avatars of desire, which is what is articulated here in the first part of the first line.

In the same way, every identification which is an identification with the insignia of the Other, that is to say of the third as such, depends on what? On the demand; on the demand and on the relationships of the Other to desire, and this is quite clear and evident, and it is this which allows there to be given its full value to the term that Freud himself calls, what we call in a very imprecise fashion - and I will rearticulate, and I will come back to why this term is quite improper - the term frustration. What it is is *Versagung*. We know by experience that it is in the measure that something is *versagt*, that there appears in the subject this phenomenon of secondary identification or of identification to the insignia of the Other.

What does this imply?

This implies that in order that there should be something that can be established, I mean for the subject, between the big Other as locus of the word, and this phenomenon of his

desire which is placed on a quite heterogeneous plane, because there is a relationship with the little other in so far as the little other is his image, something must be introduced into the Other, into the Other *qua* locus of the word, this same relationship to the little other, which is required, which is necessary, which is phenomenologically tangible, to explain human desire *qua* perverse desire. It is the necessity of an articulation of the problem that we have proposed today.

This may seem obscure to you. I will only say one thing to you: it is that in not posing anything at all, not only are we going to notice that this becomes more and more obscure, but in addition everything becomes confused, instead of what is the question, namely that if we pose this, we are going to be able to make a bit of order emerge. We pose that ϕ the phallus, is this signifier through which there is introduced into O *qua* locus of the word, the big O, the big Other through which is introduced the relationship to the other, little o, *qua* small other, through which this relationship is introduced, that is not everything, in so far as the signifier has a part to play in it.

There you are. This looks as if it is biting its own tail, but it is necessary that it should bite its own tail. It is clear that the signifier has some part to play in it, because this signifier we meet it precisely at every step. We met it at first at the beginning. There would be no beginning, not of culture, but of that which is moreover the same thing, if we distinguish culture and society, there would therefore be no entry of man into culture if this relationship to the signifier was not at the origin.

What we want to say here, is that just as we have defined the paternal signifier as the signifier which, in the locus of the Other, poses, authorises the play of signifiers, there is this other privileged signifier which is the signifier which has for effect the establishment in the Other of this thing which changes its nature, namely that this is why here it is barred, this Other. This thing which changes its nature, namely that it is not purely and simply the locus of the word, but that it is something which, like the subject, is implicated in this dialectic situated on the phenomenal plane of reflection with respect to the small other which poses that the Other is implicated in this, and which adds to it, it is purely and simply as signifier that this adds to it, that this relationship exists, in so far as it is the signifier which inscribes it.

I would ask you, whatever difficulties it gives you, to keep this in mind, to stay with this for today. I will show you in what follows what this allows us to articulate and illustrate.

Seminar 18: Wednesday 9 April 1958

If the human affairs that we in principle concern ourselves with, are marked by man's relationship to the signifier, we cannot use the signifier to speak about these things as if we were speaking about things in which the signifier is less involved.

In other words, there must be a difference in the fashion that we speak about human affairs, and the fashion in which we speak about other things.

We know of course that things are not indifferent to the approach of the signifier; that their relationship to the order of the *logos* should be studied, and that we, more than our predecessors, are in a position to be aware that the fashion in which, when all is said and done, language penetrates things, criss-crosses them, raises them up, upsets them however little, gives rise to many questions.

But anyway we are now in a position where we know, or at least we suppose, unless we are mistaken, that things, in themselves, are not developed in language.

At least it was from there that a start was made for the work of science as it is constituted for us today, the science of

To aim first at purifying language, namely to reduce it to the minimum necessary for that grasp on things to be obtained, this is what is called transcendental analysis. For things, indeed, we have managed to reduce language to its interrogative function.

In fact one has as much as possible, and naturally not totally, separated it out from things in which it was profoundly engaged up to a certain epoch which corresponds more or less to the beginning of modern science.

Now, of course, everything becomes complicated. Do we not notice on the one hand peculiar convulsions in things, which are certainly not unrelated to the fashion that we question them? And on the other hand, curious impasses in language which, when we are speaking about things, become strictly incomprehensible for us.

But that is not our concern. For our part we are dealing with man, and there, all that I am pointing out to you, is that language has not up to the present been separated out, language is not separable from what is being questioned, in the way that we think it is separated, namely when we engage in an academic, or a psychological/psychiatric discourse about human affairs. Up to the present, it is the same thing. We ourselves are very well able to perceive the poverty of the constructions that we are committed to, and moreover their immutability, because to tell the truth for the century that we have been talking about hallucinations in psychiatry, we have hardly taken a step forward, we still do not know, we still cannot define except in a derisory fashion what hallucination is in psychiatry.

Moreover the whole language of psychology/psychiatry, bears this same handicap of making us experience in fact its profound lack of progress, and of making us feel what we are

expressing here: we say that one or other function is reified, and we experience the arbitrariness of these reifications, even when we are speaking in a Bleulerian language of discordance in schizophrenia. We have the impression that we know what we are talking about when we say reify.

What does it mean? It is not at all that we reproach this psychology for making a thing of man - would to heavens that it did make a thing of him - this after all is the goal of a science of man. But precisely it makes of him a thing which is nothing other than one of prematurely frozen language, which substitutes over-hastily its own form of language for something which is already woven into language.

What we call in fact formations of the unconscious, what Freud presented to us as formations of the unconscious, are nothing other than this grasp on something primary. Moreover it is for this reason that he called it the primary process; this grasp on something primary in language. Language marks this primary thing, and this is why Freud's discovery, the discovery of the unconscious can be said to have been prepared by the questioning of this primary thing, in so far as first of all its language structure is detected.

When I say prepared, it was able to permit the preparation of the questioning of this primary thing, the introduction of a proper interrogation of primary tendencies. But we have not arrived at this point so long as we have not arrived at the point of what it is first of all a question of recognizing, namely that this primary thing is first and foremost woven like language. This is why I bring you back to it, and this is also why those who up to now promise you, try to fascinate you with the synthesis of psychoanalysis and biology, show you clearly by the fact that there is absolutely nothing in this sense that has even begun, demonstrate for you, that it is only a lure, and we will even go further by affirming that given the state of our knowledge, to promise it, is a swindle.

We are therefore at the stage of trying to situate, to project, to manifest before you what I call the texture of language. That does not mean that we exclude this primary thing. Indeed it is in a search for it, in so far as it is something other than language, that we advance in it.

In the preceding lectures we were at the point of touching what I have called for you the dialectic of desire and demand. I told you that in the demand identification is made with the object, we can more or less say, of feeling. Why, when all is said and done, is it this way? Precisely in the measure that in order for anything intersubjective to be established at all, it is necessary that the Other with a capital O, should speak; or again to put it differently, because it is in the nature of speech to be the speech of the Other; or again because it is necessary that everything which is part of the manifestation of primary desire should be at some moment, should install itself on what Freud, after Fechner, calls "the other scene", that this is necessary for the satisfaction of man, in so far precisely as being a speaking being, an altogether major part of his satisfactions must pass through the intermediary of the word.

It must be remarked right away that because of this fact alone, an absolutely initial ambiguity is introduced. If desire is obliged to go through this mediation by the word, and if, as is altogether manifest, this word owes its status, installs itself, only develops of its nature in the Other (with a capital O), as locus of the word, it is altogether clear, that there is no reason why the subject should be aware of this. I mean that the distinction between the Other and himself is one of the things which, at the beginning, is the most difficult of distinctions to make.

So that, I do not need to underline what Freud, for example, well underlined, namely the symptomatic value of this moment of childhood when the child believes that his parents know all his thoughts. Freud explains very well at this very moment the link between this phenomenon and the word, with the fact that his thoughts, after all, are formed in the speech of the Other, and it is quite natural that at the beginning his thoughts should belong to this speech.

Between him and this other there is at the beginning only a weak leading string, but one that is marked precisely by what happens in the narcissistic relationship; an ambiguous leading string in this sense that it goes beyond itself, I mean that the narcissistic relationship is quite open to a sort of permanent transitivity. This is what the experience of the child also shows us.

But the two modes of ambiguity of meaning, that which happens here on the imaginary plane, and that which belongs to the symbolic order, namely the first that I have just reminded you of, that by which desire is founded on the word of the Other, the two limits, the two kinds of breakthrough which bring about the alienation of the subject, are not to be confused, and it is in the discordance between them that there is established a first possibility, as experience shows us, for the subject of distinguishing himself of course most particularly on the imaginary plane, he establishes himself with his counterpart in a position of rivalry with respect to a third object.

But there still remains the question of what happens when there are two of them, namely when it is a question of him sustaining himself in the presence of the Other.

This dialectic which in fact is close to what is called recognition, you recognise at least, you glimpse a little bit, thanks to what at least for some among you, thanks to what I have communicated here about it. You know that this dialectic of recognition, was sought by a man called Hegel in the conflict of *jouissance* and along the path of a fight called a fight to the death in which he shows us his whole dialectic of the master and the slave.

All of this is very important to know, but it is clear that this does not entirely cover the field of our experience for the best of reasons, because the fact is that there is something else besides the dialectic, besides the fight, between the master and the slave: there is the relationship of the child to its parents, there is precisely what happens at the level of recognition, in so far as what is at stake, is not fighting or conflict, but precisely demand.

It is in fact a question of seeing that if the desire of the subject is alienated in the demand, is profoundly transformed by the fact of having to pass through the demand, how desire at some moment can reintroduce itself, as it must. The things I am talking to you about today are simple. Primitively the child in his impotence, finds himself entirely depending on the demand, namely on the word of the Other which modifies, restructures, profoundly alienates the nature of his desire.

What we are alluding to here, corresponds more or less to this dialectic of the demand that is rightly or wrongly called pre-oedipal, and certainly rightly called pre-genital, that here because of this ambiguity, because of the limits between the subject and the Other, we see being introduced into the demand the oral object which, to the degree that it is demanded on the oral plane, is incorporated, (and) the anal object which becomes the support of this dialectic of the primitive anal gift, essentially linked in the subject to the fact of whether or

not he satisfies educative demands, namely in the last analysis, whether or not he accepts to release a certain symbolic object.

In short, this profound remodelling of early desires by demand, is what we continually touch on in connection with what we call this dialectic of the oral, and particularly the anal object.

We see what results from this, namely that this Other as such, with whom the subject is dealing in the relationship of demand, is herself submitted to a dialectic of assimilation, of incorporation, or of rejection. There is something different which can and should be introduced, that by which the originality, the irreducibility, the authenticity of the desire of the subject is reestablished, I do not think that it is anything else that is meant by the so-called progress to the genital stage, which consists in the following: the fact is that the subject installed in the first, pregenital dialectic of the demand, has to deal at a given moment with another desire, a desire which up to then had not been integrated, which cannot be integrated into the remodellings still more critical and profound than for the early desires, and that the ordinary way by which this desire is introduced for him, is *qua* desire of the Other. He recognises a desire beyond demand, a desire *qua* not adulterated by demand, he meets it, he situates it in the beyond of the first Other to whom he addressed his demand - to fix our ideas, let us say the mother.

What I am saying here is only a way of articulating, of expressing what has always been taught. The fact is that it is through the Oedipus complex that genital desire is assumed, comes to take its place in the subjective economy. But that to which I wish to draw your attention, is the function of this desire of the Other, in permitting once and for all the true distinction between the subject and the Other.

In other words, the situation of reciprocity which ensures that if the desire of the subject depends entirely on the demand of the Other, namely on the other reciprocal situation, that which is expressed in the relationships of the child to the mother by the fact that the child also knows very well that he has something, that he can refuse the demand of the mother, for example in acceding or not to requests for anal or excremental discipline.

There is therefore in this relationship between two subjects around the demand, something, an original relationship so that a new dimension may be introduced which completes this first one, which ensures that the subject is nothing other than a subject in the relationship of dependency, and of whom the relationship of dependency constitutes the essential being. What has to be introduced, what is there of course from the beginning, what is latent from the start, is this: it is that beyond what the subject demands, beyond what the Other demands of the subject, there has to be the presence and the dimension of the Other's desire. This is something which at first is profoundly veiled from the subject, but which nevertheless is there imminent in the situation, and which is going little by little to develop in the oedipal experience.

This is essential in the structure, more originally, more fundamentally, than the perception of the relationships between the father and mother which I developed in what I called the paternal metaphor, even than the perception of any point whatsoever, of what culminates in the castration complex, namely the thing that will be a development of this beyond of the demand. Just in itself, the fact that the desire of the subject is first of all found, first of all located, in the existence as such of the desire of the Other, in so far as desire is distinct from demand, it is that which I wish to illustrate today by means of an example and

by the first example that is required, namely that if this is an introduction in a way to everything which belongs to this structuring of the unconscious of the subject in his relationship to the signifier, we should find it immediately. And first of all I already made an allusion to you to what we can highlight in the first observations of hysteria that Freud made.

Let us pass on to the time where Freud for the first time talks about desire. He talks to us about it in connection with dreams. I have already given you a commentary on what Freud draws out in connection with the inaugural dream of Irrea, the dream of the injection. I will not go back to it.

Let us take the second dream, because Freud in the *Traumdeutung* also analyses some of his own dreams, it is the dream of Uncle Joseph. I will analyse it another day, because it is quite demonstrative, in particular to illustrate the schema of the two interlocked loops, because there is nothing which really shows more the two levels on which a dream develops: the properly signifying level which is speech, and the imaginary level where in a way the metonymical object is embodied. We will not go into this.

I take the third dream that Freud analysed in the fourth chapter: "Distortion in Dreams". It is the one we call "the butcher's beautiful wife" (*La Belle bouchère*). Here is the dream:

I wanted to give a supper party, but I had nothing in the house but a little smoked salmon. I thought I would go out and buy something, but remembered then that it was Sunday afternoon and all the shops would be shut. Next I tried to ring up some caterers, but the telephone was out of order. So I had to abandon my wish to give a supper party." (SE IV 147)

This is the text of the dream. Freud notes scrupulously the way in which the text of the dream is articulated, is verbalised, and it is always from this verbalisation of a kind of written text of the dream, that the analysis of the dream always and uniquely appears conceivable for him.

"I answered of course," says Freud, "that analysis was the only way of deciding on the meaning of the dream" In fact the patient had proposed it to him saying: "You are always saying to me that a dream is a fulfilled wish. Here I had the greatest difficulties in realising my wish." "I admitted that at first sight it seemed sensible and coherent and looked like the reverse of a wish-fulfilment."

But from what material did the dream arise, as you know the instigation to a dream is always to be found in the the events of the previous day, he says to his patient. My patient's husband, an honest and capable wholesale butcher, had remarked to her the day before that he was getting too stout and therefore intended to start on a course of weight reduction. He proposed to rise early, do physical exercises, keep to a strict diet and above all accept no more invitations to supper. She laughingly added that her husband at the place where he regularly lunched, had made the acquaintance of a painter, who had pressed him to be allowed to paint his portrait, as he had never seen such expressive features. Her husband however had replied in his blunt manner that he was much obliged, but he was sure the painter would prefer a piece of a pretty young girl's behind to the whole of his face.

She was very much in love with her husband now and teased him a lot. She had begged him, too, not to give her any caviare. I asked her what that meant; and she explained that she had wished for a long time that she could have a caviare sandwich every morning but had grudged the expense." [This is how Mr. Meyerson translates it, but it is not quite that: "She does not give herself that liberty." Expense is not mentioned in it] Of course her husband would have let her have it at once if she had asked him. But on the contrary, she had asked him not to give her any caviare so that she could go on teasing him about it.

Here Freud puts in brackets:

(This explanation struck me as unconvincing. Inadequate reasons like this usually conceal unconfessed motives. They remind one of Bernheim's hypnotised patients. When one of these carries out a post-hypnotic suggestion and is asked why he is acting in this way, instead of saying that he has no idea, he feels compelled to invent some obviously unsatisfactory reason. The same was no doubt true of my patient and the caviare.

I saw that she was obliged to create an unfulfilled wish for herself in her actual life. And the dream represented this putting aside, this adjournment of her desire, this renunciation of her desire as having been put into effect. But why was it that she stood in need of an unfulfilled wish?)

This remark is Freud's, and it is in brackets.

The associations which she had so far produced had not been sufficient to interpret the dream. I pressed her for some more. After a short pause, such as would correspond to the overcoming of a resistance, she went on to tell me that the day before she had visited a woman friend of whom she confessed she felt jealous because her (my patient's) husband was constantly singing her praises. Fortunately this friend of hers is very skinny and thin and her husband admires a plumper figure. I asked her what she had talked about to her thin friend. Naturally, she replied, of that lady's wish to grow a little stouter. Her friend had enquired, too 'When are you going to ask us to another meal? You always feed one so well'. The meaning of the dream was now clear and I was able to say to my patient: "It is just as though when she made this suggestion you said to yourself: 'A likely thing! I am to ask you to come and eat in my house so that you may get stout and attract my husband still more! I'd rather never give another supper party'. What the dream was saying to you was that you were unable to give any supper parties, and it was thus fulfilling your wish not to help your friend to grow plumper. The fact that what people eat at parties makes them stout had been brought home to you by your husband's decision not to accept any more invitations to supper in the interests of his plan to reduce his weight." All that was now lacking was some coincidence to confirm the solution.

The smoked salmon in the dream had not yet been accounted for. "How," I asked, "did you arrive at the salmon that came into your dream?" "Oh," she replied, "smoked salmon is my friend's favourite dish." I happen to be acquainted with the lady in question myself and I confirm the fact that she grudges herself salmon no less than my patient grudges herself caviare.

It is at this point that Freud introduces this dream which involves another more subtle interpretation, and which enters into the dialectic of identification. It is in this connection that he makes the following remarks:

"She had 'identified' herself with her friend. The circumstance of her having brought about a renounced wish in real life was evidence of this identification."

I think that you should already see being outlined in this simple text the features that I could have found in opening any page whatsoever of the *Traumdeutung*. We would have found the same dialectic. I think that in taking the first dream which comes to hand, the one which is going to show us in a particularly simple fashion, because this dialectic is particularly simple in the hysteric, the dialectic of desire and of demand. But let us continue, in order to pursue up to the end what this very important text articulates for us, because in fact it is one of the first clear-cut articulations, by Freud, of what hysterical identification signifies. He clarifies what its meaning is.

I will pass over a few lines, in order not to be too long. It is a matter of discussing what is called in this connection imitation, sympathy; and he criticises with a good deal of energy the simple reduction of hysterical contagion to what is supposed to be pure and simple imitation.

This process, he tells us, is a little more complicated than the common picture of hysterical imitation; it consists in the unconscious drawing of an inference, as an example will make clear. Supposing a physician is treating a woman patient, who is subject to a particular kind of spasm, in a hospital ward among a number of other patients. He will show no surprise if he finds one morning that this particular kind of hysterical attack has found imitators. The psychological infection has occurred along some such lines as these. As a rule, patients know more.....

You have to see the import of such a remark, I am not simply saying at the time that it was made, but still for us today.

"..... know more about one another than the doctor does about any of them; and after the doctor's visit is over they turn their attention to one another."

An essential remark. In other words, the human object continues to live his own particular little relationship to the signifier, even after the observer whether behaviourist or not, has interested himself in his photograph.

Let us imagine that this patient had her attack on a particular day; then the others will quickly discover that it was caused by a letter from home, the revival of some unhappy love affair, or some such thing. Their sympathy is aroused and they draw the following inference, though it fails to penetrate into consciousness: 'If a cause like this can produce an attack like this, I may have the same kind of attack

The articulation of the symptom in its elementary form, to an identification of discourse, to a situation articulated in the discourse.

'..... since I have the same grounds for having it.' If this inference were capable of entering consciousness, it might possibly give rise to a fear of having the same kind of attack. But in fact the inference is made in a different psychological region, and

consequently results in the actual realisation of the dreaded symptom. Thus identification is not simple imitation but assimilation (*appropriation*) on the basis of a similar aetiological pretension; it expresses a resemblance and is derived from a common element which remains in the unconscious.

The term *appropriation* is not really properly translated. It is rather: "taken as one's own" (*pris comme propre*).

A hysterical woman identifies herself in her symptoms most readily with people with whom she has had sexual relations or with people who have had sexual relations with the same people as herself. Linguistic usage takes this into account, for two lovers are spoken of as being one, says Freud.

Of course the relationship of identification to the jealous friend, is the problem that Freud raises here.

I want to draw your attention to this: in this text Freud underlines as a first problem, that the desire which we meet at first, from the first steps of the analysis, the one from which the solution of the enigma is going to unfold, is that the patient was preoccupied at the time of this dream, with creating for herself an unsatisfied desire. What is the function of this unsatisfied desire?

Because if we read in this dream, the satisfaction of a wish, what we discover in connection with the satisfaction of this wish, is the underlay of a situation which is very properly the fundamental situation of man between demand and desire, that to which I try to introduce you, and that to which I effectively introduce you through the intermediary of the hysteric, because let us put things more or less like this: one can say that the hysteric is suspended at this first stage, at this necessary cleavage, the necessity of which I tried to show you above, between demand and desire. Here nothing is clearer.

What does she demand? I am talking about before her dream. In her life. This patient very much in love with her husband, what does she demand? It is love, and hysterics like everybody else, except that in them it is more of an encumbrance, demand love. What does she desire? She desires caviare. You just have to simply read it. And what does she want (*veut*)? She wants not to be given caviare.

The question is precisely to know why it is necessary, in order that a hysteric should maintain a love affair which satisfies her, first of all that she desires something else, that the caviare here has no other role than to be that other thing, and in the second place, in order that this other thing should fulfil properly the function that it is its mission to fulfil, precisely that she should not be given it, because her husband would ask for nothing better than to give her caviare. Life would probably be more peaceful, he imagines.

But what Freud tells us formally, is that she wants him not to give her caviare so that they can go on madly loving one another, namely teasing one another, teasing one another unmercifully and indefinitely.

These structural elements which have nothing, apart from the fact that we dwell on them, all that original, there is all the same something which begins to take on a meaning here. You see that what is expressed here, is a structure which well beyond its comical aspect, must represent a necessity. If the hysteric is precisely, as we know, the subject for whom the

constitution of the other *qua* capital Other, *qua* bearer of the spoken sign, is that with which it is difficult to establish the relationship which permits him, the hysteric, and this is the very definition that one can give of it, to hold on to his place as subject, and the male or female hysteric, is, to speak plainly, so open to the suggestion of speech, that there must be something in that. Somewhere in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, Freud asks himself the question of the way in which this hypnosis originates. Its relationship to sleep is far from being transparent, and the enigmatic electivity which assimilates it to it, I mean is satisfied with it, or which on the contrary for other persons, opposes it to it, radically distances it from it, shows that there is a certain unknown moment which must be realised in hypnosis, and which perhaps of itself makes possible in the subject originally, the purity of "libidinal situations". I would say rather "libidinal attitudes".

It is a question precisely of places, of positions that we are trying to clarify, and this unknown element that Freud speaks about, revolves around this articulation of demand and desire. This is what we will try to demonstrate more fully.

This preoccupation therefore, this necessity for the subject to create an unsatisfied desire in relation with what is necessary in order that there should be constituted for the subject a real other, namely an other who is not entirely imminent to the reciprocal satisfaction of demand, namely to the entire capture of the desire of the subject by the word of the other, that this desire which is in question should be in its nature the desire of the Other, this is very precisely what the dialectic of the dream introduces us to, because this desire for caviare, the patient does not want it to be satisfied in reality.

Where is it represented in the dream which is in effect incontestably a dream which tends to satisfy the patient with regard to the solution of the problem that she pursues? This desire for caviare, what is it going to be represented by in the dream? By the fact that the person involved in the dream, the one with whom, Freud points out the signs, she identifies herself with, is also there, whether she is a hysteric or not does not matter. Everything is as pure as can be, and everything is as hysterical as can be. For the hysterical patient, of course the other is also one, and this all the more easily in that as I have just told you, the hysterical subject constitutes herself almost entirely from the desire of the other. The desire which the subject takes into account here, is also the preferential desire of the other, and this is even all she has when she is not going to be able to give a supper party. All she has left is smoked salmon, namely that which indicates both the desire of the other, and that which indicates it as being able to be satisfied, but only for the other: Do not worry, however, there is some smoked salmon! The dream still does not say that things will go as far her giving it to her friend, but the intention is there.

The intention is there. Contrariwise of course the demand of her friend which is the element generating the dream, namely that she had demanded to come to dine with her where one eats so well, and where besides one can meet the handsome butcher, the loving husband who speaks always so well of this friend. He also must have some little desire at the back of his head, the young girl's behind so promptly evoked in connection with the kind proposition of the painter who proposes to sketch him, to draw his so expressive and interesting face, is certainly there to demonstrate it. Every one, to tell the truth, has his little extra desire simply more or less intensified.

What is important in the case of the hysteric, is that she shows us that for her this desire *qua* beyond every demand, namely *qua* having to occupy a function *qua* refused

desire, plays for her a role of the highest importance, and these things are quite usable. You will never understand anything about a male or a female hysteric, if you do not begin from this recognition of this first structural element.

Since on the other hand hysteria in the relationship of man to the signifier, is a quite primordial structure, if you do not know at what point of the structure, if it happens that you have pushed the dialectic of the demand far enough, you must always at a given moment encounter this *Spaltung* of demand and desire, with the risk also of making major errors, namely of making the patient hysterical, because of course everything that we are analysing there, is unconscious for the subject. In other words, the hysteric herself does not know that she cannot be satisfied in the demand, but on the other hand it is very essential for you, that you should know it.

This, at the point that we have got to, is going therefore to allow us to begin to point up what the little diagram that I gave you the last day means, and whose thrust and interpretation I could not even of course put forward, because it was a little premature to do so, but we are going to come to it now.

Here we are. I have told you, it revolves around something like this, namely around a relationship of what manifests itself as a need which must pass by way of demand, namely address itself to the Other, which we see here, through the intermediary of an encounter which happens or which does not happen, but which occupies more or less what we can call the place of the message, namely what is signified from the Other, that there appears this remainder of the demand which consists in the alteration of what is manifested at the still unformed state of the desire of the subject, and which can, which in principle manifests itself in the form of the identification of the subject.

I will take this up again if you wish, the next time, text in hand. The first time that Freud speaks in a completely articulated fashion about identification, you can already refer to it if you wish, before I speak to you about it the next time. You will see how Freud articulates it, and you will see that primitive identification is not articulated otherwise than the way I mark it for you here.

On the other hand you know the degree to which here on the path in which the narcissistic relationship or short circuit is situated, there is introduced already a possibility, an opening, a sort of sketch of a third, in this relationship of the subject to the other.

The essential of what I have brought forward for you in describing the function of the *phallos*, the function of the *phallos* in so far as it is this particular signifier which marks what the Other desires, in so far as it is marked by the signifier. The *phallos* is this particular signifier which marks that which the Other desires in so far as he as real other, as another human being, is within its economy, this is the formula that we are precisely in the process of studying, namely that he is marked by the signifier. It is precisely in the measure that the other is marked by the signifier that the subject must, cannot fail to recognize because of this through the intermediary of this other, the fact that he also in fact is marked by the signifier, namely that there is always something which remains beyond what can be satisfied through the intermediary of this signifier namely by the demand, and that this cleavage created around the action of the signifier, this irreducible residue linked to the signifier, also has its proper sign, but its sign which here is going to be identified with this mark in the signified, and that it is there that he must encounter his desire.

In other words, it is to the extent that the desire of the Other is barred, that he is going to recognise his barred desire, his own unsatisfied desire, and it is at the level of this barred through the intermediary of the other, that there is created his encounter with his most authentic desire namely genital desire. That is the reason why genital desire is marked by castration, in other words by a certain relationship with the signifier phallos. What we have here are two equivalent causes.

It is from a certain relationship with what corresponds to a demand at a first stage, namely to the word of the mother, it is beyond that, namely from a relationship of that word to a law which is beyond and which I have shown you to be incarnated by the father. This is what constitutes the paternal metaphor. But you have quite correctly the right - and I think that it is indeed this kind of lack which must have left you yourselves also desiring when I explained it to you - to think that everything is not reduced to this sort of grading of the word, and beyond the word the super-word, whatever way one denotes it, namely the law of the father; that when all is said and done there is certainly something else required, and of course naturally at the same level at which this law is situated, there is introduced precisely this elective signifier, namely the phallus which ensures that in normal conditions, what is produced here, is encountered at a second degree of the meeting with the other, this is what in my little formulae, I called the signifier of O, namely very precisely what I have just defined as being the function of the signifier phallus, namely that which marks what the other desires *qua* marked by the signifier, namely *qua* barred. Just as that which was produced here from the moment that the subject is properly speaking constituted, and not ambiguous, not perpetually inclined towards the word of the other, the completed subject, the subject which remains just as much on this side of the specular, dual relationship, to the little other as to the relationship with the word. The subject - that which is here in the Z-shaped formula - the completed subject, is the subject in so far as the bar is introduced into it, namely in so far as it also is marked somewhere by the relationship to the signifier. And it is for that reason that it is here that there appears the relationship of the subject to the demand as such.

This is the necessary stage through which is normally realised the integration of the Oedipus complex and the castration complex, namely the structuring through their mediation of the desire of the subject.

How is this produced? This has been developed on this diagram. The fashion in which there is introduced the necessity through the intermediary of the signifier phallus, of this beyond of the relationship to the word of the Other, but of course once this is constituted, it does not remain at that place, I mean that it is integrated with the word of the Other, once the phallus is there *qua* desire of the Other. This is why the signifier phallus, with everything that it involves, right away, comes here to take the primitive place of the relationship of the word to the mother. It is here that it comes to play its function.

In other words, what happens one might say, if we develop it, if we explain it, what happens for us who are trying to delimit the stages of this integration of a word which permits desire to find its place for the subject, (is that) this remains, as I might say, unconscious. I mean that from now on it is here that the dialectic of demand is going to unfold for him, that he will not know that this dialectic of demand is possible only in so far as what is his desire, his true desire, only in so far as this desire finds its place in an unconscious relationship, in something which for him remains unconscious in (*au*) the desire of the Other.

In other words, these two lines normally interchange. From the very fact that they must interchange, all sorts of accidents happen in the interval. These accidents, we meet them in different forms. What I would like simply for today, is to indicate to you that in the hysteric, what simply manifests itself, what comes to fulfill the function of this, is by reason of certain elements of lack which are always present. We will try to point it up later on, but it is already easy to evoke today that that which is produced is something more or less like this: this beyond of the desire of the Other, is produced first and foremost in the pure state in Dora, and we can put our finger right away on why a part of the battery of elements is lacking. There is absolutely nothing said about the mother. You have perhaps noticed in Dora that she is completely absent, Dora is confronted with her father. It is quite clear that it is from her father that she wants love, she wants the love of her father, and it must be said, that before the analysis Dora's life is very well balanced. I mean that up to the moment when as you know, the drama explodes, she had found a very satisfactory solution to her problems. It is to her father that her demand is addressed, and things go very well because her father has a desire, and the desire even goes all the better in this affair, because this desire is an unsatisfied desire. Dora, as Freud does not conceal from us, knows very well that her father is impotent and that the desire for Madame K is a barred desire.

But what we also know, is that Madame K - we know it with some delay, Freud only knew it a little bit too late - is the object of Dora's desire, is the object of Dora's desire precisely in function of the fact that it is the desire of the father, and the barred desire.

In order to maintain this equilibrium only one thing is necessary, it is that Dora should be somewhere, it is that Dora should achieve somewhere this base, this equilibrium, this self-identification which allows her to know where she is, and this in function of this demand, which is not satisfied, the demand made for the love of her father, but which would hold up well like that as long as there is a desire, and a desire that as such cannot be satisfied, either for Dora or for her father.

All of this depends on where there is going to be produced the identification which is called the ego-ideal. You see it here at the origin, it always happens after a certain breakthrough, a double breakthrough of the line of the Other here. It is the same except for the fact that the desire of the father represents the second line, and it is after this double breakthrough of the two lines that there is going to be realised here the hysterical identification, namely no longer the identification with the father as when the father is purely and simply the one to whom the demand is addressed. Do not forget, there is now beyond, and this suits the hysteric very well for her satisfaction and her equilibrium, the desire of the father, it is another who is in a position to satisfy desire, Mr. K, the husband of Mrs. K, of Mrs. K so seductive, so charming, so brilliant, the true object of Dora's desire. He is here because she is a hysteric, because in the case of a hysteric the process cannot go any further. Why? Because desire is the element which all by itself is given the task of taking the place of this beyond which is located here by the position of the subject herself with respect to the demand. But because she is a hysteric, she does not know what she is demanding, simply she needs there to be somewhere this desire beyond. But in order that she can lean on this desire, complete herself in it, find her own identification, her ideal, it is necessary that there at least there there should be at the level of the beyond of the demand, an encounter which allows her to be at peace, to locate herself on this line, and it is there where Mr. K. is, that she finds, as is absolutely clear through the whole case history, her other in the sense of the little o, the one in whom she recognises herself. And this is of course the reason why she is both extremely interested in him, and that at first she deceives the people around her, namely Freud on this

occasion who believes that she loves this Mr. K. She does not love him, but he is indispensable to her and it is still more indispensable for her that Mr. K. should be the one who desires Madame K and as I already noted for you a hundred times, this is more than demonstrated by the fact that the whole circulation entirely short-circuits, namely that *vis-à-vis* the other, the little o, she falls back into a situation of explosive aggression which manifests itself on this occasion by a ferocious slap, namely the fury against the other in so far as he is your counterpart, and that being your counterpart he quite simply steals your existence from you. From the moment that Mr. K speaks the fatal word to her, namely that he is not there at all, without knowing what he says, the poor unfortunate, to support Dora's identification, for a simple reason, which is that his wife means nothing to him. It is precisely this that Dora cannot tolerate. Why can she not tolerate it?

It is quite true as we are told, Dora is also structured, as it is incompletely put, just as manifestly in a homosexual fashion as the hysteric is. She should normally be quite happy with it. Not at all, this is precisely what unleashes her fury, precisely because at that moment, her lovely hysterical construction of identification to the mask, to the insignia of the other very specifically on this occasion, to the full masculine insignia that Mr. K offers her, and not her father, unfortunately collapses, namely that she comes back at this moment to the pure and simple demand, to the pure and simple claim for the love of her father, and to the quasi-paranoiac state that she entered when she saw herself for what in effect she is, much more objectively, on the part of her father, an object of exchange, namely someone who amuses Mr. K, who occupies him while he, her father, can busy himself however vainly it may be. That is sufficient for him, because precisely on this occasion you grasp the very function and nature of desire, as long as he is attending to Mrs. K.

But at that very moment our hysteric falls from a height, and returns to the quite primitive character of demand, namely that at that moment she purely and simply insists that her father should attend only to her, in other words that he should give her love, in other words that he should give her, according to our definition, everything that he does not have.

Here is why today I have made you take a first little exercise on the bar to try to show you what is the meaning and precisely in connection with the hysteric, of this relationship of desire and demand. To the degree that you get used to it, this will allow you to go much more surely and much further.

Seminar 19: Wednesday 16 April 1958

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 d & \rightarrow & \oint & \diamond & O & \rightleftarrows & i(O) \leftarrow e \\
 D & \rightarrow & O & \diamond & d & \rightleftarrows & s(O) \leftarrow I \\
 \Delta & \rightarrow & \oint & \diamond & D & \rightleftarrows & s(\phi) \leftarrow \Phi
 \end{array}$$

I would like to bring you back to some original understanding of the object of our experience, namely the unconscious, my plan in fact being to show you the ways and the possibilities that the discovery of the unconscious opens up for us, but also not to let you forget what this discovery represents in terms of the limits of our power, in other words, to show you in what perspective, along what avenue there can be glimpsed the possibility of a normatization, a therapeutic normatization. But do not forget, because the whole analytic experience is there to remind us of it, that this normatization runs into the contradictions, into the antinomies, inherent in every normatization of the human condition. It even allows us to understand more fully the nature of these limits.

One cannot all the same help being struck that one of Freud's last articles, the one that is wrongly translated as "Analysis Terminable or nterminable", in reality concerns the finite or the infinite. It is a question of analysis in so far as it ends or in so far as it should be situated on a sort of infinite range. This is what is in question, and Freud designates for us the projection of its aim to infinity in the clearest fashion, quite at the level of concrete experience as he says, namely that, when all is said and done, there is something irreducible for the man in the castration complex, for the woman in the *Penisneid*, namely in a certain fundamental relationship with the phallus.

On what did analysis, the Freudian discovery at its beginning, on what did it put the accent? On desire. What Freud essentially discovers, what Freud apprehended in symptoms whatever they are, whether it is a question of pathological symptoms or whether it is a matter of what he interpreted in what appeared up to then as being more or less reducible to normal life, namely the dream, for example, is always essentially a desire.

But even more again in dreams, for example, he speaks to us not simply of desire, but of the fulfilment of desire, and this should certainly strike us, namely that it is precisely in the dream that he talks about the satisfaction of desire. He indicates on the other hand that in the symptom itself there is indeed something which resembles this satisfaction, but the problematic character of this satisfaction already seems to me to be fairly well marked, because it is also a sort of inside-out satisfaction (*satisfaction à l'envers*).

Right away therefore it appears in experience that desire is linked to something which is its appearance, and to say the word, its mask, that the close link that desire as it presents itself to us in analytic experience, has with something that clothes it in a problematical fashion, is indeed what at the very least encourages us to dwell on it as an essential problem.

I underlined several times on these last occasions, the fashion in which desire in so far as it appears to consciousness, manifests itself under a paradoxical form in analytic

experience, or more exactly how much analytic experience has promoted this character which is inherent in desire *qua* perverse desire, which is to be a sort of desire at a second degree of *jouissance* of desire *qua* desire.

In a general fashion, on the whole, all that analysis allows us to perceive about the function of desire, it is not it that discovers it, but it shows us how deeply goes the fact that human desire is not in a way implicated in a direct fashion in a pure and simple relationship with the object that it satisfies, but that it is linked to a position that the subject takes up in the presence of this object, to a position that the subject takes up outside of his relationship with the object which ensures that nothing is ever purely and simply exhausted in this relationship to the object.

On the other hand analysis is also well fitted to recall what has always been known, namely the vagabond, fleeting, ungraspable, character escaping precisely from the synthesis of the ego, that desire is, leaving to this synthesis of the ego, the outcome that it brings of being at every instant, in a way an illusory affirmation of synthesis. I recall that it is always I (*moi*) who desires, and who in me (*moi*) can only be grasped in the diversity of its desires.

Behind what we might call this phenomenological diversity, behind this contradiction, this anomaly, this aporia of desire, it is certain on the other hand that there is manifested a deeper relationship, a relationship of the subject to life, a relationship of the subject, as they say, to instincts, and because it is also situated in this path of analysis that advances have made us make in the situation of the subject in relationship to his position as a living being, but precisely analysis teaches us, makes us experience behind every mediation of the realisation of the goals, of the ends of life, and perhaps also of what is beyond life, some teleology or other of primary vital ends, what Freud envisaged as a beyond of the pleasure principle, namely the last ends towards which life would be directed, which is the return to death. All of this, this analysis has permitted us, I do not say to define, but to glimpse.

It is indeed in the measure that it has also permitted us to follow on its journeyings the accomplishment of these desires.

This human desire in its profound, internal relationships to the desire of the other, had always been glimpsed, and you only need to refer to the first chapter of Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, to rediscover the ways in which already a deep enough reflection would permit us to engage in this research.

The novelty that Freud introduces, the originality, the new phenomenon which allows us to throw such an essential light on the nature of desire, is in so far as over against the path that Hegel takes in his first approach to desire, which of course is far from being uniquely a deductive approach as it is thought to be from outside, but which is a grasp of desire through the intermediary of the relationships of self-consciousness with the constitution of the self-consciousness in the other, and the interrogation, the question which arises: how can there be introduced through this intermediary the dialectic of life itself? Which assuredly in Hegel can only be transmitted by a sort of leap which he calls synthesis in this instance.

The Freudian experience shows us another way, and very curiously, very remarkably also, by the way that desire appears as being very profoundly linked to this relationship to the other as such, and presenting itself nevertheless as an unconscious desire.

This is the reason why it is important to put oneself on the level of what was in the experience of Freud himself, this approach to unconscious desire.

Undoubtedly, this is something that we must depict for ourselves, from the first moments at which Freud encountered this experience. We must portray it for ourselves in its character as a surprising novelty, I would not say of intuition, but rather of divination of something which already is portrayed in a human experience, that of Freud, as something which appears as the apprehension of something which is beyond a mask.

We are able, now that psychoanalysis is established, that it has developed into such a widespread and such a mobile discourse, to portray it for ourselves, but we portray rather badly, what the import was of what Freud introduced when he began to read in the symptoms of his patients, in his own dreams, and when he began to introduce us to this notion of unconscious desire, this is precisely moreover what we are lacking in order to appreciate at their just value the interpretations that are presented in Freud. We are always very astonished by the character which very often appears to us in the light of what we allow ourselves by way of interpretation, and I would say in the light of what we can, and cannot any longer allow in it, as being the extraordinarily interventionist character of Freud's interpretations. One could even add, up to a certain point as the inexact character of his interpretations. Have I not pointed out to you a thousand times in connection with Dora's case for example, in connection with his intervention or his interventions in the analysis of a female homosexual whom we spoke about at length here, the degree to which Freud's interpretations, and Freud himself recognises it, were as it were linked precisely to his incomplete knowledge of the psychology, for example, of homosexuals in general. The degree to which this inexact interpretation, the degree to which this interpretation linked to an insufficient knowledge that Freud had at that moment of the psychology, especially of homosexuals, but also of hysterics, is something which ensures that for us Freud's interpretations in more than one case, present themselves with a character which is at once too directive, and almost forced, with a precipitous character which in fact gives to this term of inexact interpretation (*interprétation à côté*), its full value.

Nevertheless it is certain that these interpretations at that time were what undoubtedly appeared as the interpretation needing to be made up to a certain point, the efficacious interpretation for the resolution of the symptom. What does that mean?

Obviously this poses a problem for us which, in order to clear the ground, we must call to mind that when Freud made interpretations of this order, he found himself before a situation which is completely different from the present situation. It must be literally realised that everything which, in a verdict-type interpretation, which leaves the lips of the analyst in so far as there is properly speaking interpretation, this verdict, what is said and proposed, given as being true, in this instance takes on its value from what is not said. I mean against what background of the unsaid is the interpretation proposed?

At the time when Freud made his interpretations to Dora, when he told her for example that she loved Mr. K, that when all was said and done, he indicated to her without ambiguity that it was with him that normally she should remake her life, there was there something which surprises us, all the more because of course there could be no question of it for the best of reasons, namely that when all is said and done Dora wants to have absolutely nothing to do with it. Nevertheless an interpretation of this order at the moment that Freud made it, is presented against a background of something which, on the part of the subject, of

the patient, of Dora, did not involve any sort of assumption that Freud was there to rectify, as one might say, her understanding of the world, to ensure that something in her should be brought to maturity in her relationship to the object. There was nothing yet of what one could call in this instance a sort of cultural ambiance of something which ensures that the subject expects something quite different from the lips of the analyst, that in reality Dora does not know what she is to expect, she is led by the hand and Freud says to her: "Speak!", and there is nothing else appearing in a way on the horizon, from an experience directed in this way, unless it is implicitly just by the fact that she is told to speak, that in fact there must really be something else in operation, which is of the order of the truth. The situation is far from being similar for us, when the subject already comes as one might say to analysis with the notion that the maturation of the personality, of the instincts, of object relations, is something which is already organised, normated, of which the analyst represents in a way the measure. He is in possession of ways and of secrets of some sort which already appear as a network of relationships, if not all known to the subject, whose major lines at least come to him at least in this notion that he has major lines, that a progress should be accomplished, that the arrests in his development are something which can be conceptualised, in short that a whole background, a whole implication concerning the normation of his person, of his instincts - you can make this embrace whatever you wish - implies that the analyst when he intervenes, intervenes in the position as they say, of judgement, of sanction. There is a still more precise word which we will indicate later.

This certainly gives quite a different import to his interpretation. But to grasp properly what is in question when I talk to you about the unconscious desire of the Freudian discovery, we must go back to those fresh times where nothing was implied about the interpretation of the analyst, unless it was this detection in the immediate behind something which appeared paradoxically as something absolutely closed, of something which is beyond, and here everyone waffles on about meaning. I do not believe that the term meaning is anything else here than a type of weakening of what was in question at the beginning.

The term desire, in so far as it may be able to tie together, to assemble [what is] identical to the subject, gives all its import to what is encountered there in this first apprehension of analytic experience, and it is to this that we should go back if we are to try to gather together both the point at which we are at, and that which signifies essentially, not alone our experience, but its possibilities; I mean, that which makes it possible. It is also what should protect us as I might say on this occasion, from sliding down this slope, into this bias, I would almost say, into this trap in which we are ourselves implicated with the patient whom we introduce into an experiment full of presuppositions, to induce him to take a path which would depend in a way on a certain number of questions being begged, I mean on the idea that when all is said and done a final solution to his condition may be given which would permit him at the end of the day to become, let us say the word, entirely identical to some object or other.

Let us come back therefore to this problematical character of desire as it presents itself in analytic experience, namely in the symptom, whatever symptom it may be.

I am talking here about symptom in its most general sense, as much the morbid symptom as a dream, or whatever else may be analysable. What I call symptom, is what is analysable.

The symptom presents itself, let us say, in a masked way, presents itself under a paradoxical form: the pain of the first hysterics that Freud analyses, here is something which appears first of all in a fashion that is quite closed in appearance, and something which Freud little by little, thanks to a sort of patience which may really here be inspired by a sort of bloodhound instinct, refers back to as something which is the prolonged presence of this patient to her sick father, and the occurrence while she was caring for her father, of something else which he glimpses first of all in a sort of fog, namely the desire which was able to connect her at that moment to one of her childhood friend of whom she hoped, let us say, to make a husband, then afterwards to something which appears also in a badly clarified form, namely to her relationships with her two brothers-in-law, namely with two persons who have respectively married two of her sisters, and whom the analysis allows us to glimpse that in different forms, they represented something important for her here: one was detested for some humiliation or other, some vulgarity, some piece of male boorishness; the other on the contrary who seems to have, let us say, completely seduced her. It seems in fact that the symptom was precipitated around a certain number of encounters, and from a sort of oblique meditation about the very successful relationships, of this brother-in-law with one of her younger sisters.

I take this up to fix your ideas in a sort of example.

It is clear that at this time we are at a kind of primitive epoch of analytical experience, and that we now feel after all the experiments that have been carried out subsequently, that the fact of saying, as Freud did not fail to say to the patient, that she was for example purely, in the the last case, purely and simply in love with her brother-in-law, and that it is around this repressed desire that the symptom had crystallized, namely on this occasion the pain in the leg. We sense of course, we know, that in a hysteric this has something just as forced as to have told Dora that she was in love with Mr. K.

What we see when we approach an observation like this one, is that we put our finger on, and Freud expresses the view that I have proposed to you above, there is no need to overthrow Freud's observation to reach it, because without Freud formulating the diagnosis in this way, without him discerning it, he gives all its elements in the clearest fashion, I would say up to a certain point the composition of his case-study allows it to appear, beyond the words that he articulates in his paragraphs, in a fashion still infinitely more convincing than all he says, because what is he going to highlight? He is going precisely to highlight in connection with this experience of Elizabeth von R, that which according to his statement and his experience, links in many cases the appearance of hysterical symptoms to this experience so difficult in itself, of being totally devoted to helping a sick person, to playing the role of nurse, and still more to the importance that this function takes on when the role of nurse is assumed by a subject *vis-à-vis* one of her relatives, namely where even more because all the laws of affection, of the passion which links the carer to the cared, the subject finds herself in the position of having to satisfy more than on any other occasion, that which can be designated there with the fullest possible accent, as demand.

The total submission, the abnegation even, of the subject with respect to the demand which is imposed on her, is really given by Freud as one of the essential conditions of the situation in so far as in this instance it turns out to be hysterogenic.

This is all the more important because in this particular hysteric, as opposed to others whom he also gives us as examples, the personal as well as the familial antecedents in this

sense are extraordinarily evasive, unemphasised, and that in consequence the term here of hysterogenic situation takes all its weight. Besides Freud fully indicates it.

On the other hand, the thing which we can see correlatively to this condition, to which the term, which I isolate here in the middle one of these three formulae: demand-function, we will say that it is in function of this basic position that the something that is in question, and that Freud's only mistake as one might say is, drawn along in a way by the necessities of language, to orient in a premature fashion, to put the subject, to implicate the subject in too definite a fashion in this situation of desire. What is in question, is above all essentially the interest taken by the subject in a situation of desire, it is an interest which is taken, we cannot say since she is a hysteric, and now that we know what a hysteric is, we cannot say completely, from what angle she takes it, because moreover to say already from what angle she takes it, is already to imply in a relationship that one might say is all of a piece., that she is interested in her brother-in-law from the point of view of her sister, or in her sister from the point of view of her brother-in-law. The fact is precisely that we now know that what can subsist in a fashion correlative to the identification of the hysteric, is double here. Let us say that she is interested, that she is implicated, in the situation of desire, and this indeed is what is essentially represented here by a symptom, which reintroduces the notion of mask.

The notion of mask, namely that this desire in this ambiguous form which precisely does not allow us to orient the subject with respect to this or that object of the situation, is the interest of the subject in the situation as such, namely in the relationship of desire, which is expressed by this something which appears, namely what I call the element of mask of the symptom, and at least it is the case that in Freud's observation, Freud who informs us and who says in this connection that the symptom speaks in the session, the Id which I am always telling you about speaks, it is there from the first articulations of Freud, expressed in the text. Later on he said that the stomach rumblings of his patients came to make themselves heard and to speak in the session, and had the signification of words.

But here what he tells us, is that in the session itself the pains in so far as they reappear, as they become sharper, as they become more or less intolerable during the session itself, form part of the discourse of the subject, that he measures by the tone, by the modulation of his subjects, the degree of weight, of importance, of revelatory value of what the subject is in the course of avowing, of expressing, in the session, the track and the direction of this track, and the centripetal direction, the progress in fact of the analysis is measured by Freud in the very modulation, in the very intensity of the fashion that the subject professes during the session a greater or lesser intensification of her symptom.

I would say therefore that we find ourselves here - and I took this example, I could just as well have taken others, I could just as well take the example of a dream - before something which allows us to centre where the problem of the symptom and of unconscious desire lies, of the link of the desire itself, in so far as the desire itself remains a question mark, an X, an enigma, to the symptom with which it clothes itself, namely with the mask, to permit us in fact to formulate the following: we are told that the symptom *qua* unconscious is in short something which in itself speaks up to a certain point, of which one can read, with Freud, and with Freud from the beginning, that it articulates itself. The symptom is therefore something which goes in the direction of the recognition of desire, but this symptom in so far as it is there to make this desire recognised, before Freud arrived, and therefore after him, the whole crowd of his disciples, the analysts. It is a recognition which tends to come to light, which seeks to know, but which precisely because it comes to birth, only manifests itself by

the creation of what we have called the mask, namely of something closed; this recognition of desire, is a recognition by no one, which is aimed at no one, because up to the moment when its key begins to be learned, no one is able to read it. It is essentially a recognition which presents itself under a form closed to the other. A recognition of desire therefore, but a recognition by no one.

And on the other hand, if it is desire for recognition, in so far as it is desire for recognition, it is something other than desire. Besides, this is what we are clearly told: this desire is a repressed desire. This is the reason why our intervention adds something more than a simple reading. This desire, is a desire which the subject excludes in so far as the subject wishes to make it recognised as a desire for recognition. It is perhaps a desire, but in the last analysis a desire for nothing. It is a desire which is not there, it is a desire which is rejected, it is a desire which is excluded.

It is this double character of unconscious desire which, by identifying it with its mask, makes of it something other than anything whatsoever that is directed towards an object. This is what we should never forget, and this is what permits us literally to read the meaning of what is presented to us as being the analytic dimension of the mapping out of the most essential discoveries, when Freud speaks to us of this debasement, of this *Erniedrigung*, of love-life which belongs to the depths of the Oedipus complex, when he talks to us of the desire of the mother as being at the source of this for certain subjects, those precisely of whom he says that they have not abandoned the incestuous object, namely the mother, I mean that they have not abandoned it sufficiently, because in the last analysis what we learn, is that the subject never completely abandons it.

Of course there must be something which corresponds to this greater or lesser abandonment, and we call it the diagnostic fixation (*diagnostico-fixation*) to the mother. It is the case where Freud presents us with the dissociation of love and desire. These are the subjects who are unable, Freud tells us, to envisage approaching a woman, in so far as she enjoys for them her full status of a lovable person, of a human being, of a being in the full, completed sense that this being has, as they say, who can both give, and give herself. In this case there is no desire, therefore, in so far as the object is there, we are told, which means of course that it is there under a mask, because it is not to the mother that this desire is addressed, it is to the woman, we are told, who succeeds her, who takes her place, and then indeed there is no longer desire.

And on the other hand, Freud tells us, this subject will find desire, where? With prostitutes. And what does that mean? Here of course when we are at this kind of first exploration of the darkness surrounding the mysteries of desire, we say: it is in so far precisely as it is completely the opposite of the mother.

Is that fully satisfactory, because it is precisely the opposite of the mother that he can subordinate it.(?) We have since made enough progress in our knowledge of images, phantasies of the unconscious, and their characteristics, to know that what the subject is going to look for in prostitutes on this occasion, is nothing other than what Roman antiquity showed us well and truly sculptured and represented at the door of brothels, namely the phallus, the phallus in so far as it is precisely that which dwells in the prostitute.

We know now that what the subject is going to search for in the prostitute, is the phallus of all the other men, it is the phallus as such, it is the anonymous phallus. To be explicit it is also, something which is under an enigmatic form, a mask, something

problematical, something which links desire with a privileged object, with something which is here in a certain relationship in the sense that we have only too well learned to see the whole importance of the phallic phase, of its defiles through which subjective experience must pass, in order that the subject may rejoin his natural desire.

In short, we find ourselves, in connection with what we call in this instance desire of the mother, which is here a sort of label, of symbolic designation of something that we verify in the facts, namely the correlative and broken putting forward of the object of desire in two irreconcilable halves, and which on occasion and even in our interpretation, can propose itself as being its object, namely the substitutive object, the woman in so far as she is the inheritor of the function of the mother, finding herself dispossessed, frustrated of the element of desire, the element of desire being itself linked to something other which is extraordinarily problematical, and which presents itself also with a character of mask and of mark, with a character let us say the word, of signifier, as if precisely we were to find ourselves, once it is a question of unconscious desire, in the presence of a necessary mechanism, of a necessary *Spaltung* which brings it about that the desire which we knew for a long time, and which we presumed to be alienated in a quite special relationship to the other, appears here as marked not only by the necessity of this going through the other as such (*ce truchement à l'autre comme tel*), but of going through the other by means of the mark of a special signifier, of an elective signifier which is found here to be the necessary way to which, as one might say, the advance of the vital force of desire must adhere on this occasion, and the problematical character in this instance of this particular signifier, the phallus. It is here that there is the question, it is here that we should pause, here is what is proposed in all sorts of difficulties introduced for us by the conception, the very fact of being able to conceive how it happens that we encounter on the path of what is called genital maturation, this obstacle which is not simply an obstacle, which is an essential defile which ensures that it is through the mediation of a certain position taken up with respect to the phallus, by the woman *qua* lack, by the man *qua* threatened, that what presents itself as being let us say the most successful outcome must necessarily be realized.

Therefore what we see here, is that in intervening, in naming something, we always do something more, whatever we do, whatever we think we are doing, that in interpreting, the word that I wanted to give you above, the precise word that I called authorised, sanctioned, permit above, is to homologize. We identify the same with the same; we say: "That's it"; we substitute for this person to whom the symptom is addressed in so far as it is there on the way to the recognition of desire, we still fail to see also up to a certain degree the desire which wants to make itself recognised, to the extent that to a certain degree we still assign it its object, since it is not of an object that it is desire, but it is desire of this lack which in the other, designates another desire.

This introduces us to the second chapter, if you like, to a second line of what I proposed to you here in these three formulae, namely to the chapter on demand.

I think that the fashion in which I approach these things and the fashion in which I take them up again, I mean in which I try to articulate for you the originality of the desire that we are dealing with at every moment of analysis, is not in the control that we can have of it in the name of a more or less theoretical idea about the way everyone matures. I think that you should begin to understand that if I talk about the agency of the word, or of the letter in the unconscious, it is certainly not to eliminate this something irreducible, unformulatable, not to prefer the method to the discovery that we can make with it, which is desire. I simply make

this remark which up to now the philosophers do not seem to have taken into account; I say it in connection with a remark which someone who was very badly inspired on that occasion took it on himself to make recently about the fact that certain psychoanalysts, as if there were a whole lot of them in this instance, gave too much importance to language, in view of this famous unformulated which, I do not know why, certain philosophers have come to value as being their personal property.

I say that contrary to this formula which consisted in the person whom I qualify on this occasion as being very badly inspired, which is the least I might say about him, and which made someone say that the formula was not perhaps unformulatable, I would answer him with the following, which he would be better off paying attention to than trying to involve everyone in these internal squabbles. It is in a perspective which is quite the opposite, it is not a reason why something is not articulatable, namely desire, for it not to be articulated, I mean in itself, desire is articulated in so far as it is linked to the presence of the signifier in man, and this does not mean for all that, precisely because it is a question essentially of this link with the signifier, it is not a reason, far from it, it is even precisely the reason why in a particular case it is never fully articulatable.

Let us come back now to this second chapter which is that of the demand.

Here we are dealing with the articulated which is articulatable, with what is actually articulated. It is indeed the link between desire and demand that is in question for the moment, and we will not arrive today at the end of this discourse, but the next time I want to show you how between these two terms of desire and demand, and the paradoxes which we have designated above in this desire as being essentially masked desire, to show you how this is certainly and necessarily articulated in the demand, and that it is precisely because we cannot approach it except by way of some demand, that once the patient approaches us and comes to us, it is to ask something of us, and we already go an enormously long way in terms of engaging with, of clarifying the situation by saying to him simply: "I'm listening."

So we must now start again with what we can call the premises of the demand, with what makes demand after demand, with what makes the situation of the demand, and the fashion in which it meshes into an individual life.

Here we must go back to what establishes it at the beginning. I am not going to go over again the dialectic of ".....". Demand is linked first and foremost to this something which is in the very premises of language, namely in the existence of an appeal which is at once the source of presence and the term which permits it to be rejected, the game of presence and absence, and which ensures from the first articulation through which the object is summoned, the something because of which it is already more than an object, a symbol, that it becomes what desire for presence makes of it, not as is said, an object. The primary dialectic is not that of the partial object of the mother as breast, or of the mother as food, or of the mother as total object as if it were a question of a kind of conquest made little by little: the child at the breast perceives that the breast extends into an armpit, into a neck and on to hair: the object that is in question, is the symbolic bracketing of this presence within which there is the sum of all the objects that it can bring, which means that this symbolic bracketing is right away more precious than any good, and that any one of the goods that it contains, cannot in itself and all by itself satisfy what is the appeal for presence, that as I already expressed for you on several occasions, none of these good things in particular can serve, and only serves in this instance, to crush as one might say the source of this appeal, namely that

the child feeds himself perhaps and begins to sleep. At that moment obviously it is no longer a question of an appeal, all the relationships to any so-called partial object whatsoever, within the maternal presence, are here only substitutes, crushings of desire, not satisfactions as such, and this, namely the primordial character of this symbolisation of the object here in so far as it is object of an appeal, is here and now marked by the fact that we ourselves have also read, but as always, we do not know how to draw to their ultimate conclusions the consequences of what we read, that here and now in the object, in the object of which there is question, in the object of presence, the dimension of the mask appears.

What does our good friend, Mr. Spitz have to say, if it is not that? It is that first of all what is recognised is this kind of direct frontal, framework, this mask, and the character of beyond which characterises this presence, *qua* symbolised, namely of a seeking beyond for this presence, in so far as it is masked, as it is symptomatised, symbolised; it is this beyond which the child designates to us in his behaviour, that he has its dimensions, because it is sufficient. I already spoke in another connection of the very particular reaction of the child before the mask, I mean the game with the child, as I told you already: the joy that the fact of taking off the mask gives him, and this particularly anxious character of what happens if underneath the mask, another mask appears, because then he does not laugh any longer. But there is no need even to give oneself over to these sort of little exercises, it is enough to observe a child to perceive that before the word, the communication, the first communication, you would have to have never simply observed a child in his development in the first months, in order not to perceive, that the first communication *qua* true communication, namely communication with the beyond of what you are before him as symbolised presence, is laughter. Before any word, the child laughs. He laughs when the laugh is of course linked to smiling and to relaxation, and the whole physiological mechanism of laughter is always linked to a certain satisfaction. People have spoken about this outline of a smile of the satiated child, but the child in so far as he laughs at you, laughs at you precisely in a certain relationship of course with his satisfaction of desire, but above and beyond this satisfaction, in so far as it is still present and alert, and that it is to this beyond of this presence in so far as it is capable of satisfying him, that it contains in itself something that accords with his desire, that laughter appears and that the familiar presence, the presence that he is used to and knows to be able to satisfy his desires in all their diversity, is there summoned, apprehended, recognised in this modality which is so specific, so special as are in the infant before speech, these first laughs in the presence of certain presences which look after him, which nourish him, which respond to him.

Laughter corresponds also moreover to all these maternal games which are the first exercises in which modulation, articulation as such are put before him. Laughter, in so far as precisely it is linked to what I called during all the first articulations of this year's lectures, the witticism, is beyond, beyond the immediate, beyond any demand. Desire in so far as it is properly speaking linked to a signifier, in this instance the signifier of presence, it is to the beyond of this presence to the subject behind it that the first laughs are addressed, and we find there from that moment on, from the origin as one might say, the root of identification, because identification in so far as it will successively occur in the course of the development of the child with one or other person, with the mother first of all, with the father afterwards, and I am not saying that this step exhausts the question, but that we find here a root of it, identification is very exactly the correlative of this laughter, because the opposite of laughter of course is not tears. Tears express colic, express need, tears are not a communication, tears are an expression. But laughter, in so far as I am forced to articulate why, is a communication.

On the contrary, what corresponds to the opposite of laughter? In so far as laughter affirms, communicates, is addressed to the one who beyond this signified presence, is the mainspring, the source of the pleasure, the identification? It is the contrary, there is no more laughter, one is as serious as a pope or as a daddy, and one lets nothing on because the one who is there and who presents you with a certain wooden expression, because no doubt it is not the time to laugh, it is not the time to laugh because at this particular time needs are not to be satisfied, desire as they say, is modelled on the one who holds the power of satisfying it, who opposes the resistance of reality, as they say, which is perhaps not quite what they say it is, but which assuredly appears here in a certain form, and to be explicit, here and now in this dialectic of demand. We see according to my old schema, being produced what is in question when the demand comes here to its right destination, namely beyond the mask, encounters here, not satisfaction, but the message of this presence, in the fashion in which the subject realises that he really has before him the source of all good, here laughter certainly explodes, and in this case the process does not need either to be continued here any longer.

But it may have to be continued further on, because the wooden expression shows that the demand has been refused, and then as I have told you, what is at the origin of this need and desire, appears here in a transformed form, the wooden expression transfers itself in the circuit to come here; moreover to a place where it is not for nothing that it is there that we encounter the image of the other, and that there is given here this transformation of demand which is called the ego ideal, while, in fact on the signifying line, the source, the place is beginning to appear of what is called prohibition and super ego, of what as such articulates itself as coming from the other.

All the difficulties that analytic theory always has to reconcile the existence, the co-existence, the co-dimensionality of the ego ideal and the super ego; but they undoubtedly correspond to different formations and productions. It would be enough to make the essential distinction that there is between need and the word which demands it, to understand how these two products can be at once co-dimensional and different. It is on the line of signifying articulation, namely of prohibition, that the super ego is formulated, even in its most primitive forms, while it is in the line of the transformation of desire in so far as desire is always linked to a certain mask, that the ego ideal is produced.

In other words, the link in demand of satisfaction with the mask, of their opposition which ensures that the mask is constituted in dissatisfaction, and through the intermediary of the demand which refuses, this is the point to which I wished to lead you today. But then what would result from it? It is that there would be in fact as many masks as there are forms of dissatisfaction.

Yes, this indeed is how things appear, and you will be able to guide yourself on this with certitude, that in the psychological dimension which unfolds, which is deployed starting from frustration which is so alive in certain subjects, you will be able to notice in their very declarations, this sort of relationship between dissatisfaction and the mask, which will mean that up to a certain degree, there are as many masks as dissatisfactions. This plurality of relationships of the subject to the other, according to the diversity of his dissatisfactions, is indeed here something which poses a problem, and precisely one of which one can say that up to a certain point, it will make of every personality a type of moving mosaic of identifications, and I would say that it is precisely in the intervention of the third dimension which I will leave to one side for today, which I reserve for the next time, that which is not introduced as people say it is, by genital maturation, nor the gift, nor oblativity, nor other

moralising banalities which are quite secondary characteristics of the question, but by something of which we will say that there intervenes in fact from a certain moment, a desire; a desire which is not need, but which is Eros, a desire which is not autoerotic, but as they say, allo-erotic, because they are exactly ways of saying the same thing.

Only it is not enough to say that, because in truth this genital maturity is not enough to bring about the subjective modifications which are going to be decisive modifications, which are going to allow us to grasp the link between desire and the mask. We will see the next time this characteristic, this essential condition which links to a prevailing, privileged signifier, which we call not by chance, but because concretely it is this signifier, namely the phallus, this level, and we will see paradoxically that it is precisely at this level that there is realised both this something which allows the subject to rediscover himself as one through the diversity of these masks, but which on the other hand makes him fundamentally divided, fundamentally marked by an essential *Spaltung* between what in him is desire, and what is mask.

Seminar 20: Wednesday 23 April 1958

It is a matter of continuing to deepen this distinction between desire and demand, which we consider to be so essential for the proper conduct of an analysis, and in the absence of which we believe it slides inevitably around a practical speculation based on the terms of frustration on the one hand and of gratification on the other hand, which in our eyes constitute a veritable deviation from its path.

It is a matter then of continuing in the direction of something to which we have already given a name: the distance between desire and demand. It is not some sort of *Spaltung*, it is not a term that I use by chance, a term which was, if not introduced, at least strongly accentuated in Freud's very last essay, the one in the course of which as one might say, the pen fell from his hand, because it was simply snatched from him by death.

This *Ich-spaltung* as a real point of convergence towards which Freud's final meditation, as one might say led him and brought him back, is something of which we have no longer any more than a fragment, some pages which are in Volume 17 of the *Gesammelte Werke*.

Delusion, to stimulate in you the presence in Freud's mind of the question that it raises. You will also see there with what force he accentuates that the synthetic function of the ego is far from being the whole story when it is a question of the psychoanalytic *Ich*.

The last time then, to take up again what we have said, because I believe that we will not be able to progress here except by taking three steps forward and two back, and to recommence and each time to gain a little step, and I am going to try to recall all the same fairly quickly what I insisted on the last time in speaking on the one hand about desire and on the other hand about demand, namely in terms of what there is in desire of what I called its character of being bound to, of being inseparable from the mask, I illustrated it for you very especially by recalling the following: that it is an over-simplification to distinguish the symptom as being a simple underlay to something external.

I spoke to you about the patient Elizabeth von R, about whom I told you in fact that simply by reading Freud's text, one could say, and Freud says it, articulates it, that her pain high up on her right thigh, is the desire of her father, and the desire of the friend of her youth, that it is every time that she evokes in the history of her illness, the moment that she was entirely subjected to the desire of her father, to the demand of her father, and when scarcely on the margin there was being exercised this attraction of the desire of the friend of her youth which she reproached herself for taking into consideration; and that the pain in her left thigh, is the desire of her two brothers-in-law, in so far as one represents the good masculine desire, the one who had married her younger sister, and the other the bad who besides has been considered by all of these women, as a very bad man.

Beyond this remark, namely of what must be considered before understanding what our interpretation of desire means, the fact is that in the symptom, and that is what conversion means, desire is identical with the somatic manifestation which is its front just as it is its back.

On the other hand I introduced, because also if we have advanced, it is because things are only introduced in a problematical form, this problematic of desire in so far as analysis shows it to us as determined by an act of signification; but that desire should be determined by an act of signification, does not at all give us its meaning in any complete sense. It may be that desire is a by-product, if I can express myself in this way, of this act of signification. In one of the articles which I quoted as being constitutive of the veritable introduction to the question of perversion, in so far as it also appears as a symptom, and not just as a pure and simple manifestation of an unconscious desire, representing for us the moment when the authors perceive that there is just as much *Verdrangung* in a perversion as in a symptom; in one of these articles published in the *International Journal*, Volume 4, "Perversion and Neurosis", there is question of the case of a neurotic subject, and the author dwells on this fact that a subject, after having satisfactorily achieved his first act of intercourse, does not mean that other things will not subsequently happen, but immediately after this first act of intercourse he carries out this mysterious, really unique act: coming home, returning from the house of the lady who has accorded him her favours, he gives himself over this particularly successful exhibition - I think moreover I already alluded to it in one of my seminars - particularly successful in this sense that it is carried out with the maximum of completeness, and on the other hand of security: he takes down his pants and exhibits himself along a railway track, and in the light of a passing train he finds himself thus able to exhibit himself to a whole crowd without, of course, running the slightest risk, and this act is interpreted by the author in the general economy of the neurosis of the subject, in a more or less successful way.

I am not going to develop this side of things, but I am going to pause at something which is the following: that this, for an analyst, is what is called a signifying act, is sure and certain, but what is its signification? What does it mean to say that it even has one?

I repeat that he had just copulated for the first time. What does it mean that he still puts at everyone's disposition, what has now, as it were, become his personal property? What does he mean in a way by showing it? Does he wish by showing it to efface himself behind what he shows, to be no longer anything more than the phallus?

All of this is equally plausible, and even within one single act, one single subjective context, that which appears here to be extremely important and worth accentuating, I would say more than anything else, and that it is well underlined, confirmed by the statements of the patient, by the context of the observation, even by what subsequently happens, that this first coitus was completely satisfying.

What the act in question shows first and foremost, before any other interpretation, is that he has had and has realised his satisfaction; this act indicates what is left over to be desired beyond satisfaction.

I simply recall this little example to fix your ideas on what I mean, on the problematic of desire in so far as it is determined by an act of signification, and in so far as it is distinct from any meaning that can be grasped. I also wish to recall in this connection, and to add it to what I said the last time, that considerations of this kind, those which show the profound coherence, coalescence of desire with the symptom, the mask, with what appears in its manifestation, is something which puts in their place, many useless questions that are always being asked about hysteria, but much more about all sorts of sociological, ethnographical and other facts, where one always sees people getting completely confused about the question.

Let us take an example. There has just appeared an excellent booklet as a number in a small little collection: *L'Homme*, which is published by Plon. It is a book by Michel Leiris on the effect of possession and on the theatrical aspects of possession, something that he develops in terms of his experience among the Ethiopians of Gondar. In reading this excellent volume, one sees how well trance events of an incontestable consistency, go along with, are perfectly married with a certain externally typified, determined, expected, located in advance, known, character of "spirits" who are thought to do away with the subjectivity of the persons who manifest all these singular manifestations, who observe the ceremonies which are called, because this is what is in question in the country we are talking about, and much more, that this is not simply that conventional part which can be noticed, which is manifested, which is reproduced in connection with the manifestation of the incarnation of this or that spirit. It is the disciplined character of these manifestations, and up to a certain point so disciplined, that the subjects perceive it as something which is a training of the spirits, who are nevertheless the ones who are thought to be taking them over. But matters are reversed: these spirits are in fact trained to conduct themselves properly.

The phenomenon of possession, with all that it involves in terms of phenomena powerfully inscribed in the emotions, in a whole passivity in which the subject is entirely possessed throughout the time of the manifestation, is perfectly compatible with this whole richness linked to the insignia of the god, of the spirit, and which create in only a completely artificial way, a sort of problem which our mentality might try to situate as a type of simulation, imitation, or other terms of this kind. The very identity of the desiring manifestation with these forms, is quite tangible there.

The other point, the other term in which there is inscribed this dialectic, this problematic of desire, is that on which on the contrary I insisted the last time, it is this eccentricity of desire with respect to any satisfaction, which allows us to understand what in general is its profound affinity with pain. This is to say that at the limit, that which desire purely and simply approaches, no longer in its developed forms, in its masked forms, but in its pure and simple form, is this pain of existence which represents the other pole, the space we might say of the interior area from which its manifestation appears to us.

At the opposite therefore of this problematic, in describing thus what I call the area of desire, its eccentricity with respect to satisfaction, in describing it thus I do not claim of course to resolve it, it is not an explanation that I am giving here, it is a positioning of the problem, and this indeed is what we have to go further into today.

I recall on the other hand the other element of the diptych, of the opposition which I proposed the last time, it is the one which is linked to the character of the identifying function, the idealizing function in so far as it is found to depend on the dialectic of the demand, in so far as the identification of everything which happens in this register, is based on a certain relationship to the signifier, in the other signifier here which is in general characterized, and in connection with the demand, as being the sign of the presence of the other, and how there is also established there something which must be related to the problem of desire, which is the way in which this sign of presence comes to dominate the satisfactions that this presence brings, the way it comes about that the human being so fundamentally pays with fine words (*se paye de paroles*), in such a widespread, constant fashion, just as much or at least as much in a tangible, very measured proportion compared to the more substantial satisfactions, there is simply recalled the fundamental characteristic which refers to what I have just recalled.

Does that mean moreover that it is only human beings? Here again a supplementary parenthesis to what I said the last time: it is absolutely not just the human being who pays with words.

To a certain degree, we know that certain domestic animals, and it is not false to think this way, have some satisfactions linked to human speech. I do not need to evoke things here, but we do learn some strange things. It seems to have the degree of credibility that one can give to the statements of those who are called, in a more or less appropriate fashion, specialists. I have been told that mink who are kept in captivity for money, namely for the profit that can be gained from their fur, grow sickly and only give fairly mediocre products to the furriers if they are not spoken to. This apparently makes the rearing of mink very onerous and increases its costs.

It would seem therefore that in any case something is manifested here whose problematic we do not have the means of getting any further into either, but which certainly must be linked to the very fact of their being enclosed, because mink in their wild state do not, to all appearances, have the possibility, as far as we know, of encountering this sort of satisfaction.

To be explicit, I would simply like to indicate the relationship, the direction in which we can see in relationship to our problem, the Pavlovian studies of conditioned reflexes. In the last analysis, what are conditioned reflexes?

In their most widespread forms, those which are the most widely experienced, conditioned reflexes are the intervention into a cycle which is more or less predetermined, innate, a cycle of instinctive behaviour. All these little electric signals, these little bells, these little ringings with which one deafens these little animals, to succeed in making them secrete to order their different physiological productions, their gastric juices, are all the same signifiers, and nothing else. They are fabricated by humans. In every case, the experimenters, for whom the world is quite clearly constituted by a certain number of objective relationships, among which those one can justly isolate as properly signifying, constitute a large part of this world.

In addition, moreover, it is with the purpose of showing along what kind of way, of progressive substitution, psychical progress is conceivable, that all these things are constructed and elaborated.

Up to a certain point, one could ask the question why, when all is said and done, this does not amount to teaching these animals who are so well trained a certain type of language. It is not the only thing that deserves to be noticed, it is precisely that the leap is not made, and that when the Pavlovian theory comes to take cognisance of what appears in man in connection with language, he/it (Pavlov or the theory), takes the very correct approach of talking about language, not as the prolongation of the system of significations as it is put into operation in conditioned reflexes, but as a second system of significations, namely of implicitly recognising what is perhaps not fully articulated in the theory, but of recognising that there is something different between one and the other. And what is different, we will say that we can try to define this distinction, this difference in the fact that it must be situated in what we call the relationship to the big Other, in so far as this constitutes the locus of a unitary signifying system, or again we would say that what is lacking in this discourse of signals, is concatenation for the subject who is involved, that is to say for the animal.

When all is said and done, what would formulate it simply, we would announce it in this form of saying that in fact, no matter how far these experiments are taken, what is not found, and perhaps what there is no question of finding, is the law under which these signifiers which are brought into play, are ordered, and which amounts to saying that it is the law which in the long run animals obey.

It is quite clear in fact that there is no trace of a reference to such a law, namely to anything which is beyond a signal, or that from a short chain of signals once established, no sort of legalizing extrapolation, is perceptible in it, and this is indeed why one can say that one never succeeds in establishing the law. I repeat: this is not to say for all that that there is no dimension of the Other with a capital O for the animal. Nothing is effectively articulated within *qua* discourse.

Therefore what we arrive at, if we resume what is in question in the relationship of the subject to the signifier in the other, namely what happens in the dialectic of the demand, is essentially that which characterises the signifier, not as substituted, which is the case in conditioned reflexes, as substituted for the needs of the subject, but the signifier itself as being able to be substituted for itself, as being essentially of a substitutive nature, and it is in this direction that we see the dominance of what is involved, namely the place which it occupies in the Other. What we see pointing in this direction, is what I try to formulate here in different ways as essential to the signifying structure, namely this topographical not to say typographical space, which constitutes precisely the law of its substitution, this numbering of places, these numbered places which give the fundamental structure of a signifying system as such.

It is to the degree that the subject, it is in so far as he senses his presence within a world thus structured in the position of the Other, that this something - it is a fact highlighted by experience - which is called identification, is produced. It is to the degree that in the absence of satisfaction, it is to the subject who can accede to the demand that the subject identifies himself.

I left you the last time, posing the question: Then why is there not the greatest multiplicity of identifications? As many identifications as there are unsatisfied demands? As many identifications as there are others who pose themselves in the presence of the subject as being the one who responds or does not respond to the demand?

The key to this distance, to this *Spaltung* which is here found reflected by the construction of this little schema which I put on the blackboard for you today for the first time, and which constitutes something which we should discover in the three lines which I already repeated for you twice. I think that you have them in your notes, but I can recall them to you namely the line which links the little d of desire on one side, through the intermediary of this relationship of the subject to little o, to the image of o and to e, that is to say the ego; the second line representing precisely the demand, in so far as it goes from demand to identification, passing through the position of the Other with respect to desire, which means that you see here the Other being decomposed in so far as it is beyond it that desire exists, and in passing by way of the signified of the Other which at this level would be placed here, I mean in a first stage of the schema which was the one that I made for you the last time, that is to the fact that it only corresponds to demand, and which precisely, because of something which is what we are searching for in a second moment, is going to be divided in this relationship which is not single, but double, which I moreover already began in other ways, in

two signifying chains: the first which is here when it is alone and single at the level of demand, being here in so far as it is a signifying chain through which demand has to reveal itself. Something else is going to intervene which doubles this signifying relationship, it is this doubling of the signifying relationship, in so far as you can for example, among other things, but naturally not in a univocal fashion, identify it, as has been done up to present, with the response of the mother.

As far as the lower line goes, that is to say as regards what happens in short at the level of demand, at the level where the reply of the mother lays down the law all by itself, namely in fact submits the subject to her arbitrariness, the other line representing the intervention of another agency corresponding to the maternal presence and to the way in which its function makes itself felt beyond the mother, and of course it is not so simple, and if everything in fact was a question of Mammy and Daddy, I can scarcely see how we could account, at least for the facts with which we have to deal.

It is therefore to the question of this *Spaltung* which is purely and simply that which is identical, responsible for this gap between desire and demand, for this discordance, for this divergence which is established between desire and demand, that we are now going to be introduced, and that is why we must once again come back to pose again the question of what a signifier is.

I know that every time we part you ask yourselves: "What, when all is said and done, is he trying to say?" You are right to ask yourselves that, because undoubtedly if it is not said like that, it is not something of any great interest.

Let us take up the question of what a signifier is at the elementary level.

I propose that you should let your thoughts dwell on a certain number of remarks. For example do you not believe that we are touching here something which is at least some example or other, something perhaps in connection with what one could call emergence? If we notice what is specific in the fact, not of a trace, because a trace is a imprint, it is not a signifier, one senses however that there could be a connection, and that in truth what one calls the material of the signifier always participates a little bit in the fleeting character of the trace. This seems to be one of the conditions for the existence of this signifying material. This however is not a signifier, even the footprint of Friday which Robinson Crusoe discovers during his walk around the island, is not a signifier, but on the contrary, if we suppose that he, Robinson, for whatever reason, effaces this trace, there we clearly introduce the dimension of signifier. It is from the moment that one effaces, where it has a meaning to efface it, that the something which is a trace is clearly constituted as signified.

One sees in effect that if here the signifier is a melting pot (*creuset*) in so far as it bears witness to a presence that is past, and that inversely in what is signifying, there is always in the fully developed signifier which the word is, there is always a passage, namely something which is beyond each one of the elements which are articulated, and which are of their nature fleeting, vanishing, that it is the passage from one to the other which constitutes the essential of what we call the signifying chain, and that this passage *qua* vanishing, is this very thing which can be trusted (*qui se fait foi*).

I do not even say signifying articulation. It may be that it is an articulation which remains enigmatic, but that that which sustains it can be trusted; it is also at this level that there emerges what corresponds to what we have first of all designated in the signifier as

testifying to a presence which is past inversely in a real passage which manifests itself, it is something which deepens it, which is beyond and which can be trusted.

In fact there again what we rediscover, is that just as after it is effaced, what remains, if there is a text, namely if this signifier is inscribed among other signifiers, what remains, is the place where it has been effaced, and it is indeed this place also which sustains the transmission, which is this essential thing thanks to which that which succeeds it in the passage takes on the consistency of something that can be trusted.

There we are really only at the level and at the point of emergence, but a point that is essential to grasp: that which ensures that the signifier as such, is something that can be effaced, which leaves nothing more than its place, that is to say that one can no longer find it. The fact is that this property which is essential, and which means that if one can speak about emergence, one cannot speak about development. In reality the signifier contains it in itself. I mean that one of the fundamental dimensions of the signifier, is to be able to cancel itself out. There is a possibility for this which we can in this instance qualify as a mode of the signifier itself, and which is materialised by something very simple and which we all know, and whose originality we cannot allow to be dissimulated by the triviality of usage, it is the bar. Every signifier of any kind is of its nature something which can be barred.

There has been a lot of talk, ever since there are philosophers who think, about the *Aufhebung*, and they have learned to make use of it in a more or less cunning way. This word means both cancellation, and essentially this is what it means: for example I cancel my subscription to a newspaper, or my reservation somewhere; it also means, thanks to an ambiguity of meaning which makes it precious in the German language, to raise to a higher power or situation. It does not seem to me that sufficient attention is paid to the following, that to be able properly speaking to talk about being cancelled, there is only properly speaking only one kind of thing, I would say roughly speaking, which can be, that is a signifier, because to tell the truth, when we cancel anything else, whether it is imaginary or real, it is simply because strictly speaking in doing so, and by that very fact, we not only cancel what is in question, we raise it by a grade, to the qualification of signifier.

There is therefore within the signifier, in its chain and in its manoeuvring, in its manipulation, something which is always capable of stripping it of its function in the line or in the lineage. The bar is a sign of bastardy by stripping it as such, by reason of this properly signifying function, of what we will call general consideration. I mean of that in which in the given of the signifying battery, in so far as it constitutes a certain system of available signs, and in an actual, concrete discourse, the signifier falls out of the function which constitutes its place which I extracted from this consideration or constellation which the signifier institutes by applying itself to the world, by punctuating it, and that from there it falls from consideration into designation, namely that it is marked precisely by the fact that it leaves something to be desired.

I am not playing with words to amuse myself. I simply mean by this use of words, to indicate for you a direction along which we get closer to this link between the signifying manipulation of our object which is that of desire, and its opposition between consideration and *désideration* marked by the bar of the signifier, being here of course only destined to indicate a direction, a beginning.

This of course does not resolve the question of desire, whatever may be the economy to which this conjunction of two terms in the Latin etymology of the word desire in French

lends itself. It remains that it is properly speaking in so far as the signifier presents itself as cancelled, as marked by the bar, that we have properly speaking, what can be called a product of the symbolic function, produced in so far precisely as it is isolated, as it is distinct from the general chain of the signifier and of the law that it institutes. It is only from the moment that it can be barred, that any signifier whatsoever has its proper status, namely that it enters into this dimension which ensures that in principle every signifier, to distinguish here what I mean, comes from the cancelling which is so essential.

The term employed in Freud is in quite funny places where no one seems to have gone to the trouble of locating it. As well as that if all of a sudden it is Freud who uses cancellation, that does not mean it has the same resonance. In principle every signifier can be revoked. So that something results once we have made these remarks which are the following, namely that for everything that is not signifier, namely in particular on this occasion for the real, the bar becomes one of the surest and the shortest modes of its elevation to the dignity of signifier, and this I already pointed out to you in an extremely precise manner in connection with the phantasy of the beaten child when I pointed out to you that in the second stage of the evolution of this phantasy, namely the one that Freud points out as having to be reconstructed, and as having never been perceived, except from an angle and in exceptional cases, this sign which at the first stage was that of the humiliation of the hated brother, namely that he was beaten by the father.

In the second moment, and when it is a question of the subject herself, it becomes on the contrary the sign that she is loved, she, the subject, accedes in fact to the the order of love, to the state of being loved, because she is beaten, which all the same poses us a problem given the change of meaning that this action has taken on in the interval, and this is not properly speaking conceivable except in the case precisely where this same act which, when it is a question of the other, is taken as a punishment and is perceived as such by the subject as the sign that the other is not loved, when it is the subject who becomes its support at a certain given moment of her position with respect to the other, this act takes on its essential value, and through its function as signifier, it is because it is in the measure that in this act the subject herself is found raised to this dignity of signifying subject, that she is caught up at that moment in its positive register, in its inaugural register, it establishes her properly speaking as a subject with whom there can be a question of love.

This is what Freud - we must always come back to Freud's phrases, they are always absolutely lapidary - in "Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes", expresses: "The child who is thus beaten becomes loved, appreciated on the plane of love" (*Das Kind, das da geschlagen - geliebt wird*" GW XIV 26; cf. SE XIX 254). And it is precisely at this moment, namely in this article that I am talking to you about, that Freud introduces the remark which was simply implicit in: "A child is being beaten", namely what I began by an analysis of the text, but which Freud formulates there quite literally, he formulates it absolutely without motivating it, but orienting it with this type of prodigious flair which is his, and which is all that is in question in this dialectic of the recognition of this beyond of desire. He says:

"The peculiar rigidity which struck me so much in the monotonous formula 'a child is being beaten' can probably be interpreted in a special way: the child who is beaten here is because of this fact appreciated." (*ibid.*)

In this study he is dealing with little girls, and what Freud recognises by this *Starrheit*, the word is very difficult to translate in French because it has an ambiguous meaning in German, it means both fixed in the sense of a fixed stare, and rigid. It is not absolutely related, even though what we have here is a contamination of two meanings, they have an analogy in history, and this is what is in question, it is a question for us of seeing indicated here this something whose place I already marked for you as a knot which it is now a matter of untying, namely this relationship that there is between the subject as such, the phallus here as problematical object, and the essentially signifying function of the bar, in so far as it comes into play in the phantasy of the beaten child.

For this it is not sufficient for us to be content with this clitoris which in so many respects, leaves much to be desired. It is a matter of seeing why it is in a certain position, is so ambiguous that in the long run, if Freud recognises it in what is beaten, in this instance the fact is that the subject on the contrary does not recognise it as such. It is a question of the phallus in so far as it occupies a certain place in the economy of the development of the subject, in so far as it is the indispensable support for this subjective construction, in as much as it pivots around the castration complex and the *Penisneid*, and it is now a matter of seeing how there comes into play in this relationship, this hold, this grip of the signifier on the subject, or inversely of what is meant by this signifying structure whose essential terms I have recalled here.

For this it is appropriate for us to dwell for a moment on what in the last analysis is the mode under which the phallus can be considered. Why do we talk about the phallus, and not purely and simply about the penis? Why moreover do we effectively see it as something different to the mode in which we make the phallus intervene? The fashion in which the penis succeeds in supplying for it in a more or less satisfactory fashion, both for the masculine subject and for the feminine subject, is a different matter. Also in what measure is the clitoris on this occasion involved in what we can call the economic functions of the phallus?

Let us look at what the phallus, the *phallos*, originally is. The place where we see it attested for the first time in the texts, is namely in Greek antiquity, where, if we go to look for the texts where they are, in different parts of Aristophanes, of Herodotus, etc., we see first of all that the phallus is in no way identical to the organ as an appurtenance of the body, a prolongation, a member, a functional organ as one might say; the *phallos*, this is the fashion which dominates by far, is employed in connection with a simulacrum, with an *insignium*, whatever the mode in which it is presented, whether it is a question of a raised staff from which the virile organs are appended, or a question of an imitation of the virile organ, whether it is a question of a piece of wood, of a piece of leather, or of a series of varieties in which it is presented, it is something which is a substitutive object and at the same time it has the property that this substitution is in a way very different from substitution in the sense we have just heard about it, from sign substitution. One could say that almost and up to including the usage of this substitution, it has all the characters of a real substitute, this type of object that we call on in good stories, and always with more or less of a smile, which treat of the most singular objects as one might say, by the remarkable character that there is in human industry. It is all the same something which we cannot but take into account as regards its existence and its very possibility.

The *lisbos* in Greek is often confused with the *phallos*. In short, what is striking in the very special function of this object which, for the ancients, beyond any doubt, played the role in the mysteries, of the object around which as one might say, there was placed, and also it

seems, to such a point that initiation lifted the last veils, namely of an object which for the revelation of meaning, was considered as a final significant character.

Does not all of this put us on the right path of what is in question, namely that in short this prevalent economic role of the phallus as such, namely as that which represents in fact desire in its most manifest form?

I would oppose it term by term to what I said about the signifier which is essentially hollow, that it is fully introduced into the world. Inversely what is manifested in the phallus is that which in life is manifested in the purest fashion as tumescence, as growth, and we really feel the image of the phallus at the very basis of all the terms we use, which means for example that in French it is under the form of *pulsion* that the German term *Trieb* was able to be translated, this privileged object, as one might say, of the world of life, which moreover in its Greek appellation is linked to everything which is of the order of flux, of sap, even of luck itself, because it seems that there is the same root in and in *phallos*. It seems therefore that things are so arranged that the most manifest, the most manifested point of desire in its vital appearances, is precisely what finds itself unable to enter into the arena of the signifier, except as one might say by unleashing the bar in it. Everything that is of the order of intrusion, of the vital surge as such, will find itself, in the measure that it comes to a point here, maximised in this form or in this image, will be something - this is what experience shows us, all we are doing here is reading it - which inaugurates as such everything which presents itself, either as connotation of an absence where it does not have to be, because it is not, namely that which makes the human being who does not have the phallus be considered as castrated, and inversely which for the one who has something which can claim to resemble it, as menaced by castration.

Effectively because I am alluding to the ancient mysteries, it is quite striking to see that on the murals, the rare frescoes that we have conserved in a remarkable integrity, those of the Villa of Mysteries at Pompeii, it is very precisely just beside the place where there appears the unveiling of the phallus that there arise represented with a very impressive size, these life size personages, these sort of demons that we can identify through a certain number of overlaps. There is one on a vase in the Louvre, and in some other places. These demons, winged, booted, not helmeted, but almost, and in any case armed with a *flagellum*, are beginning to apply the ritual punishment to one of the aspirants, the initiates who are in the image, namely give rise to the phantasy of flagellation in its most direct form, in the most immediate connection with the unveiling of the phallus.

It is also quite clear, that by all sorts of tests, of attestations which are brought to us by an experience which is not proven, and which does not demand any kind of investigation into the depths of the mysteries, that in the ancients cults, it is in the very measure that one approaches the cult, namely the signifying manifestation of the fruitful potency of the great goddess, that everything which refers to the phallus is the object of amputations, of marks of castration, or of more and more accentuated prohibitions, the eunuch character of the priests of the great goddess, the Syrian goddess, being one of the most recognised, established things in all sorts of texts.

It is in so far therefore as the phallus finds itself situated, always covered by something which is castration, the bar put on its accession to the signifying domain, namely on its place in the Other with a capital O, something by which in development, castration is introduced. It is never - observe it directly in the case histories - by way of the prohibition on

masturbation for example. If you read the case of little Hans, you will see that the first prohibitions have no effect on him. If you read the story of André Gide, you will see that his parents struggled for all his early years to stop him doing it, and that Professor Brouhardel, showing him the big needles and the big knives that he had, because it was already the fashion among doctors to surround themselves with impressive implements, promised him that if he began again, it would be cut off. And the young Gide reports very clearly that he did not believe for a single instant in such a threat, because in fact it seemed to him to be exaggerated, in other words, nothing other than the episodic manifestation of the phantasies of Professor Brouhardel himself.

This is not what is in question at all. As the texts and the case studies also indicated to us, it is in so far as the one being in the world, after all on the plane of reality, who would have the least reason to be presumed to be castrated, namely the one who had the occasion to be, that is the mother, it is nevertheless from this angle, namely at the level of the Other, at the place where castration manifests itself in the Other, where it is the desire of the other which is marked by the signifying bar of capital Ø here, it is along this path essentially that for men just as for women, there is introduced the specific thing which functions as complex of castration. When we spoke about the Oedipus complex at the beginning of the last trimestre, I stressed this by putting it in the form that first and foremost the first person to be castrated in the intra-subjective dialectic, is the mother. It is there that the position of castration is first encountered, it is because of this, that in accordance with destinies which are different for men and for women, in the little girl because castration is first of all encountered in the Other, that the little girl first links up this perception with what the mother has frustrated her of, namely that at first it is in the form of a reproach to the mother that what is perceived in the mother as castration is therefore also like a castration for her. It is in the mode of this recrimination, which comes to be added to the other antecedent frustrations, that the castration complex - Freud insists on it - first appears in the girl.

And it is because the father only comes here in the position of replacement for what she finds herself first of all frustrated of, that she goes on to the level of the experience of privation. It is because already it is at the symbolic level that there appears the real penis of the father which we are told she expects as a substitute for what she has perceived she is frustrated of, that we can talk at that moment of privation, and the crisis that this privation engenders, and the choice that it offers to the subject of renouncing, either her object, namely the father, or her instincts, namely to identify herself with the father.

From this there results a curious consequence: it is that the penis, precisely because it has been introduced into the castration complex of the woman in this form of symbolic substitute, is at the source in women of all sorts of conflicts of the type that are called conflicts of jealousy, or again of the infidelity of the partner. This is experienced as a real privation, I mean with an accent completely different from what the same conflict can represent seen from the man's side.

I am passing quickly over this, I will come back to it, but there is one thing that we must see, it is that if the phallus is found under the barred form in which it has its place as indicating the desire of the Other, everything that follows in our development is going to show us how the subject is going to have to find her place as desired object with respect to this desire of the Other, and in consequence it is always, as Freud indicates in connection with his remarkable insight on "a child is being beaten", it is always in so far as she has not the phallus, that the subject must, when all is said and done, be situated, that she will find her

identification as subject, in so far - as we will see - as the subject is as such herself a subject marked by the bar.

This is manifested in a clear fashion in the woman the incidences on whose development with respect to the phallus I approached today by a simple indication. The fact is that in fact the woman - the man also indeed - finds herself caught in an insoluble dilemma which is the one around which there must be placed all the typical manifestations of femininity, neurotic or not. It is as I indicated to you, in terms of finding her satisfaction, namely first of all the man's penis, then afterwards by substitution the desire for the child. This is classical. I am only indicating here what is commonplace in analytic theory.

What does that mean? It is that, when all is said and done, to rediscover such a deep-seated, such a fundamental satisfaction as maternity - just as exigent indeed, just as instinctual - the fact is that she only finds what satisfaction is along the paths of the substitutive line. It is in as much, I would say, as the penis is first of all a substitute, I would go as far as to say a fetish, then afterwards that the child also from a certain angle is a fetish, that the woman rejoins what is, let us say, her instinct and its natural satisfaction.

Inversely, for everything that is on the line of her desire, she finds herself bound to the necessity implied by the function of the *phallos*, to be, to a certain degree that is variable, but to be this *phallos*, in so far as it is the very sign of what is desired, and it is indeed effectively to this that there correspond, which are the function of the *phallos*, that which in what is considered as properly speaking femininity, and the whole exhibitionist phase, namely the way in which the woman proposes herself as object of desire, everything that in the feminine function, to the degree that she exhibits herself and proposes herself as object of desire, identifies her in a latent and secret fashion to the *phallos*, namely in fact situates her being as subject as desired *phallos*, as signifier of the desire of the Other, situates this being, beyond what can be called the feminine masquerade, because, when all is said and done, everything that she shows of her femininity is precisely linked to this profound identification to a signifier which is the most closely linked to her femininity.

We see appearing there the role and the root of what one can call in the completion of the subject along the path of the desire of the Other, her profound *Verwerfung*, her profound rejection *qua* being, of that in which she appears as properly speaking in the feminine mode. Her satisfaction therefore passes along a substitutive path, and her desire manifests itself on a plane where it can only end up with a profound *Verwerfung*, at a profound estrangement from her being, from the way in which she must appear.

You should not believe that for man the situation is any better. It is even more comic. He, the poor unfortunate, has the *phallos*, and it is in fact knowing that his mother does not have it which traumatises him, because then since she is much stronger, where are we going to end up? It is there, in this primitive fear of women, that Karen Homey showed one of the most essential sources of the disturbances of the castration complex. Just as the woman was caught in one dilemma, the man is caught in another. It is along the line of satisfaction that the masquerade is established for him, because in the last analysis he will resolve the question of the danger which threatens what he effectively has, by what we know well, namely the pure and simple identification with the one who has its insignia, with the one who to all appearances has escaped the danger, namely the father, and, when all is said and done, the man is never virile except by an indefinite series of proxies: these come to him from all his grandparents and from all his ancestors, passing through the direct ancestor.

But inversely, along the line of desire, namely in so far as he has to find his satisfaction from a woman, he too will search for the *phallos*, and we have all the clinical and other testimonies - I will come back to it the next day - and it is precisely because this *phallos*, is not found by him where he searches for it, that he searches for it everywhere else.

In other words, the symbolic penis for the woman is within, as one might say, the field of her desire, whereas for man it is outside it; this in order to explain to you why men in a relationship always have centrifugal tendencies.

It is to the degree therefore, that in the last analysis she is not herself, to the degree that she is in the field of her desire, namely in so far as in the field of her desire she must be the *phallos*, that the woman will experience the *Verwerfung*, that the subjective identification of the one who produces at the level of the second line, that which ends there in a delta; and it is in so far as he is not himself either, in so far as he satisfies, namely that he provides the satisfaction of the other, that man finds himself in love outside his other. Therefore it is in so far, I would say, as he perceives himself only as instrument of satisfaction, and this is the reason that, when all is said and done, the problem of love is the problem of this profound division that it introduces within the activities of the subject, it is always because what is in question, according to the very definition of love, is to give what he does not have, it is for man, to give what he does not have to a being who does not have what he does not have, namely who does not have the phallus.

Seminar 21: Wednesday 7 May 1958

We are going to begin from the current event which those of you who were present last night at the scientific communication of the Society were able to appreciate. You heard an address on the subject of the heterosexual relationship.

This is just what I also am going to try to speak about.

The heterosexual relationship showed itself in this perspective as essentially formative. It was in brief a primary given of the evolutionary tension between the parents and the child.

The thing which appears in another perspective, which is exactly my point of departure, and is without any doubt in conformity with a primary experience, is that it is just that which is in question: is the heterosexual relationship between human beings something simple?

In truth, if we hold with our experience, it does not appear to be. If it were simple, it seems that it would at least be capable of constituting within the human world a series of islands of harmony, at least for those who would have managed to remove the unpleasant briars from it. It does not seem that up to the present we can consider that there is unanimity on the part of analysts, and after all is there any need to invoke analysts on the question, that even when it has arrived at its fullness, the heterosexual relationship for man presents itself as something, because precisely its whole problem, the least that can be said - take the writings of Balint for example, which are fairly well centred on it since it is in the very title of the collection on *Genital Love* - revolves around this. There is attested the coexistence of an altogether terminal *Spaltung*, the juxtaposition of the current of desire and the current of tenderness. It is in terms of this juxtaposition that the whole problem of the heterosexual relationship is composed.

This does not take away the interest of what was said to us last evening, far from it, if it were only for the terms of reference which were employed, and for example of this aesthetic condition, this conscious and aesthetic valorisation, to take up the terms of the lecturer, which constitute a fundamental stage according to her perspective, in the oedipal relationship.

His sexual organ, his symbol appears, Madame Dolto told us, as a beautifully proportioned form (*une belle et bonne forme*). The sexual organ is beautiful, she added. What we have here obviously is a perspective of the person who is speaking, which is certainly very flattering for the bearers of this male sexual organ. At any rate one which it does not seem to be a datum that we can adopt in a univocal fashion, I mean if we refer to all the reservations of one of the people who intervened, with authority, on this subject, who gave us the benefit of what one can call ethnological observations, all the same if we refer to the savages, to the good savages who are always a reference point for anthropologists, it does not really seem that it is a primary datum, if indeed this savage is the first example of this beautifully proportioned form of the phallus. To tell the truth, all the the documents - I am not talking about learned documents, about the things that are afterwards elaborated in the ethnographer's office, but about the experience that one can find in those ethnographers who

have been in the field, who have been among these so-called savages, whether good or bad - it seems precisely that it is really a foundation and a principle of the relationships between the sexes, even in the most backward tribes, that at least the erection of the phallus is hidden. The existence, even among the tribes which only possess the most primitive style of dress, of something which consists precisely in hiding the phallus, of the *cache-sexe* for example, sometimes demonstrated by the general public as the strict residue of what remains as clothing, is something quite striking.

On the other hand, a good number of ethnographers have testified to the sort of irritation that persons of the female sex experience in the presence of manifestations concerning the erection of the phallus as being a really primary reaction. For example in the very rare cases where no clothes at all are worn - among the Nambikoiras whom as you know our friend Lévi-Strauss visited on many occasions, and about whom he has spoken at length - Lévi-Strauss testified to this when I questioned him on this matter - and moreover what I am telling you now reflects what was said and what he himself says in his book - that he never observed in front of the group, and in a fashion that he himself could see, an erection in the male. Sexual relations take place without any special concealment, a couple of feet from the group, in the evening around the camp fire, but erection, either during the day, or at that time, is not seen in public, and does not appear.

This is not altogether a matter of indifference for our subject.

On the other hand this notion of the beautifully proportioned form, if the signification of the phallus has to be situated like that, is a perspective which we will see to be rather onesided. On the other hand, I know well that there is the beautifully proportioned form of the woman. It undoubtedly is valorised by every civilized group, but one cannot say that here, if only because of its individual diversity, we can talk about a beautifully proportioned form in a univocal fashion.

Let us say that in practice this beautifully proportioned form in any case allows more variation than the other one. No doubt behind every woman there appears in silhouette the form of Venus de Milo, or of the Aphrodite of Eucnide, but it is not always with results that are univocally favourable. Daumier was much reproached for having given to the gods of Greece, the slightly sloppy forms, of the male and female *bourgeoisie* of his epoch. He was reproached as if he had committed a sacrilege. It is precisely here that there is situated the problem that I am indicating: it is that obviously if it is so deplorable to humanize gods, it is because humans are not always so easily divinized.

In brief, it is quite clear that if the necessity of perpetuating the human race is given over to the subject of the beautifully proportioned form, on the whole the indication seems to be that we should be satisfied with average requirements that the term beautifully proportioned form is perhaps not entirely destined to fulfil, or remains in any case rather enigmatic.

In fact, everything that was said in a timely and remarkable way to valorise this beautifully proportioned form of the phallus, is precisely what is in question here, which of course does not eliminate its prepossessing, dominant form, but the discourse that we are pursuing here, and in so far as it is founded, as it directly prolongs, not alone the Freudian discourse, but the Freudian experience, is there to give us a different idea of the signification of the phallus.

The phallus is not a form, is not an objectal form, in so far as it remains the captivating form, the fascinating form, at least in a sense, because the problem still remains in the Other. The attraction between the sexes, is an infinitely more complex thing, as the whole economy of the analytic doctrine reveals to us, and what we are engaged in, is to give it a solution, according to this formula which naturally is itself nothing more than a formula which must be developed in order to be understood: it is that the phallus is neither a phantasy, nor an image, nor an object, even a partial one, even an internal one, that it is a signifier, and that the fact that it is signifier, is the only thing which allows us to articulate, to conceive of the different functions that it takes on at different levels of the inter-sexual encounter.

A signifier. It is not enough to say that it is a signifier. Which one? It is a signifier, it is the signifier of desire, and of course this poses again a question which goes further: the signifier of desire, what does that mean? It is quite certain that the import of this affirmation that it is the signifier of desire, implies that we should know, and that we should say, that we should articulate first of all what is in its formula, what desire is.

Desire in fact is not something which is self-explanatory in the function that it occupies in our experience. It is not simply the inter-sexual appetite, the inter-sexual attraction, the sexual instinct, it is of course understood that this does not eliminate either the existence of what are tendencies more or less accentuated, variable according to individuals, which have this primary character of manifesting themselves as something which is, let us say in general, the greater or lesser potency of one or other individual, with respect to sexual union, that this is something which in no way resolves the question of the constitution of desire as we see it in such and such an individual, whether he is neurotic or not. The constitution of his desire is something other than what he has, if you wish, in terms of sexual potency.

This is why we are going, as a way of setting out again after the disorientation that we may perhaps have suffered from the perspectives of last evening, we are going quite simply to take up Freud's text again.

I should say that I did not wait until today to make the remark, but I communicate it to you today: people have marvelled at the existence of this text of the *Traumdeutung*, people have marvelled at it as a sort of miracle, because it is really not too much to say that one can read it as something which is thought on the march. But it is even much more: matters are introduced according to moments which correspond to a composition with several overdetermined planes. This is indeed where the word would be applicable, which means that in simply taking as I told you I was doing the last time, namely the first dreams, the import of what comes first goes far beyond the reasons which are given for putting them first in the chapter headings. It is in connection with the memories of the previous day, in so far as they are taken into account in the determination of dreams, that certain of these first dreams, the one for example that I commented on the last day for you, namely the dream of the butcher's beautiful wife, as I called it, appear there.

You have seen that from another angle it is really to approach the question of demand and desire - it is not I who put them into the dream, they are there, demand and desire are there, and Freud does not put them there, it is Freud who read them there, he saw that the patient needed to create an unsatisfied desire, it is Freud who says it, and already just by itself, with everything that we know since, and Freud of course when he wrote it, was not completely in the dark when he gave the name, he had already taken a certain perspective on

the matter. If he put things in this order, it is because he is pushed by a requirement in the approach and in the composition which may go well beyond the division of his chapters, and makes of this dream something which is really a special introduction to the problem which is fundamental in the perspective that I am trying here to promote for you, therefore desire and demand.

It is hardly necessary to say that it also is everywhere, because if the dream has been produced, it is because a friend has asked to come to dine in her house. Moreover in the dream itself, the demand is there in its clearest form. The patient knows that everything is closed that day, that she cannot make up for the inadequacy of her material, of provisions, to tackle a supper party that she must give, and then she demands in the clearest, the most isolated fashion, that one can present a demand, she demands over the telephone, which at the time - this is part of the first edition of the *Traumdeutung* - was not in widespread use, it is really there with its full symbolic power.

Let us go a little further. What are the first dreams that we are going to encounter?

We enter therefore into "The Material and Sources of Dreams" and we encounter first of all the dream of the botanical monograph which is one of Freud's dreams. I will pass over it, but it is not because it does not contribute exactly what we are now waiting for, namely what I am going to try to show you today, precisely the functioning of the relationships of the phallic signifier with desire, only, because it is one of Freud's dreams, naturally it would be a little bit longer, and a little bit more complicated to show it to you. I will do it if I have the time. It is absolutely clear, structured exactly according to the little schema that I gave you the last time, which I began to sketch out for you in connection with the desire of the hysteric, the last time. But Freud is not purely and simply a hysteric; if he has with hysteria the relationship which every relationship with desire involves, it is in a slightly more elaborated way.

We will skip therefore the dream of the botanical monograph, and we arrive at a patient who Freud tells us is a hysteric, and we take up again the desire of the hysteric.

An intelligent and cultivated young woman, reserved and undemonstrative in her behaviour reported as follows: I dreamt that I arrived too late at the market and could get nothing either, from the butcher or from the woman who sells vegetables. An innocent dream, no doubt; but dreams are not as simple as that, so I asked to be told in greater detail. She thereupon gave me the following account. She dreamed that she was going to the market with her cook, who was carrying the basket. After she had asked for something, the butcher said to her: That's not obtainable any longer, and offered her something else, adding this is good too. She rejected it and went to the woman who sells vegetables, who tried to get her to buy a peculiar vegetable that was tied up in bundles but was of black colour. She said: I don't recognise that; I won't take it. (SE IV 183)

Freud's commentary is essential here, because we were not the ones who analysed this patient. What is in question, is to see what Freud believes he himself can do, in a work which at the time is a little bit as if the first work on the atomic theory had come out, without any type of liaison with, nor any preparation by the physics which preceded it. Moreover it was in fact received by an almost total silence. It is therefore in the first pages of his book, that in order to speak about the presence of what is recent and indifferent in the dream.

Freud calmly adds on for his readers the following commentary:

(He tries to attach this dream to the events of the previous day): "She had actually gone to the market too late and had got nothing. The meat-shop was closed."

But he does not say that it was the patient who said that, he has already gone rather quickly in saying that it must be like that.

"I pulled myself up: was not that, or rather its opposite, a vulgar description of a certain sort of slovenliness in a man's dress".

In other words, it seems that in the language of Vienna, one would say that about someone who had forgotten to button his fly, and that it would be common, at least using familiar language, to indicate it to him by the phrase: "Your meat-shop is not closed." However the dreamer had not employed this phrase, Freud tells us, and he adds:

She may perhaps have avoided using it. Let us endeavour then to arrive at an interpretation of the details of the dream. When anything in a dream has the character of direct speech, that is to say, when it is said or heard and not merely thought (and it is easy as a rule to make the distinction with certainty)

It is a question therefore of words in so far as they are inscribed in the dream as if on a banner. They are not simply implied in the situation. It is a question of what can be distinguished with certainty, Freud tells us, namely the language element which Freud invites us to take always as an element which is valid in itself.

It is derived from something actually spoken in waking life - though, to be sure, this something is merely treated as raw material and may be cut up and slightly altered and, more especially, divorced from its context. In carrying out an interpretation, one method is to start from spoken phrases of this kind. What then was the origin of the butcher's remark 'That's not obtainable any longer?' (*Das ist nicht mehr zu haben*).

This sentence is taken up by Freud when he is writing the *Wolfman*, as a proof that he gives the reader that for a long time he had been interested in this question of the difficulty that there is of re-constructing what is pre-amnesic in the life of the subject, of what there is from before infantile amnesia. It is indeed in this connection that he told this to the patient:

The answer was that it came from me myself. A few days earlier I had explained to the patient that the earliest experiences of childhood were not obtainable any longer as such, but were replaced in analysis by transferences and dreams. So I was the butcher and she was rejecting these transferences into the present of old habits of thinking and feeling. What, again, was the origin of her own remark in the dream 'I don't recognise that; I won't take it?'

Which in French is translated by adding: *ça*.

For the purpose of the analysis this had to be divided up. I don't recognise that was something she had said the day before to her cook, with whom she had had a dispute;

but at the time she had gone on: Behave yourself properly! (*Benehmen Sie sich anständig!*)

It does not matter what she said to her cook, because this is taken under the guise of an element of the sentence, and as Freud says, it is precisely in the measure - "*Das kenne Ich nicht, das nehme Ich nicht*" (GW II/III 190) - that what is retained from this phrase is precisely the part which does not have signification, that precisely which the censorship tends to exclude, is what is also said to the servant. Freud remarks that it is in the measure that this is retained in what is dreamt, that the meaning corresponds to: "*Das kenne Ich nicht, das nehme Ich nicht.*"

One could add something else again, if one were more rigorous, like: "*Das kenne Ich nicht, benehmen Sie sich anständig.*"

At this point there had clearly been a displacement. Of the two phrases that she had used in the dispute with her cook..... it was only the suppressed one. Behave yourself properly that fitted in with the rest of the content of the dream: these would have been the appropriate words to use if someone had ventured to make improper suggestions and had forgotten to close his meat-shop.

The French translation is not very correct, because it omits the notion of improper suggestions and forgetting to close his meat shop. The translation is pure fantasy.

The allusions underlying the incident with the vegetable-seller were a further confirmation that our interpretation was on the right track. A vegetable tied up in bundles and is also black could only be a dream combination of asparagus and black (Spanish) radishes. No knowledgeable person of either sex will ask for an interpretation of asparagus. But the other vegetable also seems to hint at.....

The word *allusion* [French translation] is not in the German text. "It refers", says the German text, "to a sexual term."

"....this same sexual topic which we suspected at the beginning, when we felt inclined to introduce the phrase about the meat shop being closed into the original account of the dream. We need not enquire now into the full meaning of the dream. So much is quite clear: it *had* a meaning and that meaning was far from innocent.

I apologise if this seems to you to be a bit long. I simply wished to re-centre things on this little dream, now that we know so much, that we tend to read a little bit quickly.

Here there is represented in the clearest fashion, another relationship of the hysteric with something which is this super-ego. We focus for a moment on our goal. The last time I indicated that the hysteric, in her dreams and in her symptoms, requires that there be marked somewhere the place of desire as such. Here something else is in question, it is the place of the signifier phallus.

Let us blend in our theoretical discourse with these references to the dream concerning the hysteric, in order to vary things a little for you, and also to relax your attention.

There are three other dreams of the same patient that follow, and we will make use of them when it is appropriate. Let us pause for a moment at what it is now a question of highlighting.

It is the same problem, the same phenomenon of which there was question the other day, namely the place to be given to desire. But here it is not a place which is marked in the field outside the subject, of a desire as such, in so far as she refuses it for herself beyond the demand, in so far as in the dream she assumes it as being the desire of the other, of her friend. It is a question of desire in so far as it is supported by its signifier, the signifier phallus by hypothesis, because that is what we are talking about.

It is a question of knowing what function the signifier plays on this occasion.

Freud, as you see here, introduces without any kind of hesitation, without any kind of ambiguity, the signifier phallus, which is what is at stake when we are dealing with something which is the only element that he did not highlight as such in his analysis, because he had to leave us something to do, but which is quite striking. In fact, the whole ambiguity of the behaviour of the subject with regard to the phallus, since the phallus is not the object of desire, but the signifier of desire, all this ambiguity will reside in this dilemma, namely that the subject can have or can be this signifier. It is because it is a signifier that this dilemma is proposed, and this dilemma is absolutely essential, it is it which is at the root of all the slippages, of all the transmutations, of all the sleights of hand, I might say, of the castration complex.

Why does the phallus come into this dream? I do not think that we are going beyond anything in an inappropriate way from this perspective, if we say that this dream is actualised, that the phallus is actualised as such in the dream of this hysteric, around Freud's phrase: *Das ist nicht mehr zu haben*. ("That's not obtainable any longer"; *on ne peut plus en avoir*).

I had the usage of *avoir* (to have) confirmed for me, I mean in the absolute sense, as it manifests itself in linguistic usage, which makes us say *l'avoir*, or not, or better still in French: *en avoir*, or not, which also has a certain import in German. It is a matter here in this phrase, of the phallus in so far as it arises as the object which is lacking, the object which is lacking to whom? This is of course what it is important to know, but nothing is less certain than that it is purely and simply the object which is lacking to the subject as a biological subject. Let us say that first and foremost all of this is presented in signifying terms, and in so far as it is a sentence which introduces it, a sentence articulated as something which is linked to the sentence which articulates: *Das ist nicht mehr zu haben*, that this, is what one can no longer have. It is not a frustrating experience, it is a signification, it is a signifying articulation of the lack of the object as such.

This of course accords with the notion which is the one that I put here on the one hand in the foreground, it is that the phallus is the signifier here, in so far as who does not have it? As the Other does not have it, because it is a question of something which is articulated on the plane of language, and which situates itself as such on the plane of the Other. It is the signifier of desire in so far as desire is articulated as the desire of the Other.

I will come back to this in a while.

We are now going to take the second dream.

The second dream that there is question of, from the same patient is a so-called innocent dream. "Her husband asked her: Don't you think we ought to have the piano tuned?" And she replied: "It's not worth while". (*Es lohnt nicht.*) - That means something like: "It does not pay". - "The hammers need reconditioning in any case." This was a repetition of a real event of the previous day. But what was the explanation of her dreaming it? She told me that the piano was a disgusting old box, that it made an ugly noise, that it had been in her husband's possession before their marriage, and so on. This last was a substitute for the opposite idea, as the course of the analysis will make clear. Namely that her husband did not have it before his marriage.

But the key to the solution was only given by her words: "*It's not worth while.*" She had said them the previous day, says Freud, while she was visiting a friend, she had been invited to take off her jacket, but had refused with the words: "Thank you but it's not worth while; I can only stop a minute." As she was telling me this, I recollected that during the previous day's analysis she had suddenly caught hold of her jacket, one of the buttons having come undone. Thus it was as though she were saying: Please don't look; *it's not worthwhile*. In the same way the box was a substitute for a chest; and the interpretation of the dream led us back at once to the time of her physical development at puberty, when she had begun to be dissatisfied by her figure. We can hardly doubt that it led back to still earlier times, if we take the word *disgusting* into account and the *ugly noise*, and if we remember how often the lesser hemispheres of a woman's body are used for the larger ones." (SE IV 185-6; GW II/III 191-2)

Here we find ourselves dealing with the other side of the question. If the phallus is the signifier of desire, and of the desire of the Other, here is the other aspect of the problem for the subject, at the first step in this dialectic of desire: It is a question of being or of not being the phallus.

Let us trust squarely in this function of signifier that we accord to the phallus, saying the following: just as one cannot be and have been, one cannot either be and not be, and if it is necessary that what one is not is what one should be, there remains not to be what one is, namely to reject what one is into the apparent (*le paraître*), which is very exactly what the position of the woman is in hysteria. As woman she makes herself mask, she makes herself mask precisely in order behind this mask, to be the phallus, and all the behaviour of the hysteric, this behaviour in so far as it manifests itself by putting a hand on a button whose meaning the eye of Freud a long, long time ago helped us to see, but accompanied by the phrase: "It is not worth while." Why is it not worth while? Because of course it is a question of you not looking behind, because behind, what is of course in question is that the phallus should be there. But it is really not worth while to go looking there, because precisely one will not find it there. What is in question for the hysteric, as Freud immediately tells us in a note addressed to those whom he calls: *Die Wissbegierige*, which is translated in French by "to those who wish to go deeper". That means, more precisely: "to lovers of knowledge", to be more rigorous. (SE IV 185 n.1)

This carries us into the heart of what perhaps I already designated by this term borrowed from a morality which despite everything remains marked by a human experience which is perhaps richer than many others, the theological morality which is called the *Cupido Sciendi*, which gives us the term which we can choose to translate desire. These are delicate questions, these equivalences between languages relating to desire, I know that I already

obtained from my German-speaking pupils, *Begierde*. You find it in Hegel, but some find that it is too animal. It is funny that Hegel should have employed it in connection with the Master and the Slave, which is not too marked with animality.

"I may add", says Freud, "that the dream concealed a fantasy of my behaving in an improper and sexually provocative manner, and of the patient putting up a defence against my conduct."

In short, he indicates again for us what is in fact a fundamental behaviour of the hysteric, but at the same time in this context we see its meaning. The hysteric's provocation, is precisely something which tends to constitute desire, but beyond what is called defence, to indicate the place beyond this appearance, this mask, something which is essentially what is presented to desire, and which it of course cannot accede to because it is something which is presented behind a veil, but on the other hand of course not being able to be found there. It is not worth your while opening my bodice, because you will not find the phallus there, but if I put my hand to my bodice, it is so that you may designate, behind my bodice, the phallus, namely the signifier of desire.

This leads us perhaps to begin to ask ourselves how we must define this desire in all strictness, in order all the same to give you a proper sense of what we are talking about, I mean not to limit ourselves to what someone in a dialogue with me, has called - appropriately enough in my opinion - in connection with the little interwoven lines that I put before you from time to time, and which you should not lose sight of, has called a little Calder mobile. Why?

Let us try to articulate what we mean by desire as such. We pose desire in this dialectic as something which is found on the little mobile, beyond the demand. Why is there need for a beyond of the demand? There is need for a beyond of the demand in so far as I told you, that demand by the necessities of its articulation, deflects, changes, transposes need. There is therefore the possibility of a residue. It is in so far as man is caught in the signifying dialectic, that there is something which does not succeed, whatever may be thought by the optimistic people who no doubt point out to us the successful discovery of the other sex, which happens between children and parents. There is only one thing missing, it is that things should go just as smoothly between the parents. Now, here precisely is the whole level at which I approach the question.

There is therefore a residue. How does it appear? How must it necessarily appear? It is no longer now a question of sexual desire. We will see why sexual desire must come to this place. But from the moment that there is a general relationship of a need in man with the signifier, we find ourselves before the following, namely whether something makes good the margin of deviation marked by the incidence of the signifier on needs, and how this beyond appears, if it does appear?

Experience proves that it does appear, and that it is this that we call desire, but as a possible form of its appearance, here is more or less how we can articulate it.

The fashion in which desire must appear in the human subject, depends on what is determined by the dialectic of demand. If demand has a certain effect on needs, it has on the other hand its own characteristics. These proper characteristics, I have already articulated them here. It is that the demand fundamentally in its existence, by the very fact that it is articulated as demand, poses even if it does not expressly demand it, the other as absent or

present, and giving or not this absence or this presence, namely as demand for love, for this something which is nothing, not any particular satisfaction, which is what this subject contributes by a pure and simple reply to the demand.

It is here that there is situated the originality of the introduction of the symbolic under the form of demand. It is in this unconditionality of demand, namely that it was, that it is demand, that it is against the background of a demand for love, that there is situated the originality of the introduction of demand with respect to need.

If this involves some loss with respect to need, under any form whatsoever, must this be rediscovered beyond demand? It is quite clear that if this must be rediscovered beyond demand, namely beyond what in fact introduces distortion into need, this dimension of demand, it is to the extent that beyond we should rediscover something where the Other loses its prevalence, or if you wish, need in so far as it originates in the subject, regains the primary place.

Nevertheless, because need has already passed through the filter of demand to the plane and the stage of unconditionality, it is in the guise, as one might say, of a second negation that we are going to find beyond, what it is precisely a question of finding, which is the margin of what is lost in this demand, and the beyond is precisely the character of absolute condition which is in desire, what presents itself in desire as such is this something which is of course borrowed from need. How could we construct our desires, if not by borrowing the raw material from our needs? But this passes over to a state of being unconditioned, not because it is a question of something borrowed from a particular need, but of an absolute condition out of all proportion to the need for any object whatsoever, and in so far as this condition is perhaps called for precisely in this, that it abolishes here the dimension of the other, that it is a requirement in which the other does not have to reply yes or no. It is this which is the fundamental dimension, character of human desire as such.

Any desire whatsoever, at the state of pure desire, is this, it is something extracted from the soil of needs, which takes the form of absolute condition with respect to the other. It is precisely the margin, the result of the subtraction as one might say, of the exigency of need with respect to the demand for love. That is to say that inversely desire is going to present itself as that which in the demand for love is a pointer to any reduction to a need, because in reality that satisfies nothing other than one's self, namely desire as absolute condition.

It is for this reason that sexual desire will come to this place, precisely in the measure that sexual desire presents itself with respect to the subject, with respect to the individual, as essentially problematical, and on the two planes, on the plane of need - Freud is not the first to underline this, from the beginning of time people have been asking themselves how the human being who is a being who has the property of recognising what is advantageous for him, how he can take on, how he can admit a need which incontestably pushes him to aberrant extremes, because it does not correspond to any need which can be immediately rationalised, but which introduces into the individual, let us say what has been called the dialectic of the species.

Of its nature sexual need will already present itself with a certain problematic for a subject who is precisely what we have just said, even if the philosophers have articulated it otherwise, namely someone who can rationalise his needs, namely articulate them in terms of equivalence, namely of the signifier.

On the other hand, with regard to the demand for love, the expression of sexual desire will precisely become desire, and it will be called desire because it can only place itself there, at the level of desire as we have just defined it. Even though at first sexual desire presents itself with respect to the demand for love, in a problematical fashion, whatever may be said about it, and whatever holy water one tries to throw on it by using the term oblativity, the question of desire with regard to the formulation of what is called in every tongue, formulating one's demand, is problematical in as much as to express things in the form of language, the most usual thing, which is revealing here, it is a question, when all is said and done, whatever may be the mode in which the demand is formulated, that the following emerges: it is that the other comes into play from the moment that sexual desire is in question in the form of instrument of desire.

This is the reason why it is at the level of desire as we have thus defined it, that sexual desire is posed in so far as it is a question, namely in so far as it is a question, that it cannot really be articulated. There is really no word (*mot*), hear it from my own lips, because it perhaps will not do any harm for me to say that everything is not reducible to language. I have always said it, of course, but if it has not been heard, there is no word to express something, and something which has a name, and it is precisely desire, to express desire, as popular wisdom knows very well, there is only empty talk.

The question of the signifier of desire is therefore posed as such, and it is for that reason that what expresses it is not a signifier like the others. It is something which in fact is borrowed from a dominant form of the surge of the vital flux in this order, but which is no less caught up in this dialectic as a signifier, with this passage to the register of the signifier which involves the mortification that affects everything which accedes to this dimension of signifier. Here the ambiguous mortification appears very precisely under the form of the veil, of the veil which we see being reproduced every day in the form of the hysteric's bodice, namely the fundamental position of woman with respect to man concerning desire, namely that above all you must not look behind the blouse, because of course there is nothing, there is nothing except the signifier. Which is precisely not nothing, but the signifier of desire.

Behind this veil, there is either something which must not be shown, and it is in this that the demon whom I spoke to you about the last time or the second last time in connection with the unveiling of the phallus in the antique mysteries, is presented and articulated, and is named as the demon of shame, and shame has a different meaning and import in man and in woman. I made an allusion to that, whatever its origin may be, whether it is the horror that the woman has of it, or whether it is something which arises quite naturally from the delicate soul of men. I alluded to this veil which in man very regularly covers the phallus. It is exactly the same thing which covers more or less normally the totality of the being of the woman, in so far as what there is a question of there being behind, what is veiled, is the signifier of the phallus. And the unveiling of something which would only show nothing, namely the absence of what is unveiled, it is very precisely to this that there is attached what Freud called in connection with the feminine sexual organs, the *Grauen* in connection with the head of Medusa, or the horror which corresponds to absence revealed as such (GW XVII 47; SE XVIII 273).

When all is said and done, what is in question in this perspective, namely in this interplay of the subject of desire and the signifier of desire, is something which is not exhausted, at the point that we have got to, which has only begun, but you can see well, that it completely reverses a notion for example like that which obscures the whole dialectic of the

contribution of the Other in the sexual relationship, and that supposedly matured by the sexual relationship, progress would be from a partial object to a total object.

There is here properly speaking one might say, a veritable camouflage, avoidance, because to be blunt, it would rather be the problem which arises from the fact that in acceding to the place of desire, the other does not at all become as we are told, the total object, but the problem is the following: it is that he becomes totally object, *qua* instrument of desire. This indeed is what he becomes, and it is a question of maintaining as compatible, this position of the other *qua* Other, namely *qua* locus of the word, the one to whom the demand is addressed, and the one whose radical irreducibility as Other is manifested in so far as he can give love, that is to say something which is all the more totally gratuitous, because there is no support for love, that as I have told you: to give one's love, is very precisely and essentially to give as such nothing of what one has, because it is precisely in so far as one does not have it that there is question of love.

It is a question of this discordance between what is absolute in the subjectivity which gives or does not give love, and the fact that one's access to him as object of desire, makes it very precisely necessary that he should become totally object. It is in this essentially vertiginous, essentially nauseous, discrepancy to call it by its name, that there is situated the difficulty of access in the approach to sexual desire.

Freud alludes somewhere in the most precise fashion to the symptom, which, in the hysteric is manifested in the form of nausea and of disgust, by relating it to the phenomena of vertigo in so far as It is not Freud who says it, but it is in Breuer's text (SE II 210 n.3). Breuer's text refers to Mach and to the works of Mach on motor sensations, in order to point out with some intuition that it is in the discordance between optical sensations and motor sensation that there lies the essential source of this labyrinthic phenomenon which is supposed to manifest itself, which we see emerging the series: vertigo, nausea and disgust.

Effectively it is perfectly observable, and I have already observed it in more than one person, that the realisation, the perception of the contribution of the Other in desire, in the form of the signifier phallus with this sort of short circuit which results at the point where the analysis of such a thing is possible, this short circuit which is set up between this signifier phallus and this something which then at this moment in the subject, can only appear as empty, namely at the place which the organ should normally occupy, I mean the place between the two legs, which at that moment is only evoked as a place, is something which is accompanied, and I would have ten observations to propose to you on this subject, in all sorts of forms, which are either clear, crude and raw, or in various symbolic forms, the subject despite everything saying quite clearly, that it is in so far as the other as object of desire, is perceived as phallus, and that as such she is perceived as lack at the place of her own phallus, that he experiences something which resembles a very curious vertigo, that someone went so far as to relate to me to a sort of metaphysical vertigo experienced in other circumstances, the rarest ones encountered in subjects in connection with the notion of being itself, in so far as it underlies everything that is.

This is where I will end today. We will come back therefore to this dialectic of being or having of the hysteric. We will go further. You will see where this will take us in the obsessional.

I am telling you right away that you should all the same clearly sense that this is not unrelated to a whole dialectic, a different imaginary one whose theory has only been

proposed to you, but which is imposed in a more or less forced fashion on patients in a certain technique concerning obsessional neuroses, and in so far as the phallus as imaginary element plays the dominant role in it. We will see the rectifications that can be brought about, in theory and in technique, by the consideration of the phallus, no longer as image or as phantasy, but as signifier.

Seminar 22: Wednesday 14 May 1958

<u>Forderung</u>	for	Demand
<u>Begehren</u>	for	Desire
<u>Bedurfnis</u>	for	Need

in this dialectic

We are going to try to continue to advance along this path where, as you see, the theme of the phallus plays a quite essential role, in so far as it leads us to circumscribe more closely what is said in analysis, what is put forward there, and the way in which the notion of object effectively is used.

You should be beginning to sense clearly that we should normally both get closer to, centre our attention on the effective function that this relationship to the object has in current analytic practice, and that at the same time, by focusing the fashion in which it is employed, the uses it is put to, attempt a more elaborated articulation of what in fact we designate simply in a precise fashion by talking about the phallus, which also permits us to criticise this use of object-relations.

If we take a report which has taken on a historical value with the passage of time, and which appeared in the *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* on *Le Moi dans la névrose obsessionnelle*, a quite inadequate title because in reality it is only a question of object-relations in the obsessional, it would perhaps be something to explore, we will get an idea from it, namely why the author wanted to mention the ego in obsessional neurosis, in his title, because in fact nothing is really said about it in obsessional neurosis, except that it is weak, or that it is strong. On this point the author all things considered prompted by something which he understood at that time, remained in an attitude of prudence which one can only find praiseworthy. But what dominates this report in which two previous articles by the same author culminate, namely the first which dates from December 1949 and appeared in 1950 in the *Revue Française de Psychoanalyse*: "Incidences thérapeutiques de la prise de conscience de l'envie de penis dans la névrose obsessionnelle féminine." This was his first clinical report on the function of the penis in obsessional neurosis. It is the freshness of this first approach which gives a quite important value to this article, in so far as it shows how things went rather downhill afterwards, because undoubtedly at the level at which in an experience which was still new this penis envy in the female obsessional neurosis has something which reflects a freshness of experience which is extremely interesting.

Afterwards there is another article which is published in the *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* (July-September 1948), which is on the homosexual relationship in the transference.

The third article is a report on the ego in obsessional neurosis.

I believe that we have here three things which ought to be read because there are not all that many articles written in French on the subject. In fact this indicates rather well the level that things have come to here with respect to these problems. On the other hand

rereading it carefully cannot fail to make an overall impression which will give in a way a background to what we ourselves can arrive at here, it seems to me, by approaching the exact articulation of what allows us to situate in sum the value and the importance of a therapy which is centred in such a way. Because when all is said and done one can see there very clearly that there is something of the blind window about these object-relations which are articulated in the synoptic tables where we see the progressive constitution of the object in subjects. I do not believe that the genital object, or the pre-genital object are very significant or important things here, except for the beauty of these aforesaid synoptic tables. But in the last analysis what gives to these object-relations their value, what is their pivot, is that which in fact introduced the notion of object into the analytic dialectic.

It is first and foremost what is called the partial object, a term borrowed from the vocabulary and the terms of Abraham, in a fashion moreover that is not quite exact, because what Abraham spoke about, is the partial love of the object, which is obviously not quite the same thing, and already this slippage of itself has some significance.

This partial object, there is no need for a great effort to recognise it, to identify it purely and simply with this phallus that we are talking about, that we should be able to speak about all the more easily because we have precisely given it its importance, which at the same time spares us any kind of embarrassment in making use of it as a privileged object. We know why it merits this privilege, it is precisely under the heading of signifier, it is precisely because of this extraordinary embarrassment of giving this privilege to a particular organ, that the authors have precisely ended up by no longer talking about it at all, while on the contrary it is quasi-omnipresent in the whole of analysis.

Effectively you will be able to verify, if you reread these articles, the absolutely manifest usage; it is an outstanding fact, of the first order, which runs through all these pages, that it is taken by the psychoanalyst, not only by the psychoanalyst in question, but by all those who listened to him. It is taken at the level of phantasy, namely that one can say that in the perspective of the author whose three articles I have just cited, the treatment of obsessional neurosis entirely revolves around an incorporation - these are the terms that the author employs - or of an imaginary introjection of this phallus which appears in the analytic dialogue, is referred to in all these phantasies under the form of the phallus attributed to the analyst.

There would therefore be two phases here: a first where the phantasies of the incorporation, the devouring of this phantastical phallus are supposed to have a clearly aggressive, sadistic character as they say, at the same time as being felt as horrible and dangerous. Even this phantasy therefore is supposed to have a value that is quite revelatory of something which is supposed to belong to the very position of the subject with respect to what is called in the perspective of object - relations, the corresponding object, the constitutive object of his stage, namely in this instance of a particular second phase of the anal-sadistic stage in which one is supposed to pass from tendencies fundamentally destructive of the object to something which would begin to respect the autonomy of this object at least under this partial form.

In fact the whole dialectic of the moment where there is situated the subjective moment, as we would say here, where there is situated the sufferer of the obsessional neurosis, would be as the author explains to us, dependent on the maintenance of a certain form of this partial object around which can be established a world which would not be

entirely destined to fundamental destruction, because of the stage immediately underlying this precarious equilibrium at which the obsessional is supposed to have arrived. The obsessional is really represented to us as always ready to tip over into a destruction of the world, because just as these things can only be thought of in terms of the relationship of the subject to his environment, in the perspective within which the author expresses himself, and it is by the maintenance of this partial object, a maintenance which requires of course a whole edifice, a whole scaffolding which is precisely what constitutes the obsessional neurosis, that the obsessional is supposed to avoid tipping over into the psychosis which is always threatening him.

This is very certainly considered, by the author, to be the very basis of the problem.

One cannot fail all the same to object here that whatever may be the parapsychotic symptoms, the symptoms for example of depersonalisation, of ego disturbance, of feelings of strangeness, of a clouding of the world, sentiments which obviously touch on the complexion, even perhaps on the structure of the ego, despite all that we cannot avoid remarking that cases of transition between obsession and psychosis have always existed, but have always been extremely rare.

The authors have seen for a long time that on the contrary there was indeed a sort of false hope of incompatibility between the two mental conditions, and on the other hand, it is indeed when we are dealing with a true obsessional neurosis, the thing we run the least risk of in psychoanalysis. There is a danger that one will not cure an obsessional, but the danger of seeing him tip over into psychosis, is really a risk which seems to me extraordinarily phantasmatic in itself, because it is extremely rare. The obsessional who for whatever reason has tipped over into psychosis in the course of analysis, or even during an unfortunate or even wild therapeutic intervention, is very very very rare. Personally I have never seen one in my practice. Thanks be to God! I never had the impression either that it was a risk that I was running with these patients.

There must be something in a judgement like that, which betrays something a little more than clinical experience. This necessity for the coherence of the theory which takes the author further than he wishes, or even very probably something which goes further, a certain position of his own before the obsessional, which cannot then fail to open up problems onto something which one cannot describe of course as being those of any particular person. Naturally there is no question here of talking about countertransference in the personal sense, but of countertransference in a more general sense where one can consider it as being constituted by what I often call the prejudices of the analyst, in other words the background of things said or not said against which his discourse is articulated.

To begin to situate what can be represented therefore by a practice, which is led to pivot entirely in the particular therapy of obsessional neurosis around this phantasy of the imaginary incorporation of the phallus, and of the phallus of the analyst, in showing really a little mysteriously, because one does not see very well at what moment, nor why this reversal comes about, if it is not by what one can suppose to be a sort of effect of attrition, of the acceptance of something by the subject, because there is a moment, we are told, when by reason of a , of insistence of the treatment, of its presence as treatment, the incorporation of this tragic phantasy is something which appears to the subject as having a phallic value.

A quite different value, namely the introduction into him of something which is suddenly of a different nature, which appears to have been the incorporation of an object

which is dangerous and rejected in a way in the phantasies, becomes the welcomed object, an object which is the source of power. The source, it should be noted - the word is there, it is not I who constructed the comparisons and the metaphors.

Does not this sort of introjection which plays a preservative role, have features in common with religious communion, we are told on page 172? At least in the obsessional neurosis where one swallows without chewing, he adds, because it is a question of commenting on the sentiments of happiness in this phantasy which involves no destruction comparable to the phantasies of sucking and of melancholy that Abraham speaks about. This sort of introjection which one could qualify as passive, seems to preserve better the name preservative. "Does it not have features in common with religious communion, where one swallows without chewing?"

What we have here are not features chosen, I would say, in a tendentious fashion. Abraham's melancholia. It is indeed in terms of something which we sense is happening, in terms of a sort of practice or acesis operating principally on phantasies, that no doubt with a careful dosing, with barriers, with an application of the brakes, with stages, with all the precautions that are involved in the technique, we see being realised this something which would permit the subject of obsessional neurosis to adopt relationships which when all is said and done we cannot really see the reason for, but which undoubtedly concern what is called the distance taken from the object. In sum, if I understand it properly, it is a question of allowing the subject to approach more closely on the plane of phantasy, to pass through a phase where this distance is cancelled out in order no doubt, at least it must be hoped, to be reconquered afterwards; this distance from an object which has successively concentrated in itself all the forces of fear, and danger, in order subsequently to become in fact the symbol through which there is established a libidinal relationship which is considered to be more normal, which is described as genital.

In fact we remain perhaps, when we have a particular perspective, namely our own, a little bit more severe than the author in applauding the fact of having reached this goal when, speaking of a female patient, he received at the end of a certain number of months of treatment, the following declaration (p. 164):

"Now she told me this: I had an extraordinary experience, that of being able to enjoy (*jouir de*) the happiness of my husband. I was extremely moved in ascertaining his joy, and his pleasure made mine."

I would ask you to weigh these terms. They are certainly not without value. They describe very well a sort of experience which absolutely does not imply, I must say, any removal of the previous frigidity of the said patient; the extraordinary experience of being able to enjoy the happiness of one's husband, is something which is frequently observed, but this does not mean for all that that the patient has in any way reached orgasm. In fact we are told, the patient remains, we are told, semi-frigid. This is why one is perhaps a little bit surprised that there is immediately added afterwards:

"Is this not the best way to characterise adult genital relationships?"

This notion of adult genital relationships is evidently what gives to this whole perspective what I call the construction of blind windows in the adult genital relationship. One cannot see very well what that really means, when one looks closely at it. We have seen

that once the authors try to explain it, they do not seem to have found there either the simplicity or the unity that all this seems to imply.

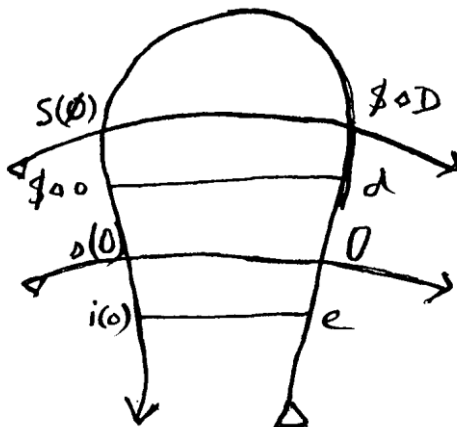
As regards the affirmation of the coherence of the ego, it emerges not alone from the disappearance of the obsessional symptomatology and the phenomena of depersonalisation, but also expresses itself by the accession to a feeling of liberty, of unity, which is a new experience for these subjects.

These optimistic approximations perhaps do not quite represent either something which at least for me corresponds in my experience to what really represents a progress and a cure in obsessional neurosis.

This having been said, we can see clearly the kind of mountain, of wall, of ready made conceptions we have to deal with when it is a question of situating somewhere, of appreciating what is an obsessional constitution, an obsessional structure, the way in which it is lived and the way in which it evolves.

Here we are trying to articulate things in a completely different register, because we believe that even though it is not any more complicated than others - I do not believe that if you succeed in familiarising yourselves, in counting the number of measures that we bring into play here, you will find when all is said and done that it involves many more things, simply that it is perhaps articulated differently, in a multilinear fashion, even though, of course, the desire to have a synoptic table corresponding to or opposing that of Madame Brunswick, is deep in the heart of many listeners. We will get to it perhaps one day, but obviously before reaching it it would perhaps be appropriate to go step by step and to see what we mean when we think that this action of the partial object of the phallus must be re-criticised, and must be put in its place in order to be put to use, and perhaps to also see the dangers of a certain usage which is the current usage.

It is this place that we try to articulate by this little schema. We could cover the whole of this with signs and equations, but I do not wish to give you the impression of artificiality, even though these things are things which I tried as far as possible to reduce to their essential necessity.



We have already placed here the capital O of the big Other, where the code is found and which receives the demand, and we have seen that it is in the passage here from 0 to the point where the message is, that the signified of the Other is produced, after which the need begun here is found there in a state of transformation at different levels, is qualified differently, which, if we take this line as being the line of the realisation of the subject, is expressed here by something which always more or less culminates in an identification, namely in the passage, in the remodelling, in the transformation also, in the passage when all is said and done of the subject's need into the defiles of the demand.

We know that this is not sufficient to constitute a satisfactory subject, a subject who is based on the number of supporting points that are necessary for him, let us say four, and who knows? It is precisely in this beyond of the demand that there is articulated a *Verdrangt*. We have already tried to define it the last time by qualifying it as of desire, at its topological place where it was formally in this way that I presented it to you, where there is in a way a necessity linked to this topology, that it must be in this field of the beyond of the demand that there comes to be situated, and at the same time to be necessarily articulated, to be subjected to the particular articulation of this beyond, sexual desire.

There is here in fact a coincidence between the place where the sexual drive, the tendency as such can find its place, and the structural necessity which links it to being at this place in the beyond of the demand. It is in sum to the degree that there intervenes this something which in the totality of signifiers on which there comes to be superimposed to make of it a signified, namely that we usually put underneath the bar of our articulation, capital S over little s, here the signified which is first of all an a-signified (*un assignifié*).

The phallus is indeed therefore this particular signifier which in the body of signifiers, is specialised to designate as such the totality of the effects of the signifier on the signified, as such, namely in so far as they are the effects of the signifier on the signified.

This goes very far, and there is no way of going less far if we wish to give the phallus its signification, namely this something which ensures that it occupies here this privileged place in what is going to appear as such as signifier, in this beyond which is here called the beyond of desire. Namely the whole field which is here beyond the field of demand.

In so far as this beyond of desire is symbolised, it is there, and in so far as it is thus that we see the possibility, it is a simple articulation of the meaning of what we are saying, the possibility of there being here a relationship of the subject to the demand as such, because it is quite obvious that for there to be a relationship of the subject to the demand, he must not be completely included until this beyond is constituted, if it is the case that by hypothesis he is constituted by articulating himself thanks to the signifier phallus. It is at this moment that here, beyond the pure and simple Other who up to then totally lays down the law of the constitution of the subject, simply in his bodily existence, by the fact that the mother is a speaking being, the fact that she is a speaking being is something absolutely essential, whatever contemporary analysts may think. It is not just little cuddles and dabs of Eau de Cologne that need to be given to the infant in order to constitute a relationship to the mother. It is necessary that the mother should speak to him. Everybody knows that. Not only that she should speak to him, but everyone knows that the child has a very particular relationship, and that a mute nurse will not fail to produce some fairly visible consequences in the development of the infant.

Beyond this Other, if there is here something of the signifier which is constituted which is called the beyond of desire, we have the possibility of this relationship $S \diamond D$, namely the subject as such, a less complete subject, namely that he is barred. This means that a complete human subject is never a pure and simple subject, the subject of knowledge as he is constructed by the whole of philosophy, well and truly corresponding to the *percipiens* of this *perceptum* which is the world. We know that there is no human subject who is pure subject of knowledge, unless it is the human subject in so far as we reduce him to something or other like a photo-electric cell or an eye, or again to what can be called in philosophy a consciousness. But because we are analysts, we know that there is always a *Spaltung*, namely that there are always two lines on which he constitutes himself, and it is for this reason moreover that all the problems of structure that we have originate.

Here, what must be constituted? It is precisely what I have called no longer the signified of O , but the signifier of \emptyset , $S(\emptyset)$, in so far as he knows this *Spaltung*, that he is himself structured by this *Spaltung*, in other words in so far as he, O , has already undergone the effects of this *Spaltung*. Here this is reversed, that means: the one who is signified by the signifier phallus is already marked by this effect of the signifier. It is therefore the \emptyset if you wish, in so far as the phallus is barred in it, raised to the state of signifier. It is the Other *qua* castrated, which here is represented at the place of the message. The message of desire, is that.

The message of desire, is that. This is not to say for all that that it is easy to receive because precisely the whole problem of this difficulty of articulating desire which ensures that there is an unconscious, in other words that in fact what appears here as being at the upper level as one might say of the schema, is on the contrary ordinarily something that we must imagine as being at the lower level, as not being articulated in the consciousness of the subject, even though it is well and truly articulated in his unconscious, and it is even because it is articulated in his unconscious that it can up to a certain point - it is precisely a matter of knowing which, it is the question that we pose here - be articulated in the consciousness of the subject.

What does the hysteric whom we spoke about the last day show us? The hysteric of course is not psychoanalysed, otherwise she would no longer be hysterical by hypothesis. The hysteric, we have said, poses, situates this beyond in the form of a desire *qua* desire of the other.

To fix your ideas, I will justify this for you a little bit more in what follows, but right away, because it is necessary, if one tries to articulate something, to begin by articulating, by giving a commentary on it, I shall say that things happen in the following way, that just as here in the first loop, the subject by the manifestation of need, of his tension, causes this path of the first signifying line of demand to be crossed over, in the same way it is here that we can, to topologise things, put the relationship which is that of the ego to the image of the other as such, and in the same way it is here, namely in sum in so far as that which in the Other as such, *qua* capital O , not in the other *qua* little o , in the imaginary other, that which in the Other *qua* capital O permits the subject to tackle this beyond of the signified which is precisely the field that we are in the process of exploring, that of his desire, this little d of desire occupies the same place as the little e occupies with respect to the subject, which expresses the following, simply and precisely it is in this place where the subject has sought to articulate his desire that he will encounter the desire of the other as such, and what we express is precisely something which is founded on experience, and which I already for a

long time articulated for you in other forms, but which I also articulated for you in this one that the desire that is in question, namely desire in its unconscious function is the desire of the Other. This indeed is what we saw when we spoke the last time about the hysteric in connection with the dream. These are not selected dreams, any more than I give you selected texts from Freud. I assure you, if, as is apparently beginning to happen, you set about reading Freud, I cannot advise you too strongly to read him completely, otherwise it is you who run the danger of coming upon passages which will be perhaps not selected, but which will be none the less the source of all sorts of errors, or even of mistaken identity, if you do not see the place at which one or other text is situated in I would not say the development of a thought, even though this strictly speaking would be what should be said, but ever since people have spoken about thought, it has become such a bizarre term that no one ever knows too well what is being spoken about, it is not enough to talk about thought for one to be able to say that one is speaking about the same thing. It is even the development of a research, of an effort by someone who himself, has a certain idea of its magnetic pole, as one might say, and who can only reach it by a certain detour, and it is in terms of the whole journey that each one of these detours must be judged.

Therefore I did not choose the two dreams of the last day of the patient, of the hysteric, at random. I explained to you how I chose them. I took the first dream because I encountered it after the other dreams having explained to you the reasons why I did not take them first. I will return to them. Namely, because the dream of the Botanical Monograph, which may be something which helps us to understand what has to be demonstrated, is one of Freud's dreams which it will be more convenient to explain later.

I continue first the articulation of the dream of the hysteric. What the hysteric has shown us, is that she finds her supporting point - these are not terms which are reserved to me, if you read Mr. Glover writing about obsessional neurosis, you will see that he employs exactly the same term to say that it appears that when one has removed their obsession from obsessional neurotics, they lack for example a supporting point. You see that the usage which I make here of terms, is a usage which I have in common with the other authors, namely that we try to metaphorise our experience, our little impressions - we have said that the hysteric takes her point of support in a desire which is the desire of the other. This is essential, this creation of a desire beyond demand. It is something that we have, I believe, sufficiently articulated.

One could mention here a third dream which I did not have time to tackle the last time, but which I may as well read for you now.

"She was putting a candle into a candlestick; but the candle broke so that it wouldn't stand up properly. The girls at her school said she was clumsy; but the mistress said it was not her fault."

In this case again, here is how Freud relates this dream to real events:

The day before she had actually put a candle into a candlestick, though it did not break. Some transparent symbolism was being used in this dream. A candle is an object which can excite the female genitals; and, if it is broken, so that it cannot stand up properly, it means the man is impotent.

And Freud underlines:

"It was not her fault. But how could a carefully brought up young woman, who had been screened from the impact of anything ugly, have known that a candle might be put to such use?" In this connection we learn that while they were in a rowing boat she had heard a very vulgar student song about the use that the Queen of Sweden, behind closed shutters, made of Apollo candles. She had not understood the last word. Her husband had of course explained behind closed shutters, the meaning of Apollo, and all of this is rediscovered and appropriately felt in this instance.

The important thing is that here we then see appearing in its naked and isolated state as I might say, in the state of a partial, even a flying object, the signifier phallus, and that the point which is important, is of course that we do not know from what moment of the analysis of this patient, because it is certainly a patient who is in analysis, the subject of this dream was taken. The important point is obviously here in the it was not her fault.

This it was not her fault is the fact that it is at the level of others. It is before all the others, it is in function of the mistress that all her fellow pupils no longer mock her. Here the symbol is evoked, and this is what I want to get to, which overlaps and confirms as one might say what was already in the dream of the butcher's beautiful wife, it is namely that the accent is to be put on the fact that for the hysteric, and the hysteric in sum is a constitutive mode of the subject concerning precisely her sexual desire, is the mode upon which she adopted what is to be stressed in the case of the hysteric. It is of course the dimension of desire in so far as it is opposed to that of demand. But it is first and foremost in the term desire of the Other (with a capital O), the position, the place in the other which is to be underlined.

I reminded you how Dora lived up to the moment when her hysterical position came apart. She is very much at ease, apart from a few little symptoms, but which are precisely those which constitute her as hysterical, and which are read in the relationship of the distinction, the *Spaltung* between these two lines. We will return to the way in which we can articulate the overdetermination of the symptom. It is linked to the existence of two signifying lines as such. But what we showed the other day, is that what Dora wanted, is that in sum she should subsist as a subject in so far as she demands love, no doubt like every good hysteric, but that she sustains the desire of the Other as such. It is she who sustains it. It is she who is its support. Things go very well in so far as the things happening between her father and the aforesaid Madame K proceed most successfully, and without anyone needing to see in it, the term that she sustains, the desire of the Other is here the term which best fits the style of her action and of her position with respect to her father, to Madame K, and it is here that I indicated something to you; it is in as much as she is able to identify with Mr. K, that the whole little construction is possible. It is in a certain relationship to the other, in this case the imaginary other, as such; it is in as much as faced with this desire she sustains him at this place, namely at the place which corresponds to her own.

You have clearly seen that in fact there is sketched out a little square whose four vertices are represented by the ego, the image of the other, the relationship of the subject thus constituted to the imaginary other as such, and here desire. We thus find here the four legs on which a human subject constituted as such can normally be based, that is to say one who is neither more nor less aware of the mechanism and of the strings pulling the puppet of another there where she sees, namely where she is capable or more or less capable, of locating herself in this essential component.

It is here and at that level, faced with the desire of the other, and besides I showed it the last time, without for all that things going beyond, because after all one could say that in the hysteric the return line was more effaced. Moreover this is the reason why the hysteric has all sorts of difficulties with her imaginary world, here represented in the image of the other, and is likely to see produced in it the effects of fragmentation, of different disintegrations, which are strictly speaking what are of service to her in her symptoms.

I am simply recalling this at the hysterical level - how are we going to be able to articulate what happens at the level of the obsessional? I mean in an obsessional structure.

The classical theory, I tell you, tells you how it is articulated in Freud, and how it is articulated in Freud in the final word of Freud on obsessional neurosis. Obsessional neurosis, is clearly a bit more complicated than hysterical neurosis, but not all that much. If one can manage to focus things on the essential, it can be articulated, but if one does not focus things on the essential, which is certainly the case of the author about whom I spoke to you above, one literally gets lost in it, namely one splashes around between the sadistic, the anal, the partial object, incorporation, the distance from the object. One literally does not know any longer where to turn, to find one's bearings in it. Now it is extremely varied from a clinical point of view, as the author shows us in observations which it seems scarcely possible to unify under one clinical heading, under the names of Pierre and of Paul without counting the Moniques and the Jeannes who are in the background. But I would like to say that in the author's clinical material, at the level of the report on the ego, there are only Pierre and Paul. Pierre and Paul are manifestly completely different subjects from the point of view of the texture of a single object. One can scarcely put them under the same heading, which of course is not in itself an objection either, because we are not particularly well able either to articulate for the moment, different nosological headings.

It is very very striking to see how, after having spent so much time on obsessional neurosis, we are incapable of dismembering it as clinical work manifestly requires us, given the diversity of the aspects which it presents to us. You remember in Aristotle what is called the correct path of the cook's knife, of the good cook, the one who knows how to cut along the joints. In the present state of things, nobody, particularly those who have occupied themselves with obsessional neurosis, is capable of correctly articulating it. It is a sure sign of some theoretical deficiencies.

Let us take things up at the point that we have got to.

What does the obsessional do, in order to consist *qua* subject? He is also like the hysteric, and as you can suspect, there is not such a profound relationship between the hysteric and the obsessional neurotic, that already before any kind of serious elaboration, namely before Freud, a Mr. Janet could produce this very curious kind of work of geometrical superposition as one might call it of point by point correspondence, of images which are called in geometry I believe, transformations of figures, which means that the obsessional is really conceived as something which is the transformed face of a hysteric as one might say.

The obsessional is also oriented of course towards desire. If there was not a question in all of this, first and foremost of desire, there would be no kind of homogeneity between the neuroses.

Only look at the classical theory, Freud's theory, Freud's final articulations. What does he tell us? That obsessional neurosis - he said many things in the course of his career, he had first of all discovered that what one can call the primitive trauma is different to the primitive trauma of the hysteric. In the hysteric it is a sudden seduction, an intrusion, an eruption of the sexual into the life of the subject. He saw very clearly that in as much as this psychic trauma can stand up to the critique of reconstruction, it is a question on the contrary of something in which the subject had had an active role, as he said, in which he had taken pleasure.

That was the first approximation. Then subsequently there is the whole development in the *Ratman*, namely the appearance of the extreme complexity of the affective relationships of the obsessional, and namely the stressing, the focusing of the accent on affective ambivalence, on the fundamental active/passive, masculine/feminine oppositions, and the most important thing, the love/hate antagonism. The *Ratman* moreover should be reread like the Bible. The *Ratman* is still rich in everything which is still to be said about obsessional neurosis, it is a topic to work on.

Finally what did Freud end up with as a last metapsychological formulation? The fact is, he says, there had been at that time clinical experiences and metapsychological elaborations which had brought to light the aggressive tendencies and which had already caused Freud to make this fundamental distinction of life instincts and death instincts, which are still tormenting psychoanalysts.

What Freud tells us, is that there was precocious defusion, separation, of the life instincts and the death instincts. In other words, that the detachment of the destructive tendencies as such, happened at too early a stage in the obsessional not to mark his whole subsequent development, namely his installation in his own particular subjectivity, as obsessional.

How is this going to be inserted into this dialectic? Much more immediately, concretely, tangibly, it seems to me. If these terms of demand and desire, begin to seem logical to your minds, you will find them of use every day, and in any case quite usable in your day-to-day analytic practice. I mean that you can make some habitual use of them before they become worn out, but you will always find yourself asking here whether it is a question of desire and demand, or of desire or of demand.

What does what we have just recalled regarding the instincts of destruction mean here, namely something which is manifest in experience, in an experience which must first be taken at the popular, common level of what we know about obsessionals, but not even the obsessionals that we analyse, the obsessionals that simply as knowledgeable psychologists, we can see around us and on whose behaviour we are able to measure its effects?

It is quite certain that the obsessional tends to destroy his object. This is something which is almost a truth of experience. It is a matter simply of not contenting oneself with that, to see what is this destructive activity of the obsessional.

Here is what I propose to you. I propose to you to consider that unlike the hysteric, who lives entirely at the level of the other - the accent for her is to be at the level of the other, and it is for this reason that she needs a desire of the other, because without that, what would the other be, if not the law? But it is first of all at the level of the other that there is posed as one might say the centre of gravity of the constitutive movement of the hysteric.

For reasons which are not at all impossible to articulate, and which are in fact identical with what Freud tells us in speaking of the precocious effusion and defusion of instincts, it is the seeking, the aiming at desire itself, at the beyond of the demand which is constitutive of the obsessional.

I would like you to have had some little experience of what a child who is going to become an obsessional is like. I believe that there are no young subjects in whom we see more tangibly what I tried to articulate for you the last time when I argued that in this margin of need which is necessarily of a limited range, as one talks about a company with limited responsibilities, need is always something with a limited range. In this margin between need and the unconditional characteristics of the demand for love, there is situated this something which I called desire, and how did I define this desire as such? As something which precisely because it must be situated in this beyond, as I might say, denies the element of alterity which is included in the demand for love.

But to preserve this unconditioned character by transforming it into the character of the absolute condition of desire, into desire as such in a pure state, the other is denied, but need from the fact that the subject has had to break through, to know this final, limiting character of the unconditionally of the demand for love, we see that this character remains transferred onto need as such.

The young child who will become an obsessional, is the young child of whom the parents say - here is a convergence of common language with the language of the psychologists -: "He has fixed ideas". He does not have ideas that are more extraordinary than any other child, if on the contrary we focus on the material of his demand, namely that he demands a little box. A little box is really not such an important thing, and there are many children on whom one will not pause for a single instant when they demand the little box, except of course psychoanalysts, who will see all sorts of subtle allusions in it. In fact they would not be wrong, but I find it more important to see that there are certain children among others, who demand little boxes, from whom their parents find this demand for the little box to be properly speaking an intolerable demand, and it is intolerable.

One would be quite wrong to believe that it is enough to send the aforesaid parents to a school for parents so that they can get over it, because contrary to what is said, parents are of course involved in it too. That means that it is not for nothing either than one is an obsessional. For that to happen there must be a model somewhere. Of course, but in the reception itself, the fixed idea aspect that the parents notice is quite discernible, and always immediately discerned even by people who do not form part of the parental couple.

In this very particular exigency which manifests itself in the way that the child demands a little box, what is strictly speaking intolerable for the other, on this occasion is precisely what people call in an approximate way fixed ideas, namely that it is not a demand like the others, in other words that it has the character of absolute condition which is what I designated for you as being that of desire. And the obsessional, is precisely a child who for reasons whose correspondence you see with what is called in this instance the defusion of drives which are very strong in this instance, which is going to be the element I might say of the first foundation of this tripod which must afterwards in order to be able to stand firmly, have four legs: in his case the stress is put on desire, not only on desire, but on desire as such, namely that in its constitution it involves this destruction of the other.

It is the unconditioned form of need, need which has passed over to the state of absolute condition, and precisely in as much as it is beyond this unconditioned exigency of love of which on occasion it can come to be a test, but as such it is something which denies the other as such, and it is this indeed when acquired which makes it, like the little child's desire for the small box, so intolerable.

Pay close attention, because you should understand that I am not saying the same thing when I say that the desire is the destruction of the other, and when I say the hysteric is going to search for her desire in the desire of the other.

When I say that the hysteric searches for her desire in the desire of the other, it is the desire that she attributes to the other as such.

When I say that the obsessional gets his desire across, this means above all precisely that he is going to look for it in a beyond by aiming for it as such in its constitution as desire, namely in as much as he destroys the other as such. And this is the secret of this profound contradiction that there is between the obsessional and his desire. It is that aimed at in this way, desire carries in itself this internal contradiction which makes of it the impasse of the desire of the obsessional, which the authors try to express by talking about these kinds of perpetual and instantaneous comings and goings, between introjection and projection.

I must say that this is something which is extremely difficult to portray for oneself, especially when one has sufficiently indicated as the author does in certain places, the extent to which the mechanism of introjection and the mechanism of projection are unrelated. I articulated it for you more strongly than this author, but you must all the same begin with this, namely that the mechanism of projection is imaginary, and that the mechanism of introjection is a symbolic mechanism. They are absolutely unrelated.

On the contrary it seems to me, you can conceive, and moreover discover in experience if you carefully observe your obsessionals, that the obsessional is inhabited by desires which are precisely all those that you see, on condition that you familiarise yourself a little with it, which you see swarming like a kind of extraordinary vermin which, in a particularly suitable kind of cultural *milieu*, if you in fact direct, it does not require a great effort, it is enough to have the elements of your transference that I spoke about a while ago, if you direct the culture of the obsessional neurosis into the culture of the phantasy, you will see the aforesaid vermin proliferating almost everywhere. That is why the culture of the obsessional neurosis does not last very long.

But in fact, if you try to see the essential, namely what happens when the obsessional from time to time, taking his courage in his hands, sets himself to try to break through the barrier of the demand, namely to head off to find the object of his desire, first of all he does not find it easily, but there are many things all the same, because he has already had the practice, there are many things which can serve him as a support for it, even if it is only the little box.

It is quite clear that it is on this route that the most extraordinary accidents happen to him, namely something that people will try to find the motive for at different levels by the intervention of the superego and of a thousand other things which of course do exist.

But much more radically than all that, the obsessional in so far as his fundamental movement is directed towards desire as such, and above all in its constitution as desire,

implies in every movement towards the attainment of this desire what we call the destruction of the other, even though it is in the nature of desire as such to require this support of the other. This desire of the other is not a way of access to the desire of the subject, it is quite simply the place of desire, and every movement in the obsessional towards his desire runs into something which is absolutely tangible in, what I may call, the movement of their libido. The more something plays the role in the psychology of an obsessional of object, even a momentary one, of desire, the more the law of approach as one might say of the obsessional with respect to this object, will be conditioned by something which manifests itself literally in what one can call a veritable lowering of libidinal tension at the moment that he approaches it, and to the extent that at the moment that he hold this object of his desire, for him nothing more exists.

You will see this. It is absolutely observable.

I will try to articulate it for you, to show you by examples. The whole problem for the obsessional, is therefore to give to this desire which for him conditions this destruction of the other, when desire itself has disappeared, the only thing which can give it this appearance of support; namely this corresponding point that the hysteric for her part, thanks to her identifications, occupies so easily, and which on this occasion, because precisely from the fact that there is no Other, no big Other here, I mean of course in so far as it is a question of desire, I am not saying that the big Other does not exist for the obsessional, I am saying that when it is a question of his desire, there is none, and it is for this reason that he is searching for the only thing which can maintain in its place this desire as such, outside this reference point. It is something which is opposite, which comes to take this place, which is the other formula of \$ with respect to little o. What takes the place of the identification of the hysteric - it is its function in the obsessional - is an object, and this object is always in a veiled form, no doubt, but is always perfectly equivalent, identifiable and reducible to the signifier phallus.

This is where I must end today. You will see subsequently what this_v involves as regards the behaviour of the obsessional *vis-à-vis* this object, and also his behaviour *vis-à-vis* the small other. You will see, I will show you the next time, how a certain number of much more current truths can be deduced from it, namely for example that the subject cannot really show his desire except by opposing himself to what we will call an absolute virility, and that on the other hand, in so far as he must show his desire, because it is for him the essential exigency, he can moreover only show it, where it exists, and very precisely show it in something where he must perform some exploit, I mean that the performance aspect of the activity of the obsessional is something which finds here its reasons and its motives.

Seminar 23: Wednesday 21 May 1958

Through the exploration that we are pursuing of the neurotic structures in so far as they are conditioned by what we call the formations of the unconscious, we came the last day to talk about the obsessional. We finished our discourse on the obsessional by saying in fact that he has to constitute himself somewhere in face of his evanescent desire. We began to indicate in the formula of desire as being the desire of the other, why in the case of the obsessional this desire is evanescent. This desire is evanescent because of a fundamental difficulty in his relationship with the Other, with the big Other as such, this big Other in so far as it is the locus where the signifier orders desire.

It is this dimension that we are trying to articulate here, because we believe that it is for lack of this dimension that there are introduced, both difficulties in the theory and also deviations in practice.

We would like in passing to weave in a way into this discourse, to make you experience - it is the meaning of the whole of Freud's work if you look at it after having gone through it sufficiently - that this discovery is the signifier which orders desire. But of course within this phenomenon, the subject tries to express, to manifest in an effect of the signifier as such, what happens in his own approach to the signified.

Up to a certain point the work of Freud can itself be inserted in this effort. There has been a lot of talk in connection with Freud's work about a naturalism, an effort to reduce human reality to nature. This is not the case at all. Freud's work is an attempt to make a pact between this being of man and nature, and a pact which undoubtedly is sought elsewhere than in a relationship of innateness. It is by starting from the fact that man has been constituted, is constituted, *qua* subject of the word, *qua* I of the act of speech, that man is always experienced in Freud's work, and how can this be denied because precisely in analysis he is never experienced otherwise? He therefore finds himself essentially before nature in a posture other than that of an immanent bearer of life. It is within this experience which makes of him the subject of the word, that the link, his relationship with nature has to be articulated, to be formulated.

It is this relationship to life, which is found to be symbolised in this sort of lure that he extracts from the forms of life in the signifier of the phallus, and it is here that there can be found the central point, the most tangible, the most significant of all these signifying crossroads that we explore during the analysis of the subject. The phallus is in a way the summit, the point of equilibrium, the signifier *par excellence* of this relationship of man to the signified, and of course by this very fact, it is in a position, we would say, with respect to which the insertion of man into the dialectic of sexual desire is destined to be absolutely specially problematic. The first [problem] is that it has to find its place in something which preceded it, which is the dialectic of demand in so far as demand always demands something which is more than, and beyond satisfaction, to which it appeals, - hence as one might say, the ambiguous character of the place where desire must be situated, this place which is always problematic, and is beyond the demand, it is of course beyond in so far as the demand aims at the satisfaction of need, and is on this side of the demand. Yes, it is on this side in so far as the demand, because of the fact that it is articulated in symbolic terms, is a demand which goes beyond all the satisfactions it calls for in so far as it is a demand for love, in so far

as it is a demand aiming at the being of the other, at obtaining from the other this essential presence (*présentification*) which means that the other gives this something which is beyond all possible satisfaction, which is his very being, which is precisely what is aimed at in love.

It is in this virtual space between the appeal for satisfaction and the demand for love, that desire has to organise itself, has to find its place, and it is for this reason that in order to situate desire we find ourselves always in this double position, which with respect to demand makes of it something which is at once beyond it and on this side of it, according to the face or the aspect under which we envisage the demand, namely *qua* demand connected with a need, or demand *qua* structured in signifying terms, which as such always supercedes any kind of response which is at the level of satisfaction, which of itself calls for a sort of absolute response which then is going to project its essential character of absolute condition onto everything that is going to be organised in this interval, this interval within as it were the two planes of the demand, the signified plane and the signifying plane of the demand, where desire has to be articulated, to take its place.

It is precisely because it has to be articulated and to take its place in this place, that once the subject approaches this desire, the other becomes the relay, the other *qua* locus of the word, and precisely in so far as it is to him that the demand is addressed, is going also to be the locus where desire must be discovered, where there must be discovered the possible formulation of desire. It is here that the contradiction operates at every instant, because within this other in so far as he is possessed by a desire, by a desire which in fact from the beginning and fundamentally is foreign to the subject, the difficulties in the formulation of this desire are those on which the subject is going to come to grief, and going all the more significantly come to grief, precisely because we see him develop the structures which are those which analytic discovery has allowed to be delineated.

We have said that these structures are different, depending on whether the accent is put upon the character of the unsatisfaction essential to desire - this is the way by which the hysteric approaches its field and its necessity - or whether the accent is put on the essential dependency on the other, in order to accede to this desire, and this is the fashion in which this approach is proposed to the obsessional.

We said as we were finishing the last day, that something happens here which is different to this hysterical identification, this hysterical identification which comes essentially from the fact that the hysteric, in order to envisage this desire which for her is an enigmatic point, is something to which we always bring as I might say, a sort of forced interpretation which is the one which characterises all the first approaches that Freud made in the analysis of hysteria. Freud did not say that desire is situated for the hysteric, in such a position that to say to her: here is the man or woman whom you desire, is always a forced interpretation, always an inexact interpretation, always an interpretation that misses the point. There is no example where a hysteric, either in Freud's first observations, or later, or in the case of Dora, or even if we extend the meaning of hysteria to the homosexual case that we commented on at length here, where Freud did not in a way make a error, and did not in any case end up without exception at the refusal of the patient to accede to the meaning of her desire, of her symptoms and of her acts, every time that he proceeded in this fashion. In fact the desire of the hysteric is essentially and as such not the desire of an object, but the desire of a desire, the effort to maintain herself before this point where she calls her desire, the point where the desire of the other is. On the contrary she identifies herself with an object. Dora identifies herself with Mr. K. The woman that I spoke to you about, Elizabeth von R also identifies

herself with different persons in her family or in her entourage. It is the point from which she identifies herself with someone for whom the term of ego or ego ideal are equally inappropriate in the case of the hysteric, someone who becomes for her her *alter ego*, precisely this object whose choice as object of identification was always expressly articulated by Freud in a fashion that is in conformity with what I am telling you, namely that it is in so far as he or she recognises in another man, or in another woman, the indices as one might say of their desire, namely that he or she is faced with the same problem of desire as him or her, that identification is produced, and all the forms of contagion, of crisis, of epidemic, of symptomatic manifestation which are so characteristic of hysteria.

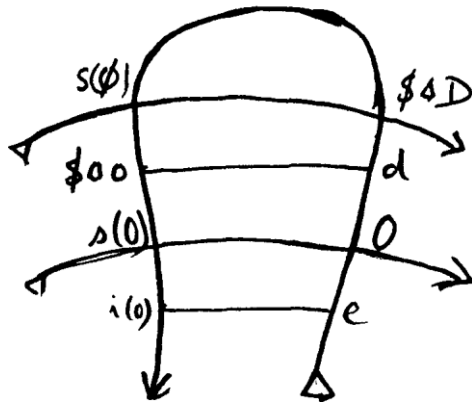
The obsessional has different solutions, because the problem of the desire of the other appears to him in a quite different way. In order to articulate it we are going to try to accede to it by the stages which experience has furnished us with concerning the obsessional.

I would say that in one way, it does not matter from what end we take the living experience of the obsessional. What is in question, is not to forget its diversity. The ways traced by analysis, the path along which what must be called our tentative experience has encouraged us to resolve, to find the solution of the problem of the obsessional, the ways are partial and incomplete: of themselves they of course give us material, the way in which this material is utilised, we can explain in different ways with respect to the results which have been obtained.

First of all we can also criticise them in themselves. This critique should be in a way a convergent one. The impression that we have when we spell out this experience as it has become oriented in practice, is undoubtedly that the theory like the practice tends to be centred on the utilisation of the phantasies of the subject. This role of phantasy in the case of obsessional neurosis has something enigmatic about it, in so far as the term phantasy is never defined. We have spoken here a good deal, and for a long time about the imaginary relationships of the function of the image as a guide as one might say, of instinct, as a channel, an indication along the path of instinctual realisations. On the other hand we know the degree to which this use of the function of the image is reduced, is diminished, is impoverished in the case of man, in as much as one can detect it with certainty, because it seems to be reduced to the narcissistic image, to the specular image, is, I would say, reduced to an extremely polyvalent function; I am not saying neutralised because also functioning on the plane of aggressive and erotic relationships.

How can we articulate the undoubtedly essential, prevalent, imaginary functions of which everybody speaks, which are at the heart of analytic experience, those of the phantasy, at the point that we have arrived at?

I believe that in this connection we should see that the schema presented here opens up for us the possibility of articulating, of situating the function of the phantasy. It is no doubt through a sort of intuitive approach to this topology, that I ask you to begin in the first instance to represent it for yourselves. It is not a question of course of a real space, but it is a question of something in which homologues can be delineated.



If the relationship to the image of the other is constituted in effect somewhere at the level of an experience which is integrated into the circuit of demand, to the primitive circuit of demand, that in which the subject addresses himself in the first instance to the other for the satisfaction of his needs, and if it is somewhere on this circuit that there is constituted this sort of transitive accommodation to a striking presence (*d'effet de prestance*) which puts the subject in a certain relationship to his counterpart as such, if therefore the relationship to the image is found there at the level of the experiences and of the very moments of entry into the operation of the word at the limit of the passage from the *infans* state to the speaking state, we will say this: in this field where we search for the pathways of the realisation of the desire of the subject through the access to the desire of the other, it is in a homologous point that there is found the function and the situation of the phantasy.

The phantasy we will define, if you wish, as the imaginary which is taken up into a certain signifying usage. So this is important and is manifested and is observed in a characteristic fashion, if only in the fact that when we speak about phantasies, sadistic phantasies for example, which play such an important role in the economy of the obsessional, it is not enough to qualify these manifestations as phantastical by the fact that they represent something which is a tendency qualified as sadistic, in connection with a certain literary work which itself does not present itself as an investigation of instincts, but as an operation which the term imaginary would be far from sufficient to describe, because it is a literary work, that there are scenes, in fact .that there are scenarios, that it is something which is profoundly articulated in the signifier that is in question. And all things considered, I believe that every time that we speak about the phantasy, we must not overlook this scenario aspect, this story aspect which forms an essential dimension of it. It is not, as one might say, a sort of blind image of the destructive instinct; it is not something where the subject as one might say - I will try to give you an image myself to explain what I mean - all of a sudden sees red in front of the prey that it is in question. It is something which the subject not only articulates in a scenario, but in which the subject brings himself into play in this scenario.

The formula S with the little bar, namely the subject at the most articulated point of his *présentification* with respect to little o , is indeed here something valid in every kind of properly phantastical deployment of what we are calling in this instance the sadistic tendency, in so far as it may be implied in the economy of the obsessional.

You will notice that there is always a scene in which the subject is presented as such in differently masked forms in the scenario, in the form of implications in diversified images of the other in which an other *qua* counterpart, and also *qua* reflection of the subject, is here made present. I would say further: not enough stress is put on the character of presence of a

certain type of instrument. I already made an allusion, following Freud, to the importance for example of the phantasy of flagellation, this phantasy which Freud especially articulated in so far as it seemed to play a very particular role. It was one of the aspects of his article, of the precise communication that he made on this subject. It is on its role in the female psyche. He made it because he approached it from this angle, and from a certain angle of his experience.

This phantasy is of course far from being limited to the field and to the cases that Freud spoke about on this occasion, but if one looks closely at it, it is its quite legitimately limited field in as much as this phantasy plays a particular role at a certain turning point of development, and a particular point in the development of feminine sexuality, and very precisely in so far as the intervention of the function of the signifier phallus which plays its particular role within obsessional neurosis, and in all the cases where we see emerging what are called sadistic phantasies.

The presence, the predominance of what is, when all is said and done, this enigmatic element gives its prevalence to this instrument which one cannot say is explained properly in any way in terms of biological functions. One can imagine in it or find in it some relationship or other to superficial excitations; the stimulation of the skin. You sense the degree that this would be incomplete, almost artificial and obvious in character; that in the function of this element which appears so often within this phantasy, that to this function there is attached a signifying multivalency which puts the whole weight of the balance much more on the side of the signified than of anything which might be attached to a deduction of the biological order, of the order of needs, of any order whatsoever.

This notion of phantasy therefore as something which no doubt participates in the imaginary order, but which only takes up its function of phantasy in the economy, and wherever it is articulated, through its signifying function, is something which appears to me - it has not been formulated up to the present like this - which seems essential to me in order to talk about the phantasy. I would say more: I do not believe that there is another way of conceiving what are called unconscious phantasies.

What are unconscious phantasies, if not the latency of something which - we know it through everything that we have learned about the organisation, about the structure of the unconscious - is quite possible *qua* signifying chain? That there are in the unconscious signifying chains which subsist as such, and which from their structure, act on the organism, influence what appears from the outside as a symptom, this is the whole basis of analytic experience. It is much more difficult to conceive of the unconscious agency and incidence of something that is imaginary, to put the phantasy itself at the level of that which by common measure is what appears for us at the level of the unconscious, namely at the level of the signifier. The phantasy is essentially an imaginary taken up into a certain signifying function.

I cannot articulate this approach any further for the moment. It is a certain way simply of proposing to you what will later be articulated in a more precise fashion, namely the situating at the point $\$$ with respect to little o , of the phantastical event, the phantastical fact, being in fact itself an articulated and always complex relationship, a scenario. This is its characteristic, it is something which consequently can do without, and remain latent for a long time at a certain point, something unconscious which nevertheless is already organised like a dream for example which cannot be conceived of without the function of the signifier being the only thing to give it its structure and its consistency, and at the same time its insistence.

These sadistic phantasies for example which it is a part of common experience from the beginning of the analytic investigation of obsessionals to have seen the place they occupy in the obsessional; that they occupy, but that they do not necessarily occupy in an obvious and open manner, but only in the obsessional transformation metabolism, the attempts that the subject as such makes towards a re-equilibrium of what is the object of his research, an equilibrium, namely of something which is to recognise himself in relation to his desire. Of course when we see a raw obsessional, in his natural state, as happens or is supposed to happen in the published cases, what we find, is someone who speaks above all about all sorts of hindrances, of inhibitions, of barriers, of fears, of doubts, of interdictions. We also know that here and now this is not the moment that he will speak to us about this phantasy life. We also know that it is in the obsessionals with regard to whom, either therapeutic interventions, or autonomous attempts at a solution, a way out, an elaboration of their own properly obsessional difficulty, that we will see appearing in a more or less predominant fashion, the invasion in his previous life, in his psychic life of these phantasies which we qualify on this occasion by the simple etiquette of sadistic, namely of those phantasies which already propose to us as one might say their enigma in so far as we cannot be content with articulating them as manifestations of a tendency, but of an organisation itself signifying relationships of the subject to the other as such.

You know on the other hand the degree to which these phantasies can take on in certain subjects a really invasive, absorbing, captivating form, which can swallow up as one might say parts, whole areas of their psychical life, of their living experience, of their mental preoccupations. It is a question indeed in this instance of trying to construct for ourselves a formula for the economic role of this phantasy in so far as it is articulated and subsistent here.

These phantasies have the characteristic of being phantasies which remain in these subjects at the state of phantasies, which are not realised except in an altogether exceptional fashion, and which in any case are moreover always disappointing for the subject, in as much precisely as we ourselves observe on this occasion the mechanics of this relationship of the subject to desire, namely in the measure that he may try in ways which are proposed to him, to approach, it is precisely to this degree that the approach to his desires comes to be extinguished, to be deadened and to disappear. The obsessional is a Tantalus, I might say, if Tantalus were not an image which is presented to us by the authentic and fairly rich infernal iconography, as an image which is above all oral. But it is nevertheless not for nothing that I present it to you, and as such, because we will see that this oral underlay to what constitutes the point of equilibrium, the level, the situation of the phantasy of the obsessional as such, must all the same exist because after all it is this plane which on the phantastical plane is rejoined by the therapist, by the analyst himself, in as much as, as you have seen, I referred to it in connection with the therapeutic line which is traced in the series of three articles, it is to a sort of phantastical absorption that certain therapists and a major part of analytic practice has committed itself, with no doubt certain results which remain to be criticised, has committed itself to finding the way in which a new mode of equilibrium, a certain tempering as one might say is made accessible to the obsessional along this path of the realisation of his desire.

Let us observe nevertheless that by taking things from this angle, we only see one aspect of the problem. From the other aspect, we must deploy this range successively, and of course we are not overlooking what appears in the most obvious fashion in the symptoms of the obsessional, that which is usually presented in the form of what is called the exigencies of the super ego.

We are now going to deal with the fashion in which we should conceive of these exigencies, the root of these exigencies in the obsessional. I believe that we can indicate and read what happens in the obsessional, at the level of this schema in a fashion which I believe will reveal itself subsequently to be no less fruitful.

One could say that the obsessional is always in the process of asking for permission. This I believe is something that you will find at the concrete level, at the level of what the obsessional tells you in his symptoms. This is even inscribed, and very often articulated. He is always in the process of asking for permission, and we will see what the next step is, but the fact that if we trust this schema, what happens at this level is important. To ask for permission, is precisely to have as subject a certain relationship with one's demand. A permission for the obsessional is after all the reinstatement of this Other (with a capital O) who is precisely what we have said, in order to enter into this dialectic which was threatened, put in question, even put in danger, to place himself in the most extreme dependence with respect to the Other (with a capital O), namely with the Other in so far as he speaks. This already is something which indicates for us the degree to which it is essential for the obsessional to maintain this place. I would even say that it is indeed here that we see the pertinence in Freud of what he always calls *Versagung*, refusal, refusal and permission moreover implied at the basis, the pact of something which is refused, as one might say, against a background of promise, instead of talking about frustration.

It is not at the level of the pure and simple demand that the problem of relationships to the Other is posed when you are dealing with a completed subject. It is posed in this way when we try to have recourse to development, when we imagine for ourselves a little child more or less powerless before its mother, namely when we ourselves make an object of someone who is at the mercy of someone else. But once the subject is in this relationship which we have defined with the Other through the word, there is beyond any response of the Other, and very precisely in so far as the word creates this beyond of his response, there is a virtual point somewhere, no doubt it is not only virtual, but in fact if there had not been analysis, we could not answer for the fact that anyone gets there, except by this sort of masterful and spontaneous analysis which we always suppose to be possible for someone who could realise perfectly the "Know thyself". But it is certain for us that we have every reason to think that this point has never been delineated up to the present in a strict fashion except in analysis.

What the notion of *Versagung* delineates is in itself properly speaking this situation of the subject with respect to demand, and here what I want to stress, is this, and I would say that it is a little step which I only ask you to make on the same line of advance as the one which I asked you to make in connection with the phantasy. What are we talking about when we talk about the fundamental stages of relationship to the object, that we qualify as oral, as anal, even as genital? There is here a kind of mirage which is established by the fact that reprojecting all of this into development, we get the idea, but which is never anything except a notion that is reconstructed in retrospect, that a certain type of relationship structuring the *Umwelt* of the subject around a central function, is what defines by development his relationship with the world.

By giving to everything which comes to him from his environment, a special signification, usually there is not even articulated in as elaborated a fashion, precisely the fact that all these actions for example from the environment are supposed to undergo as one might say refraction through the typical oral, anal and genital object: this is very often evaded.

People speak purely and simply about an object, then alongside it they speak about environment, and do not dream for a single instant of seeing the difference that there is between this typical object of a certain relationship defined by a certain stage of rejection in the subject, and the concrete environment with its multiple incidences, namely the plurality of this object to which the subject whoever he is, is always submitted, and this whatever may be said about it, from his earliest childhood.

The so-called absence of objects, the so-called lack of objects of the suckling is something about which in the present state of our knowledge we should be very doubtful about. I must tell you as regards myself here and now if you wish to believe me, you will consider this notion as purely illusory, because it is a matter of having recourse to the direct observation of the tiniest infants, namely that there is no question of it, that the objects in the world are both multiple as well as being interesting and stimulating for him.

What then is in question?

The discoveries that we have made, we can define them and articulate them as being in effect a certain style of the subject's demand. Where have we discovered them, these manifestations which have caused us to speak about relationships to the world which are successively oral, anal, even genital? We have discovered them in analyses, in the analyses which were carried out on people who had long ago superseded the stages in question, *qua* stages of infantile development, and we say that the subject regresses to these stages.

What do we mean when we say that he regresses to these stages?

I believe that to say that there is anything at all which resembles a return to the same imaginary stage, if they are even conceivable, but let us suppose that they can be accepted, which are those of childhood, is something which deceives us and which does not give us the true nature of the phenomenon. When we speak about fixation for example at a certain stage in the neurotic subject, what might we try to articulate that would be more satisfying than what we are usually offered? If effectively what is in question, what is our goal, what is in every case our path, is in fact what we see in analysis, namely that the subject articulates in the course of regression, and we will subsequently see better what this term regression then means, articulates his present demand in analysis, in terms which allow us to recognise a particular relationship which is respectively oral, anal, genital, with a particular object.

Do you not see that this means that at a certain stage, it is in so far as they have passed to the function of signifier, that the relationships of the subject were able to exercise a decisive influence on the whole subsequent development? It is in so far as at a certain level which is the level of the unconscious, that the subject articulates his demand in oral terms, that the subject $\$$ is in a certain relationship here at the level of a virtual signifying articulation, which is that of the unconscious, it is in so far as it is in terms of absorption that the subject articulates his desire, that we can talk both of something that will present itself at a moment in our exploration with a certain value called fixation to a particular stage, and that on the other hand it will be important to get to this stage, to make the subject regress to this stage so that something essential can be elucidated from the mode in which his subjective organisation appears. But it is only in so far as what interests us, is not to give to what was more or less correctly called, at a given moment, the unsatisfaction of the subject on the plane of an oral, anal or other demand, the unsatisfaction on which the subject is supposed to have come to a halt, which we have to give compensation, gravitation, even symbolic return. It is in so far as it is at this moment of his demand that there are posed for him in a certain fashion

the problems of his relationship to the Other, in so far as they are going subsequently to be altogether determining for the putting in position, the putting in place of his desire. It is in that respect only that this interests us.

In other words, everything which belongs to the demand in what has been effectively lived by the subject, is once and for all and from now on a thing of the past. The satisfactions, or the compensations which we cannot give him will never be after all but symbolic, and to give them can even be considered to be an error. It is an only an error to the extent of course that it is not completely impossible. We will see why it is not altogether impossible, precisely thanks to the intervention of phantasies, of this something more or less substantial as one might say, which is supported by the phantasy. But I believe that it is an error of orientation in analysis, because when all is said and done at the end of the analysis it leaves the question of the relationships to the Other still to be accounted for.

I am saying that the obsessional, just like the hysteric, needs an unsatisfied desire, namely a desire beyond a demand.

The obsessional resolves the question of the evanescence of his desire by making of it a prohibited desire. He has it supported by the Other, and precisely by the prohibition of the Other. Nevertheless this fashion of having one's desire supported, sustained by the Other, is ambiguous. It is ambiguous, because a prohibited desire does not mean for all that a stifled desire. The prohibition is there to sustain the desire, but in order that it should be sustained, it must present itself. So this is what the obsessional does, and it is a matter of knowing how.

The fashion in which he does it, is as you know, very complex. He both shows it and does not show it at the same time, to put it plainly he camouflages himself, and it is easy to understand why. His intentions, as one might say, are not pure. This, it has already been seen, is what has been designated precisely by the aggressivity of the obsessional, that fundamentally every emergence of his desire would be for him the occasion of this projection or of this fear of retortion which would precisely inhibit all the manifestations of his desire.

I believe that this is a first approach to the question, but that it is not all, and that it is to overlook what is at stake right at the very foundation, to simply say that the obsessional rocks himself on a sort of swing which goes from the manifestation of a desire which by going too far, becomes an aggressive desire, and which from there goes down again and swings back into a disappearance as one might say, into a disappearance which would be linked to this fear of effective retortion on the part of the other, of this aggressivity, namely of undergoing from him a destruction equivalent to that of the desire that he manifests.

I think that it is appropriate to take a more global view of what is in question in this instance, and to do it it is almost necessary to pass by way of the illusions which this relationship to the other develops within ourselves, I mean us analysts, the analytic theory itself.

In the final analysis this notion of the relationship to the other is always solicited by a slippage which tends to reduce desire to the problem of demand. If desire is effectively what I articulated here, namely this something which is produced in the gap that the word opens up in demand, and therefore as such beyond every concrete demand, it is clear that every attempt to reduce desire to something whose satisfaction one demands, comes up against an internal contradiction. I would say up to a certain point that the term oblativity, namely the recognition of the desire of the other as such, that in which analysts almost with one accord,

at present, place the summit and acme of a successful realisation of the subject, of what they call genital maturity, and of which I gave you an example the other day in a passage from the author whom I put in question, namely of this profound satisfaction taken in the satisfaction given to the demand of the other, to speak plainly what is called commonly altruism, is precisely this something which allows to escape what is effectively to be resolved in the problem of desire.

To tell the truth, I think that the term oblativity, as it is presented to us in this moralising perspective, can be called without forcing the terms, an obsessional phantasy. It is quite certain that in analysis, to all appearances hysterical temperaments - I am speaking of those which the discipline theorises about for reasons which are very easy to understand - are much more rare than obsessional natures. A part of analytic indoctrination is carried out along the line, along the pathways of obsessional wishes: the illusion, the phantasy even which is within the reach of the obsessional, is that in the final analysis the other as such should consent to his desire.

This involves in itself extreme difficulties, because it is necessary that he should be consenting, but in a completely different way, to the response to any satisfaction, to a response to a demand. But it is completely evaded, the problem is to give us the solution in a short circuit. This is preferable to thinking that all things considered it is enough to be in agreement, and that in order to find happiness in life, it is enough not to inflict on others the frustrations of which one has oneself been the object. One part of the unfortunate and quite confused outcomes of analysis, finds the demand from a certain moment the subject exalted by the perspective of good intentions which are those which are established rapidly in a certain number of presuppositions for the successful termination of analytic treatment, but surrendering oneself to something which is one of the most common *penchants* of the obsessional, namely this something which is explained more or less: do not do to others what you would not wish to be done to you yourself.

This undoubtedly categorical imperative is quite essential and structuring in morality, but is not always of practical use in existence. It is assuredly completely beside the point when it is a question of a realisation like sexual union.

The order of relationship to the other which consists in putting oneself in his place, is something which certainly is a tempting deviation, all the more tempting in that the analyst being precisely vis-à-vis this other who is the small other, his counterpart, in an aggressive relationship, is quite naturally tempted to be in this position of sparing him, as one might say. Sparing the other, is indeed what is at the basis of a whole series of ceremonies, of precautions, of detours, in short of all the intrigues of the obsessional. If it is in order to indoctrinate, to construct a kind of generalisation of what manifested itself no doubt not without reason in a much more complicated fashion in his symptoms, to make of it a kind of moralising extrapolation, and to propose to him as the goal and the way out of his problems, what can be called the oblativity way out, namely submission to the demands of the other. I believe that it was really not worth the trouble to make this detour, because in fact it is really nothing other than to substitute as experience shows, a symptom, and a very serious symptom, because it does not fail of course to engender what is going to be produced, namely the reemergence in other more or less problematic forms, of desire and the question of desire which has never been, and which could never be resolved in any way whatsoever, by these methods.

It is quite clear that in this perspective one can say that the ways that the obsessional himself finds, the ways that he finds and in which he seeks the solution to the problem of his desire, are much more adequate even though they are not adapted, because the problem can at least be read there in a clear fashion. For example there are several methods of solution, there are methods of solution precisely at the level of an effective relationship with the other. The way in which the obsessional conducts himself with his counterpart when he is still capable, when he is not submerged by his symptoms, and it is rare that he is completely submerged, is something which in itself is characteristic enough and ends up no doubt in a blind alley, but gives all the same an indication which is not so bad as regards direction. For example I have spoken to you about the exploits manifested by the obsessional. What is this exploit?

For there to be exploit, it is necessary that there must be at least three, because one does not perform one's exploit all alone. There must be at least two for there to be something which resembles it, for there to be a winning performance, a sprint; then it is necessary that there should also be someone who registers it and who is the witness. It is quite clear that what the obsessional tries to obtain in the exploit, is very precisely this: he tries to obtain what we have called a little while ago the permission of the other, in the name of something which is very polyvalent. One can say because of the fact, that he had well deserved what he tried to obtain, satisfaction is not something which is classified at all on the terrain where he has well deserved it. Observe the structure of our obsessionals.

What is called an effect of the super-ego, means what? It means that they inflict on themselves all sorts of particularly difficult, particularly testing tasks, that moreover they succeed at them, that they succeed at them all the more easily because precisely they desire to do so, but here they succeed very very brilliantly, and in the name of this they will have the right to a little holiday during which they can do what they wish, hence the well known dialectic of work and holidays. For the obsessional work has power, being there to liberate the time of the long sail which is that of the holidays, and the time spent on holidays usually revealing itself as time that is more or less lost. Why? Because of course what was in question, was to obtain the permission of the other, and since the other - I am speaking about the other as the other who exists - is absolutely uninterested in all this dialectic, for the simple reason that the real other is far too occupied with his own other, he has no reason to fulfil this mission of giving to the exploits of the obsessional their little reward, namely this something which would be precisely the realisation of his desire in so far as this desire has nothing to do with the terrain on which he has demonstrated all his capacities.

This is certainly a very tangible phase, whose humorous side it is well worth the trouble of exposing. But it is not limited to that, it is precisely the interest of concepts like those of the big Other and the little other, that they are applicable to, can structure living relationships in much more than one direction. One could also say from a certain point of view, that in the exploit the subject dominates, and this has been said by other people besides myself, tames, even domesticates what is called a fundamental anxiety, and here again I believe that a dimension of the phenomenon is overlooked, namely that the essential is not in this expertise, in this risk which is run which is always in the case of the obsessional a risk run within certain strict limits, I mean in the fact that a wise economy strictly distinguishes all that the obsessional risks in his exploit, from anything which resembles what can be called the risk of death in the Hegelian dialectic.

There is something in the exploit of the obsessional which remains irremediably fictitious, for the reason that death, I mean the place where the real danger lies, is somewhere

quite other than in the adversary which he seems effectively to be defying. It is precisely on the side of this invisible witness, of this Other who is there as spectator, the one who keeps the score, and the one who is going to say about the other: "Really," - as is said somewhere in Schreber's delusion - "he is quite a stud." But this sort of exclamation was encountered as a way of acknowledging the success, as implicit, as latent, as wished for in all this dialectic of the exploit. The obsessional here puts into a certain relationship the existence of the other as being his counterpart, as being the one in whose place he can put himself, and it is precisely because he cannot put himself in his place that there is in reality no kind of essential risk in the display he puts on, in its effects of cutting a fine figure, of playing a sport, of risks that are more or less taken, this other with whom he plays, is never in the long run anything more than an other who is himself, another who already in any case leaves him the palm, from whatever aspect he approaches things. But the other before whom all of this happens, he is one one who is important, it is he also who must at all costs be preserved, is the point, the locus in which there is registered as one might say the exploit, it is there that there is inscribed as one might say his history, this point which must be maintained at all costs, and which makes him adhere to such an extent to everything which is of the verbal order, to every thing which is of the order of computation, of recapitulation, of inscription, of falsification also, and which means that what the obsessional wants above all to maintain without appearing to do so, while appearing to aim at something else is this Other (with a capital O) in whom things are articulated in terms of signifier.

Here therefore is a first approach by which we can begin to approach this wish, because beyond every demand and what he desires, it is a question of seeing at what the behaviour of the obsessional is aimed in its totality. It is certain that this maintenance of the Other (with a capital O), is for him the essential aim, because it is the first aim, the preliminary aim within which alone there can be given this validation of his desire which is so difficult. What is this validation and what will it be? This is what we will subsequently have to articulate. But first of all it is necessary that the four corners as one might say of the behaviour, should be fixed in such a fashion that the trees as one might say do not hide the forest from us, and that when we see one or other of these little mechanisms, we will not in a way be brought to a halt, fascinated by this mechanism making of it a species, because it has a certain style, finding there this satisfaction. Obviously that one has always to dwell on a particular detail of an organism, is not a completely illegitimate satisfaction, because a detail always reflects well in fact, at least in the domain of natural phenomena, something of the totality, but in a material which is so little organised in a natural way as that of the relationships of the subject to the signifier, we cannot entirely depend on the reconstruction of the whole obsessional organisation, starting from one or other mechanism of defence, because of course all of this, you could find yourself expressing it in a catalogue of mechanisms of defence.

I am trying to do something different. I am trying to help you find the four cardinal corners around which each of the defences of the subject is oriented and polarised.

Here already are two for today, namely this corner that we tackled first, the role of the phantasy. We now see in connection with the exploit that this presence of the other as such, is something which is quite fundamental. There is another point whose chapter heading I would at least like to introduce you to. In hearing me talking about exploit, you have of course thought about all sorts of behaviour of your obsessionals. There is an exploit which does not perhaps deserve to be put under the same heading, it is what is called in analysis acting out. In this connection I have devoted myself - you will devote yourselves also I hope, following

my example, even if it is only to confirm what I am advancing - to some investigations of the literature. It is very surprising, to the extent that there is no getting out of it. One person has written the best article on this subject, namely , with the title: "General Problems of Acting Out". It is quite a remarkable article in that it shows that up to the present nothing of value has been articulated on the subject.

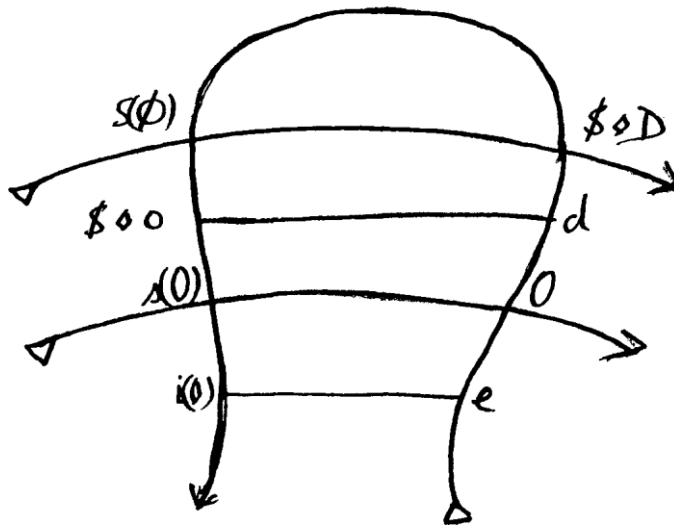
I believe that we must limit these problems. I believe that it is quite impossible to limit it, if one holds for example to the general notion that it is a symptom, that it is a compromise, that it has a double meaning, that it is an act of repetition, because this is to drown it in all sorts of repetition compulsions in their most general forms. I believe that if it has a meaning, it is always something which arises in the course of an attempt at resolving this problem of demand and desire, and this is why these sorts of acts that one calls acting out, are produced in a most preferential fashion during analysis, because all the same, whatever one effectively does in analysis, there are always attempts at the solution of the problem of the relationship of desire and demand. Acting out certainly appears along the way, in the field of this realisation of unconscious desire in analysis. It is extremely instructive, because if we examine closely what characterises the facts of acting out, we will find there all sorts of absolutely necessary components which ensure for example that it is this which absolutely distinguishes them from what is called a parapraxis (*un acte manqué*), namely from what I call here in a more appropriate fashion, a successful act, I mean a symptom in so far as it allows a to clearly appear.

Acting out is something which for example always involves a highly signifying element, and precisely in the fact that it is enigmatic. We will never call acting out anything except an act which appears with this character of being especially unmotivated. This does not at all mean that it does not have a cause, but that precisely from a psychological point of view it cannot be given a motive, because it is always a signified act.

The role on the other hand of an object in acting out, of an object in the material sense of the term, namely that which I will be led to come back the next time, to show you precisely the limited function that should be given in all this dialectic to the role of the object, there always exists in acting out on the other hand the function and the relationship, almost the equivalence that there is between phantasy and acting out, I mean that acting out is in general structured in a way which is very close to that of a scenario. It is in its way something which is at the same level as the phantasy. There is something which distinguishes it from the phantasy and which also distinguishes it from the exploit which is that if the exploit is

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Seminar 24: Wednesday 4 June 1958



Freud, in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, devotes a chapter to identification.

In the last few seminars which remain to us this year, we are going to advance into this field of topography opened up by Freud after the First War, around the 1920's. Because, what we have gone over this year in trying to give a dimension of the formations of the unconscious, of what that represents, is the only thing which will allow us not to go astray along the other paths that are usually taken in dealing with topography.

We shall therefore be led to indicate at least what this topography means, and very especially why it came to the forefront of the function of the ego in a quite other, manifestly different, and much more complex sense, than the use that has been made of it since. This is just to show you the direction.

For the moment I am retaining from this chapter on identification - of course you have to read it, you will have to see in what sense it is applicable to the accounts that I will give you of three types of identification which are distinguished by Freud, on the schema here, and in fact which should have for you at the point at which we have reached, precisely a mediating value, of a schema articulating, even interpreting what the structure of the unconscious is, in so far as the structure of the unconscious is fundamentally structured like a word, like a language, and on the other hand of what emerges from it in terms of topography. This is precisely what you are going to see immediately.

Freud distinguishes three types of identification. This is clearly articulated, and in a particular paragraph it is clearly summarised.

"First, identification is the original form of emotional tie with an object; ..."

The second form is the one which he develops most particularly in this chapter, which moreover is the concrete basis of all Freud's reflection about identification, fundamentally linked to everything connected with the topography.

Let us all the same not forget as a primary fact, before appreciating the different organs as one might say of the Freudian topic, in as much as they emerge from this famous schema in the form of an egg with an eye, which is the schema which you imagine, in which you intuit the relationships of the id, the ego and the superego, an eye and somewhere a sort of pipette which is supposed to enter into the substance which is thought to represent the superego. It is obviously a very handy schema. The inconvenience of it is precisely, that in order to represent topological things, one uses spatial schemas. It is a necessity from which I myself do not escape, since I too represent my topography by a spatial schema. I try to do it with the fewest possible inconveniences, because what distinguishes topography from a spatial schema, is that this schema, this one here for example, my little network, picture this for yourselves: for example if you were to take it and crumple it up, if you were to make a little ball of it and put it in your pocket. In principle the relationships always remain the same, they are relationships of linking, of order. It is obviously more difficult to do it with the schema of the egg because it is entirely oriented towards this spatial projection.

So you imagine for yourselves that by the Id Freud means to designate something which is somewhere, which is an organ on which there is this kind of protuberance which is represented by the ego, which in fact appears there like an eye. But read the text: he makes no allusion to anything at all which appears with this substantial character, something which allows it to be represented as a sort of organised differentiation. The development of bodily organs, is something quite different. The term identification means something completely different. It is on these identifications that there are supported these differentiations which are of another kind, of a quite different order to organic differentiations.

It is very important all the same to recall this, if only because this can go very far. After all there are really people who imagine that when they do anatomy, they are taking out a slice of the superego. And not only do they believe it, but they write about it and they do it with this thought in their heads.

Let us see how Freud articulates the second term of identification:

"Secondly, in a regressive way it becomes a substitute for a libidinal object tie, as it were by means of introjection of the object into the ego;"

I repeat, this second form of identification is the one which throughout Freud's discourse in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, but also in....., poses most problems for him, its ambiguous relationship with the object. It is here also that all the problems of analysis come together, the problem of the inverted Oedipus complex in particular.

Why at a moment, in certain cases, and in the form of the inverted Oedipus complex, does the object which is an object of libidinal attachment become the object of identification?

In some cases it is more important to sustain the problem which has been posed than to resolve it at all costs. We are absolutely not obliged to construct a representation of any sort of possible solution to this question. This question may after all be the central question, the question that we are always condemned to remain on this side of, the one constituting the

pivotal point. There must be one somewhere, because wherever we place ourselves to consider that all the questions are resolved, there will always remain this question: Why are we there? And how have we got to the point where everything is clear?

It is clear that there must be a point which ensures that precisely we remain plunged in the question. I am not saying that this point here, is the point in question, but however, it is clear that Freud himself, in any case, turns around it and does not claim anywhere to have resolved it.

What is important on the contrary, is to see how the coordinates as one might say of this point vary. I repeat, this is the essential question, that of the relationship between the love for an object and the identification which is fundamentally given by experience as resulting from it.

Here Freud introduces in the clearest fashion the distinction and the opposition which is the one that at the end of one of our last seminars in which I alluded to the problem of the relationship to the phallus, to the opposition in sum of being and of having. This is how he articulates the difference that there is between erotic libidinal attachment to the loved object, and identification to this same object.

But Freud tells us clearly, in any case what his experience teaches him, which is that this identification is always regressive in nature. The coordinates, the correlates of this transformation of a libidinal attachment into identification, are coordinates which show that there is a regression.

I think that all the same you know enough about it for me not to have to dot the i's. In any case I already articulated in the preceding sessions, what a regression bears witness to. You know of course, but it is a question of knowing how one articulates it here. We articulate it as follows: it is the choice of signifiers which always clearly indicates it. What we call regressing to the anal stage with all its nuances and varieties, even to the oral stage, is always the fact that we see in the present the opposition of regressive signifiers in the discourse of the subject.

There is no other regression in analysis. It sometimes happens that the subject starts crying on your couch like a child, or even imitates its behaviour. But we are not accustomed to see in this the true regression that you see in analysis. This sort of imitation on the part of the patient does happen, but it is generally not in cases which have a good prognosis, and that is not what you are usually accustomed to call regression.

At the point that we have got to with these two forms of identification, we are going to try to apply them on our schema and to see what they mean.

If the two lines which, when we place ourselves here, namely at the level of the need of the subject - the term is employed by Freud. I point out to you in passing that Freud, and precisely in connection with the same reflection concerning the emergence of identification and its relationships with object cathexis, tells us in a certain sentence:

"We can only suppose that later on object-cathexes".

I would like to point out to you in passing that Jankelevitch's translation of these chapters, makes them quite unintelligible, and sometimes makes them say exactly the

contrary of Freud's text. The term object-cathexis is translated there by *concentration sur l'object*, which is unbelievably obscure.

" object-cathexes proceed from the Id which feels erotic trends as needs."

You see that the *Es* is here something which is proposed as very ambiguous. It perceives erotic stimulations, pressures, erotic tensions as need.

Whatever may be the case from the perspective of need, these lines give therefore the two horizons of demand, namely of demand here *qua* articulated, a demand for the satisfaction of a need, in so far as every demand for the satisfaction of a need must pass through the defiles of articulation which are made necessary by language, and on the other hand, by the very fact of passing onto the plane of the signifier, as one might say in its existence and no longer in its articulation, what results from it at the level of the one to whom the demand is addressed, namely of the other, from this unconditional demand for love in so far as it is linked to the fact that the one to whom one thus addresses oneself is herself symbolised, namely that she appears as a presence against a background of absence, that she may be rendered present *qua* absent, namely this other horizon.

Before an object can be loved in the erotic sense of the term, in the sense that the eros of the loved object can be perceived as need, the establishment, the position of the demand creates the horizon of the demand for love.

These two lines, are separated on this schema, the one of the demand as demand for the satisfaction of a need, and the one of the demand for love. They are separated for a reason of topological necessity, but the remarks made above apply. That does not mean that they are not one and the same line, namely what the child articulates in the mother.

In other words, the ambiguity, the simultaneity as one might say, of the unfolding of what happens on these two lines in so far as they are lines where what belongs to the need of the subject is articulated as signifier, this superposition, this simultaneity, this ambiguity is something which is always presented to us in a permanent state. You are going to see an immediate application of it: this ambiguity is very precisely the ambiguity which the notion of transference as such, I mean the action of transference in analysis, maintains throughout the whole work of Freud, in a permanent fashion, with that of suggestion. Freud tells us the whole time that after all transference is a suggestion, that we use it as such, but he adds: except that we make something completely different of it, because we interpret this suggestion.

But what does that mean, if not that yes, we can interpret suggestion? The fact is that a background is provided to suggestion as such, that as I might say, transference is potentially there. We know very well that this exists and I am going to give you an example of it immediately.

The potential transference is already analysis of suggestion, it is itself the possibility of this analysis of suggestion, it is a second articulation of what, in suggestion, is purely and simply imposed on the subject. In other words, the line on the horizon on which suggestion is based, is there, it is very essentially at the level of demand, of the demand that the subject makes to the analyst, by the very fact that he is there.

What are these demands? How can we situate them? It is very important to make the point from the beginning, because it is extremely variable. There are really people for whom the demand to be cured is there present at every moment. Others better informed, know that it has to be postponed until tomorrow. There are others who are there for something other than to demand a cure, they have come to have a look. There are those who are there to become analysts. What importance does this have for knowing the place of demand, because from the fashion in which the analyst even by not replying to it, established like that, replies to it, is constitutive of all the effects of suggestion, but do not tell me that it is enough to say that the transference is here something thanks to which suggestion can operate. This is usually the idea that people have of it, not alone is it the usual idea, but I would say that up to a certain moment of his text, Freud writes that if it is appropriate to allow the transference to become established, it is because it is legitimate to use the power of what? Of suggestion which transference gives, transference conceived here as the hold and the power of the analyst on the subject, as the affective link which makes the subject depend on him; that it is legitimate for us to use it so that an interpretation can get across.

What is this, if not to enunciate at this level in the clearest fashion, that we use suggestion? It is because the patient, to call things by their names, has come to love us, that our interpretations are accepted. We are on the plane of suggestion. Now, of course Freud does not mean to limit himself to this. But when people say: yes, we are going to analyse the transference, pay careful attention to the bifurcation which appears at this level. It is a bifurcation which appears at this level, it is a bifurcation which causes the transference to vanish completely in so far as it is, let us say - I underline the terms, because they are not mine, but those which are implicit in every discussion of this subject of transference understood as an affective hold on the subject, because if we consider that at that moment we distinguish ourselves from the one who bases himself on his power over the patient in order to get across the interpretation that he suggests, by the fact that we are going to analyse this effect of its power, what else are we doing but deferring the question to infinity. Therefore namely that it is once again from transference that we will analyse what has happened from the fact that the subject has accepted the interpretation. For example there is no reason to get out in this way from the infernal circle of suggestion. Now, we suppose precisely that something different is possible. The fact is therefore that transference is something other than the use of a power, transference is already an open field, the possibility of another and a different signifying articulation from the one which locks the subject into demand.

This is why it is legitimate, whatever its content may be, to place at the horizon the following which is called here, not the line of suggestion, but the line of transference, namely this articulated something which is potentially beyond what is articulated on the plane of demand.

Now, if what is there on the horizon, is what produces demand as such, namely the symbolisation of the other, namely the unconditional demand for love, it is here that the object comes to lodge itself subsequently, but *qua* erotic object. It is there that it is aimed at by the subject, and to say that the identification succeeding in him to this aiming at the object as loved, that the identification in replacing it is a regression, means precisely that what is in question, is the ambiguity between this line of transference, as I might say, and the line of suggestion, because we know - and I articulated this for a long time, right from the beginning, and Freud articulates it for us here - that on this line of suggestion identification is constructed in its primary form, this identification that we know well, this identification to the insignia which ensure that the other *qua* subject of demand, the one who has the power to

satisfy it or not to satisfy it, and who marks this satisfaction at every instant by something which of course is in the foreground, her language, her word, the spoken relationships of the child with the mother - I underlined their importance, they are essential - and which ensure that all the other signs, all the pantomime of the mother as was said last evening, is something which is articulated in terms of signifiers are crystallised in the conventional character of these so called emotional mimics which are the things with which the mother communicates with the child, and which give to every kind of expression of emotions in mankind, this conventional character which ensures that the so called expressive spontaneity of emotions is revealed to examination, and this without one necessarily having to be a Freudian for that, as not only altogether problematic, but completely uncertain; namely that which in a certain area of signifying articulation of emotions signifies a certain emotion, would have in another area - it is a reference - a quite different value from the point of view of the expression of emotions.

Therefore identification as such, if it is regressive, it is precisely in so far as the ambiguity remains permanent between the line of transference and the line of suggestion.

In other words, we should not be surprised that in what follows, in the development, in the detours of analysis, we see the regressions being punctuated by a series of identifications which are correlative to them, which mark their times, their rhythms. Moreover they are different. You cannot have regression and identification at the same time. The latter are the arrests, the stoppages of the former. But it remains that if there is transference, it is very precisely in order that this should be maintained on a different plane to that of suggestion, namely that this should be aimed at, not as something to which no satisfaction of demand responds but as such, as a signifying articulation, and this is what distinguishes one from the other.

You will say to me: what is the operation which ensures that we keep them distinct? Precisely our operation is the abstinent or abstentionist one, which consists in never gratifying the demand as such. This we know, but this abstention, even though it is essential, is not sufficient in itself. Obviously, it is because it is in the nature of things that these two lines remain distinct, that they can remain so. In other words, it is because for the subject they are distinct, and that precisely between the two there is a whole field which, thank God, is not slight, namely which is never abolished, and which is called the field of desire, that they can remain distinct.

In other words everything that is asked of us, is through our presence there as other, not to favour this confusion, because of course it is enough that we should listen there as other, and especially in the way that we enter it, with what we call the permissive character of analysis, but permissive only on the verbal plane. But that is enough, it is enough that things should be permissive on the verbal plane. Why? Not at all of course for the patient to be satisfied, because he is all the same satisfied by that, but he is not satisfied in the elements of the real. But it is enough that he should be satisfied on the plane of demand in order that confusion should be irremediably established between these two planes: the one which I call the line of transference, and the one which I call the line of suggestion.

We are therefore, through our presence, and in so far as we listen to the patient, what tends to make the line of transference become confused with the line of demand, we are therefore harmful in principle, and that is what that means.

Regression is our way, but it is a descending way, it is a way which with respect to the end of our action, does not designate its goal, but the detour, and it is this that we must continually keep in mind. Thank God there is something which prevents this irremediable confusion from being established again, that there is a whole technique of analysis which has no other goal and no other end than to establish this confusion, and that is the reason that it ends up in a transference neurosis, and that you afterwards see it written in a journal called *La Revue Française de Psychanalyse*, that in order to resolve what is called the question of transference, there is only one thing to do: sit the patient down, show him the nice things, show him what is beautiful in the outside world, and to tell him to leave your office slowly, in order not to disturb the flies; and this by a great technician!

Fortunately there is between the two lines which oppose this confusion, between the line of transference and the line of suggestion, there is between the two precisely desire and all that, they are such obvious things, that the hypnotists, let us say simply those who are interested in hypnosis, know very well, that no suggestion, however successful, completely takes over the subject.

What resists? Very precisely this: I would not even say one or other desire of the subject, it is obvious, but very essentially the following: it is the desire to have one's desire. It is still more obvious, but that is not a reason for not saying it.

These are for the subject the forms for the necessary maintenance of desire, thanks to which he remains what belongs to the very nature of the human subject as such, a divided subject. If he is no longer a divided subject, he is mad; he remains a divided subject because there is here a desire whose field after all must not be all that easy to maintain either, because what I am explaining to you, is that the reason why a neurosis is constructed the way it is constructed, a hysterical neurosis, an obsessional neurosis, is in order to maintain something articulated which is called desire.

And this is well defined. Neurosis, is not more or less strength or more or less weakness, or fixation understood in this kind of intuitive sense which also consists in imagining fixation as something which has come to a point where the subject has put his foot in a pot of glue; fixation, is obviously something different. If it resembles anything, it is rather these pegs for maintaining something which otherwise would escape.

What is called the quantitative element, the strength of desire in neurotics, is very variable and I would say that it is one of the more convincing things for ensuring the autonomy of what is called structural modification in the neurosis. The fact is that it is obvious from experience that neurotics who have the same form of neurosis are people who are differently gifted from the point of view of what one of the authors in question regarding obsessional neurosis, calls somewhere "the exuberant and precocious sexuality" of one of his patients.

I must say that the exuberant and precocious sexuality of a patient who is the one of whom it is said somewhere that "he masturbated by lightly pinching the peripheral part of the foreskin, convinced, at the time that irreparable lesions would be produced He did not dare to wash away the secretions because he dreaded wounding himself and losing something. The advice of his doctor gave him more precise ideas about sexual matters he had had to consult a doctor because of repeated failures in the attempts to have intercourse".

We know well that these are all symptoms. The subject will reveal himself in the milieu at least where the author takes his analysis, quite capable of satisfying his wife and of fulfilling his duties as a husband. But still...but still... We are not after all going to talk about an exuberant sexuality which is that which by whatever strength we may suppose the symptoms to be supported, allows itself all the same to languish, to be lured to the point that one can give such a description of a subject who has already reached an advanced age. Which does not mean that on the other hand, another obsessional neurotic might not show you a different picture, for example that of a sexuality which one could in fact qualify as exuberant, even as precocious.

It is precisely this quite tangible difference in clinical cases, which moreover does not prevent us from recognising that it is a question in all these cases of one and the same obsessional neurosis, which shows us that the reason why it is an obsessional neurosis, is to be situated quite elsewhere than in this quantitative element of desire. If it intervenes, it is uniquely, and in as much as it will precisely have to pass into what I call the defiles of the structure. But what characterises the neurosis in this instance, is the structure, namely that something for example in the case of the obsessional, which ensures that his desire, whether his desire is weak, whether he is in the middle of puberty, or whether he comes to us when he is forty or fifty years old, and he wants to understand a little about what has happened, namely about what he has understood nothing of up to then in his existence, namely at a time when all the same his desire is declining. This is what in all these cases will present itself not at all as the weakness or the strength of desire, but in the fact that on the contrary, weak or strong, the obsessional throughout the whole duration of his existence is preoccupied with putting his desire in a strong position, with constituting a fortress for desire, and this on the plane of relations which are essentially signifying relationships. In this fortress, there dwells a weak desire or a strong desire.

That is not where the question lies. There is one thing certain, it is that in all these cases these fortresses are double edged; the fortresses which are constructed against the outside are much more troublesome still for those who are inside, and that is where the problem is.

You see therefore that the first form of identification is defined for us by the first link to the object, namely at the level of that identification that takes place, if you wish, to schematise identification, to the mother.

The other form of identification, is identification to the loved object *qua* regressive, namely in so far as it must be produced completely elsewhere, at a point on the horizon which of course is not altogether easy to reach because precisely being unconditional, or more exactly submitted to the sole condition of the existence of signifier, because without the existence of the signifier, there is no openness possible to the dimension of love as such. It is entirely dependent, being the only condition for the existence of the signifier, but within this existence of any particular articulation, if it is not from the fact that there is the existence of the articulation, and this is the reason that it is not altogether easy to formulate because in fact nothing is able to complete it, to fulfil it, that not even the totality of my discourse in ray whole existence, because it is in addition the horizon of my discourses.

Which precisely poses the question of what this capital \$ means, but at this level. In other words, what subject is in question? There is no need to be astonished that this never constitutes anything but a horizon, namely that the whole problem is to know what is going to

be constructed, to be articulated, to be articulated in this direction, in this interval. This direction in which what is articulated, is articulated for the neurotic in sum, is the right one, the neurotic who lives out what? Who lives out the paradox of desire exactly like everybody else, because there is no human being inserted in the human condition who escapes from it. The only difference between what is called a normal relationship of desire and the neurotic, is not simply this paradox, because this paradox of desire is fundamental, it is that the neurotic is open to the existence of this paradox as such, which of course, does not simplify his existence for him, but all the same does not put him in too bad a position compared to a certain point of view, that we can in this instance squarely articulate [as] the point of view of the philosopher.

The point of view of the philosopher is not clear either. In other words, that it can very well be questioned in the same way as the point of view of the neurotic. One does not even know if he has occasion to do it.

Whether this is valid or not, it is sure that it is in the nature of things that it should be so, because it is all the same on something, on a path, on a line, on an opening that he has some relationship with what the philosopher articulates, or at least what he should articulate, because in fact have you seen this problem of desire well and truly, and carefully, and correctly, and powerfully articulated in a philosophical way. Up to the present, one of the things that appears to me as most characteristic of philosophy, is that this is what is most carefully avoided in philosophy.

This would push me to open another parenthesis on the philosophy of action, and which would culminate in the same conclusions, namely that the action that is continually being spoken about, namely when one sees in it some intrusion or other of spontaneity, of the originality of man in so far as he succeeds here in transforming the data of the problem, in transforming the world as they say. It is very peculiar that what is never highlighted is what nevertheless for us is this truth of experience, namely this profoundly paradoxical character and quite related to the paradox, of desire to action, those traits and those features that I began to introduce you to the last time by alluding to the character of exploit, of performance, of demonstration, of action, even of a despairing outcome.

All these terms that I employ are not my own, because the term *Verwerfell* [?] is employed by Freud to designate the quite paradoxical action, quite generalised action, human action. Human action is especially there when one pretends to designate it, in accordance with history, as the passage of the Rubicon. My friend Kojève [?] speaks of it as something which is the point of agreement, the harmonious solution between the present, the past and the future of these souls, even though the last time I passed that way, I always saw it dry. It was immense, and at the time when I was there, it was dry. It was not the same season as when Caesar crossed it; and even in the fact that Caesar crossed the Rubicon with Caesar's genius, in the fact of passing the Rubicon, there is always something which involves one taking the plunge since it is a river.

In other words, human action is not something all that harmonious, and for us analysts, it is indeed the most astonishing thing in the world that no one in analysis has proposed, or has tried to articulate the question of action precisely in this paradoxical perspective in which we continuously see it, which we never see otherwise. Which moreover gives us plenty of trouble in properly defining what is called strictly speaking acting out, acting out in a certain sense, in this respect, being an action like another, but precisely taking

on its characteristics by being provoked by the fact that we use transference, namely that we do something extremely dangerous, and all the more dangerous in that as you see according to what I suggest, we do not have a very precise idea of what it is.

Perhaps this is an indication in passing, which will clarify for you what I mean, if I say that resistance, and resistance in a quite tangible and natural manner, namely resistance in as much as the subject in some cases does not accept the interpretations as we present them to him precisely on the plane of regression, and something which seems to fit in so well at first sight, namely that for him it does not at all seem to fit in like that, and if the subject resists, he will end up by leaving us if we insist, since we are always ready to play on the chord of suggestion.

This resistance, in so far as it expresses the necessity of maintaining the point at which it is a question precisely of articulating desire differently, namely on the plane of desire, this resistance, what value does it have? Very precisely the value that Freud in certain texts gives it. If he calls it: *Übertragungswiderstand*, it is because it is the same thing as transference, transference in the sense that I am talking about for the moment, where no doubt what it is a question of maintaining, is the other line, the line of transference, the line where articulation has another exigency than the one which we give it immediately, in response to demand.

I would like to tell you, after this reminder which only corresponds to the facts, but to facts which I believe all the same I believe need to be articulated, to tell you that the second identification means the point at which is judged what happens *qua* regressive, that it is this transference appeal which permits this confusion of signifiers which is called regression, and which should lead us to something beyond itself which is what we are trying to aim at for the moment, namely how to operate with transference, but which quite naturally tends to be degraded into something which we can always satisfy at its regressive level in a certain fashion, namely in constructing for ourselves a certain conception of analysis, the one precisely which allows itself to be fascinated by the notion of frustration, and by different articulations which in this instance are expressed in a thousand fashions in object-relations.

All the fashions, if I might say, of articulating analysis, always tend to become degraded, which does not prevent analysis from being something different, all the same.

The third form of identification, Freud articulates for us like this:

"... it may arise with any new perception of a common quality shared with some other person who is not an object of the sexual instinct."

Where is this third identification situated?

Freud exemplifies it for us in a fashion which allows no kind of ambiguity in the way of responding to it on this schema. He gives as an example the identification of the hysteric. He articulates it for us exactly. As I have been telling you all this time, in Freud it is always said in the clearest fashion: for the hysteric the problem is to fix somewhere in the sense that an optical instrument allows a point to be fixed, to fix her desire, this desire which for her comes to present some special difficulties.

Let us try to articulate this more precisely. This desire, is all the same for her destined to reach some impasse or other, because she cannot realise this fixation of the point of her

desire except on the condition of identifying herself to anything at all, to a small trait. Freud writes: when I say an insignium, a trait, a single trait, he says, it does not matter which, of someone else in whom she can sense that there is the same problem of desire, namely that her impasse, for the hysteric, opens wide for her the doors of the other, at least wide open from the point of view of all the others, namely of all possible hysterics, even of all the hysterical moments of everyone else, in so far as she senses in them for a moment the same problem which is that of this question about desire.

Here therefore is how Freud situates it. I will show it to you: the question, even though it is articulated a little differently, is from the point of view of the relationship of topology, exactly the same for the obsessional, and for good reasons!

In other words, this identification that is in question is the one which is here, namely the locus where I designated the phantasy for you the last day in the obsessional. It is in so far as there is a point where the subject has to establish a certain imaginary relationship with the other, not in itself as I might say, and why? Namely in so far as it is this imaginary relationship which brings him satisfaction. It is made quite precise for us that it is a question here of a person or of an object who has no relationship with any It is something else, it is a support, if you wish it is a puppet of the phantasy. I gave to this word phantasy all the extension that you could wish. It is question of the phantasy as I articulated it the last time, and as I will return to it, in so far as the phantasy can be an unconscious phantasy. Here the other only serves, which is not a small thing, to allow the subject to hold a certain position which avoids this collapse of desire, which avoids the problem of the neurotic.

Here is a third form of identification which is quite essential. Since I do not know where it would lead us, because it always takes longer than one thinks, to get into a reading of the observation of the article which appeared in the *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* - which contains my report on aggressivity in psychoanalysis - (July/September 1948, observation 2 of the article called: "*Importance de l'aspect homosexuel du transfert*". I am asking you to read it. I will come back to it, but I want in this connection to articulate today the point where I designate the technical error of analysing the current homosexual transference in an obsessional neurosis.

What is produced, in so far as the phallic object appears in the phantasies, and notably the phallic object in so far as it is phantastically the phallus of the analyst, is something which appears there at the proliferating point already established, but which can always be stimulated, namely there where the subject *qua* obsessional, maintains by his phantasy the possibility of maintaining himself which is much more risky and much more dangerous for the hysteric faced with her desire.

It is here that there appears, the phantastical phallus in so far as in this technique that I am indicating, it is here that the analyst is going to make his present interpretations, insisting, that the subject should in some way consent to commune, to swallow, to incorporate phantastically this partial object.

I am saying that this is an error of plane, that it is very strictly to put onto the plane of suggestive identification, onto the plane of demand, what is being put in question there at that moment; that it is to favour a certain imaginary identification of the subject by taking advantage, as I might say, of the hold given by the suggestive position opened to analysis on the basis of transference; that it is to give a false, deviant, inexact solution to what is in question, I am not saying in his phantasies, but in the material that the subject effectively

brings to the analyst, and this can be read in the observations themselves where one sees being constructed on this a whole doctrine, a whole theory of partial objects, of the distance from the object, of the introjection of the object, and everything that results from it, and in order just to introduce what I will continue with the next time in detail, I am going to give you an example of it.

At every moment in this observation, there is the tangible, perceptible fact that the problem which is the solution of the analysis of the obsessional, is that the obsessional discovers castration for what it is, namely as the law of the other. It is the other who is castrated, and for reasons which are those of his faulty implication in this problem, the subject feels himself threatened by this castration, to such an intense degree, that he cannot approach his desire without feeling its effects.

What I am in the process of saying, is that this horizon of the Other, of the big Other as such, and *qua* distinct from the small other and from the fact that the problem is there, is tangible at every instant in this observation. From the beginning in his anamnesis, this subject who the first time that he has an encounter with a little girl, flees, hurrying away in anxiety and going to confide it to his mother, and feeling himself completely reassured from the moment that he says to her: "I will tell you everything". You only have to take this material literally.

There is only one reference and one support which of course is a virtual support, a project, only a desperate reference to the Other as locus of the verbal articulation in which the subject is in future going to invest himself entirely. It is the only possible refuge for the panic that he experiences at the approach of his desire. It is already inscribed. It is a matter of seeing what is beneath.

When after all sorts of solicitations from the analyst, certain phantasies come to light, we come to a dream that the analyst interprets. He describes it immediately and strictly, as the fact that the passive homosexual tendency of the subject is becoming obvious. Here is the dream:

"I am accompanying you to your private residence. In your room there is a large bed. I lie down on it. I am extremely embarrassed. There is a bidet in the corner of the room. I am happy, though uneasy."

We are told that after a preparation of this subject by a previous period of the analysis, the subject does not experience much difficulty in admitting the passive homosexual signification of this dream.

To your eyes does that seem sufficient to articulate it? Undoubtedly in taking up this observation again, one can show all the indices which prove that it does not suffice, but there is one thing certain, it is that the text itself of the dream shows that the subject has put himself, it is the least that can be said, in the place of the other; he says it: "I am at your private residence. I am lying in your bed."

Why passive homosexual? From what we see, nothing appears there which in this instance makes of the other an object of desire. On the other hand I see here in a completely clear fashion, also designated in a third position, and in a corner, something which is fully articulated and to which nobody seems to pay attention, which is still not there for nothing. It is the bidet. Namely something which at once hints at the phallus and does not show it,

because I do not foresee that in the dream that it is indicated that anybody is in the process of using it. The bidet is here indicating that what we are dealing with, what is problematic, it is in fact something which is present in the question. It is not for nothing that this famous partial object comes. It is the phallus, but the phallus is posed there precisely as I might say, *qua* question: does the other have it or does he not have it? It is the opportunity to show it. Is the other it or is he not it? This is what is in the background. In short, it is the question of castration, the very question if you wish, for this obsessional beset by all sorts of obsessions about cleanliness which show well the degree to which on occasion, this instrument can be a source of danger.

And these obsessions about cleanliness, it is not for nothing that I evoke them here, because I read you this little piece about the bidet which shows that the bidet for him, for a long time, presentified the phallus, at least his own. It is the question about the phallus, and about the phallus in so far as it comes into play, and at the level of the other as being the object of this essentially symbolic operation which ensures that in the other, and at the level of the other, and at the level of the signifier, the phallus is the signifier of what is struck by the action of the signifier, of what is subject to castration.

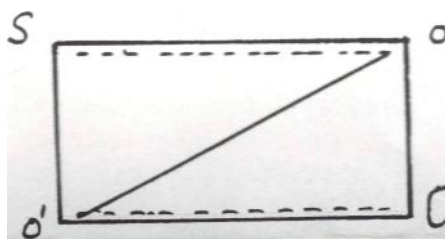
It is in this essential articulation, namely in so far as the aim is not to know whether at the end the subject will feel himself strengthened by the assumption of a superior power, by the assimilation to one that is stronger than him, but to know how he will have effectively resolved the question which is implicit at the horizon on the very line of what indicates the structure of the neurosis indicates, namely the acceptance or not of the castration complex, in so far as being realised, it is realised in its signifying function.

It is here that one technique is distinguished from the other, and I will show you why, independently of the legitimacy linked to the structure, linked to the very meaning of the existence of the desire of the obsessional, independently of that, the therapeutic solution itself, if you wish, the knot, the completion, the scar let us say, that is obtained, leaves absolutely no doubt that a certain technique is not favourable, does not correspond to what one can call a cure, nor even to an orthopedics, even a clumsy one, that the other alone can give, not only the correct solution, but the effective solution.

Seminar 25: Wednesday 11 June 1958

We are going to continue our account still with the help of our little schema.

Some of you are asking questions about the little diamond shaped sign as it is employed for example when I write: \$ in front of o, the small other. This does not seem to me to be very complicated. But after all because some of you are asking the question, I recall that the diamond in question, is the same thing as the square of a much older and much more fundamental schema:



In which there is inscribed the relationship of the subject to the other *qua* object of the word, and *qua* message of the other in this first approximation that we made of what comes from the other and encounters the barrier of the relationship o - o', which is the imaginary relationship.

What does that mean?

That means that it expresses the relationship of the barred or unbarred subject as the case may be, namely *qua* marked by the effect of the signifier, simply that we consider as a subject still quite simply undetermined, still not split by the *Spaltung* which results from the action of the signifier, the relationship therefore of this subject to something which is determined by this quadratic relationship, and which, when I write it like that, is not otherwise determined as regards the vertices of the quadrangle in question in this frame, for example of the small other, that is of the counterpart, of the imaginary other.

If I write \$ with regard to demand, or \$ \diamond D, it is the same thing. One does not prejudge the point in the little square at which the demand as such will intervene, namely the articulation of a need in the form of the signifier.

Here we have therefore a line which is a signifying line, and undoubtedly as such, articulated. Because it is produced at the horizon of any signifying articulation, it is the fundamental backdrop for every articulation of a demand. Here (second line) it is articulated in general. However bad it may be, we have a precise articulation, a succession of signifiers, of phonemes.

Behind, that is in the beyond of every signifying articulation, this represents or corresponds to the effect of the signifying line, of the signifying articulation *qua* caught up in its totality, from the fact that by its simple presence it makes something symbolic appear in the real. It is in its totality, and in so far as it is articulated that it makes this horizon or this possibility of demand appear, this power of the demand which is that it is essentially and of its nature a demand for love, a demand for presence, this naturally with all its ambiguities.

I say love in order to fix something. Hate in this instance has the same place. It is uniquely on this horizon that the ambivalence of hate and of love can be conceived; it is also in this horizon that we can see coming to this same point this third term really homologous to love and to hate with respect to the subject, and precisely which I found in a text and elsewhere: ignorance.

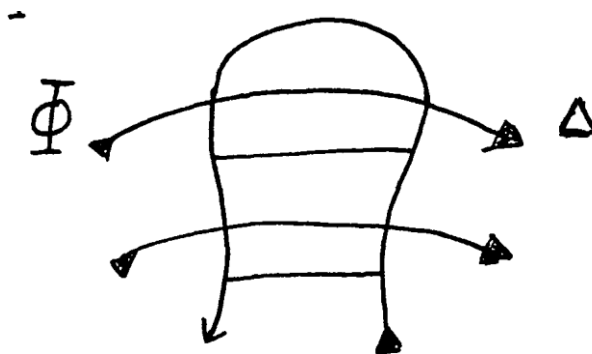
It is here then that there is found the signifier of O, *qua* marked by the action of the signifier, namely of O barred, namely that at this precise point which is the homologue of the point where on the line of demand there appears in this fundamental schema of every demand, this return of the passage of the demand through the other which is called the message. If you like, in a homologous fashion, what has to be produced at the point of the message in the second line, is precisely this message of a signifier, signifying that the other is marked by the signifier.

That does not mean that this message is produced. It is there at a homologous point as the possibility of being produced. And on the other hand, a point homologous to this point at which the demand arrives at the other, namely where it is submitted to the existence of the code in the other, at the locus of the other, at the locus of the word.

You also have at this horizon, what can be produced which is called this reference, which is called this conscious awareness (*prise de conscience*). But it is not simply conscious awareness, this articulation by the subject *qua* speaker of something which is his demand as such, and with respect to which he situates himself.

That this should be capable of being produced, is the fundamental presupposition of analysis itself. It is what is produced in the forefront of analysis. It is not, not essentially and as a first step, the renewal by the subject of his demands. Of course in a certain fashion it is a renewal, but it is an articulated renewal; it is in his discourse that the subject in a certain fashion makes appear, either directly, or in filigree running through his discourse, which is undoubtedly much more important for us when it is in filigree than when it is renewed directly by the form and the nature of his demand, namely by the signifiers in which this demand is formulated. And it is in so far as this demand is formulated in archaic signifiers than we talk about anal, or oral regression, for example.

I remind you that the last time, what I articulated, what I wished to introduce, is that everything that is produced which is properly speaking of the nature of transference, depends on the existence of this line behind, of this line which begins from a point whose start we can give by Φ , and which ends with a \diamond , whose meaning we will make more precise subsequently with respect to this line $\Phi - \diamond$, which it is the origin, the foundation.



The foundation of this effect of the signifier as such in the subjective economy, it is in so far as something is situated with respect to this line that one can talk about transference, namely that everything which is of the order of transference, according to the action or the inaction of the analyst, according to his abstention or his non-abstention, always tends to operate in this intermediary zone, and can always in a certain fashion be brought back to the articulation of the demand.

In a certain fashion, of course at every instant it is I would say normal, it is in the nature of verbal articulation in analysis, that something should be articulated on the plane of demand. But if precisely the analytic law is that no demand of the subject shall be satisfied, it is precisely for no other reason than that we speculate on the fact that in analysis something will be produced which will tend to make this line of demand operate, not on the plane of a precise, formulated, satisfied or not satisfied, demand. Everybody agrees: it is not because we frustrate the subject of what he may demand of us on occasion, whether it is the extreme case of wanting to kiss our hands, or whether it is simply to answer him; it is not that which operates, it is a more profound frustration, belonging to the nature, to the essence of the word in so far as it itself causes to arise this horizon of demand, and it is always in sum at the level of this horizon which I called very simply, to fix your ideas, the demand for love, and which, as you see, may also be a demand for something else, maybe a certain demand concerning the recognition of his being, with all the conflicts that this gives rise to, in as much as the analyst by his presence and *qua* counterpart, denies it.

The Hegelian negation of the relationship of consciences, is also glimpsed here on this occasion: the demand to know. This naturally exists at the horizon of the analytic relationship.

The reason why this interests us, the reason why this is involved in the symptoms, the reason why this serves for the resolution of neuroses, is to the extent that it is in this topological relationship with these two lines in so far as they are formed by every articulation of the word in analysis, that there are situated the four vertices of this other locus of reference of the subject to the other which is the imaginary locus of reference; in so far as here they are only false vertices. They are realised by the narcissistic or specular relationship of the ego to the image of the other, in so far as it is already on this side, anterior to, entirely implied in the first relationship of demand, and that beyond it is in the intermediary zone between the articulated demand and its essential horizon, also articulated of course, because it is the zone of all the articulations that are involved, also articulated as such because it is supported by what is articulated; but which does not of course mean articulatable, because here what is at the horizon, and strictly speaking this last term in so far as nothing suffices to formulate it in a completely satisfying fashion, except by the indefinite continuation of the development of the

It is in this intermediary zone that there is situated this something which is called desire, desire in so far as it interests us, desire in so far as it is desire which is properly speaking put in question in the whole economy of the subject, and can be involved in what is revealed in analysis, namely in everything that in the word begins to move in this oscillating interplay between what I might call the down-to-earth signifiers of need, and all that results beyond the articulation of this signifier, from the constant presence of the signifier *qua* present in the unconscious of the subject, namely in so far as it has already moulded, formed, structured the subject, it is here in this intermediary zone, and I have told you why, that desire is situated, the desire of man in so far as it is the desire of the other, namely that it is beyond

the passage of the articulation of man's need in this necessity to make it known to the other, this desire in the form of absolute condition, of something which is beyond every satisfaction of need, and which is produced in the margin which exists between the demand for the satisfaction of need and the demand for love, which is situated there. It is the problematic of this desire in so far as the desire of man is always to be sought by him in the locus of the other and which means that desire is a desire structured in this locus of the other as such, and in so far as the locus of the Other is the locus of the word, which creates the whole problematic of desire, of human desire, and which makes it subject to the formations of the unconscious, to the dialectic of the unconscious, which means that we deal with it, that we can have an influence on it by the fact that it is or not articulated in the word in analysis. There would be no analysis if there were not this fundamental situation.

This having been said, we have what is, as one might say, its correspondent, its support, the point where it fixes its object which far from being some sort of natural object, is an object that is always constituted by a certain position taken up by the subject in relation to the other. It is with the help of this relationship which is phantastical in its essence, in its nature, that man finds himself and situates his desire, hence the importance of phantasies, hence the fact that in Freud you will see how rarely the term instinct is employed. It is always a question of drives, in other words of something which is a technical term given to this desire, in so far as the word isolates it, fragments it and puts it in this problematic and disjointed relationship with its proper goal, namely what is called the distinction (*direction*) between the tendency and its object.

On the other hand you know that it is essentially made up of substitution, of displacement, indeed all the forms of transformation and equivalence essentially subjected to the word.

We had arrived the last time at the attempt to centre the problems more closely around something which must have a relationship with what is said there, because after all elements of it come through in the studies, especially of the nature of obsessional neurosis which I advised you on several occasions to get to know by your own efforts, and it is certain that certain elements: term, distance from the object, phallic object, relationship to the object, which are involved in it, cannot fail, at least in the report after these studies, to provoke us to see how we can judge them, assess them in the light of what this brings.

The last time therefore I took from the point of view of the treatment relationship, two cases of obsessional neurosis, in the article: "*Importance de l'aspect homosexuel du transfert*" (the case of Catherine, a false obsessional).

I pointed out to you how problematic in a certain way there appears the result of one or other of the suggestions, we could say directives, or even let us say strictly speaking interpretations, which are given in this phantasy. I pointed out to you in connection with a dream for example, how because of certain presuppositions one finds simplified in the system, one comes to avoid certain outstanding elements, and therefore the dream itself. Mention was made of a homosexual transference dream, as if this itself could have a meaning when the dream itself gives the image of what is involved, namely a relationship which is far from being a dual one, in as much as I showed you in the quite piquant presence here in the form of an object, of an object which is in this instance the famous bidet mentioned in this dream, the subject then who in this dream was transported into the bed of the analyst, who is both at his ease there, in an attitude which one can describe, in accordance with the manifest

content of the dream, as one of expectation, but with the quite articulated and essential presence of this bidet (*lit*).

One may be all the more astonished that the analyst does not pay attention to this, because another text of the same analyst shows that he is far from ignoring the strictly phallic signification of what certain analysts have called the hollowed out or cup-like penis, in so far as it is one of the forms under which the signifier phallus can present itself at the level of the assumption of the phallic image by the feminine subject. In fact this sort of grail which is presented here for us in the dream, is clearly something which is at the very least destined to stimulate the attention, indeed to give rise to some prudence in someone who interprets this dream in terms of a twofold relationship.

I would go further: this observation No.2, I reread it once more, I also read the one which precedes it. It really seems to me that this is not the most important thing, for one to criticise, because it is really taken to this really obvious level. I would simply ask you to reread this observation. Let us take all the same at random for example this sentence:

I alluded then to a second phase of the analysis, when an intervention of this kind had previously taken place, but I come back to it because in a way the subject who had been really been drawn by the fact to a deepening of the transferencethe transference situation became more and more precise. It was necessary to insist in order to overcome certain silences. The transference became then frankly homosexual..... I alluded therefore to the fact that if it exists, it is a question of facilitating affectionate relationships between men which are designated by the name of friendship, and that everybody knows that these relationships always take on a certain passive character for one of the partners, when the one who finds himself in the necessity of having to receive directives At that difficult moment I had the idea of using an analogy which could be understood right away by this ex-officer. Why do men go to their death for a leader whom they love, because they accept orders and commands with an absolute sense of obedience; they thus experience the feelings and the thoughts of their leader so strongly, that they identify with him and sacrifice their lives as he himself would do if he found himself in their place.

You see that an intervention of this kind should demand a fairly serious piece of silence.

"They can only act in this way because they love their leader passively."

"This remark did not cause all reservations to disappear immediately, but it allowed him to continue to be objective, even though he was going to re-live with me other homosexual situations, more precise than these."

And in effect this does not fail to occur.

In fact it is quite clear that the fact of orienting, of facilitating, of opening the door to a whole imaginary elaboration in what is called the twofold relationship between the analyst and the analysand, in a fashion which is shown by the observation itself to be not simply systematic, but really insistent, and in these two terms, on the two planes it chooses everything which, in the material, goes in the simplifying direction of elaborating the twofold relationship in so far as it is provided with an analytic signification.

Here it is not even a question of this element on which I will subsequently insist, namely the role of the stamp given to interpretation by the introduction of a signifier. Here interpretation, namely what makes it necessary that interpretation should be something that of its nature should be brief, is precisely this: it is that it essentially is, and that it should be essentially centred on the handling of the signifier.

What do we have here? We have manifestly an intervention in the very paragraph we are considering. It shows the meaningful, comprehensive, persuasive character which consists in inducing the subject to live precisely this relationship which as such is articulated and considered at this level of the work of the author as a twofold relationship, exactly for him to articulate the notion of the analytic situation as such, as a simple relationship which he elsewhere calls a two-fold relationship.

Here we find ourselves in the clearest fashion - everyone can put his finger on it, you do not even need to be an analyst to perceive it - before something which of its nature is close to suggestion, which in any case by the very fact that it chooses a signification to which it returns on three occasions, even in this observation which is about six pages long, shows us the essential stages of this relationship of the analyst to the person in analysis, and presents itself in the form of a facilitation of the understanding of the twofold situation in terms of homosexual relationships, as they are classically presented to us in the Freudian doctrine as being this something libidinal which underlies every relationship considered from a social angle, namely in this highly ambiguous form which does not allow to be distinguished what is strictly speaking the homosexual drive in so far as it is distinct in the choice of an erotic object, that of the sex opposite to the one which the norm may wish for.

There is here something of a different nature to the use of the term homosexual in connection with this libidinal underpinning. This no doubt poses all sorts of problems, but their use in the form of an indoctrination within the therapy, I am not saying that it is illegitimate in itself, I am saying that the fact that it is systematic assuredly poses the problem of the whole orientation, of the whole direction of the treatment. Because in fact we see clearly the degree to which this can have an effect, but do you not at the same time also see that there is here a choice in the mode of intervention in connection with obsessional neurosis, and that everything that you otherwise know about obsessional neurosis, clearly reminds you that this relationship of the subject to himself, to his existence in the world, which is called an obsessional neurosis, is something infinitely more complex in every way, than a relationship of libidinal attachment to a subject of his own sex, at whatever level he manages to articulate it.

Everyone knows, since Freud's first observations, the role played by the destructive drive directed against the counterpart and redirected by this very fact against the subject himself. Everyone knows that many other elements are involved in it; these elements of regression, of fixation in libidinal evolution which are moreover far from being as simple, and I would say even embarrassing, as the famous link between the sadistic and the anal, is not something which of itself can be held to be simple, or even to have been simply elucidated at some moment or other.

In short, everything shows that if such an orientation or direction of the treatment pursued has an effect, it is precisely something with a much wider perspective on what is in question, something which comes to be articulated. I do not say that this is entirely sufficient, but already it permits us to organise better the different planes and registers on which things can effectively be organised.

At the level of this plane, we can see, we can in effect situate this something which is a detail in the economy of the obsessional, namely the role played at one point of this economy, by the identification to an other who is a small *o*, an imaginary other, and that it is one of the modes thanks to which he balances more or less well or badly his economy as an obsessional.

To go too far as one might say in this direction, to give him this sort of satisfaction which is the ratification of this relationship, there appears in the history of the subject, the frequency, I would say the consistency in the history of the obsessional, of an other in so far as he is the one to whom he refers, whose approbation and criticism he demands, with whom he identifies as someone. The author in question articulates it as someone stronger than him, and on whom literally one can say that he bases himself, a sort of dream.

This is something that is well known: the fact of sanctioning as one might say this mechanism, which is undoubtedly strictly speaking a mechanism of defence in this instance, the way in which the subject balances the problematic of his relationship to the desire of the other, is something which can have some therapeutic effect, but far from having one all by itself, and moreover does not the subsequent development of the works of the author show that things pushed in this sense, which more and more put the accent on what he calls on this occasion the distance from the object, this is incarnated in something which is produced, which is very specially centred around the phantasy of fellatio; the fellatio of a phallus, not just any phallus but very precisely the phallus which is a part of the imagined body of the analyst. This culminates in the elaboration in a way of a sort of phantasy in which this sort of imaginary support based on the counterpart and in the homosexual other, is incarnated, is materialised in this imaginary experience which is proposed to us as being as such comparable to Catholic communion, to the consumption of a host. We see here that always along the same line, along a certain line of the elaboration of the phantasy, this time still more exaggerated, that there is produced something where we then undoubtedly see, where we can materialise it on the schema that we are dealing with. It is a question of the production of what happens at the level of the original phantastical productions.

I am going to show you that it is exactly from the subject himself, of the passage from this, namely from the relationship $\$ \diamond o$, in so far as it is at the level of the phantasy, namely of the phantastical production which allowed the subject to situate himself, to reach an arrangement with his desire, of the passage from this to the level of the message strictly speaking, of the message which is that of the reply to the demand, of the message, in so far as it is situated - it is not for nothing that in the observation, you are going to see it - is articulated in this fashion, we see at that moment appearing the image of the good mother, of the benevolent mother, and that we are told about the allaying of the infantile feminine superego. In effect it is in so far as it is at the level of the signification of the signified of the Other (O).

Ratifying this phantastical production of the subject, in a way it is this which we can literally only properly express except as a reduction of the complexity of the formations in the subject which desire is, as a reduction of this to the relationship of demand, of demand articulated in the direct relationship of the subject to the analyst.

You will say to me: but if it succeeds? In effect, why not? Do we not even have here a certain notion that one can have of analysis?

I reply: not only does it not suffice, but we have in these observations, moreover in the most perceptible fashion, in what we are given, we also have in addition documents which allow us to see by experience what the result of this is.

Undoubtedly this has certain effects, but on the other hand what is produced is something which is very far from representing the healing that we could expect, or the pretended genital maturation which is supposed to be realised. How can we fail to see the paradox that is represented by the fact of speaking about genital maturity when in fact it is frankly articulated here that genital maturity is represented on this occasion by the fact that the subject allows himself to be loved by his analyst?

There is all the same something extraordinary here; far from genital maturity being realised by a process, we see here on the contrary very obviously the occurrence of a subjective reduction of symptoms by the mediation of a process which of its nature, has something regressive about it, not regressive only in the temporal sense but regressive from the topographical point of view, in as much as there is a reduction to the plane of demand of everything that is of the order of the production, of the organisation, of the maintenance of desire. And effectively, what is produced in these stages, far from being interpretable as it sometimes is in the direction of an amelioration, in the sense of a normalisation of relationships with the other, shows itself as brusque explosions, or acting out - I showed it to you last year in connection with an observation, the observation of relationships in a subject strongly marked by perverse tendencies, and where things ended up in a true acting out with the subject going to observe through toilet doors, women urinating, namely literally going to find the woman precisely *qua* phallus, namely by a sort of brusque explosion of something which, under the influence of the demand is excluded, and which here re-enters in the form of something which strictly speaking in this quite isolated act in the life of the subject, has all the compulsive forms of acting out, and the presentifying of a signifier as such.

Many more testimonies still show us in other forms, sometimes for example in the form of a falling in love which itself has this paradoxical aspect in these subjects that there is no reason for considering them in themselves as being dissident homosexuals; the homosexuality they have, they have or do not have any more than what one can see of it in a sudden falling in love with one's counterpart, in a problematic falling in love, I would say in a really artificial production of these sorts of interventions, in a falling in love which in effect takes on the appearance of a homosexual falling in love, and which is only in fact the forced production as one might say of this relationship $\$$ with respect to o , which in this sort of way of orienting, of directing an analysis, is properly speaking what was forced by the reduction to demand.

I would therefore say that at this level of this practice, this fashion really which at that moment one can say lacks all criticism, all subtlety, there is something which discourages any commentary, and that is also why I would like to take something which is still earlier, and which, as I told you once, in the work of the author in question, always seemed to me much more interesting and suitable for showing what development perhaps might have taken place, if his elaboration of these subjects had been differently oriented.

It is the one which concerns the therapeutic incidences of conscious awareness (*prise de conscience*). It is the very title of *L'Envie du penis dans la névrose obsessionnelle féminine*.

This observation is very interesting because we do not have many analyses of obsessional neuroses in women, and also for those who may approach the problem of the sexual specificity of neurosis, namely who think that it is for reasons connected with their sex, that subjects choose one or other angle of neurosis.

We will see all the same in this instance of feminine obsessional neurosis, how everything that is of the order of structure in neurosis, is something which allows very little place to the determination that the sexual position, in the sense of natural sexual position, in the sense of natural, biological sex, can have.

Here in fact this famous prevalence of the phallic object as such that we saw operating in the observations concerning masculine obsessional neuroses, is found again, and in a very interesting fashion.

Here is how the author on this occasion, conceives, discovers, develops the progress of the analysis. He articulates it himself in the following fashion:

Like the masculine obsessional, the woman needs to identify herself in a regressive way with the man in order to free herself from the anxieties of early childhood. But while the former depends on this identification in order to transform the infantile love object into a genital love object.....

This corresponds strictly to what I remarked above about the paradox of the identification of the masculine subject to the analyst in this instance, because just by itself it constitutes this passage from the infantile love object to the object of genital love. There is certainly here something which at least poses a problem:

She (the woman) bases herself at first on this same identification and 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 onto the person of the analyst.

It is therefore said with an ambiguity that is undoubtedly striking, but necessary, that it is the identification to the analyst articulated here as such, which is defined as such. It is noted that he is of the masculine sex, that it is this identification which in the first case, of itself, is simply supposed as self-evident, this identification, assures the access to genitality, whence it results, if one has this presupposition, this hypothesis, that in the case of the woman, if we obtain what is given as being the case, however not without some prudence, because in this observation no extraordinary amelioration is noted, but undoubtedly it is established that in the very measure of this identification to the analyst, it is established not without a certain embarrassment, not without a certain surprise even, that this identification will be successively carried out in fact in two modes: in a first mode which will be first of all conflictual, namely of complaints against men, of hostility even with respect to men, then in the very measure that this relationship, we are told, allays, a particular problematic.

It is always because of the necessity of conceiving in a certain fashion this progress of a feminine identification, which is admitted as possible, by reason, we are told, of the fundamental ambiguity of the person of the analyst. We are certainly not satisfied for all that with this explanation.

... a new identification, this time feminine, this time onto the person of the analyst. It goes without saying that the interpretation of transference phenomena is particularly

delicate here, if the personality of the masculine analyst is first apprehended as that of a man, with all the interdictions, the fears, the aggressivity that this involves, shortly after the desire for phallic possession

And this is what we are going to have to talk about, and what we are going to have to estimate.

"... and correlatively for the castration of the analyst."

And he adds:

"...and that because of this fact, the aforementioned effects of relaxation were obtained, the personality of the masculine analyst is assimilated to that of a benevolent mother".

And he adds again:

"Does this assimilation not show that the essential force of anti-masculine aggressivity is found in the initial destructive drive of which the mother was the object?"

Here a Kleinian horizon can always give some support.

The conscious awareness of the one brings about the right to the free exercise of the other, and the liberating power of this conscious awareness of the desire for phallic possession becomes then obviously comprehensible, as well as the passage from one identification to the other in function of the fundamental ambiguity.

Here we find again the sentence pronounced above.

In fact it is all there. You are going to see, this is based first of all on the interpretation of what is involved, both on a requirement or on a desire for phallic possession, and correlatively for the castration of the analyst.

If we look at things more closely, this is far from representing what is effectively presented in the observation.

I will take up the observation in the order that it is presented to us.

The patient is a fifty year old woman; healthy, mother of two children, exercising a paramedical profession. She has come because of series of obsessional phenomena which are altogether commonplace: the obsession of having contracted syphilis. This is important, in so far as she sees in this some prohibition or other directed against the marriage of her children, which however she was not able to oppose, in the case of her eldest son. Obsessions of infanticide, of poisoning, in short a whole series of obsessions which are I would say quite banal, especially in the type of obsessional manifestations in women.

Before even giving us the list, it is the author himself who speaks to us in a prevalent fashion about obsessions with a religious theme. There are of course all sorts, as in all obsessions with a religious theme, insulting scatological phrases which impose themselves on the subject, in formal contradiction to her convictions.

Let us begin to look at what presents itself as one of the elements which the author himself underlines right away, in the relationships of the subject to religious reality, especially to the reality which for her, because she is a Catholic, is the presence of the body of Christ in the host.

She also represents in her imagination male genital organs, without there being any question of a hallucinatory phenomenon, we are told, in the place of the host. A few lines further on an important detail concerning this principal religious schématisation of these obsessional is pointed out to us: it is that her mother alone was responsible for her Catholic education, and her conflict with her was able to be referred onto the spiritual plane, we are told, which moreover was always of an obligatory and constraining character. I do not dispute it. This is a very important fact.

Before reflecting on the mode of the interpretations which are subsequently given, I would like you to dwell for a moment on this symptom. This symptom in itself is altogether of a nature to encourage us to make some remarks.

The genital organs, we are told, appear in front of and in the place of the host.

What can that mean for us? For us, I mean for us analysts. Here all the same there is a case where this place, this superposition, should be given its value, if we are analysts.

What do we call repression, and especially the return of the repressed, if not something which appears as something which discolours from beneath, which arises to the surface as the scriptures describe it, or like a stain which rises or which with time returns to the surface?

Here is a case, where if we wish to accord their textual importance to things, as our position as analysts requires us to do, we should try to articulate what it returns from.

We know that for this woman who has received a religious education, Christ should at least have a religious sense, as for all of those who are in the Christian religion, and it is not a matter of indifference. Christ is the Word, the Logos, and this is drummed into us in Catholic education, and that he is the incarnate Word, is something which is not in the least doubted, it is the most abbreviated form of what one can call a creed. We see in sum that if we refer to this Logos, what he is, namely if we are told that he is the Word, he is the Word; he is the Word, namely the totality of the Word. We see appearing through him, substituting itself for him, in his place, something which is what we, in what in a converging fashion with respect to all our exploration, we try to formulate about the analytic experience. We have been led to call this privileged signifier unique, in so far as it is defined by the fact that it designates the effect, the mark, the imprint of the signifier as such on the signified.

What is produced therefore in this symptom, is the substitution for a relationship which is given to us as that of the relationship of the subject to the word, to the word in its essence, to the total word, to the incarnate word even, the substitution for the totality of this word of a privileged signifier which is properly speaking that of the signifier which serves to designate the effect, the mark, the imprint, the wound of the totality of the signifier which bears on this human subject in so far as through the agency of the signifier there are in him things which come to signify.

We are going through the observation. What are we going to find further on?

To are going to find the following: that the subject is going in this instance to find herself saying that she has dreamed, that she crushed the head of Christ with her kicks, and this head, she adds, was like your own. She is speaking to the analyst. And in association, she makes the following remark: "Every morning in order to get to work, I pass in front of an undertaker's shop where four images of Christ on the cross are exposed. Looking at them I have the sensation that I am walking on their penises. I experience a sort of intense pleasure and anxiety."

Here once again, what do we find? We find manifestly the identification of this something which is the Other, the big Other, undoubtedly in this instance the Other *qua* locus of the word. On this occasion what we are given, is that the subject crushes the face of Christ with her heel. Let us not forget that here Christ is materialised by an object, namely a crucifix. That this object itself in this instance should be in its totality as one might say, the phallus, is again something which cannot fail to strike us, especially if we continue to pursue the details that are given in the observation, namely the following: the fact is that something very peculiar is going to intervene in the relationships of the analysand with the analyst: the reproaches that she is going to address to the analyst, about the difficulties that he introduces into her existence by his treatment, are going to be materialised in the fact that she cannot buy shoes for herself.

The analyst of course could not be so unaware as not to recognise here the phallic value of the shoe, in other words that the shoe, and especially the heel of which great use is made, very precisely on this occasion in order to crush the head of Christ, is something which has here all its import.

Let us remark in this connection that this occurs within an analysis, that fetishism, especially shoe fetishism in a woman is practically never seen, the appearance of this something which is referred to the shoe with this phallic signification. On the other hand in the course of the elaboration of an observation as it is carried out in analysis, is something which here takes on all its value. Let us try to understand it.

In order to understand it it is not necessary to go very far. While the analyst does everything at that moment to suggest to the subject that it is a question here of a need, of a desire to possess the phallus, which is perhaps not in itself the worst thing that he could say, if it were not for the fact that for him this represents, as he also says, the desire of the subject to be a man. Which the subject does not fail to object to, to contest with the greatest energy up to the end. She never had the desire to be a man, and in truth in fact it is perhaps not the same thing to desire to possess the phallus and to desire to be a man, because analytic theory itself supposes that matters can be resolved in a very natural fashion, and who would not take it into account?

But here is what the analysand replies in this instance. She replies:

"When I am well dressed, men desire me, and I say to myself with a very real joy: There's another one who's going to pay for it. I am happy to think that they are suffering because of it."

In short, she brings the analyst back to solid, economic earth, namely, if there is a relationship to the phallus in her relationships with men, what is it?

Let us try now to articulate it ourselves.

Here more or less is how I propose to you to articulate it precisely: there are several elements here: there is the relationship to the mother, the relationship to the mother of course about which we are told that it is profoundly essential, a really coherent relationship between the real subject and this mother whose problematic relationships with the father we are shown, and we will subsequently come back to her relationships with the father, and to the relationships of the patient with her father, that this mother in any case showed herself in several ways, and in particular in the following way: that the father was not able to overcome the attachment of his wife to a first love, which was moreover a Platonic one. For something like this to be pointed out in the observation, means that it must have had a certain place.

We see here on the other hand that the relationships of the subject to the mother are these: she judges her favourably in every way, more intelligent than the father, etc..., fascinated by her energy, etc...:

The rare moments when her mother relaxed filled her with an unspeakable joy she had always considered that her younger sister was preferred to her. As well as that however anybody who interfered with this union with her mother was the object of a death wish, as is demonstrated by a large amount of material, either from dreams, or from childhood, relating to the desire for the death of her sister.

Is this not enough to demonstrate that first and foremost everything that in this instance is in question in the relationships of the subject to her mother, is precisely what I underlined for you as being the relationship of the subject to the desire of the mother. The fashion in which the problem of desire is introduced into the life of the subject is precocious and particularly manifest, precisely in the history of the obsessional.

This desire which culminates in the fact that the subject sees being outlined as an end, the end not of having this or that, but first of all of being the object of the desire of the mother, with what this involves, namely of deducing what exists, but is unknown. The object of the desire of the mother, is precisely that on which there depends everything which from now on links for the subject the approach of her own desire to a destructive effect, and that which at the same time subordinates, defines as one might say, the approach of this desire as such to the signifier which is precisely by itself the signifier of the effect of desire in the life of the subject, namely the phallus.

I am articulating things afresh: the problem is not for the subject in question of knowing whether the mother, as in the case of the phobic for example, has or does not have the phallus. It is to know what is the effect in the other of this something which is X, which is desire. And in other words, what comes to the forefront for the subject, is to know what she will be, whether she is or is not, that which the desire of the other is.

What we see here coming to the forefront, and very precisely in this connection, it is very nice to see it on this occasion is the substitution at this point and at this level of the signifier phallus as such for the incarnate Logos, namely for the other, for the other in so far precisely as the word marks him.

In other words, I will articulate my thought still further: Freud saw and designated the frontiers of analysis as stopping, as I might say, at this point which in certain cases, he says, proves to be irreducible, there descends on the subject a sort of wound which for the man is the castration complex, and which keeps all its predominant manifestations, which in short can be resumed as follows: that he cannot have the phallus except against the background of

not having it, which is exactly the same thing as what appears in the woman, namely that she does not have the phallus except against the background of the following: that she has it, because otherwise how could she be so enraged by this irreducible *Penisneid*. Do not forget that *Neid* in German, does not simply mean a wish, *Neid* means that which literally enrages me. All the underlay of aggression and of anger are indeed in this original *Neid*, in modern German and much more still in the old forms of German, and even of Anglo-Saxon.

If Freud in a certain fashion marked here what he called on a certain occasion the infinite character, projected to infinity, which is badly translated by interminable, of what can happen in analysis, it is because he does not see, because after all there were things in the face of which he did not have the opportunity of doing, even though many things indicate, especially in the last article on the *Spaltung* of the ego to which I will return, he does not see that the solution to the problem of castration in man as in woman, is not about this dilemma of having or of not having the phallus, because it is only starting from the moment when the subject perceives that there is one thing which in any case must be recognised and stated, that he is not the phallus, and it is starting from this realisation in analysis that the subject is not the phallus, that he can normalise what I would call this natural position, that either he has it, or that he does not have it.

This is therefore effectively the final term, the signifying relationship around which there can be resolved the imaginary impasse engendered by the function that the image of the phallus comes to take on at the level of the signifying plane, and this indeed is what happens in our subject when, under the effect of the first manifestations of being taken up into the mechanism of transference, namely of a more elaborated articulation of symptomatic effects that there is produced in her something which is produced in an entirely recognisable fashion in what I have just quoted for you today, namely the following: I am saying that the phantasy *qua* presented in the analysis, which is linked to the possession or the non-possession of shoes, of feminine shoes, of phallic shoes, of shoes which we will on this occasion call fetishistic, what function does it take for a masculine subject in so far as in his perversion, what he refuses, is that the woman should be castrated?

This is what the fetishistic perversion means for the masculine subject: the perversion, is to affirm that the woman has it against the background of what she does not have. Without this there would be no need for an object, to present her with an object over and above, manifestly independent of the woman's body.

If the woman begins to develop in the course of the transferential elaboration, something which is apparently the same thing, namely that she has it, because what she underlines is that she wishes to have it in the form of clothes, in the form of those clothes which are going to excite men's desire, and thanks to which she can disappoint them in their desire. She is the one who articulates it in that way. Undoubtedly she is apparently stating the same thing, but it is something quite different when it is posed by the subject herself, namely by the woman, rather than by the man who confronts her, and also for her on this occasion, what she shows, is that by wishing to present herself as having what she herself knows perfectly well she does not have, it is a matter there of something which for her has a quite different value, namely what I called the value of a masquerade, and that through which, for all that, she makes of her femininity precisely a mask.

What is in question, is that starting from the fact that this phallus which is for her the signifier of desire, what is in question is that she should present its appearance, that she should appear to be it. What is in question, is that she should be the object of a desire, and of

a desire that she herself knows very well she can only disappoint. She expresses it formally at the moment that the analyst interprets what is in question to her as a desire for the possession of the phallus. It is a question here of something which once more shows us the divergence which is established, and which is essential, between being this something which is the object of the desire of the other, and the fact of having or of not having the organ which bears its mark.

We come therefore to the following formula: the original desire, is: I want to be what she, the mother, desires. In order to be it I must destroy that which for the moment is the object of her desire. The subject wishes to be what this desire is. What she must be led to see in the treatment, is that it is not in himself that the man is it, the object of this desire; it is to show her precisely that the man is no more the phallus than the woman. What causes her aggressivity - I will show it to you better the next time - with regard to her husband *qua* man, is in so far as she considers that he is, I do not say that he has, that he is the phallus, and it is under this heading that he is her rival, it is under this heading that his relationships with her are marked by the sign of obsessional destruction.

That this desire of destruction is turned against herself in accordance with the essential form of the obsessional economy, this indeed in effect is the goal of the treatment, it is namely to make her see that: you yourself are what you wish to destroy, in so far as you also wish to be the phallus; and what is done in a certain way of carrying on the treatment?

Notice the difference: you are what you wish to destroy; it is replaced by: you wish to destroy what in this instance is taken up into quite improbable and fleeting phantasies. The details of the observation will show you this destruction of the phallus of the analyst. You wish to destroy this, says the analyst, and I myself give it to you. In other words, the treatment is entirely conceived as being the fact that the analyst phantastically gives, consents as one might say, to a desire for phallic possession. Now, that is not what is in question, and one proof among others that one can give that it is not that, is the fashion in which, at the quasi-terminal point to which the analysis seems to have been pursued then, we are told that the patient holds on to all her obsessions, apart from the fact that she no longer has but one of them. They have all been ratified, in block, by the analysis, of course, but the fact that they still exist has all the same some importance.

What does the patient do? This is said in the observation with a complete ignorance. She intervenes with all her energy with her eldest son of whom she has always been terrified, because in fact he is the only one whose masculine reactions she had never completely succeeded in mastering, telling him that he must as a matter of urgency go and have himself analysed in his turn, namely that this phallus that the analyst believes to be the solution of the situation, in so far as taking, as he says himself, the position of the benevolent mother, he gives the phallus to this patient; she gives it back to him, namely at the only point at which she effectively has the phallus, she gives it back to him. What is lent must be repaid.

The analyst has entirely oriented the analysis towards the term that the person in analysis wishes to be a man. Up to the end the person in analysis is not entirely convinced. Undoubtedly however, something which is involved, namely that it is true that the possession or not of this phallus was calmed down in this case. But the basis, the essential, the signification of the phallus in so far as it is that of desire, remains unresolved.

Seminar 26: Wednesday 18 June 1958

The 18th of June is also the anniversary of the foundation of the *Société Française de Psychanalyse*. There was a moment when we too said no.

The last time I had begun to comment on the observation of a female obsessional who was being treated by one of our colleagues, and I had begun to outline some of the principles which can be deduced about the way in which we try to articulate things as regards the good or bad direction, the correct or incorrect character of the conduct of a treatment centred on something which obviously presents itself as existing in the content of what emerges in the analysis, namely the conscious awareness (*prise de conscience*) of penis envy.

I think that in general you can see the importance of the use that we make of it. There are of course always some little delays when you are upset because the schémas which you were concentrating on, the oppositions which seemed to you to be easy to hold on to, find themselves somewhat shaken or put in question by what is revealed as we make further progress..

We only have to ask ourselves for example if there is not a contradiction between what I put forward the last time, and a principle on which some people wanted to concentrate. I said that in fact for the woman, her sexual development passed necessarily through something which could be described as: she must be the phallus against the background of not being it, I said. For the man it is the castration complex which can be formulated as follows: that he has the phallus against the background of the fact that he does not have it, or is threatened with not having it. Obviously these are schemas which from a certain angle, and when one speaks of, when one opposes sexual development at one or other phase, may well show a certain opposition. It is quite insufficient to stop at this because it is also the case that this dialectic of being and of having holds for both.

The man also must realise that he is not it. It is even in fact in this very direction that we can see situated one part of the problems brought into operation by the solution of the castration complex and of penis envy. We are going to examine it in greater detail, and I hope that little by little you will put in their place things which are not false in themselves, but which are partial views.

To do this let us start again today from our schema.

It is extremely important to articulate correctly the different lines on which analysis is situated. There is an article which I would recommend you to read, it is the article by Glover which is called: "The Therapeutic Effect of Inexact Interpretation" (October 1931, Vol. 12, Art. 4 of the *IJP*).

It is one of the most remarkable and most intelligent articles which could be written on such a subject. It is really in fact the starting base from which the question of interpretation can be approached.

In fact the basis of this article and of the problem that it poses, is something which can more or less be situated as follows: at the point in time that Glover wrote it, we are still at a

time when Freud is alive, but at which the great change of analytic technique around the analysis of resistances and of aggressivity has happened. Glover articulates that this analysis of resistances and of the transference is something which with the experience and the development of notions acquired in analysis, is something which implies going over, covering as one might say, in the sense that ground must be covered by the analytic progress the totality of the *systèmes fantasmatiques* - let us translate "phantasy systems" in this way: the systems of phantasies - which we have learned to recognise in analysis. It is clear that at that time more had been learned, more was known than right at the beginning of analysis, and the question which is posed, is: what was our therapy when we did not know the whole extent, the whole range, of these phantasy systems?

Does it mean that what we did at that time, were incomplete therapeutic treatments, less worthwhile than those which we are carrying out now? It is obviously a very interesting question, in connection with which he is led in a way to draw up a kind of general report on all the positions articulated, taken up, by the one who finds himself in the position of being consulted about any difficulties whatsoever. In a certain way he generalises, he extends the notion of interpretation to every articulated position taken by the person who is consulted, and he draws up a table of the different positions of the doctor with regard to the patient.

There is here an anticipation of the doctor-patient relationship, as it is called today, but really articulated in a way which makes me regret that it was not developed in this direction which sets out a sort of general approach. The fact is very precisely that in so far as we overlook the truth included in the symptom, we find ourselves by this very fact collaborating with the symptomatic formation.

He takes this first from the position of the general practitioner who says to the patient: "get a grip on yourself, take a holiday, change your job", in fact who puts himself in the position of miscognition. Right away he occupies a certain place, which is not an ineffective one because it is one which is situated, can be very precisely located at the very place that certain symptoms are formed. He immediately occupies a certain function with respect to the patient which can be situated in the very terms of analytic topography. I will not insist on this.

He remarks at one point that the whole trend of "modern psychoanalytic therapy" in his time, is the direction of interpreting both what he calls sadistic systems and guilt reactions. He remarks that up to recent times, all this was not stressed. The patient was no doubt relieved of his anxiety, but there were undoubtedly left unresolved in him, unsuppressed, and at the same time repressed, this famous sadistic system.

Here for example is an example of the direction in which, he does not conclude his remarks, but begins them, and it is this that in our own day it would be interesting to take up again.

In this precise connection I will make a remark. It would be in sum a question of situating what is meant by the advent of the analysis of aggressivity. For a certain time, analysts were so impressed by the discovery that they had made of it, that it had become a sort of answer to everything. Our aggressivity was so well analysed that the words that analysts in formation encountered one another with tell the story.

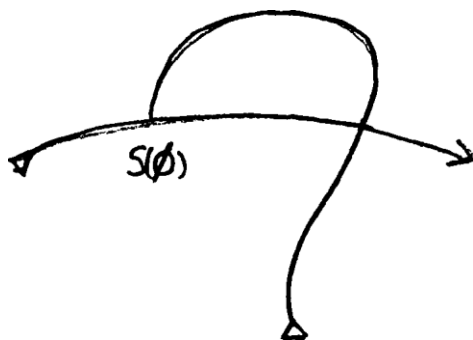
It would be a question of knowing what in effect this discovery represented, and I think that we can situate it somewhere on our fundamental schema. This is what I tried to do

above, because in fact we too can pose certain questions about it. I often remarked how much ambiguity remained at the time that I was teaching you, that I was talking to you about the narcissistic system as such, as fundamental in the formation of aggressive reactions, that aggressivity, the one that is provoked in the imaginary relationship to the small other, an is not something that can be confused with the totality of aggressive power, as a vital function, an imaginary relationship.

On the other hand, it is clear, to recall very obvious things, that violence is indeed what is essential in aggression, at least if we situate ourselves on the human plane. It is not the word, it is even exactly its contrary, it is violence or the word which can appear in an interhuman relationship, if violence is something in its essence which is distinguished from the word, the question can be posed of knowing in what measure violence as such - I say violence in order to distinguish it from the use that we make of aggressivity - can be repressed because if we follow what we have here posed as a principle, that in principle there can only be repressed what is revealed as illuminated by the structure of the word, namely by a signifying articulation, this is a question that must be posed.

In effect, from the imaginary angle, it is from the angle of this murder of the counterpart which is latent in the imaginary relationship as such, that what is of the order of aggressivity comes to be symbolised, and as such taken up in the mechanism of repression, of what belongs to the unconscious, of what is analysable, of what is even, you can say in a general fashion, interpretable.

Let us take things up properly once again. If we follow and if we begin again, if we spell out again our little schema, our schema in its simplest form:



namely in the intersection of the tendency, the drive if you wish in so far as it represents an individualised need, and this something which is the signifying chain in which it must come to articulate itself.

By itself what is it? This already gives us some elements and allows us to make some remarks.

Let us make a supposition: let us suppose that for the human being there is only reality; this famous reality that we make use of in all sorts of circumstances. Let us suppose that there is only that. It is not unthinkable that something signifying should articulate this reality. To fix your ideas, let us suppose that as they sometimes like to put it in some schools, the signifier is simply a conditioning, I would not say of reflexes, but of this something which is reducible to reflexes, as if language was not something of a different order to what we

artificially create in the laboratory with animals, by teaching them to secrete gastric juices at the sound of a bell. The sound of the bell is a signifier, and one can suppose a human world that is entirely organised around a coalescence of each of the needs which have to harmonise with a certain number of predetermined signs. If the signs are valid for all, in principle this should give us a society which functions in a perfectly ideal fashion. Every instinctual discharge of the order of need will be associated with something which we will call, if you wish, the differently varied sounds of the bell, which will function in a fashion appropriate to the one who hears it, so that immediately he may satisfy the aforesaid need. We thus arrive at the ideal society.

I would like to point out what I am outlining, is what has always been dreamed of by Utopians: a society functioning perfectly, and culminating in the satisfaction of each one according to his needs, with everyone, it is added, participating in it according to their merits. This is where the problem begins.

In fact if this schema remains at this level of the intersection of the signifier and the pressure or the tendency of the need, what does it culminate in? At the identification of the subject to the Other, in so far as this Other articulates the distribution of what can respond to need, the distribution of resources.

This is precisely what already shows you that it is not like that, namely that it is absolutely necessary that this background of demand should be taken into account, simply in order to take into account what happens in this articulation of the subject, in the subject's taking up a position in an order which exists beyond the order of the real, and which we call the symbolic order, which complicates it, which is superimposed on it, which does not belong to it.

Here and now however at this level, at this simple state of the schema we can see that at this level already something is happening, something in the natural order, in the organic order, let us say at least in man, which complicates this schema simply at this stage that is here described on the blackboard, and which consists in the following: it is that here we have the subject, this mythical child, let us stress, whom we use as a sort of background for our psychoanalytic speculations, this child in the presence of his mother who begins to manifest his needs.

It is here that he encounters the mother as a speaking subject. It is here that his message culminates, namely at the point where the mother satisfies him. As I pointed out to you, it is not when the mother does not satisfy him, frustrates him, that the problems begin. This would be too simple, even though of course people constantly try to come back to it, precisely because it is simple. I told you the interesting problem, one which did not escape someone like Winnicott for example, whom we know to be someone whose thinking and whose practice covers the whole breadth of the present day development of psychoanalysis and its techniques, up to and including an extremely precise consideration of the phantasy systems which are at the limit, at the frontier with psychosis. Winnicott, in his article on transitional objects, which I brought to your attention, shows with the greatest precision that the essential problem, is how the infant emerges from satisfaction, and not from frustration, to construct a world.

The fact is that in so far as a world is articulated for the human subject, which involves a beyond of demand, when the demand is satisfied, and not when it is frustrated, this is what he calls transitional objects, namely these small objects that we very early see taking

on an extreme importance in the relationship with the mother, namely a piece of a blanket that he jealously pulls on, a piece of anything at all, a trinket. And the importance of this transitional object in the developmental system of the child, is something absolutely essential to see and to situate and to understand in its precociousness.

This having been said, let us focus on this frustration, namely on the fact that here the message does not arrive there after a date that we tried to fix when we were interested, three years ago, in the mirror stage. It has not evaporated since. I really like those of you who tell me: every year it is something different, the system changes. It does not change. I am simply trying to make you go over the whole field.

What we find, is that what happens in this relationship with the mother, in so far as here the mother imposes what I called more than once her law, her omnipotence or her caprice, complicated by the fact that the child, the human child, and not every little animal, and we know it from experience, is open to a certain relationship of the imaginary order which is the relationship to the image of his own body, and to the image of the other, namely in so far as we see it on our schema, in the beyond of what happens on the return line of the satisfied or unsatisfied need. Namely that he experiences, reactions for example of disappointment, of malaise, of vertigo, in his own body, compared to an ideal image that he has of it and which takes on for him an altogether predominant value because of a feature of his organisation which we have linked more or less correctly to the prematurity of his birth.

In short, from the beginning you see, if you wish interfering, interacting between one another, two circuits, the first of which is the symbolic circuit, to fix your ideas, to hang things on a clothes-stand that you already know, the infantile feminine superego, and on the other the imaginary relationship to this ideal self-image which is found in him when he is frustrated or disappointed, more or less affected, even injured.

In other words, from the beginning the circuit is found to act on two planes: the symbolic plane and the imaginary plane; the relationship to the image of the primordial object, the mother, the Other in so far as she is the locus where there is situated the possibility of articulating need in the signifier, and on the other hand the image of the other, small o in so far as it is the point where the subject has this sort of link with himself, with an image which represents what we can call the line of his completion - imaginary completion of course.

In what has all we have said since the beginning of the year consisted, since we began to take things at the level of the witticism?

In having the opportunity of putting forward this schema, of showing you its pertinence, its inevitable character in mental states, I told you that in fact no mental life could be organised, which corresponds to what we are given in experience, to what experience articulates in analysis, if there is not beyond this other primordially placed in the position of omnipotence through its power, not of frustration, because that is insufficient, but of *Versagung*, with the ambiguity of promise and of refusal that is contained in this term *Versagung*. That there is I might say, the other of this other, namely what permits this other locus of the word, which the subject perceives it as itself symbolised, namely that there is this other of the other. On the occasion when we take the system of the family oedipal triangle, if you wish, you see clearly that there is something more radical, more fundamental than anything that is given by social experience, this term family, and this indeed is what

constitutes the permanence, I mean the constancy of this oedipal triangle and of the Freudian discovery.

I told you that here the Father (with a capital F) in so far as he is never a father, but much more rather the dead father, the father *qua* bearer of a signifier as such, a second degree signifier, of a signifier which authorises and founds the whole system of the signifier, which ensures that in a way the first other, namely the first subject to which the speaking individual addresses itself, is herself symbolised.

It is uniquely at the level of this other, of the other of the law properly speaking, and of a law, I am going to insist on it, that is incarnated, that the articulated, human world, can take on its proper dimension as we see it operating in experience, and such that experience shows it to be absolutely indispensable this backdrop of an other with respect to the other without which the universe of language as it shows itself efficacious in the structuring, not only of needs, but of this new thing whose original dimension I am trying to make you understand to demonstrate to you this year, and which is called desire, to be articulated.

It is at this level that there is perceived, at the level of the other *qua* locus of the word, this other which could be purely and simply the locus of the sound of the bell that I talked to you about above, which would not therefore properly speaking be an other, but simply the organised locus of this system of signifiers, introducing its order and its regularity into the vital exchanges within a certain species. It is hard to see who could have organised it, and after all one can envisage that in a particular society, men who are full of benevolence spend their time organising it and making it function. It can even be said that it is one of the ideals of modern politics.

Only the other is not that. It is precisely not purely and simply the locus which is this something perfectly organised, fixed, rigid. It is an other which is itself symbolised. This is what gives it its appearance of liberty. It is a fact that it is symbolised, and that what happens at this level of the other of the other, namely of the father in this instance, of the locus where the law is articulated from the point of the perspective of (*ou*) him, who depends on an other; this other is itself subjected to signifying articulation, more than subjected to signifying articulation, marked by something which is the denaturing effect - let us strongly underline it - of our thinking, of this presence of the signifier which is still far from having arrived at this state of perfect articulation that we take here as a sort of starting hypothesis, simply to illustrate our thought, of this effect of the signifier on the other as such, of this mark of it that it was subjected to at this level.

It is this mark that represents castration as such.

If we have formerly, in the castration-frustration-privation triad, clearly marked in castration that the action is symbolic, that the agent is real, that one needs a real father, that castration exists, that castration, is a symbolic action, and that it bears on something imaginary. We find here the necessity for this: it is in so far as something passes from the real to the level of the law, a more or less inadequate father, it does not matter, or something which replaces him, but something which holds his place, that this is produced: the fact is that there is reflected in the system of demand, in the system of demand where the subject establishes himself, this something which is its background, namely which marks in this system of demand, far from being articulated, far from being perfect, but far from being fully productive or fully used, which marks in its background, this something which is called the

effect of the signifier on the subject, the marking of the subject by the signifier, the lack, the dimension of lack introduced into the subject by this signifier.

This lack which is introduced, is symbolised as such in the system of the signifier as being the effect of the signifier on the subject. The signified properly speaking, the signified which does not come as one might say so much from the depths, as if life abounded in significations, but which comes from elsewhere, from language and from the signifier as such, in order to imprint on it this sort of effect which is called signified.

This is symbolised primitively as is indicated by what we have put forward about castration. The fact that what emerges as a support for the symbolic action properly speaking, which is called castration, is an image, an image chosen as one might say in the imaginary system to be its support, this something in which the symbolic action of castration chooses its sign. It is borrowed from the imaginary domain, something in the image of the other is chosen to carry the mark of a lack which is this very lack through which the living being perceives himself, because he is human, namely because he is in relationship with language, perceives himself as excluded from the totality of desires, as something limited, local, as a creature, in this instance as a link in the chain of life, as only being one of those through whom life passes, unlike the animal, who is only effectively one of those who realises the type who in this sense can be considered by us as in relationship to the type, each individual as already dead.

We ourselves are also already that for them. We are already dead with regard to the movement itself, this movement itself of life, which because of language we are capable of projecting in its totality, and even more, in its totality as having arrived at its end.

It is exactly what Freud articulates in the notion of death instinct. He means that for man, life here and now is projected as having arrived at its term, namely at the point at which it returns to death.

This articulation by Freud of the death instinct, is the articulation of a position essential to an animal being who is caught up and articulated in a signifying system which permits him to dominate his immanence as a living being, and to perceive himself as already dead.

It is exactly what precisely he does only in an imaginary fashion; I mean here as virtual, as at the limit, as speculative. There is no experience of death, of course, which can correspond to it, and this is the very reason that it is symbolised in a different fashion. It is symbolised on this point and on this precise organ where there appears in the most obvious fashion the thrust of life. That is the reason that it is the phallus in so far as it represents simply the rise of vital power which takes its place in the order of signifiers, in order to represent for the human individual in his existence, that which is marked by the signifier, that which is struck by the signifier with this essential caducity in which there can be articulated the signifier itself, this lack of being whose dimension the signifier introduces into the life of the subject.

This is what allows us to understand the order in which things were presented for analysis, once someone simply did not start from academic considerations in order to approach the phenomenon, but simply started with the phenomena as he saw them manifesting themselves in neurotics, a privileged terrain for manifesting this articulation in its essence, simply because of the fact that it shows it in its disorder. And experience has proved

that it was always in disorder that we should learn to find rather easily the machinery and the articulations of order.

We can say that what is first given by Freud to an experience, an experience which immediately put in the foreground, promoted to the underpinning of the castration complex as such, this is something which everyone knows, started from the apprehension and the perception of the symptoms of the subject.

What does the symptom mean? Where it is situated in this schema?

It is situated somewhere in $s(O)$, which is produced at the level of signification. It is essentially the whole of what Freud put forward; it is a symptom, it is a signification. A symptom is a signified, it is a signified which is very far from involving only the subject. It is his history, his whole anamnesis that is implied. That is the reason that one can legitimately symbolise it at this place by a little $s(O)$. Which means: a signifier (sic) of the Other coming as such from the locus of the word.

But what Freud taught us also, is that the symptom is never simple: the symptom is always over-determined. There is no symptom whose signifier is not brought from a previous experience, precisely from an experience situated at the level where it is a question of what is suppressed (*réprimé*) and of what is the heart of all that is suppressed in the subject, namely the castration complex, of this signifier of O which is something which without any doubt is articulated in the castration complex, but which is not necessarily nor always totally articulated there. The famous trauma from which we started, the famous primitive scene, what is it, if it is not precisely something which enters into the economy of the subject, and which operates at the heart, at the horizon of the discovery of the unconscious, always as a signifier, a signifier in so far as it is defined in its incidence as I began to articulate it above, namely that life, I mean the living being grasped as living, *qua* living, but with this separation, this distance which is precisely what constitutes this autonomy of the signifying dimension, the trauma or the primitive scene.

What is it therefore if not this life which grasps itself in a horrible perception of itself, in its total strangeness, in its opaque brutality as pure signifier of an existence intolerable for life itself, once it separates itself from it to see the trauma and the primitive scene. This is what appears of life to itself as signifier in the pure state, namely as something which cannot yet in any fashion be resolved, be articulated. This necessity, this backdrop of the signifier with respect to signified, this is the something which from the beginning, once Freud began to articulate what a symptom is, is implicated by him in the formation of every symptom, and what have we recently seen in the hysteric, if it is not this which permits us to situate where the problem of the neurotic is found?

It is a problem of the relationship of the signifier with his position as subject depending on the demand. It is that in which the hysteric has to articulate something which we will provisionally call her desire, and the object of this desire, in so far precisely as it is not the object of need. That is the reason that I insisted somewhat on what I called the dream of the butcher's beautiful wife.

What is it that we are dealing with? It appears there in quite a clear fashion, and Freud says it in the beginning, from the very dawn of psychoanalysis, that it is a question for the hysteric of setting up, of making the object of desire subsist as distinct and independent from the object of any need.

This relationship to desire, to the constitution, to the maintenance in its enigmatic form of desire as such as a backdrop to every demand, this is the problem of the hysteric, and everyone knows that this, namely if you like something which we have called X, the unsayable desire.

What is the desire of my hysteric? It is that I should open up for her, I will not say the universe, but a whole world which is already vast enough, namely the dimension that can be called the dimension of hysteria latent in every human being in the world, namely everything that can present itself as a question about his own desire.

Here is what the hysteric finds herself communicating with on an equal footing, first of all of course with everything of this order which can be happening among all her hysterical brothers and sisters, namely that it is on this, as Freud articulates for us, that hysterical identification reposes. To every hysteric there echoes everything which, in actuality, is posed in some others, whether it is as questions about her own desire, especially and in so far as this other is hysterical, but also in so far as it is only a hysterical mode of posing a question in someone who may only occasionally and even in a latent fashion be hysterical.

The world is opened up to the hysteric through this question about her desire; a world of identification which puts her, as one might say, properly speaking in a certain relationship with the mask, I mean with everything which can in any way, fix, symbolise according to a certain type, this question about desire which relates it to the hysteric, let us say here to the appeal to hysterics as such, which makes her essentially identified to a sort of general mask under which stir all the possible modes of lack.

We have now come to the obsessional. The structure of the obsessional, as I am trying to advance in it, I told you, is also designated by a certain relationship with desire which is not this relationship d_x which is a different relationship which I already indicated to you as being essential for him, which we will call if you wish, today, d_o .

The relationship of the obsessional to his desire is subject to something which we have long known, thanks to Freud, namely the precocious role played in him by what is called *Triebentmischung*, the defusion of the drives, the isolation of something which is called destruction. It is in so far as the first approach of the desire of the obsessional subject was as for every subject, the contribution of the desire of the other, and that this desire of the other was first of all and as such destroyed, cancelled, that the whole structure of the obsessional is entered into, and that it is as such and uniquely through this, I am not saying anything terribly new, in saying that, I am simply articulating it in a new fashion, that it is determined as such and from that starting point.

When you are dealing with obsessionals, and those who are already dealing with them, may know that it is an essential trait of its condition, of its structure, that not only as I already announced and said, his own desire dims, flickers, vacillates and vanishes for him to the degree that he approaches it, carrying here the mark of this: that desire was first approached as something which is to be destroyed because first of all the reaction of the desire of the other was presented to him as something which was his rival, as something which immediately bore the mark to which he reacted with the style of destructive reaction which is the reaction underlying the relationship of the subject to the image of the other as such, to this image of the other in so far as it dispossesses and ruins him.

There is therefore this mark which remains in the approach by the obsessional to his desire which ensures that every approach makes it vanish.

This is what the author of whom I am speaking, and let us say whom I criticise on occasion in what I am in the process of unfolding before you for the past few lectures, this is what the author perceives in the form of what he calls distance from the object, and which he confuses with something that he calls the destruction of the object. I mean that the idea that he constructs of the psychology of the obsessional is that of someone who has perpetually to protect himself from madness; from madness defined as the destruction of the object.

This is only - I will explain why - a projection by the aforesaid author, of something which is, given the perspective from which he himself operates and wants to get to, to the resolution of this problem of desire in the obsessional along the path where he passes, where he conceives it, not only in function of his inadequacies on the theoretical plane, inadequacies of his thought on the theoretical plane, but also because of personal factors, because this is only a phantasy, a phantasy that in a way is necessary. I will show you how through the imaginary perspective in which he tackles the solution of this problem of desire in the obsessional, but it is obvious, commonplace in experience that there is not in typical obsessionals, the least danger of psychosis, or that you will lead them to it, and I will tell you why when the time comes; I will be able to tell you why, in the measure that matters are articulated in a way which will show you the degree to which an obsessional differs in his structure from a psychotic.

On the contrary, what is perceived in it, precisely although badly expressed, is effectively the following: that the obsessional only maintains himself in a possible relationship with his desire at a distance. What must be maintained for the obsessional, is the distance from his desire, and not the distance from the object. The object, as we shall see, has in this instance a quite different function, and what experience shows us in the clearest fashion, is that precisely he must keep himself at a certain distance from his desire for that desire to subsist. But there is another aspect to this which is the following: it is that in so far as the obsessional - observe this in the clinic and in the concrete - establishes with the other a relationship which, in a certain fashion, is fully articulated at the level of demand, that it is a question of the mother first of all, but in everything else subsequently, and in particular with respect to his spouse, because what does analysis mean for us, what can this term spouse mean, if not something which is fully articulated at the level of things where we try to situate them? It is namely the one with whom in some way or other one must willy-nilly come back to being the whole time in a certain relationship of demand, someone with whom one is all the time, even if one's keeps one's mouth shut on a whole series of things, it is never without pain. The demand demands to be pushed to the limit.

What happens on the plane of the relationships of the obsessional with his spouse? It is very exactly the following which is very subtle to see, as you will notice it, as you will observe it, when you take the trouble to do so. The fact is that the obsessional spends his time destroying the desire of the other. Every approach into the interior, as one might say, of the domain of the obsessional, culminates in the normal case, if one allows oneself be taken in by it in a silent attack, a permanent wearing away which tends in the other, and by the doing of the obsessional, to culminate in the abolition, in the devaluation, in the depreciation of what is his own desire.

These are nuances, terms undoubtedly whose handling demands a certain practice. But outside these terms, nothing else will permit us even to perceive the true nature of what is

happening. I already said, I already marked on the other hand in the obsessional's past, in the childhood of the obsessional, the very particular and accentuated character that the articulation of demand precociously takes on for him.

On this schema you are beginning to be able to understand and to situate it, because what I already stressed for you by portraying this little child who is always demanding something, and who, a surprising thing, has this characteristic among all children who in fact spend their time demanding something, of being the one from whom this demand is always felt, and by the best intentioned of those in his entourage, to be strictly speaking unbearable, the demanding (*tanant*) child, as we say. It is not that he demands more extraordinary things than the others, it is in his way of demanding, it is in the relationship of the subject to demand that there lies this specific or precocious character of the articulation of the demand of the one who already at the time that this manifests itself at the period for example just of the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, in what is called the latency period. This is what is in question.

As regards our hysteric, we have seen that to sustain her enigmatic desire, something in her case is used as an artifice, which we can represent, if you wish, by the formation of two parallel and identical tensions at this level of the idealising, identifying formation with the small other. Think of the feeling of Mr. K. for Dora. Every hysteric moreover, in one of the phases of her history, has a similar support which comes to play here the same supportive role as O.

The obsessional does not take the same route, the same path. He is even centred on the fact that to manage this problem of his desire he must start with different elements, he must start from elsewhere. What I am beginning to show you, is how - precociously and essentially - it is in a certain relationship to his demand that he can in his relationship to the other manifest the specificity and the place, maintain as one might say the necessary distance from that which is possible somewhere, but from a distance, the position of this desire cancelled out in its essence, of this sort of blind desire as one might say, which is the one whose position it is a question of maintaining.

We are going to go over, to circumscribe this relationship of the obsessional to his desire. A first trait of it is this specific relationship of the subject to his demand. There are others.

Let us observe the following. What is obsession? You know the importance of the verbal formula in it, to the point that one can say that the obsession is always something verbalised. On this point Freud had no doubts, even when he is dealing with what one might call latent obsessional behaviour; he considers that it has only revealed its proper structure, in so far as it takes on the form of a verbal obsession. He goes so far as to say that in fact one has only properly articulated the first steps, even in the treatment of an obsessional neurosis, when one has made the subject give to his symptoms, what one calls their whole development, which can present itself clinically as a worsening, and what is involved, is a kind of destruction of all the obsessional forms in something well and truly articulated.

Besides is it necessary to insist on the character of verbal, verbal-style cancellation, which is going to start from the structure of the obsession itself? And everyone knows that what in fact constitutes the essence and its phenomenologically anxiety-provoking power for the subject is this: it is that it is a question of a verbal destruction by the word and by the signifier. The subject finds himself prey to this destruction that is called magical, I do not

know why - why not say quite simply verbal? - of the other, which is given in the very structure of the symptom.

This also introduces us to a phenomenology that it is essential to go over in order to understand its necessity.

I would say that just as you have seen here in fact the circuit of the hysteric which culminates on the two planes, namely at an idealisation or identification in the schema at this upper level, which is only the parallel and the symbolisation which occurs on the imaginary plane here. If I allowed myself to use this schema to the limit, I would say that for the obsessional the circuit is more or less something like this, just as we find it here.

I will explain myself: the schema of verbal obsession, this schema which is destructive of the relationship with the other, this fear of causing harm by thoughts, we may as well say by words, because they are spoken thoughts, to the other, this obsession of blasphemy also is something which introduces us to a whole phenomenology which it would be well to dwell on for a little longer.

Blasphemy itself, I do not know if you ever took an interest in it. In itself it is a very good introduction to verbal obsession, this theme of blasphemy.

What does it mean to blaspheme? I would really like some theologian to give me an answer on this point. Let us say undoubtedly that it is something which causes the collapse of an outstanding signifier regarding which it is a question of seeing at what level of signifying authorisation as one might say, where there is undoubtedly situated its relationship with that supreme signifier which is called the unknown (*méconnu*) Father, it is absolutely not to be confused (with it) even if it plays a homologous role, that God has a relationship with signifying creation as such, is not to be doubted, and that blasphemy in its essence is something which is absolutely situated only in this dimension, namely in something which causes the collapse of the signifier to the rank of object, which identifies in a way the *logos* with its metonymical effect, which makes it go down a notch, is something which doubtless is not the right answer, the complete answer to the question of blasphemy, but it is undoubtedly an essential approach for what is involved in obsession, verbal sacrilege, I mean in the phenomenon which is established in the obsessional.

Remember the episode of the Ratman, this furious anger against his father which possessed him at the age of four, if I remember rightly, where he began to roll around on the ground crying out: "You towel, you plate, etc..." As always it is again in Freud that we find the most colossally exemplary things, a real collision and collusion between the essential thou of the other and this something inert, this collapsing effect as one might say of the introduction of the signifier into the human world which is called an object, and especially an inert object, an object in so far as it is only of itself an object of exchange, of equivalence, also moreover the whole litany of the child's rage sufficiently indicates it: it is not a question of knowing whether he is a lamp, a plate or a towel, it is a question of the thou dropping, being destroyed to the rank of object.

You will tell me that what is in question in this destruction of the other in verbal obsession is something, and I hope you will permit me to end with this, because we will be obliged to remain there for today, I would say that this something which is happening here and whose whole structure we will see the next time, this something which brings it about that it is only in a certain signifying articulation that the obsessional subject manages to

preserve the other, that the destructive effect towards which he aspires, to sustain him thanks to a signifying articulation, and think about this, you find here the very texture of this world that the obsessional lives in, the obsessional is a man who lives in the signifier, he is very solidly installed in it, there is absolutely nothing to fear, this signifier suffices for him to preserve the dimension of the other but it is a dimension which is in a way idolatrised, and its schema gives us this theme which I recall to you from the observation on the Ratman, I would say that French allows us to articulate it in a way which moreover I began here once, it will not be a surprise for you, at the level of the relationship to the other, and of the thou which begins here; what the subject articulates to the other is a: "Thou art the one who 's me." (*Tu es celui qui me*)

And for the obsessional it stops there. The full word which is that in which there is articulated the engagement of the subject in a fundamental relationship with the other cannot be completed except by this sort of repetition which a humorist portrayed in the famous "to be or not", and the chap scratches his head in order to be able to continue: "to be or not", "to be or not" And it is in repeating that he finds the end of the sentence: "Thou art the one who 's me", "Thou art the one who 's me", "Thou art the one who kills me". (*Tu e celui qui me tues.*)

The French tongue here gives us this fundamental schema of this relationship with the other. This relationship with the other is founded on an articulation which in a way is itself formed on the destruction of the other, but because of the fact that it is articulation, and signifying articulation, makes him subsist.

It is within this articulation that we are going to see what is this relationship, this place of the signifying phallus as regards being it and as regards having it, the thing we stopped at at the end of this last session, which will allow us to see the difference that there is between the solution which would allow the obsessional to be shown what- is truly involved in his relationship to the phallus *qua* signifier of the desire of the other, or of satisfying it in a sort of imaginary mirage of conceding to the demand for symbolisation by the analysis of the imaginary phantasy, this something in whose dimension as you know this whole observation unfolds, that which consists in fact in saying to the woman: "You have a penis envy? Well then..." as Mr. Casimir Perier said to a chap stuck up against a lamp post, a little bit disturbed: "What to you want?" And the chap replies: "Liberty!" - "Well then you have it", said Casimir Perier to him, and he passes between his legs, and goes off leaving him completely stunned. It is perhaps not exactly what we can expect from an analytic solution. The very termination of this observation, this kind of euphoric, intoxicated identification of the subject, the description which completely includes a masculine ideal found in the analyst, is perhaps something which brings to the subject a change of equilibrium, but certainly not the one which is the genuine response to the question of the obsessional.

Seminar 27: Wednesday 25 June 1958

We arrived the last time at the point at which we tried to begin to designate concentrically the constellation of the desire of the obsessional, and I announced to you for today that within what I began to approach in speaking to you about the position of demand in the obsessional, this demand so precociously felt by the other as having this special accent of insistence which makes it so difficult to tolerate; on the other hand this need for the destruction of the desire of the other in the obsessional; in the same way also something which already began our propositions for today, namely the function of certain phantasies.

It is obviously not in vain that in the work of the author whom I chose to take as a basis, less for a critique in the polemical sense of the word, than of a critique in the sense of a systematic analysis, an examination of what emerges from it, of what the author himself articulates, it is not in vain that this phallic phantasy in the form, specifically in the 1950 article (*Revue Française de Psychanalyse*, No. 2, 1950, April-June), namely therefore in this article, this phallic phantasy appears in the form of the special examination of the importance that penis envy takes on in a woman during the analysis of an obsessional neurotic.

It is obviously not all the things that I am teaching you, among them naturally the importance of the signifier phallus, which can be used as proof that an exaggerated importance is given here to this element. It is a question of seeing how it is being used, and it is not a question either of course, of engaging in the facile little game of criticising the outcome of a treatment which moreover is presented as incomplete, and of judging from outside something into which one has not entered.

Simply in this observation, the important thing is that nothing that I put before you as an element marking, in some way let us say the hesitations of the direction, indeed a direction frankly opposed to the one that might appear logical to us. If we do it, it is never - I mean it is not beginning from the observation itself considered as a succession and account of facts - but beginning from the articulations of the author himself, I mean: either from the questions that he poses himself, which you can always find expressed at the proper place, because of course the property of the human spirit called common sense, in particular, is indeed as has been rightly said, and not without irony, the least common thing in the world, and there is no doubt that what creates an obstacle for us here has already been an obstacle in the minds of the authors, and what is more it is a fact that in this observation, these obstacles are fully articulated. There are interrogations; I would say even more: there are remarks concerning the paradoxical outcome, the non- emergence of what was being sought for. There are finally contradictions to which the author himself does not give all the importance that they should have, but which undoubtedly can be qualified as such because they are written in black and white in his text.

Therefore to come to what we are going to try to formulate today concerning what constitutes the general direction of this treatment, the fashion in which it is articulated, we are going first of all to try to go to the heart of the matter, namely to pose the difference that exists between something which presents itself as articulated and not as articulatable, and then what is aimed at and effectively done.

Let us take our schema as a starting point, and let us begin by making of it the locus of a certain number of positions that it fully constitutes, which will also allow us to situate ourselves on what we have the most familiar knowledge of, and which is found represented there in a certain order and a certain topology.

What - asking the question once more - is this signifying line, the line at the top of our schema? It is a signifying line, we have said, in that it is structured like a language. On the other hand although it is structured like a language, it is precisely the sort of sentence that the subject cannot articulate, and that we should help him to articulate.

How is it situated in this schema? How can we understand it? What it structures is in fact, we are going to say, the totality of the neurosis, neurosis being here identical, not to an object, to a sort of parasite, to something which would be foreign to the personality of the subject, but which is precisely the whole analytic structure of his acts, of his behaviour.

In short, in the measure that the progress of our conception of neurosis advanced, we perceived that it is made up not only of decomposable elements in its signifying elements, in the signified effects of this signifier, because this is the way that I learned to retranslate what Freud articulates, but that the whole of his personality in a certain fashion bears the mark of these structural relationships, is something that goes well beyond what the word personality involves in a kind of first acceptance, its static nature, namely in what is called character. It is not that, it is personality in the sense that it designates in its behaviour, in its relationships to the other and to others, a certain movement which is always found to be the same, a scansion, a certain mode of passage from the other to the other; and indeed to an other who is always and continually rediscovered which forms the basis, the modulation if you wish, of obsessional action.

This means that all obsessional behaviour, and moreover even hysterical, if we say that it is structured like a language, I would say that this does not mean that beyond the articulated language which is called discourse, it is something which, taking all the acts of the subject, would have this sort of equivalence to language which exists in what is called a gesture, because a gesture is not simply a well-defined movement, the gesture is signifying. This would not be sufficient for what it includes; one could almost employ the expression in French, which fits perfectly, of: *une geste* in the sense that it is employed in the *chanson de geste*, the *geste de Roland*, namely the sum of his history.

When all is said and done it is, if you wish, a word, and in a certain fashion the sum total of the neurotic's behaviour presents itself as a word, and even as a full word, I would say, in the sense that we have seen the primitive mode of this full word which takes shape in the form of a discourse, of a full word also, but of a word in the entirely cryptographic sense, unknown to the subject as regards its meaning, even though in fact he pronounces it with all his being, by everything that he manifests, by everything that he evokes and has ineluctably realised along a certain path of achievement and non-achievement, if nothing intervenes in it which is of the order and oscillation of what is called analysis; therefore a word pronounced by this barred subject, this subject barred to himself which we call consciousness.

It is this that we represent in the form of a sign. Here it is indeed this that is in question. In sum what you see being discerned in this distinction that we are in the process of making, is that we have defined the Other with a capital O as the locus of the word, the Other establishes itself and takes shape by the sole fact that the subject speaks. Because he uses the

word, this big Other comes to birth as the locus of the word. This does not mean that for all that it is realised as subject in its alterity. The Other is invoked every time there is a word.

I think that I do not need to go back on this. I already insisted enough on it, but then this beyond which you see here, which is precisely the one which is articulated in the top line of our schema, is in sum the other of the other. It is this word which is articulated at the horizon of the other as such, it is this other of the other that is in question, and regarding which we will say that there is no reason why this other of the other, namely the locus where the word of the other is delineated as such, should be closed to us. It is even the principle of the intersubjective relationship as such, that this Other as locus of the word, is immediately and effectively given as subject, namely as a subject which thinks of us ourselves as his other. Here we have the principle of all strategy. When you play chess with someone, you attribute to him as many calculations as you make.

Why, because we therefore dare to say that this other of the Other, which should be the most transparent element for us, is given in a way along with the dimension of the Other, that it is in this very other of the Other that the discourse of the unconscious is articulated, this articulated thing which is not articulatable by us. Why must we do it? Why have we a right to do it?

It is extremely simple: this other to whom in experience and because of the conditions of human life, which ensure that human life precisely is pledged to the condition of the word, this other to whom we are submitted by the condition of demand, we do not know what our demand means to him, and why do we not know it? What gives him this opacity?

Now the things I am saying here are obvious: but still obvious things whose data are precisely not the least useful things to articulate. We are always happy to obscure them in the guise of premature objectifications. Why is it therefore that we do not know how this other is going to receive our demand? In other words, why in our strategy is he going to become, and realise this paradoxical position of his discourse?

That is what I mean when I tell you that the unconscious is the discourse of the Other. This is what happens virtually at this horizon of the other of the Other, in so far as it is there that the word of the Other is produced, and this word of the Other in so far as it becomes our unconscious, namely something which comes to be presentified in us necessarily by the simple fact that in this locus of the word we bring alive an other capable of responding to us. That is the very reason why he is opaque to us, it is because there is something in him that we do not know, and which separates us from his response to our demand, and it is nothing other than what is called his desire.

This is enough to make us perceive something immediately, it is that the essential point of this remark which is only apparently obvious, takes its value in function of the following: that this desire precisely is situated there between the Other as pure and simple locus of the word, and the other *qua* being of flesh and blood at whose mercy we are for the satisfaction of our demand. But that this desire is situated there, is precisely what conditions its relationship with something which is precisely of the order of the word, which is this symbolisation of the action of the signifier on the subject as such, this thing which makes in fact what we call a subject, which we symbolise with this \$. It is something different from purely and simply a *soi-même*; I mean what is called in an elegant English word, the fact of saying it in English, of isolating it allows what it means to be well distinguished, it is the *self*, namely what is irreducible in this presence of the individual to the world, this something

becomes subject properly speaking, and a barred subject in the sense that we symbolise it, in so far as it is marked by this condition which subordinates it, not just to the Other qua locus of the word, it is the subject defined as a moment, not of a certain relationship to the world, of a relationship of the eye to the world, of the subject-object relationship which is that of knowledge in the subject in so far as it comes to birth at the moment of the emergence of the human individual into the conditions of the word, and in so far therefore as he is marked, as I told you, by the other, not just simply *qua* locus of the word, but as itself. This other is conditioned and marked by these conditions of the word.

What do we see therefore at this horizon rendered opaque in this way by the obstacle of the desire of the Other? This is the thing which refers the subject thus marked back to his own demand, which puts him in a certain relationship, the relationship designated here by the symbol of a little diamond which I explained for you the last day, to his demand, in so far very precisely as the Other, as one might say no longer answers as they say. Here the big O no longer answers, something which is very celebrated under other initials. At the level of the subject, what tends to be produced at the horizon, is this confrontation, this reference back of the subject to his own demand in the forms as one might say of signifiers that are englobing with respect to the subject, these signifiers of which the subject himself becomes the sign. It is at the horizon of this non-response of the Other that we see being taking shape in analysis, and in so far precisely as at first the analyst, in so far as he comes at first to be nothing other than the locus of the word, than an ear which listens and which does not reply, is going in fact to push the subject to detach himself, to oppose himself to something which experience will show you as showing up in filigree in his discourse, namely precisely these forms of demand which appear in the form of what we call the anal phase, the oral phase, whatever kind of phase you wish, but which is characterised in a way by what? What do we mean when we speak of these phases? Let us not forget all the same that our subject does not progressively return before our eyes to the state of a suckling. We are not involved in some sort of fakir-like operation. I think you would have to see the subject going back through time and reducing himself in the end to the seed which engendered him. What is in question, are signifiers. What we call the oral phase, the anal phase, is the fashion in which the subject articulates his demand by the appearance in his discourse, here in the largest sense, in all the ways in which his neurosis makes itself present before us, of signifiers which have been formed at one or other stage of his development, which were the signifiers which were of service to him either in the more recent, or in the oldest phases for articulating his demand.

What is called in other words, fixation for example, is the prevalence kept by one or other form of oral, anal or other signifier, with all the nuances that you have learned to articulate. That is what this means, it is the special importance that certain signifying systems have kept, and which is called regression. This is what happens, in so far as the signifiers are rejoined by the opening therefore to the discourse of the subject, precisely of this, to be simply *qua* word, without there being anything special to demand, it takes shape in the dimension of the demand, and this is the reason why the whole perspective on what the subject lived from his earliest and most tender childhood, namely precisely the condition of the demand, is retroactively covered.

It is a question of knowing what we make of this regression. That is the whole question. We are there to answer it, or to say what happens when we do not answer it, and what else we can do. This is the goal that is worth reaching.

Here I point out to you in passing that in sum the signifiers which are involved here in this regression of discourse, should therefore be considered as being in the structure of the discourse itself, since it is always there moreover that we discover them, in these two successive signifying lines:

$$\begin{array}{c} S_1 \dots S_2 \dots S_3 \dots S_4 \dots \\ \hline S_1 \dots S_2 \dots S_3 \dots S_4 \dots \end{array}$$

the significations being always produced according to the law of the signifying chain. If you wish, these two things are equivalent because of an anticipation of the signifying succession, every signifying chain opening out before it the horizon of its own completion, and at the same time by a retroaction, once there has come naturally the signifying term which, as one might say, overtakes the sentence, which means that what it produced at the level of the signified always has what one might call this retroactive function. Here S_2 already takes shape once S_1 has started, and is only completed when S_2 retroacts on S_1 . The signifier and the signification are always out of phase to a certain degree, that is even what gives to every signification, in so far as it is not a natural signification, not linked to this completely momentary outline of the agency of need in the subject, which makes of it this something which is essentially metonymical, namely always linked to what links the signifying chain in itself to what constitutes it as such, to those links, to those knots which we can here precisely call momentary, and to distinguish them from a certain sigma if you wish, namely this beyond of the signifying chain to which we attempt to reduce it, these signifiers precisely that we find in this confrontation of the subject to demand, in this sort of reduction of his discourse to these elementary signifiers which we discern in filigree in everything that we evoke, and which is precisely what forms the basis of our experience, that through which we rediscover the same structural laws in all the behaviour of the subject, in the mode in which he expresses it to us sometimes, even down to its very scansion, to the motor fashion that he articulates it, in as much as a stuttering, a stammering, or any stumbling over words as I expressed it elsewhere, can be significant for us of something which, fundamentally, is of the order of a signifier of demand as an oral or an anal lack.

What does this already permit us to conceive of in passing? That this is really what is in question, and is what ensures as a little study group, directed by the most friendly of my colleagues, namely Lagache, discovered with an astonishment which must have been motivated by a kind of permanent misunderstanding, namely that in all the places where in French we see the word *instinct*, the fact is that in referring to the German text, and this was one of the surprises for this group, nothing other is ever found than the term *Trieb*; *Trieb*, or *pulsion*, as we translate it, and in truth *pulsion* rather obscures things. The English term is "drive", and if we wished to find something in French, we have scarcely anything which allows us, given the true sense of *Trieb*, to translate it. I would say that it is a word that would have to be chosen among scientific words and which is *tropism*, which is specially constructed to designate the irresistible elements of certain attractions considered as irreducible to physico-chemical attraction as it is exercised in animal behaviour, and which would allow us precisely to exorcise the more or less finalistic aspect that there is in the term *instinct*. I would say that it is something which when all is said and done is also of this order that we encounter here in our Freudian notion of *Trieb*. Let us translate it if you wish, by the French word *attirance* which I used just now to talk about those tropisms except for the fact that what would be in question here, is something which situates the human subject in a certain necessary dependence on something which of course - I cannot say that the human being is not the obscure subject in gregarious forms of organic attraction towards the element

of climate for example, or something of a different nature; it is obviously not there that our own interest develops, in the field that we are called on to explore in analysis, it is something which makes us speak of these different oral, anal, genital, and other phases, and what do we see?

The fact is that in analytic theory, there is a certain necessity, a certain relationship which puts him in a relationship of subordination, of dependency, of organisation and attraction with respect to what? To signifiers borrowed from what? From the register, from the battery of a certain number of his own organs.

It means nothing else to say that an oral or an anal fixation survives in an adult subject, if it is not precisely to make it depend on what? On a certain imaginary relationship. But without any doubt what we in addition articulate here, is that this is raised to the function of signifier. If it were not isolated as such, mortified as such, it could not have the economic action that it has in the subject, for a very simple reason, which is that images as such are never linked except precisely to the arousal or the satisfaction of need. This even does not fail to be expressed on occasions, when it is a question purely and simply of need; if the subject remains in a way attached to these images, outside their text, both oral ones, where there is no question of food, and anal ones where there is no question of excrement, it is all the same because these images have indeed taken on another function. It is the signifying function that is in question. The drive as such, is precisely the manageable expression of concepts which are valid for us, and which are precisely those which express to us this dependence of the subject with regard to a certain signifier.

What is important is this: it is that this desire of the subject encountered as the beyond of the demand, is what makes him opaque to our demand and what also installs his own discourse as something which is absolutely necessary for our structure, but which is in certain aspects impenetrable for us, which makes of it an unconscious discourse.

This desire therefore which is its condition, is itself submitted to the existence of a certain effect of the signifier, which I explained to you at the beginning of this year, I mean beginning in January, under the name of the paternal metaphor. This signifies that it is in so far as the name of the father appears on the horizon, *qua* itself being the support of the signifying chain, of the order established by the signifying chain; it is uniquely in so far as this metaphor of the primitive desire, of the opaque desire, of the obscure desire which represents the desire of the mother is established, of this something which first of all is completely closed off for the subject, and which can only remain closed off except because of the formula of the metaphor, namely the one that I already symbolised by the relationship of two signifiers, one being in two different positions

$$\frac{S}{S'} \quad \frac{S'}{X}$$

the name of the father over the desire of the mother, and the desire of the mother over its symbolisation.

Its determination as a signified is something which is produced by a metaphorical effect, and I told you, that where the name of the father is lacking, is precisely where this metaphorical effect is not produced. I cannot manage to bring to birth this thing which causes to be designated the X, namely the desire of the mother as being properly the signifier phallus:

$$S \quad \frac{(\quad s \quad)}{(\text{phallus})}$$

This indeed is what happens in psychosis, in so far as the name of the father is rejected, I mean is the object of a primitive *Verwerfung* which does not enter into the cycle of signifiers, and it is also why the desire of the other and in particular the desire of the mother, is not symbolised in it. It is very precisely that which on this schema, if we had to represent the position of psychosis, would make us say that this desire as such, I do not mean *qua* existing, everyone knows that even the mothers of psychotics have a desire, even though it is not always sure, but undoubtedly it is not symbolised in the system of the subject, and its not being symbolised, is what allows us to see what we see, namely that for the psychotic the word of the Other does not pass in any way into his unconscious; the Other speaks to him unceasingly, the Other *qua* the locus of the word. This does not necessarily mean you or I, it means more or less the sum of what is offered to him as a field of perception. This field naturally speaks to him about us, and also to take an example, the first one to come to mind, the well known one, the one repeated last night by Stein [?] in what he told us, that in delusions the red colour of a car can mean that he is immortal. Everything speaks to him because nothing of the symbolic organisation destined to dispatch the other to where he ought to be, namely to his unconscious, nothing of that order is realised, and that is why I could say, the Other speaks in a fashion that is entirely homogeneous to this first primitive word which is that of the demand. That is why everything is sonorised, that the Id which is in the unconscious for the neurotic subject speaks, is outside for the psychotic subject. That the Id speaks, and that it speaks aloud in the most natural fashion, is not a cause for astonishment. If the Other is the locus of the word, it is there that the Id speaks (*ça parle*), and resounds from every side.

Naturally we find the extreme case at the point of the outbreak of the psychosis, where as I have always formulated it for you, what is *Verworft*, or rejected from the symbolic, reappears in the real. This real which is in question, is precisely the hallucination in this case, that is to say the Other in so far as he speaks. It is always in the Other of course that the Id speaks, but here it takes on the form of the real. The psychotic subject does not doubt it: it is the other who is speaking to him, and speaks to him through every possible signifier, and it is enough to stoop down to collect them by the shovelfull in the human world. Advertisements, etc., everything that surrounds us has a character marked by the signifier. The character of loosening, of dissolution is more or less great according to the state of the psychosis. Everything that we see, and what Freud articulates for us as being the reason why the psychosis is organised, is articulated, being constructed precisely to supply for this absence in its organised point, I mean depending on the signifying structure of the desire of the Other, because what do the most benign forms of psychosis present us with, if it is not of course fundamentally, and right at the extreme state of dissolution, a pure and simple discourse of the Other, namely that that comes to be stressed here in the form of signification, namely as I showed you two years ago, these very curious sorts of decompositions of the word which, by the very structure of what is presented to us here - I could not show it to you then - necessarily proved themselves to be a message-code (*code de messages*). On the code what is sent back from O is then all that the subject has at his disposition to vivify the discourse of the Other.

You remember Schreber, the fundamental tongue, every word which is given to him involves in itself this kind of definition whose advent comes about with the giving of the

word itself. It is a message code on the code, and inversely these phrases: "How is it that" "You only have to"

Perhaps he will want, and again will want too much in the sentence. But that is all there is, namely a series of messages which only aim at what in the code refers to the messenger, that which in the code designates these particles, these personal pronouns, these auxiliary verbs, designates the place of the messenger.

This can be strictly referred back to this graph. I do not want to say too much, you will see it in my article on the psychoses which is going to appear, where I have made a sort of synthesis of my course two years ago and the one I am giving you this year. I do not want to insist on it now, what I want to say to you in this connection, is that it is quite evident that something like the delusion of jealousy as Freud himself articulated it as the subject's negation of the "I love him", the "I love him" being less the homosexual subject than the fellow subject, who is of course homosexual as such; Freud says: "It is not me that he loves, it is her." What does that mean, if it is not precisely that the delusions (*désire*) of jealousy, in so far as they create an obstacle to this pure and simple unloosing of the word, of interpretation, is precisely the thing that he is trying to restore, to reestablish, the desire of the Other, the structure of the delusions (*désire*) of jealousy, is precisely to attribute to the Other a desire which is this sort of desire that is outlined, delineated in the imaginary, which is that of the subject. It is attributed to the Other: "It is not me that he loves, the subject, the rival, it is my spouse." As psychotic I try to establish in the Other this desire which is very precisely this function, this essential relationship which is not given because I am psychotic, because nowhere has there been produced this essential metaphor which gives to the desire of the Other this primordial signifier, this signifier which is called the signifier phallus, and whose use we are now going to see in connection with what is done for this patient.

It remains however that there is something rather obscure in admitting this signifier phallus as being essential, and in a certain way preferential with respect to all sorts of other objects, which besides we see playing a homologous role on occasion, the equivalences which have been made between the signifier phallus and the excremental signifier for example, the signifier exactly the tip of the breast, the object of every suckling, certainly exist. Which means that what makes it privileged is that it is open to all sorts of equivalences. It can be very difficult for us to perceive what. It is very obviously this something which puts it in a certain place with respect to something which has the highest functions in the relationship of the individual to the species, namely what is called the genital phase.

Of course. But it is precisely for that reason that it is more especially dependent than any other on a function of significance, the fact is that the other objects, the maternal breast, or that part of the body which in the form of excrement, sometimes appear as being able to be the occasion for the subject of an essential loss. All that, is something which up to a certain degree is given on the outside, *qua* object. It is a currency, as one might say, in the loving exchange, which of course needs to pass to the state of signifier to act as means, but nevertheless just like pieces of lava or shells which serve in certain tribes who precisely are far away from objects of exchange, it is nevertheless something which already exists in the natural order.

Note carefully that for the phallus, however, things are not quite the same, because in the end for the phallus in its real organic form, the penis, or the something which corresponds to it in the woman, after all much more is required than for the predetermined objects, for the

subject to make an object of it, and whether in phantasy or otherwise, a detachable object. We can never insist enough on the enigmatic articulation that is involved in the castration complex or penis envy, namely that this something which is after all well and truly something which belongs to the body, and which after all nothing threatens any more than any other member, or arm, or leg, even the nose or the ear, this element which after all is only a pleasure-point on one's body.

This is how the subject first discovers it. Masturbatory auto-eroticism which in effect plays such a major role in the history of the subject, is not at all of a nature, as you know, in itself to unloose such catastrophes, as we know from experience, in so far, and to the degree that the organ as such is not taken up precisely into the signifying interplay, into the paternal metaphor, into the maternal or paternal interdiction. In other words, it is precisely because this organ which at the beginning is nothing other for the subject, and in so far as it only has as a relationship to himself, than a pleasure-point in his own body, certainly much less subject to caducity than all the other elements which took on the role of signifier in his previous demand, that this element, this point of his body, of his organic relationship to himself, is more than any other, only the hold of a metaphorical chain in the paternal metaphor, specifically as such, which must play its role in order to make of it a signifier which at the same time becomes an altogether privileged signifier of this relationship to the other of the other, which makes of it an altogether central signifier of the unconscious.

So that we grasp that the whole dimension that the analysis of this subject has opened up for us, was precisely this something new, this something completely unexpected compared to everything that had been formulated up to then, which shows us, if I can really articulate what I mean to say here, that it is in so far as this thing is only an organ with which the subject entertains relationships which after all are innocent; let us not forget that in our brother species, the monkeys, it is enough for you to have gone to one of the little moats which surround a certain platform of the zoo at Vincennes, to see with what tranquillity into which we would be wrong to project our own anxieties onto this honest and courageous tribe of baboons and others who spend their day playing with their reddened sexual organs without worrying in the least what their neighbours are going to think, except to help them on occasion in their collective enjoyment.

You can see all the same the world of difference there is between this relationship of a certain animal species more or less upright in stature to what is hanging from the bottom of his belly, and that which in man all the same makes, essentially and primitively of the phallus, and historically of the phallus the object of a cult, which means that it is linked for us from the earliest times to something which makes of erection as such, a signifier, and which makes us all realise that it is not for nothing that in our very ancient cultures, the raised stone has all its import, all its incidence as a signifier in the groupings of the human collectivity.

Therefore this role of the phallus here is fundamental, essential, it is its passage, its emergence which is certainly not primordial, but dependent on something else, its metaphorical emergence to the rank of signifier, which is that on which there is going to depend any possible situating of the desire of the Other as such, in so far as the subject must find in it the place of his own desire. It is within the accidents of the encounter of the desire of the subject with this desire of the Other in so far as it is at the level of the desire of the Other that he must manage to signify his desire, it is there and it is very naturally there of course, that we are going to see the signifier phallus functioning, and that we are going to see that the subject, the subject placed in atypical, abnormal, deficient, pathological conditions,

the neurotic, but nevertheless in a complete and not an uncompleted constellation, that would make him a psychotic, namely before the four cardinal points that are posed of the definition of desire, is going to have to develop himself.

The obsessional, we have said, is the one in whom in this relationship to the desire of the Other there is found primordially, primitively, the defusion of instincts. It is by finding himself in a position such that the first outcome, the initial outcome, the one which is going to condition all his subsequent difficulties, is going to be that this desire of the Other is cancelled out.

What does that mean, if we give its full meaning to what we have just said?

To cancel out the desire of the Other, is not the same thing as having through the lack, the deficiency of the metaphorical signifying act of the father, of the name of the father, been incapable of grasping the desire of the Other. On the other hand, in a more or less delusional real, the desire of the Other is established, it is symbolised, it is even symbolised by the phallus, but it is denied as such. The primitive relationship of the obsessional subject to his own desire is something which is founded on the denegation of the desire of the Other. The term *Verneinung* as such applies here in the sense in which precisely Freud shows us its two aspects, that it is articulated, symbolised, but secondly it is provided with a "no" sign.

Here is something before which the obsessional finds himself confronted as the very basis of his position, and the one to which he must respond by formulas of substitution, of compensation. I am not saying anything new here, I am simply applying the triad put forward by all the authors about the formation of the obsessional: cancellation, isolation, defensive reaction. It is this that I am in the process of re-articulating for you. Simply notice the following: that to be able to speak about cancellation of anything at all at the level of the subject, it must be a question of the signifier, because one cannot cancel anything which is not a signifier. There is not the least trace of cancellation, that is even conceivable, at the animal level, and if we find something which resembles it, we will say that there are the beginnings of symbolic formation, but the term cancellation which is not simply there what I spoke to you about when it was a question of the effacing of a track, but on the contrary the taking up of something elementary and signifying within the parenthesis of something which says that it is not, but which saying that it is not, puts it forward all the same as signifying. It is indeed always essentially the signifier that is in question.

In fact it is indeed this that is in question, if the obsessional is led to cancel so many things, it is because they are things which are formulated.

Things that are formulated, means what? We know very well: it is a demand, only it is a demand for death, and every one knows that a demand for death, especially when it is precocious, having for result precisely the destruction of the Other, and in the first place the desire of the Other, naturally destroying with the Other at the same time everything within which the subject may himself be able to articulate himself, it is all the more necessary to isolate the parts of the discourse which can be conserved compared to those parts of the discourse which must absolutely be effaced and cancelled, in order that the subject should not be at the same time be himself destroyed. And it is at this perpetual game of yes and no, of separation, of sorting out, of what in the word, in his demand itself destroys him compared to what can conserve him, which is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the Other as such, because the Other only exists as such at the level of signifying articulation.

It is in this contradiction that the obsessional subject is constantly caught, and this indeed as you know is what constantly preoccupies him precisely to maintain the Other, to maintain the subsistence of the Other with respect to all these language formulations with which he more than anyone else is preoccupied, and which are precisely established here to sustain the Other who is perpetually in danger of collapsing, of succumbing under the demand for death; this Other who is nevertheless the essential condition for his maintenance of himself as subject. He could not even subsist as a subject if this Other as such were effectively cancelled out.

While if anything presents itself at the signifying level as being very especially cancelled out, namely that which marks the place of the desire of the Other as such, namely the phallus, if here the d_o which I spoke to you about the last time, which situates the desire of the obsessional, is something which is equivalent to the cancellation of the phallus, we really sense that in effect it is around something which has the closest relationship with this signifier that everything is going to be played out.

What I am in the process of explaining to you, the division which is presented between a coherent method, one which would take into account this function of the phallus as signifier, and the one which for lack of having elucidated it, is reduced to groping around something which in effect operates around this signifier phallus in the subject, here is what this difference consists in, here is what will be for you the golden rule, if you take the trouble to read this article which I have referred you to, at the risk of an excessive demand for it, but perhaps this risk is not too great, the demand for the aforesaid number in the *Presses Universitaires*.

This rule which will allow you to discern what is done in a certain fashion by this conduct of the treatment from something different, resides in the following: what does a full, complete relationship of a subject to his own desire involve on this basis and on these premises? The subject, I have told you, the human subject, in so far as he must assume as human subject, and not just as animal, his genital desire, must realise as essential signifier of his desire, the function of the signifier phallus. It is because the signifier phallus is there in the circuit, in the circuit of the unconscious articulation of the subject, that the human subject can be human even when he copulates.

This does not mean that on occasion the human subject cannot copulate like an animal, it is even a sort of ideal which trembles somewhere in the depths of the hopes of every human subject. I do not know if it happens very frequently; some people have boasted of having arrived at it. I do not see why one would not believe them, but it is of little importance.

For us, what we know, experience has simply shown us, that it is subject to much greater difficulties, and these difficulties are signifying difficulties. This also explains to you for example the perpetual ambiguities which occur in connection with: has one reached the genital or the phallic stage? At a given moment has the child arrived at the genital stage before the latency period, or is it simply a phallic stage?

That is what it revolves around. Perhaps things would be less obscure if it were perceived that the phallic stage in this instance simply means the following: access to the level of the signification of genital desire. The two things are different when, in a first approach it was said that the child only managed to accede to the phallic stage, this was

probably true, although of course one can argue about auto-erotic activity, whether or not it is properly speaking genital. It is also true after all, but what is important in any case for us, what has an essential incidence, is not the characteristic that is more or less physiologically characterised as genital, it seems to appear in effect as the representative of a first surge of physiological evolution, the question is about its structuring on the phallic plane, and this is what is decisive for the subsequent course of the neurosis.

After all, what is in question? What is in question is that if it is true as I have told you that something must be realised at the level of the unconscious, which is equivalent as one might say to a full word, namely there where discourse is articulated at the locus of the Other, and returns as a signified to the subject, by involving the ego of the subject as such, which the subject of himself had concretely located in relation to the image of the other. Here any kind of completion of unconscious articulation means nothing other than this: that this circuit which begins from the confrontation of the subject to his completed demand, is formulated in a desire articulated as such, satisfying for the subject, to which the subject is identical, and which comes to culminate at a certain place in this circuit, at the place which is precisely the place of the other *qua* human being marked by language, *qua* human being marked by the proper drama of the castration complex, *qua* really an other myself, and comes here, I would not say to formulate himself in an "I am identical to the phallus", but precisely the contrary, not: "I am the phallus" but "I am at the very place it occupies in the chain, in the signifying articulation." The meaning of *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden* is that it is in so far as the subject caught up in the movement of the signifier must come to conceive that that to which he had been precociously confronted, this signifier of desire which withdrew from him the total object of the mother, this phallus, he is not it, but that he is subjected to the necessity which brings it about that this phallus occupies a certain place that the subject has come to realise, that he is not it, and that starting from there and only starting from there, he can accept what had been everywhere the process profoundly put in question, namely to know if he has it or if he does not have it, and accepts to have it when he has it, and not to have it when he does not have it.

It is here at this place, and in the articulation of the basic signifying chain, in the elucidation of this relationship of the subject to the phallus, in so far as he is not it, but that he must come to its place, that an ideal completion such as the one that Freud articulates in the *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden* is conceivable.

This is the necessary condition for us to orient our interventions and our technique, this will be the object of my seminar next year, which I will call properly speaking: "Desire and its interpretation", how one can do it. Such are the directions and the directives which allow us to see the modes of access to this last message the one in which the Freudian formula, with its lapidary presocratic turn, is articulated, that the object of what we will try to articulate next year, will be what happens, everything that happens that is different to that, it is very precisely what neurosis or any other anomalous form of evolution, realises spontaneously, what neurosis in the case of obsessional neurosis, realises, just as the place of desire situated in a profound uncertainty in the hysteric and fixed by the hysteric through a certain detour which he or she describes on the model of what permits him or her to situate their ego.

The hysteric, like every subject, well knows that it is by a certain detour, and in so far as she fixes herself with respect to the image of the other, that she finds that she has fixed the place of her ego, the place of desire. She obtains it in exactly the same way at the upper level

as one might say, as if the hysteric separates herself, turns herself away from the other and from the signified of the other, manages to situate herself in a certain ideal type, in a certain image to which she identifies herself. It is likewise by an analogous detour, as I explained to you already, that Dora identified herself to Mr. K. She finds the place of this desire whose point she is trying to situate, namely how can one, if it is a woman, desire a woman when one is impotent. This is the case for Dora.

For the obsessional, the procedure is the same, except that just as it is at the level of the ideal of the mask of identification that the hysteric tries to locate the difficulties of her position, it is on the contrary on what can be called the stronghold of his ego that the obsessional situates himself to try to find the place of his desire. That is why I say that he will also as we know by all our experience, [construct] somewhere these famous Vauban fortifications that I spoke about elsewhere, the sorts of fortresses in which a desire that is always threatened with destruction barricades itself, it is something which does so on the model of his ego, and of course with respect to the image of the other.

This relationship to the image of the other consists very precisely in the signifying phallus, this signifying phallus always threatened with destruction because it is caught up in a negation by being discovered in the relationship with the other, namely this something which for example you see signalled in all the observations of the author about whom I am speaking in this instance, namely that always in every obsessional, man or woman, you see playing an essential, fundamental role, the appearance at a given moment of their history, in this identification to the other (with a small o) a counterpart, a friend, a brother who is barely their elder, a friend who is a contemporary, but who all have, and in every case, the prestige for them of being the one who is more virile than themselves, the one who has the power.

Here the phallus appears not in its signifying, not in its symbolic form, but in its imaginary form, imaginary as a complement to an image stronger than themselves, to an image of power. It is not I who articulate this, you will find it properly speaking articulated in the article that I am quoting.

This person affirms at the proper place the very terms that I am citing. It is recognised by the very people who are influenced by their experience of these subjects that there is here something which is functionally essential. The accent is put, if you wish, on the image of the other in so far as imaginarily the form, this time in the imaginary sense, the phallic form is here accentuated, underlined, that it is it which here takes on the value and the function, no longer of the symbolisation of the desire of the other, but of this imaginary relationship of prestige, of bearing, of impressiveness whose function we have already stressed at the level of the narcissistic relationship.

This is what is produced as such in the obsessional symptom, in the history of the obsessional, and it is this which marks the special function taken on in phantasies by the relationship of the subject as such to this imaginary other who is his counterpart. This distinction between the presence of the Other (with a capital O) and the presence of the other (with a small o), is tangible in the very evolution of the observation. If you read this observation with attention, namely the observation of the woman in question, you will see for example a very curious evolution between the beginning of the treatment when she is not able to speak, and subsequently when she does not wish to speak, because first of all it is at the level of the word that the relationship of the analysand with the analyst is established, and at that level she refuses and the analyst perceives very well that she refuses because, it is not the

way he expresses it, it is as if all the same this that her demand can only be a demand for death.

Of course afterwards something else happens, and it is very funny to see that the analyst perceived very well that there was a difference: relationships improved. Nevertheless she still does not speak: now she does not wish to speak. The difference between the two, is that when she does not wish to speak, it is because of the presence of the Other (with a capital O). Only what is precisely disturbing in this, is that if she cannot speak, it is because what has come in place of this Other (with a capital O), is precisely the other (with a small o) that the analyst has done everything to presentify. He has done everything to presentify the other (with a small o), for what reason? He has done everything to presentify it because following all the same the scent, the trace of things, he sees clearly from the content of what the subject brings him, the place that the phallic phantasy plays here. Of course it is with this the subject defends herself, he spends his time drumming into her, that she wants to be a man.

That depends on how one understands it. It is true that the subject, at the imaginary level, in effect makes a breast of this phallus, that the condition of man *qua* provided with a phallus, and uniquely *qua* provided with a phallus, is something which represents a certain element of power.

What it is a question of knowing, is precisely why she has such a need for this reference and for this element which is found to be an element of power, which is the phallus. From another angle she quite authentically absolutely denies that she has the slightest desire to be a man. Only she is not let go with that, I mean that there are interpreted in the summary terms of aggressivity, even of the desire to castrate men, things which are articulated in a much more complex fashion, which should be articulated quite differently, if we follow here what we are in the process of trying to delineate.

The whole evolution of the treatment, the way in which it is directed, and it is here that there is posed the whole ambiguity that there exists between interpretation and suggestion, tends on the contrary to indicate this term, not to use others with reference to this something which is quite different, and no one doubts it, I may say that the author himself underlines it sufficiently in the fashion that he articulates his own action, and in other ways, that it is a benevolent mother, that it is an other who is much nicer than the other with whom the subject had to deal, who intervenes to tell her, according to the very formula that the author employs elsewhere in the terms which are more or less those which I am going to tell you:

This is my body, this is my blood, this phallus, you can trust me as a man, consume it, I allow you to do so, this phallus is what should give you strength and vigour, it is the thing which should resolve for you all your obsessional difficulties.

In fact, what is given at the end of the treatment as being its result, is literally the following, that not a single one of the obsessions really gave way, that she simply is subjected to them, but experiences them without guilt. This is strictly modelled on what I am in the process of telling you, which should normally be the result of such a mode of intervention.

Inversely, as I have told you, it is equally striking to see the treatment terminating with the fact that at the point at which it has been left, the patient sends the analyst her own son. It is certain that this action is rather astonishing, because the fact that the subject, we are told, experienced right through her life a holy terror before this son which one feels, in the

context, the perspective, the images which the analyst constructs about it, which one feels comes from the fact that there has always been a problem with this son. It is the least that can be said.

Is it not precisely the fact that in this instance this son is offered to the analyst at the end, which marks, like acting out, which marks what precisely had been missed? Namely that it is at this point, at this mediating point where the phallus is something quite different to an appurtenance of power, where it is truly this means, this mediation through which at the signifying level, what happens between man and woman is symbolised. Is this child, of whom moreover analytic experience, and I mean what Freud articulated concerning the relationships of the woman to the father, showed us the equivalence between this desire for the symbolic gift of the phallus and this child which comes to be substituted for it afterwards? It is very precisely in so far as the child occupies the same place, this place which has not been worked over, which has not been elucidated in the treatment, namely a symbolic place, it is in so far as the subject despite herself, and certainly in an unconscious fashion, but in quite the same fashion as an acting out appears when something has been missed in the analysis, that the subject shows that something else should have been realised, that that which culminates in the treatment with this kind of intoxication of power, of goodness, a quasi-manic intoxication which is the usual case and the sign of those treatments which end with an imaginary identification, which is what when all is said and done? Nothing other than a certain fashion of posing in their final consequence, to facilitate as one might say by way of suggestive approval what is already found in the mechanisms of the obsession, namely this consumption or this incorporation of the phallus at the imaginary level. It is already that which is one of the mechanisms of obsession, it goes along the same path, if you wish to choose among the defence mechanisms of obsession, that the solution one might say is given by something which is the additional approval of what is now a good mother, a mother who permits the consumption of the phallus.

Should we content ourselves, for the solution of a neurosis, with something which is only put there after from among the constitutive components of the neurosis as such, a more successful symptom, separated out as I might say from the others?

I do not think that we can hold ourselves to be entirely satisfied with this. I do not think either than I have said everything that could be said about this treatment in this connection, and today once more the clock has caught up with us. Between now and the next time, at least, I will pick out the three or four points in the observation which will again better highlight what I have tried to articulate for you today. Then we will say some concluding words about the formations of the unconscious to resume the circuit that we have gone through this year, after which we will only have to wait to engage ourselves in a new stage next year.

Seminar 28: Wednesday 2 July 1958

We are coming to the end of this year's seminar to which I gave the title of *Formations of the Unconscious*. Perhaps you are now able at least to see the appropriateness of this title: formations, forms, relations, perhaps topology. I had my own reasons for avoiding frightening you right away with those words.

I think that if something should remain as a step, as a step forward, more exactly as something on which one can put one's foot in order to climb to the level above next year, it is something which shows you that there is no way of articulating anything at all that belongs properly speaking to the mechanisms of the unconscious which are the foundation of Freud's experience and discovery, solely by taking into account tensions considered as being in themselves only the object of a sort of progress in maturity in the register which develops within the range of the pregenital and the genital, this is one side of the matter, nor can one simply talk about relationships of identification as they are apparently - I say apparently - presented to us in the course of Freud's work.

If one wished to reduce [them] to this relationship, to a sort of collection of characters, if you wish in the style of Italian comedy, in which there would come into the foreground for example terms like the mother and the father, even if some others are added on.

What I wanted to show, is that it is impossible to articulate anything, either in the progress of the fixation of desire, or on the other hand in this intersubjectivity which in effect is in the forefront of our experience and our preoccupations in analysis, if we do not situate them in relation to something called the conditions, the necessary relationships that are imposed not only on human desire, but on the subject as such, by the relationships of the signifier.

That is why throughout the whole of this year, I tried to make you familiar with this little graph which it seemed, in my opinion, appropriate to put to use for a time to support my experiments, to distinguish things which for example, to take this signifier which is encountered everywhere, and for good reason because it cannot fail to be involved in a direct or indirect fashion, every time that there is question not of any signification whatsoever, but of signification in so far as it is expressly engendered by the conditions imposed on the organism, this living organism which has become the support, the prey, indeed the victim of the word, which is called man.

I will take this up again today, simply to put you on the brink of this multipresence, I would say, of the signifier phallus in a particular case, still the same one, the one which has occupied us for some sessions, and in order simply to indicate that it is extremely important to distinguish the places where the signifier phallus makes its appearance in the subject.

To say of course that becoming conscious of penis envy is of prime importance in an analysis of a feminine obsessional neurotic, is to say something self-evident, because if one had never encountered the phallus in an analysis of an obsessional neurotic, whether a female or not, and indeed in any neurosis whatsoever, it would really be very strange.

It is possible that by pushing the analysis in a certain direction, the one that is articulated in the so-called *Psychanalyse d'aujourd'hui*, namely the reduction of phantastical productions of transference to what is called this so simple reality, namely the analytic situation, namely that there are here two people who of course have nothing to do with these phantasies, when one has managed to reduce things totally to this schema, one will perhaps be able completely to neglect the phallus in the interpretation of an analysis. But up to now we still have not got there, because all of these things are incomplete formulations, and in fact no analysis takes place up to now as it is schematised in this book.

Obviously we have to do something with this signifier phallus, and to say that becoming conscious of it is the key in this instance to the solution of obsessional neurosis, is naturally not saying very much, because everything of course depends on the way that one will interpret it, situate it, understand it, at the different points that it appears, and at the points that it appears it does not play a homologous function either, nor is all of this reducible to a penis envy in the sense that it is a question of rivalry with the male, as really it is finally formulated when all is said and done in this observation, namely: to assimilate the relationships of the patient with her husband, with her analyst, with others in general, which is contradicted by the observation itself.

It is obviously not from this angle that the phallus appears. It appears at several points. We are going to try simply, without claiming of course to give an exhaustive analysis of an observation which moreover is presented as an unfinished analysis, and on the other hand after all as we only have partial documents, but undoubtedly all the same well enough established to allow us to get a correct idea of it.

I would like first of all to begin by making certain remarks which will introduce you to certain other properties of the graph that we are using.

There is something which appears in this observation which is signaled to us as being the very lively guilt feeling which accompanies the patient's obsessions, for example her religious obsessions, and what one might call the paradox that is represented by the so clearly marked appearance of guilt feelings in obsessional neurosis, when it would undoubtedly seem that the subject could consider these thoughts as parasitic ones which are imposed on her, which moreover she does in a correlative fashion, as things which are foreign to her, of which she is more victim than responsible.

This will perhaps allow us to try to articulate something about this guilt feeling.

In short, for some time people scarcely speak about anything except the term superego which seems here to have covered everything. One cannot really say that it has clarified things very much, because in fact if you wish to look at things more closely, and very precisely to consider what has been contributed by the notion that the superego is something much older, more archaic as a formation, than was thought at first, in fact it was thought at first that the superego could be considered as the creation corresponding to the two Oedipus complexes, and to be explicit as people have written, to the introjection of the person considered as eminently the prohibitor (*interdicteur*) in the Oedipus complex, namely the paternal personage. You know that all our experience has forced us to show that there was a scarcely older superego, or that this something which from some aspects imposed on us this older origin, was not unrelated, either on the one hand to the effects of introjection, nor on the other hand to the effects of prohibition (*interdiction*).

But let us try all the same to look at things more closely.

Here is the obsessional neurosis, and as in every neurosis, what we have to bring to light first of all precisely in so far as we are not hypnotists, that we do not treat people by suggestion, but that it is at a point beyond that we in a way invite the subject to meet us, and at this point which is portrayed here by the second line, the upper line, the horizon if you wish of signifying articulation, and from there the subject, as I explained to you at length the last time, is confronted with his demand.

It cannot mean anything else when we speak about this alternating process of successive regression and identification, the two alternating because in the measure that while regressing he encounters one of them, he stops on the path of a regression which is entirely inscribed in short in this retroactive covering which opens out to the subject once he simply articulates his word, namely in so far as the word gives rise to all the background and all the history back as far as its origin, of this demand in which the whole life of speaking man is inserted.

If we look closely at it, and without moreover doing anything else here than rediscovering what has always been articulated about obsessional neurosis, there is a fundamental form for obsessional neurosis that we find in this demand, at the horizon of every demand of the subject, and precisely what creates for her the greatest obstacle to the articulation of this demand, it is this something which experience teaches us to qualify as aggressivity, which carries us more and more towards the consideration of and the entry into what one can call a death wish.

The inaugural difficulty, the major difficulty before which one might say the demand of the obsessional is broken, is fragmented, is disjointed, which motivates the cancellation of all defences, and very primordially in very serious obsessionals, this silence often so prolonged that you have the greatest trouble in the world sometimes in conquering it in the course of an analysis, and I evoke it here because it is precisely what is evoked for us in the case that I am basing myself on, is indeed that this demand is a demand for death.

In fact it is very striking to see absolutely exposed to view, repeated throughout the whole observation, but without ever being properly speaking articulated, as if the thing formed part of some natural expression or other of a tension which is very basic, the relationship of this demand for death with the very difficulty of articulation itself which nevertheless is connoted here in the same pages, within a few lines, and which is absolutely never highlighted. And nevertheless is this not something which demands that we should dwell on it?

If this demand is a demand for death, if this demand is what outlines the horizon of the obsessional's demand, namely that his first relationships with the Other, as Freud's theory teaches us, were essentially made up of this contradiction that the demand which is addressed to the Other on whom everything depends, culminates, has as horizon, for a reason which moreover at this moment is attached to the hook of the question mark, because we must not rush things, we will see later why and how this can be conceived. It is not all that simple to talk as Mrs. Melanie Klein does about the primordial aggressive drive, if we start from there. Let us leave there what sort of army, a sort of primordial badness of this suckling regarding whom the Marquis de Sade underlines for us that his first impulse was after all, if he had been able to do so, to bite and to tear his mother's breast.

Of course in fact this articulation of the problem of desire in its fundamental perversity, is indeed something which has not led us back in vain to this horizon of the divine Marquis, who as you know was not the only one in his time to have posed in a very intense and very sharp fashion, this question about the relationships of desire and of nature, about this fundamental harmony or disharmony which constitutes in fact the basis of this passionate interrogation which is absolutely inseparable from all the philosophy of the so-called *Erklärung*, and which marked all the literature of the time on which in my old seminars, I think of my first seminars, I based myself to show an analogy to which I will come back next year in connection with desire, to this link between the first interrogation and the interrogation about the limit to its philosophical clarity, but also to everything that accompanies it, to its whole theme of literary eroticism which in fact is its absolutely indispensable correlate.

Therefore we do not know where this demand for death comes from. Before telling ourselves that it arises from the most primordial instincts, from a nature turned against itself, let us begin simply by situating it where it is, namely at the level at which it is - I would not say articulated - but where it prevents every articulation of the subject's demand, where it is an obstacle to the discourse of the obsessional, just as much when he is alone by himself as when he begins his analysis, when he finds himself in this disarray that our analyst on occasion describes, namely this sort of impossibility of speaking that his patient has at the beginning of the analysis, which is only expressed in reproaches, indeed in insults, even in the setting forth, the articulation of everything that creates an obstacle for a patient to speak to a doctor:

"I know enough about doctors to know that among themselves they make fun of their patients."

"You are better educated than me. It is impossible for a woman to talk to a man."

It is a flood which simply shows here the emergence correlative to the activity of the word, to this difficulty of simple articulation, of something which cannot in any fashion evoke at the horizon the basis of the demand that is already there in the fact of entering into the field of analytic therapy, which is here in fact what appears right away.

This demand for death, if it is situated where we have put it, namely at this horizon of the word, in this implication which forms the basis of every possible articulation of the word, and if it is what creates the obstacle, I think that this schema will show you perhaps a little better that this logical articulation can also be made, but not without some suspensions or stoppages of thought, that if the demand for death is something which represents for the obsessional subject this sort of impasse from which there results what is inaccurately called ambivalence, which is rather this movement of seesawing or swinging in which the obsessional is sent back as it were to the two end points of an impasse from which he cannot escape. If effectively this demand for death is this something which, as the schema articulates it, requires to be formulated in the locus of the other, in the discourse of the other, it is not simply because of a history of something or other involving for example the mother as having been the object of this death wish in connection with some frustration, it is essentially and in an internal fashion, the demand for death in so far as it concerns this other, because this other is the locus of demand, implies the death of demand.

The demand for death cannot be sustained in the obsessional, namely in so far as he is organised according to the laws of signifying articulation, without in itself implying this sort

of destruction which we call here the death of demand. It is condemned to this endless seesawing which ensures that once it begins its articulation, this articulation dies out, and this indeed is what constitutes the basis of the difficulty of articulating the position of the obsessional.

This indeed is also what makes us say that between the relationship of the obsessional, of the obsessional subject to his demand, and this maintenance of the other which is so panic- strickenly necessary for him, but which maintains him, because without that he would be something other than an obsessional, we find this desire cancelled out in itself, but with its place maintained, this desire which we have characterised by a *Verneinung*, because it is expressed, but in the negative form, that in which we see it effectively appear in analysis, when the person in analysis says to us: "I am not thinking of something or other", that he is articulating for us what is an aggressive, disapproving, depreciating desire with respect to ourselves. He manifests here in effect something which is indeed his desire, but he cannot manifest it. This is the fact which the experience concerning the *Verneinung* gives us. He manifests it against the background of denial.

How does it happen that this denied form must nonetheless be correlative to a guilt feeling, since in sum it is denied? It is here I believe that our schema is going to allow us to make some distinctions which will subsequently be of use to us again.

I think that the obscurities concerning the incidences of the superego which have corresponded to the extension of our experience concerning this distance, come very essentially from this: that it is important to distinguish concerning guilt which after all preserves the following, that there is a relationship of the subject to the law, that guilt is without any kind of reference to this law. This on the other hand is the fact that analytic experience has contributed.

In other words, what one might call the naive step from the dialectic of the relationship of sin to the law, ever since it has been articulated for us in the words of St. Paul, namely that it is the law which makes sin, from which there follows - I already insisted on it formerly in evoking the phrase of old Karamazov: "If God does not exist, then everything is permitted."

It is quite clear that analysis was necessary for us to see what comes to us in experience. It is quite naturally one of the strangest things of all, that what experience shows us, is that there is no need for any reference at all, either to God, or to his law for man to be literally bathed in guilt. It seems even that one could formulate the contrary expression, namely that if God is dead, the world said: "Nothing is permitted any longer." I already talked about all that at one stage.

How then are we going to be able to try to understand and to articulate this relationship which is called the appearance of guilt feelings as they arise in the life of the neurotic subject?

Let us refer back to the first steps of analysis in this direction. In what connection did Freud first show it as fundamental, as concerning an essential subjective manifestation of the subject?

It is in connection with the Oedipus complex, it is very exactly in so far as the contents of analysis gave rise to what? The relationship of a desire which was not an

indifferent one, which was a desire profoundly hidden up to then, which was the desire for the mother, and with it the intervention of a destructive person who is this father as he emerged from the first apprehensions of the Oedipus complex, and this father who namely intervenes in the form of complexes first given by phantasies of castration, also discovered by analysis, a discovery of which there had not been the slightest suspicion before analysis, a discovery whose link I believe I articulated for you this year with the necessary unthinkability, outside the fact that the phallus has very precisely this role of being raised to the signification of signifying an image, a privileged, vital image, namely the image of the phallus, but which here takes on the function of this something which in fact is going to mark this sort of incidence, of impact, in which desire is struck by prohibition.

In fact if we want to distinguish the three stages which correspond strictly to those which are schematised here, 1, 2, 3, in which everything which is related in our experience to the superego, must be articulated, we will say at the level of this line on the horizon which precisely is the one which is not formulated in the neurotic. It is precisely for that reason that he is neurotic. Here the commandment reigns, call it what you will, call it the ten commandments in this instance, why not? Because I told you that the ten commandments were very probably the commandments which are the laws of the word, namely that all the disorders begin to enter into the functioning of the word from the moment that the ten commandments are not respected. Let us take them here in any form whatsoever. It is a question of the demand for death, and it is obviously the "Thou shalt not kill" which is there at the horizon to make a drama of it. But you see that it is not either because of what begins as a reply in this place to punish the person who kills, that the commandment effectively has its impact, it is very precisely because the demand for death, for reasons which belong to the structure of the other for man, that the demand for death is equivalent to the death of the demand.

This is the level of the commandment. This level of commandment exists, it exists so well that in fact it emerges, it emerges all by itself. Do not forget that if you read the notes that Freud took on his case of an obsessional, the Ratman, he will tell you - I am talking about the supplement published in the *Standard Edition* - in this very interesting complement where we see in the notes certain chronological elements appearing here, which are very valuable to know, he will tell us that first of all what the subject talks to him about in terms of obsessional content, are the commandments that he receives, and you know the importance of these commandments, these commandments which the subject receives: "You must pass your examinations before such a date", or "What would happen", he says, "if I received the command: you must cut your throat", and you know the state of panic that he gets into when there comes into his mind the command: "You must cut the throat of the old woman" who at that moment was keeping his beloved far away from him.

We also see these commandments appearing in another context, and in the clearest fashion, in psychotics, who as you know receive commands, and it is one of the terminal points in the classification of the psychotic, to know the degree to which he obeys them.

In short, the autonomy of this function at the horizon of the relationship of the subject to the word of command is something which we can only take as fundamental.

This commandment can therefore remain veiled. It is veiled, it is fragmented, it only appears in fragments in our obsessional. Where are we going to situate guilt?

Guilt, as Monsieur de la Palice would say, is a demand experienced as prohibited, and in fact one habitually experiences it there, and I would say that everything is drowned in this term prohibition, the notion of demand being avoided although it seems that the two should go together. It is not certain however, as we are going to see, but there is something whose essential dimension I would ask you to hold on to phenomenologically, and with regard to which one is really stupefied by the fact that no analyst, nor any phenomenologist, has paid attention to it. Why is it experienced as prohibited? If it were purely and simply experienced as prohibited because as is said, it is forbidden (*défendu*), there would be no problem of any kind. How do we see it appearing in clinical work at the level of the point where we usually say that guilt intervenes? The distinctions we have made, we have made them in order to articulate what is in question, and they will help us perhaps to articulate what is called neurotic guilt, which consists in what?

In what does neurotic guilt consist? It is a fact all the same that it is not articulated as such, and that it is not made a criterion. Now, it is essential to make a criterion of it. The demand is experienced as prohibited, a demand, or more exactly a guilt feeling, in so far as it is in connection with such an approach, the approach of a demand, and it is precisely what distinguishes it from the diffuse anxiety which you know is very different to a demand, and experienced as a prohibition which is called the arousal of the guilt feeling, in so far as it is experienced as prohibited because it kills desire. It is in the relationship of desire to demand, in the fact that everything which goes in the direction of a certain formulation of the demand is accompanied by an agency, by a mechanism whose features we see here, the wires drawn on this little graph on the blackboard, but which precisely because it is in this little graph, precisely for this reason, cannot be experienced, determined in its living source, in its source by the subject, because the subject is himself condemned to be always at one or other of these places, but he cannot be at any of these places all at the same time. This is what guilt is. It is this something where the prohibition appears, not this time in so far as it formulates, but in so far as it strikes the desire, that it makes it disappear, that it kills it.

Here then is something clear. It is in so far as the obsessional is condemned to wage his battle for the salvation of his subjective autonomy, as they say, at the level of desire, that everything that appears at this level of desire, even in a denied form, is linked to this guilt, and what beneath this, namely at the third level, at the level of what we will call on this occasion, no one will contest this location, that of the superego; what is called, I do not know why, in the observation that we have been following in the *Revue de Psychanalyse*, the feminine superego. Why the feminine? Let us say the maternal. Indeed it is usually considered as the maternal superego in all the other texts of the same register. There is here an anomaly inherent to the observation itself, and to a certain sort of obsession engendered by the fact that it is a question here of penis envy, and of something which interests the woman as such.

This maternal super-ego then, this archaic superego, this superego to which are attached the effects of the primordial superego that Melanie Klein talks about, is something of course which we now understand has been put as one might say in the same perspective, in the same setting as what is produced at the level of the commandment of guilt, linked in fact as you see, to the other of the other. It is to the first other in so far as it is the pure and simple support of the first demands, what I might call the emerging demands, I would say the almost innocent demands of the subject at the level of these first wailing articulations of his need, at the level on which people insist so much today, of the first frustrations.

What do we have here? We have what has been called dependency. And in fact it is indeed around this something which is called dependency, that everything belonging to the maternal superego is articulated.

Here why is it that we can put it on the same register? Put it on the same register, and not fundamentally distinguish it. It means that already this two-level structure which we see here, must be involved. If at the beginning there were only the suckling and the mother, if the relationship were a dual one, it would be something quite different to what we have articulated in the commandment relationship, in the relationship of guilt.

It is very precisely because it has to be admitted from the beginning that from the very fact that it is a question of the signifier, there are these two horizons of demand, which I explained by telling you that even behind the most primitive demand, that for the breast, and the object which represents the maternal breast, there is behind this reduplication created in the demand by the fact that the demand is a demand for love and a demand which symbolises the other as such, which distinguishes therefore the other as real object, capable of giving such and such a satisfaction, from the other *qua* symbolic object who gives or who refuses what is called presence or absence, and who is the matrix within which there are going to crystallise these fundamental relationships which are at the horizon of every demand, and which are called on the one hand, love, on the other hand hate, and of course ignorance.

It is because the first relationship of dependency is linked to this threat which is called the loss of love, and not simply to the threat which is called hunger, or privation of maternal care, that it is something which already in itself is homogeneous to what will be subsequently organised, articulated in the perspective of commandment, namely in the perspective of the laws of the word. They are here and now already pressing, virtual, preformed, from the time of the first demand. They are not completed, they are not articulated, and that is why a suckling does not begin to be an obsessional from the moment that he is first suckled; but from the time he is first suckled he can already very well begin to create this gap which will bring it about that it will be precisely in the refusal to feed himself that he will find the evidence he requires of the love of his maternal partner.

In other words, we can see appearing very precociously manifestations of anorexia nervosa.

What is it that specifies the case of the obsessional? The case of the obsessional which therefore hangs precisely on the precocious formation at this horizon of the relationship to demand, of what we have here first of all articulated as a demand for death; a demand for death is not purely and simply, and in itself, a death bearing tendency. It is an articulated demand, it is an articulated demand, and from the very fact that it is articulated, it is precisely for that reason that it is not produced at this level of the relationship to the other, that it is not a dual relationship, that it aims beyond the other to his being, his symbolised being, and this is always why moreover it is felt, experienced by the subject in its return. The fact is that the subject cannot injure the Other, because he is a speaking subject, and solely because of this, without injuring himself, and that the demand for death is the death of demand.

It is within this that there is going to be situated everything that I would call the avatars of the signifier phallus, because in fact I see no way of not collapsing into amazed astonishment, when one sees it in effect - once one knows how to read - re-emerging at every point in the phenomenology of the obsessional, nothing else allows there to be conceived this type of omnipresence of the signifier phallus, at the level of different symptoms, if one does

not essentially make of it, if one does not find there the confirmation of the function of the phallus as signifier of the incidence of the signifier on the living being, in so far as by his relationship to the word, he is destined to be fragmented into all sorts of effects of the signifier.

What do we find? We are told that this woman is possessed by penis envy. I quite agree, but then why does the first thing that we encounter in the observation itself concern her obsessions, and the first that is cited for us is the obsessional fear of having contracted syphilis, which leads her, we are told, vainly to oppose the marriage of her eldest son, this son whose signification throughout the whole course of this observation I have made so much of.

Here then when all is said and done we have the following. It is simple enough, the miracles and the conjuring tricks which we would always do well to pay attention to as such, to tell you that it would be well from time to time to polish up a little, to give a shine to our capacity for astonishment. What do we see in male obsessional subjects? The fear of being contaminated and of contaminating. It is something which is shown by everyday experience to be extremely important. The male obsessional has in general been initiated rather precociously into the dangers of so-called venereal diseases, and everyone knows the place that this can have in his psychology in a large number of cases. I am not saying that it is constant, but we are used to interpreting it as something which goes well beyond the relational aspect of the matter. This as always is in Hegel, and matters are going so well for some time past thanks to some medical interventions, the fact remains nevertheless that the obsessional remains very obsessed about anything which could engender his impulsive acts in the libidinal order, and that we ourselves are used to considering it as something which is what? Namely that beneath this libidinal impulse, the aggressive impulse appears, that in some way the phallus is something dangerous.

If we hold on to the notion of it that, if the subject is in a relationship of what one might call narcissistic exigency with regard to the phallus, it appears to me very difficult to motivate it. Why? Precisely because at this level she makes this use of it which is strictly equivalent to the one a man would make of it, namely that through the intermediary of her son, this woman considers herself to be dangerous. She presents him on this occasion as being in a way an extension of herself, namely that as a result she is not brought to a halt by any *Penisneid*. She has it in the form of this son, she well and truly has this phallus because it is on him that she will crystallize the same obsession that a male patient would construct for himself in this instance.

The obsessions of infanticide which follow, even the obsessions about poisoning and the others, I will not go on about it here indefinitely, what can be said, is that something will arise very quickly in the observation and in all its implications, to confirm what I am putting forward on this subject, and this I read out because it is worth while:

"The very violence of her complaints against her mother bore witness to the immense affection that she had for her", we are told, after making a few curtsies to the possibility or not of a true oedipal relationship, by bringing forward arguments which are completely irrelevant to the question.

"She found her to be from a higher social milieu than her father, judged her to be more intelligent, was especially fascinated by her energy, her character, her decisive spirit, her authority".

This is the first part of a paragraph where it is a question of making us see something which undeniably exists, namely the disequilibrium of the parental relationship, what I would call the oppressed, indeed the depressed aspect of the father who may have been virile before, in the presence of the mother. This is how the fact that the subject requires in a way that the phallic attribute should be attributed to her is interpreted.

"The rare moments when the mother relaxed filled her with an unspeakable joy. But up to this there had never been a question of an openly sexualised desire to possess the mother."

There is no trace of anything at all that even resembles it.

Here is how it is expressed:

Renée was bound to her on an exclusively sado-masochistic plane. And now there came to light the mother-daughter alliance which operated here with great rigour, and every transgression of the pact provoked an impulse of extreme violence, which up to recently had never been objectified. Anyone involving himself in this union was the object of a death wish.

This point is really important, and you will find it not just in obsessional neurotics, but these powerful bonds of daughter to mother, from whatever angle we see their incidence in our analytic experience, this sort of knot where we find ourselves once more before something which goes beyond a kind of distinction; I would say beyond the carnal distinction between people, which means that what is expressed there, is exactly this ambiguity, this ambivalence as I called it above, which renders equivalent the demand for death and the demand for the demand, but which shows us in addition that the demand for death is there.

I am not saying anything new, because Freud saw it very clearly on occasion; the demand for death which Mrs. Melanie Klein will try to refer to the primordial aggressive drives of the subject. But the observation shows us that the demand for death is not simply the bond which unites the subject to the mother, it is the demand of the mother herself, it is in so far as the mother carries in herself this demand for death, and the whole observation shows it to us, that she exercises on this unfortunate paternal person, a sergeant in the gendarmerie, who despite the goodness and the kindness that the patient speaks about at first, shows himself all through his life as sad, depressed, taciturn, not managing to overcome the rigidity of the mother, or to triumph over the attachment of his wife for a first love, which moreover was platonic, a jealous man who only broke out of his autism to make a demand from which he always emerged defeated. Nobody doubts of course that the mother had some part in this.

We are told that this is expressed from the angle and in the form of what is called the castrating mother. On this occasion perhaps there is reason to look at things more closely and to see in fact here the term of the demand for death, namely much more than castration, privation, for this man, from the loved object who seems to have been the mother, and the establishment in him of this depressive position which indeed is the one Freud taught us to recognise as being determined by a death wish against oneself, but against oneself in so far as it aimed at what? An object loved and lost, in short this dialectic of the demand for death in so far as it is already here present in the previous generation, is it the mother who embodies it? It is this demand for death in so far as it is not mediated here by nothing, not at the level of the subject, because if it were not mediated by nothing at the level of the subject, if there were not this oedipal horizon in fact which allows this demand to appear at the

horizon of the word, and not in its immediacy, we would not have an obsessional, but a psychotic.

On the contrary, in the relationship between the father and the mother, this demand for death for the subject is in no way mediated by nothing which bears witness here to a respect for the father, to a putting into a position of authority and of support for the law by the mother with respect to the father. The demand for death that is in question at the level that the subject experiences it, sees it being exercised between the father and the mother, is a demand for death directly exercised, directly manifested in this something by means of which the father turns against himself aggression, sadness, quasi-deafness and depression, it is quite different from that demand for death that can be in question, that is always in question in every intersubjective dialectic, and which is expressed before a court when the prosecutor says "I demand the death sentence", and he does not demand it from the subject in question, he demands it from a third person who is the judge, and this is the normal oedipal position.

Here then is the context in the midst of which the *Penisneid*, or what is called such, of the subject, is led to play its role. We see it there in the form of this dangerous weapon. What does that mean? It is there only as the signifier of the danger manifested by every arousal of desire in the context of this demand, and similarly we see this character of signifier, even in the details of some of the subject's obsessions, in one of her first obsessions which was a very interesting one: it was that she was afraid of putting pins in her parents bed, and why? In order to prick her mother, not her father.

Here is the first level of the appearance of the phallic signifier. Here what is it? It is the signifier of this desire *qua* dangerous, of this desire *qua* guilty. It seems to me that this is not the same function as the one in which it appears for example at another moment. Moreover it does not appear in the same form, but it appears in quite a clear fashion, namely here properly speaking under the form of an image. After all, everywhere I showed it to you there, it is veiled, it is in the symptom, it comes from elsewhere, it is a phantastical interference, namely that it is to us as analysts that it suggests the place where it exists as phantasy, but it seems to me that it is something different when this phallus appears in a quite different function which is namely when it is projected as one might say for the subject before the image of the host. I already alluded to these sorts of profanatory obsessions, that, where the subject is possessed and that there it seems to us in effect if for all that religious life in this profoundly restructured form, infiltrated by symptoms when it is present in the obsessional, and to which moreover, by a sort of curious conformity, this religious life, and especially this sacramental life, shows itself to be so suitable for giving to the symptoms of the obsessional the path, the furrow in which they flow so easily, it is all the same in as much as especially in the Christian religion - I have not much experience of obsessions among Muslims for example, but it would be worth while to see how they deal with things, I mean what office in this instance at the horizon of their beliefs as it is structured in Islam, manages to implicate itself in obsessional phenomenology. Certainly in Christianity one cannot fail to see, and every time that Freud had an obsessional, whether it was the Ratman or the Wolfman, who had a Christian formation, he showed clearly its importance in their evolution and in their economy, one cannot all the same fail to see that by its articles of faith, the Christian religion places us before this really astonishing, daring, solution, which is daring to say the least, of effectively causing to be supported by something which is man-God, an incarnate person, to be precisely supported by him this function, because he is the word, this function of the signifier in which we say that there is precisely marked the action of the signifier on life as such.

The Christian *logos* in so far as he is the incarnate *logos*, gives a precise solution to this mystery of the relationships between man and the word, and it is not for nothing precisely that the incarnate God is called the Word.

That it should be at the level of the ever renewed symbol of this incarnation that the subject makes appear the signifier phallus which for her is substituted for it, and which of course does not form part as such of the religious context; we should not be surprised, if what we say is true, to see it appearing at this place. But when the subject sees it appearing at this place, it is certain that it plays there a quite different role than at the place where we have first seen it interpreted, and I think that it is quite wrong afterwards at a subsequent point of the observation, to interpret the function of the signifier phallus as homogeneous to the angle under which it intervened here for example at the level of the symptom, when at a much more advanced period of the observation, the subject communicates to her analyst this phantasy:

"I dreamt that I was crushing the head of Christ with my kicks, and this head resembled your own."

It is certain that at this moment the function of the phallus is identified here, not in the way it is said, to the analyst, in so far as the analyst is supposed to be the bearer of the phallus, but in so far as it is obviously at this level of transference, at this point of the history of transference, that the analyst is identified with the phallus. He is identified with the one who, at this moment, incarnates for the subject precisely this effect of the signifier, this relationship to the word which she is beginning at that moment to project a little more through the effect of a certain number of manifestations of relaxation, and to interpret it in a homogeneous fashion in terms of *Penisneid*, at this time is precisely to miss the opportunity of relating the patient to what is most profound in her situation, namely of grasping the relationship perhaps which in a far-off time, was made by her between this X which fundamentally provoked with respect to the other, to this demand of the other, the death of the demand, and the first perception, the form in which for her the intolerable rivalry first appeared, namely in this instance the desire of the mother for this distant love which distracted her both from her husband and from her child for example.

In any case no doubt the fact that the phallus, and in a repeated fashion, because there is a second example which is given afterwards, appears here in this position, namely somewhere which, may, must be situated at the level of the signifier of the Other as such, *qua* struck, *qua* barred, *qua* identical to the most profound signification with which the Other may be struck for the subject should not be neglected as such. And on the other hand when the phallus appears at another moment of the analysis, at a moment of the analysis which is slightly later, because at that time many interpretations have to be taken into account which made it come to light from this angle, namely in these dreams where the patient - it is one of the most common dreams observed in I would say in the majority of neuroses - where the patient realises herself as a phallic being, namely sees one of her breasts replaced by a phallus, indeed a phallus situated between her two breasts. It is one of the most frequent dream phantasies that one can meet up with in every analysis.

The question, I must say, seems to me to be linked to something quite different in this instance, than to a desire, as they say, "for masculine identification and possession of the phallus". In effect there is some speculation here about whether she sees her own breasts transformed into a penis. "Does she not refer onto the man's penis the oral aggressivity primitively directed against the maternal breast?"

It is one way of reasoning. But on the other hand if one observes the extreme extension given under its form, from the fact that on the other hand its forms themselves can be, as is well known, essentially polyphallic, I mean that once there is more than one phallus, I would almost say that we find ourselves before an altogether fundamental image which the Diana of Ephesus sufficiently provides for us in this sort of streaming of breasts of which her whole body is in a way composed.

Here then, because the analyst had already at that moment pointed out the equivalence of the shoe and the phallus, what this patient sees, what immediately follows - I mean that this immediately follows the first two attempts, and is moreover considered as confirming them.

"I am having my shoe repaired by a shoemaker. Then I get up on a stage decorated with blue, white, red stage lights, where there are only men. My mother is in the crowd and admires me".

Can we content ourselves by talking about *Penisneid*? Is it not obvious here that the relationship to the phallus is here of a different order, that the dream itself that is in question, both indicates that it is linked to a relationship of exhibition; of exhibition not before those who have it, the other men who are there with her on the stage, and regarding whom it is almost too clever to say it, the blue, white, red lights evoke here for us all sorts of different obscene backgrounds, and that it is before her mother, and as such, that she exhibits herself; in other words, that here we find ourselves before this phantastical, compensatory relationship, of which I spoke the last time, this power relationship no doubt, but power in relation to the third person who is the mother, and this is something which is produced at this level in the relationship that the subject has with the image of her own counterpart, of the small other, of the image of the body, and that what is to be studied, precisely the function of this phantastical relationship in the equilibrium of the subject, that to interpret it and to assimilate it purely and simply to the function and to the appearance of the phallus, at the other points, is also something which bears witness, I would say to a lack of criteria in the orientation of interpretations, because when all is said and done, what will all the interventions of the analyst in this observation tend towards? Towards facilitating in her what he calls the conscious awareness of some lack, some nostalgia or other for the penis as such, and in facilitating for her the outcome of her phantasies, by centering on this phantasy as such, as being a phantasy of lesser power, even though most of the facts go against this interpretation.

What does the analyst do in restoring to the patient or to the subject, what I might call, the legitimate phallus? Its meaning is changed for her. I mean by that that one does something which amounts more or less to teaching her to love her obsessions, because in fact this is what is presented to us as the sum total of this therapy: the obsessions have not diminished, simply that the patient no longer feels guilty about them, which is brought about by a certain intervention essentially centred on the texture of phantasies, and on the valorisation of this phantasy, as a phantasy of rivalry with men, supposedly, by a simple supposition, transferred from some aggressivity or other against the mother whose root is in no way reached.

It is something which culminates in the following: in fact the texture of the obsessions is, through the authorisation given by the analyst, separated from this fundamental demand for death.

But I would say that by operating in this way, namely by legitimating when all is said and done, because one can only legitimate in a block to the degree that the phantasy is authorised by interpretation, the obsession of the genital relationship is consumed as such, I mean that from the moment that the subject learns to love her obsessions as such, in so far as they are invested with the whole signification of what happens to her, we see developing here at the end of the observation all sorts of intuitions which are no doubt extremely elating.

I would ask you to refer to it, because it is too late for me to read it for you today. But undoubtedly this has altogether the appearance of this style of narcissistic effusion that some people have highlighted as a phenomenon coming at the end of analyses, and regarding which moreover the author does not have many illusions.

"The positive feature", he writes, "is precisely with these characteristics of a strongly genitalised Oedipus complex"

And it is on this note of profound incompleteness, and I must say of few illusions concerning a really genital solution, as it is expressed concerning the outcome of this analysis, that he himself concludes.

What does not seem to have been seen at all in this is precisely that this is closely correlated with the very mode of interpretation, the centring of interpretation on something which when all is said and done aims at the reduction of demand, rather than at its fundamental elucidation, and this is all the more paradoxical in our day, when one is used to showing for example, the importance of the interpretation of aggressivity as such. Perhaps this term precisely is too vague for practitioners still to find their way about in it, and that the term of demand for death which might be substituted for it, which might be advantageously substituted in German, is what is required to be reached as a level of subjective articulation of demand.

I would like in concluding, because I alluded above to something which is called the commandments, to draw your attention to something, because I also spoke about Christianity, which is precisely not one of the least mysterious commandments of what one could call, not a morality, because in reality it is not a moral commandment, it is a commandment precisely founded on identification, it is the one which at the horizon of all the commandments, is put forward by the Christian articulation in the words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself".

I do not know if you have ever dwelt on what that involves. It involves all sorts of rather surprising objections. First of all the beautiful souls will cry: "As thyself! Surely more! Why as thyself? That is not very much!" On the other hand people with more experience will say:

But after all, is it so sure that one loves one's self? Experience proves that we have the most contradictory sentiments as regards ourselves, the most unusual ones, and after all this reference to a thyself which seems all of a sudden in fact to place in a certain perspective, if one takes it from a certain perspective, is fundamentally egoism, and how can you make it the measure, the module, the paragon of love.

This all the same is one of the most surprising things.

I think that in fact these objections which are in a way quite valid, and that one could in fact very easily incarnate by the impossibility of responding to this sort of challenge in the

first person, no one ever supposed that to this "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", an: "I love my neighbour as myself" could answer, because obviously the weakness of this formulation is clear to everyone.

In fact, I believe that if something allows us to dwell on this formulation as something which interests us, which profoundly interests us and which in a way illustrates what I called here the horizon of the commandment, the horizon of the word, it is indeed this something which ensures that if we articulate it from where this must start, namely from the locus of the other, if symmetrically and parallel to the point: "Thou art the one who kills me" (*Tu es celui qui me tues*) which I showed you here underlying the position of the other at the simple level of the first demand, the "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", is a circle, and thou has led us in this "thyself" not to recognise anything else than the thou at the level of which the commandment itself articulates by ending on an "as thyself", as thyself you are at the level of the word, the one whom you hate in the demand for death, whom you hate because you do not know him. It is at this level that the Christian commandment rejoins the one which gives us the point at the horizon where Freud's instruction is articulated: *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*. It is the same thing again that another wisdom expresses in the "Thou art" (*Tu es*) which must when all is said and done end an authentic and full assumption of the subject in his own word, that he should recognise where he is, at this horizon of the word which is that without which nothing in analysis can be articulated, except to produce false routes and miscognitions.