

**Seminar 1: Wednesday 2 December 1964**

*Colourless green ideas sleep furiously  
furiously sleep ideas green colourless*

*Songe, songe, Céphise, à cette nuit cruelle  
Qui fut pour tout un peuple une nuit éternelle  
[Dream, dream, Cephise, of that cruel night,  
Which was for a whole people an eternal night]*

Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.

If I were not in front of a French-speaking audience, I could say right away: “that’s what talking is about”. But since it happens that I must presume that despite the obvious necessity for bilingualism in our culture, there are some people here who are in no way burdened by English, I will give a word-for-word translation of it. The first word means without colour, the second word green, the third word ideas (in the plural), the fourth word means sleep (*sommeil*), can also mean to go to sleep (*dormir*), provided you put *to* before it, and can mean sleep (*dorment*) in the third person plural of the present indicative. You will see why this is the sense (*sens*) that we will pause at.

The nature of the indefinite article in English, which is not expressed, allows us therefore to translate up to this word-for-word: “D’incolores vertes idées dorment” - to which there is added what is very obviously an adverb because of its ending - “furieusement.”

I said: “that’s what talking is about”. Is that really talking? How can we know? It (2) is precisely in order to know that this signifying chain - I scarcely dare to say sentence - was forged.

It was forged by a linguist called Noam Chomsky. This example is quoted, introduced in a little book called *Syntactic structures* published by Mouton in the Hague. What is it about? About structuralism, you can take my word for it, about syntactic structure, syntax.

This would immediately deserve a more precise commentary. I am only going to indicate it.

Syntax, in a structuralist perspective, is to be situated at a precise level that we will call formalisation on the one hand, and on the other hand, as regards the syntagm - the syntagm is the signifying chain considered from the point of view of what concerns the linking of its elements - *Syntactic Structures* consists in formalising these linkages.

Are all the linkages between these elements equivalent? In other words, can any signifier whatsoever be immediately contiguous to any other signifier. It is

obvious that the reply will tend towards the negative, at least as regards what concerns a certain usage of this signifying chain, its usage, let us say, in discourse.

This example is found at the beginning of the work in question. It introduces something which is to be distinguished from the end of this work, namely, the (3) constitution or the initiation, the outline of a reasoning about syntactic structure, it introduces a notion which must be distinguished from it, that of grammar.

He introduced his subject matter, *Syntactic structures*, by specifying it as having a goal: how can we establish the formalisation, the algebraic signs, let us say, in order to illustrate immediately for you what is involved, which will allow there to be produced in the English language something grammatical, and to prevent there being produced a chain which is not so.

I cannot go on here to judge what the author of this enterprise achieves. What I can indicate, is that, in the particular conditions that are offered to him by this positive tongue that the English tongue is, I mean the tongue as it is spoken, it is not a matter of extracting the logic of the English tongue, it is a matter in a way of something which could be set up, in our day at least, in an electronic machine, so that from it there could emerge only grammatically correct sentences, and, a greater ambition, all the possible forms that his tongue offers to the Englishman, I mean to the speaking subject.

This book is a very seductive one to read because it gives the idea that by pursuing this kind of work a certain rigour emerges, the imposition of a certain real in the (4) usage of the tongue, and a very ingenious, very seductive, very captivating possibility which is demonstrated to us, of managing to mould oneself according to formulae like those, for example, of the most complex connections of auxiliaries, with certain forms which are proper to English, how to generate without error the transformation from the active to the passive, connected to a certain form which is that of the present in its actuality, which in order to say *lire* distinguishes "I read", from "I am reading" and which generates, in a quite mechanical fashion "I have been reading", for example, by a series of transformations, not of the conjunction of these words but of their composition. There is here something very seductive, but this is not at all what I shall engage myself with.

For what interests me is the reason why this example was forged. It was forged to distinguish the grammatical from another term that the author introduces here of the order of *signification*. In English that is called meaning.

The author thinks that in constructing this sentence he has produced a sentence which is without meaning, on the pretext that colourless contradicts green, that ideas cannot sleep and that it appears rather problematic for one to sleep furiously.

What strikes him is that he can, on the contrary, obtain from a subject, a subject that he questions, or that he pretends to question but undoubtedly who is his (5) recourse, that this meaningless sentence is a grammatical sentence.

I take this historical example because it is in the history, in the work, on the present-day path of linguistics. I am a little embarrassed because it is not in French, but in fact this ambiguity forms part of our position, as you are going to see. For those who do not know English, I would ask you to make the effort of picturing to yourselves that the reverse order of the words *furiously sleep ideas green colourless* is not grammatical.

“*Y restez cieux aux êtes qui Père Notre*” {there remain heavens art in who Father Our} this is what this corresponds to, the reversed sentence of the rather well known sentence of Jacques Prévert: “*Notre Père qui êtes aux cieux restez-y*” {Our Father who art in heaven, remain there}.

It is clear that being grammatical here does not depend, at least entirely, on what may appear in these few inflected words, namely, the *s* of *ideas* which acts as a comfort for the absence of *s* at the end of *sleep*, namely a certain formal harmony recognisable by the English speaker and also the *ly* ending which indicates to us that it is an adverb. Because these characteristics remain in the second sentence; it is nevertheless, for an English person, of a completely different degree as regards the experience of the word, from the first. It is ungrammatical. It will not offer, we might say, any more sense than the ironic, even blasphemous prayer of Prévert (6) - but believe me, in time, it will be baptised: “What respect in this, remain there” - than this sentence once it has been reversed.

This indicates that you should underline in passing, in what I have just articulated, the word sense. We will see the use we can put it to today. We will see what I am introducing here by this means.

In fact Chomsky's undertaking is subjected, understandably, to the discussion of other linguists. It is noted, and quite rightly, that there is some abuse, or in any case that the discussion can begin around this connotation of *meaningless*, of *sans signification*.

Undoubtedly meaning is completely extinguished where there is no grammar, but where there is grammar, I mean a grammatical construction, sensed, presumed by the subject, the subject who is being questioned, who here is called on as judge, at the place, at the locus of the Other, to reintroduce the term inscribed in my presentation last year as a reference, where there is a grammatical construction, can one say, that there is no meaning? And it is easy, basing myself always on documents, to refer you to a particular article by Jakobson in the translation Nicolas Ruwet has made of it, for you to find in a particular article in the grammar part, in these articles entitled *Essai de linguistique générale*, on page 205, the discussion of this example.

(7) It would be easy for me to put forward all sorts of attestations in English usage, in Marvell, for example, “*Green thoughts in a green shade*”, which he immediately translates in parenthesis or rather that the translator translates “*une verte pensée dans une ombre verte*”, or indeed particular Russian expressions completely analogous to the supposed contradiction inscribed here in the sentence. There is no need to go any further. It is enough to remark that to say a *round square*, in English, another example taken by the same author, is not at all a

contradiction in reality, given that a *square* is very often used to designate a *place* and that a *place ronde* can then very easily be called a *round square*.

What nevertheless are we going to engage with? You see in the equivalents, and to say the word, if I try to show that this sentence can have a meaning, I will certainly be entering on more subtle paths. It is from grammar itself that I will begin. I will observe that whether this phrase is grammatical or not is, for example, because what apparently emerges in this sentence as an adjective, namely *colourless green*, comes before the substantive, and that here we find ourselves, in English as in French, confronted with a certain number of effects which remain to be described. Provisionally, I continue to call them effects of sense, namely that in (8) relationship of the adjective to the substantive, the adjective, in Greek we call it *epithete*, usage in English, in French and in every tongue, shows us that even though this usage varies with tongues, this question of the place is important to qualify the effect of sense created by the joining of the adjective to the substantive. In French, for example, an adjective which, as I might say, is identified to the substance is placed before the substantive, *une belle femme* is different to *une femme belle*. Epicatathetic usage, one could say, that of the adjective which comes before, is to be distinguished from the epanathetic, from the one which comes after, and that the reference of the woman to beauty in the case of the epanathetic, that is from the adjective which comes after, is something distinguished, while a *belle femme* is already, that it is within her substance that she is found to be beautiful, and that there is still a third phase to be distinguished, the epamphitetic usage, or that of ambiance, which will indicate that this woman appeared beautiful in particular circumstances, that in other words it is not the same thing to say: "*furious Hermione - Hermione furious - furious, Hermione*" etc, and so on.

In English, the real epamphitetic is where it is permitted to put the adjective after the noun. Epanathetic, like epicatathetic, is always placed in front, but the epicatathetic is always closer to the substantive.

(9) One says: *Un / de belle apparence / et pourvu d'une belle barbe, vieil homme*" (An old man of handsome appearance with a beautiful beard). It is because the *vieil* is closer to *homme* rather than the fact that he has a beautiful beard and a radiant appearance.

Henceforth we are, simply along grammatical paths, in a position to distinguish two planes and as a consequence not to have them meeting in the contradiction, *green colourless*. In addition some memories of Sheridan that I had noted for you, of a dialogue between Lady Teazle and her husband Sir Peter - naturally it is the notes that one takes that one never finds at the right time - sufficiently teaches us that for example, if Lady Teazle protests at the fact of being tortured about these *elegant expenses*, about these *dépenses élégantes*, this is in order to point out to us that the relationship of the adjective to the substantive in spoken usage, when it is a matter precisely of the epicatathete is perhaps not to be taken in English the way it is in French and that you cannot translate *elegant expenses* by *depenses elegantes* by strictly inverting the relationship and by saying *des élégances coûteuses*. Even in Tennyson I also found for you a certain *glimmering strangeness* which comes from the speaker, emerging from his dream, obviously must be translated by *lueurs étranges* and not by *étrangetés lumineuses*. So that

here, it is perhaps indeed this (10) idea of greenness, of ideal greenness that is involved, as compared to what, *colourless* and more decayed, it is something like the shades of ideas which slip away there, losing their colour and in a word, bloodless. They are moving about there, not because they are sleeping, and I would have no trouble, spare me the end of this stylistic exercise, in proving to you that it is perfectly conceivable, that if we grant to sleep, *dorment*, something of the metaphorical, there is a sleep accompanied by some fury. Besides is it not what we experience every day and in a word, if indeed you excuse me from this vain tail-end of discourse, I leave you with the task of fabricating it. I cannot find, in questioning things in the sense of the link of grammar to meaning, I cannot find in this sentence the evocation properly speaking of the unconscious where it is.

What is the unconscious, if not precisely ideas, thoughts, *Gedanken*, thoughts whose faded greenness, does not Freud tell us somewhere, that like the shades summoned from hell and returning to the sunlight, want to drink blood, to recover their colours. Is it the thoughts of the unconscious that are involved, that here sleep furiously?

Well, all of that would have been a very pretty exercise but I did not pursue it, I (11) would not say to the end, because I am cutting it short only to suggest that it is quite simply completely idiotic.

The unconscious has nothing to do with these metaphorical meanings, however far we may push them. And to search for meaning in a signifying, grammatical chain is an undertaking of extraordinary futility.

For if, because of the fact that I am before this audience, I was able to give it that meaning, I could just as well have given it a completely different one, and for a simple reason, which is that any signifying chain whatsoever, provided it is grammatical, always generates a meaning, and I would go further, any one whatsoever.

Because I commit myself, in varying, and one can vary to infinity, the surrounding conditions, the situation, but what is more, the situations of dialogue, I can make this sentence mean whatever I want, including for example in a particular case that I am mocking you.

Pay attention! Does there not intervene here at this extreme point something other than a meaning? That I am able, in a particular context, to make any meaning emerge from it, is one thing, but is it really meaning that is involved. Because why did I say that nothing guaranteed the meaning I gave earlier? It is in the very measure that I had given it one with respect to what? With respect to an object, a (12) referent, something that I have brought out there for the needs of the case, namely the unconscious.

In speaking about context, in speaking about dialogue, I allow to disappear, to vanish, to vacillate what is involved, namely, the function of sense. What it is a question here of circumscribing more closely is the distinction between the two. In the final analysis, how does it come about that its very author who chose this sentence, drew comfort so easily from something that is so doubtful, namely that it does not make sense.

How could a linguist, who does not need to take the extreme examples, the round square, which I spoke to you about earlier, to grasp that the things that are most easily accepted, allow there to be completely avoided, the remark of a certain contradiction. Does one not say with common assent, *une jeune morte*, (a dead young person). Which could be a correct way of saying that she died young (*elle est morte jeune*) but to describe her as a *jeune morte* with what the adjective placed before means, the adjective in French, must leave us curiously perplexed! Is it as dead that she is young?

I asked myself what gave this sentence its distinctive character. We cannot believe in such naivety on the part of the person who produced it as a paradigm. And why did he take such an obviously forged paradigm? And nevertheless while I was (13) asking myself what effectively gave this sentence its paradigmatic value I had myself taught how to pronounce it properly. My English phonetics are not especially exemplary, and this exercise had a use for me which was not to torture the ears of those for whom these phonetics are familiar. And in this exercise I noticed something, that between each word, I had to take a little breath.

Colourless, green, ideas, sleep, furiously. Why did I have to take a breath? Have you noticed that this becomes grgr, ideas, sleep, one s linking up with another s and after that **fff**uriously.

So then I began to interest myself in the consonants. There is one thing that can be said in any case, it is that this text is struck by “amusie”, however you understand it, music or the muses, as Queneau says “*avec les arts on s’amuse: on muse avec les lézards*” (with the arts one amuses oneself: one muses with the lizards). In noticing, in counting these consonants, the two l’s and the c of colourless, the g of green, the n, a third l, a fourth l, there came to my mind those verses which I hope you adore as much as I do, the ones written at the bottom of the blackboard and which make use very precisely of the consonantal battery of the made-up sentence :

*Songe, songe, Céphise, à cette nuit cruelle*  
*Qui fut pour tout un peuple une nuit éternelle*  
(Dream, dream, Céphise, of that cruel night  
Which was for a whole people an eternal night.)

(14) I can easily do the opposite of the work I did earlier to show you that it is no less strange to speak about a cruel night, than of a round square. That an eternal night is undoubtedly a contradiction in terms, but on the contrary that the moving value of these two lines, is essentially in the repercussion first of all of these four sibilant s’s which are underlined on the blackboard, of the repercussion of *Céphise* in *fut* on the second line, in the repercussion of the *t* four times, of the *n* of *nuit* twice, of the primitive labile *f* promised by its attenuated form *fut* and of *Céphise*, in this *pour tout un peuple* which harmonises, which makes vibrate in a certain fashion something which undoubtedly in these two lines, is the whole sense, the poetic sense, and this is of a nature to force us, to draw us intimately closer to the function of the signifier.

If undoubtedly the two verses in question do not claim in any degree to give the meaning of the formula of the linguist, they force us to question ourselves, whether we are not in this way much closer to what constitutes its sense, to what was for its author above all the true point at which he felt assured of its non-sense. For at a certain level, the requirements of sense are perhaps different to what appears to us at first, namely that at this level of sense, music is a radical objection.

(15) Here is how I decided to introduce, this year, as a way of giving you the tone of it, what I am calling *Crucial problems for psychoanalysis*.

I spoke last year about the foundations *of* psychoanalysis. I spoke about the concepts which seemed to me to be essential to structure its experience, and you could see, that at none of these levels, were they true concepts, that I could not make them hold up, except in the measure that I made them rigorous with respect to no referent. That always in some way the subject who carries these concepts is implicated in his very discourse, that I cannot speak about the opening and the closing of the unconscious, without being implicated in my very discourse by this opening and this closing, that I cannot speak about the encounter, as constituting by its very lack the principal of repetition, without rendering ungraspable the very point where this repetition is qualified.

Dante, after some people but before still more, introduced in *De vulgari eloquentia*, which we will have to speak about this year, the most profound question of linguistics. He says that every science, and for him it is science that is involved, must be able to declare what must be translated as its object, and we all agree except that object, to have its value, in the Latin Dante uses is called here *subjectum*.

(16) In analysis it is in effect the subject that is involved. Here no displacement is possible to permit him to make an object of it.

That it is the same in linguistics no more escapes any linguist than it escaped Dante and his reader, but the linguist can try to resolve the problem differently from us analysts.

It is precisely for that reason that linguistics is engaged ever further along the path highlighted earlier by the work of our author, along the path of formalisation. It is because, along the path of formalisation, what we are trying to exclude is the subject. Only we analysts should have an exactly contrary aim because this is the pivot of our praxis.

Only you know that on this point I do not retreat before the difficulty, since in short, I posit, I did it last year and in a sufficiently articulated way, that the subject can only be in the final analysis nothing other than that which thinks: *Therefore I am*. Which means that the supporting point, the navel, as Freud would say of this term subject is properly only the moment at which it vanishes beneath sense, where sense is what makes it disappear as being, for this *Therefore I am* is only a sense. Is it not there that the discussion on being can find its support?

(17) The relationship of sense to the signifier is what I have always believed to be essential to maintain at the heart of our experience so that our whole discourse does not become debased.

At the centre of this effort of mine, oriented towards a praxis, I placed the notion of signifier. How does it happen, that again quite recently, at one of the meetings of my pupils, I was able to hear one of them, I do not remember who, saying, and after all I know he was not the only one to say it, that the notion of signifier, for Lacan, still left him with some uncertainty in his mind.

If that is how things are, while after all an article like *The agency of the letter in the unconscious*, which I ask you to re-read, it is a fact that my texts become clearer as the years pass.

There are murmurs, people are asking themselves why? I am saying that it is a fact to which more than one if not all testify, this text is admirably clear and the man-woman example that I evoke, as evoking by its signifying coupling the meaning of a urinal, not by the opposition between the sexes, but as inserting itself, because of the masking of this sense, for two small children who come into a station in a train, a henceforth irremedial division about the spot that they have just passed, one (18) holding that he has passed by man, and the other holding that she has passed by woman. This seems to me all the same a story that is designed to open peoples' ears.

Moreover formulations that are less like apologues, which are that the sign, however it is composed and includes in itself the signifier/signified division, the sign is what represents something for someone, namely at the level of the sign we are at the level of anything at all, of the psychological, of knowledge, that you can refine. There is the authentic sign, the smoke which indicates the fire, that there is the index, and that to see the trace left by the hoof of the gazelle on the sand or on the rock, and that the signifier is something different, and that the fact that the signifier represents the subject for another signifier, a sufficiently firm formulation, that is simply forcing you to locate yourself in it, has certain consequences.

Why then does this discourse on the signifier retain some obscurity? Is it because for a certain time I, for example, wanted it? Yes. And who then is this I?

It is perhaps internal to this knot of language which is produced when language has to give an account of its own essence. Perhaps it is necessary that at this conjunction there is necessarily produced some loss. It is exactly connected to (19) this question of the loss, the loss that is produced every time that language tries to give an account of itself in a discourse, that there is situated the point from which I wish to begin to mark the sense of what I call the relationship of the signifier to the subject.

I describe as philosophical everything that tends to mask the radical character and the originating function of this loss. Every dialectic, and specifically the Hegelian one, which tends to mask, which in any case points towards a recuperation of the effects of this loss is a philosophy.



There are other ways than the pretention of dealing with this loss. There is for example looking elsewhere and specifically turning one's gaze towards meaning, and to make of the subject, this entity that is called the human spirit, to put it before discourse.

It is an old error whose final incarnation is called developmental psychology, or if you wish to illustrate it, Piagetism. It is a matter of knowing whether we can approach a critique of it on its own terrain. An example of the contribution that I hope to make this year to something for psychoanalysis, which shows that the discourse that we are pursuing for it necessitates choices, and specifically the (20) exclusion of a certain number of positions, positions concerning the real. That these positions are false, and that it is not without reason that they are false, that the position we take up is perhaps the only one which allows there to be grounded, at its most radical foundation, the notion of ideology.

I will not allow you to leave today - even though it may be a superfluous talisman - without a formula that can be written on the blackboard because after all I put myself into it, which is the following, that it is true that the relation of the signifier is essentially to the signifier, that the signifier as such, in so far as it is distinguished from the sign, only signifies for another signifier and never signifies anything other than the subject. There must be superabundant proofs of this.

On the very plane of the criticism of Piaget, that I think I will approach the next time, and specifically the function of ego-centric language, I think I will be able to give you at that time proofs as a kind of graph, of simplified graph, indicating the path that we are going to travel and the formula of S/s, signifier over signified, is and always has been in an unambiguous fashion to be interpreted as follows, that there is an order of reference of the signifier which is to, what I called last year, another signifier. This is what defines it essentially.

What then is the signified? The signified is not at all to be conceived of only in relation to the subject.

(21) The relation of the signifier to the subject, in so far as it involves the function of meaning, passes through a referent. The referent, that means the real, and the real is not simply a raw and opaque mass. The real is apparently structured. We have moreover absolutely no knowledge of how as long as we do not have the signifier. I do not mean for all that, that if we do not know it, we have no relations to this structure. At different levels of animality these structures are called tendency, need and even necessarily what is called rightly or wrongly, but in fact in animal psychology, intelligence, one has to pass through this structure.

Intelligence, I do not know why a mistake has been made about this, intelligence is indeed for me, as for everybody else, non-verbal. What I will try to show you the next time, to criticise Piaget, is that it is absolutely indispensable in order not to make the error of thinking that the evolution of the child consists, in accordance with a pre-determined will of the Eternal, from all time, of rendering him more and more able to dialogue with Mr Piaget. This poses the question, even if it does not resolve it, of how intelligence as pre-verbal comes to link itself with language as pre-intellectual. For the moment, I note that in order to conceive anything (22) whatsoever about meaning, you must first take, which does not exhaust

anything, and does not force a scaffolding on us, and to preserve the same thing indefinitely, notice that there are two usages of the signifier with respect to the referent, the usage of denotation, comparable to a correspondence which claims to be bi-univocal, let us say a brand, an iron brand on the referent, and a connotation, namely, how it is on this - you will see it the next time - there is going to turn our example of the criticism of Piaget, how a signifier can serve to introduce into the relationship to the referent, something which has a name, which is called the concept. And that is a relationship of connotation.

It is then through the mediation of the relationship of the signifier to the referent that we see the signifier emerge. There are no valid instances of meaning which do not make a circuit, a detour, by way of some referent.

The bar, therefore, is not as has been said, in commenting on me, the simple existence, fallen from heaven in a way, of the obstacle, here entified. It is first of all a question mark about the return circuit. But it is not simply that. It is this other effect of the signifier by means of which the signifier only represents the subject, and a little earlier I wanted to incarnate the subject in what I called sense, where he vanishes as subject.

(23) Well that's it. At the level of the bar an effect of sense is produced, and what I started from today in my example, is there to show you how much the effect of the signified can be bent to every sense, if we do not have the referent at the beginning, but that the effect of sense is something different.

It is so different that the face it presents on the side of the signified, is properly what is not "unmeaning", *non-signifiant*, but "meaningless", that it is properly speaking, what is translated, because we are in English, by the expression "non-sense", and that it is not possible to properly punctuate what is involved in our analytic experience, except by seeing that what is explored is not the ocean, the infinite sea of meanings, it is what happens in the very measure that it reveals to us this barrier of "non-sense". Which does not mean without meaning, which is the face of refusal that sense presents on the side of the signifier. That is why, when we have passed through this survey of psychological experimentation, we will try to show the degree to which it lacks the facts, by overlooking the true relationship of language to intelligence, we will throw light on it from a different angle, which is that while starting from an experience which no doubt is also, just as much as psychology, different to that of psychoanalysis, a literary experience specifically, by (24) trying to give its proper status, for it is not we who have invented it, it exists, to what is called non-sense, by questioning *Alice In Wonderland* or some good author of this register, we will see how this enables us to illuminate the status of the signifier.

**Seminar 2: Wednesday 9 December 1964**

I want to thank my listeners for showing themselves to be so attentive as I take up these lectures again. I saw the last time how numerous they were .

I begin there because, in truth, for me this is a part of a problem that I am going to try, I will not simply say to pose today, with regard to which I would like to define something which could be described as: how are we going to work this year?

I say “are we going to”, since I do not imagine that my discourse is deployed in a professorial abstraction, where after all it does not matter who profits from it, for better or for worse, or in what way.

I learned from echoes, which precisely because of the specificity of my position always reach me without delay, that the last time I was didactic: indeed that on this point I was considered to have made progress.

It is certainly not the case, however, it seems to me, that I spared you, as I might say, because to introduce the problem which is going to occupy us from the beginning this year, that of the relationship of the subject to language, as I did it by (2) this non-sense, and to remain with it, to sustain a commentary, a question about it long enough to make you travel along paths, through defiles that I was subsequently able to cancel with a turn of the hand, let us be clear, as regards the results and not as regards the value of the test, in order, at the end, to make you admit and, I would almost say, from my point of view, to get across the “Hey presto!” of a distinct relationship, the one to sense supported, as I showed, by the two sentences which were still there on the blackboard a little earlier, I can only congratulate myself that something of such a discourse reached its goal.

If it is true that there is the gap, whose formulation I began the last time, between something we do not grasp at the very level where the signifier functions as such and as I define it - the signifier is that which represents the subject for another signifier - if it is true that this representation of the subject, that the way in which the signifier is his representative is what is made present in the effect of sense, that there is between that and everything that is constructed as meaning, this sort of neutral field, of gap, of danger point, what has been encountered is not at all articulated in a necessary fashion, namely, what returns as meaning from a certain (3) relationship, I articulated it the last time, which remains to be defined, of the signifier to the referent, to this something articulated or not in the real, on which it is by managing, let us say, to rebound off, to say no more at this time, that the signifier generated the system of meanings.

There is here no doubt, for those you have followed my past discourse, a new emphasis on something whose place you can no doubt find in my preceding schemata, and even see in it that what was involved in the effect of the signified, where I had to lead you to indicate its place, at the moment when last year I was giving the schema of alienation, that this referent existed but at a different place,

that this referent was desire in so far as it may have to be situated in the formation, in the establishment of the subject somewhere, hollowing out there, in the interval between the two signifiers essentially evoked in the definition of the signifier itself, that here, not the subject, collapsing into this formulation of what one can call the primordial cell of its constitution, but already in a first metaphor this signified, because of the very position of the subject on the way to collapse, had to be relayed by the function of desire.

An illuminating formula, no doubt, to designate all sorts of developmental effects in our analytic experience, but a relatively obscure formula if we have to map out (4) what is involved, when all is said and done, essentially, in the validity of this formula, and, in a word, about the relationship of development taken in its widest sense, of the relationship of the position of the subject taken in its most radical sense, to the function of language.

If these formulae, produced in a fashion that is more aphoristic than dogmatic, given as a supporting point, starting from which there can be judged, or at least sequenced, the range of different formulations which are given of it at every level at which this questioning tries, attempts, to pursue in a contemporary fashion whether it is the linguist, the psycholinguist, the psychologist, the strategist, the games' theorist, etc.

The terms that I am putting forward, and in the first place that of the signifier representing the subject for another signifier, has in itself something exclusive about it, which recalls what another path attempted to trace out, as regards the status to be given at one or other conceived level of the signifier, something which more or less cancels, crosses a certain gap, is undoubtedly risky, and before letting oneself be taken in by it, one should perhaps look at it more than once. Again there is here, I would say, a quasi-imperative position which, of course, can only be sustained by attempting a reference, which not only finds its recourse in an (5) adequate development of theories and of facts, but which also finds its foundation in some more radical structure and, moreover, all of those who for some years have been able to follow what I have developed before them, know that three years ago in a seminar on identification, it is not unrelated to what I am bringing you now, I was led to the necessity of a certain topology which appeared to me to impose itself, to arise from that very experience which is the most particular, sometimes, often, always perhaps, the most confused, the one that we have to deal with in analysis, namely identification.

Undoubtedly this topology is essential to the structure of language. In speaking about structure one cannot but evoke it. The first remark, I would even say the primary one, that however much we ought to conceive of discourse as unfolding over time, if there is something that structural analysis, as it has been operated in linguistics, is designed to reveal to us, it is that this linear structure is not at all sufficient to account for the chain of concrete discourse, of the signifying chain, that we can only order it, harmonise it in the shape of what is called in musical notation a stave, that this is the least that we have to say and that henceforth, the (6) question of how we are to conceive the function of this second dimension, and whether this is something which obliges us to take surface into consideration and in what form? The one formulated up to this in the intuition of space as, for example, it can be inscribed in an exemplary fashion in transcendental aesthetics,

or whether it is something different, whether it is this surface as it is theorised precisely at the level of what are called in mathematical theory, surfaces, taken strictly from the angle of topology, whether this is sufficient for us, in short if this stave, this stave upon which every unit, every significance or sentence should be inscribed - undoubtedly at its cuts - how, at the two extremities of the sequence of these measures, how does this cut come to circumscribe, striate, section the stave. Let us say that there is here, in this regard, more than one way of questioning oneself, that there are horses for courses.

It is undoubtedly not too soon, faced with this structure, to pose again the question whether indeed effectively, as has seemed self-evident up to the present in a certain natural schema, time is to be reduced to a single dimension.

But let us leave that for the moment. And to stay with this curious uncertainty at about what this surface might be, you see that I require as always indispensable for all our ordinates, the two dimensions of the blackboard. Again it is visible that (7) each line does not at all have a function that is homogenous to the others. And simply to approach it, to shake the intuitive character of this function of space in so far as it interests us, I would go as far here as to point out to you that in this first approach that I evoked from previous years, a certain topology that is very structuring as regards what happens to the subject in our experience, I recall that what I was led to make use of is something which does not at all form part of a space which seems to be so integrated into all our experience, and of which one could well say, that alongside this other it deserves in fact the name of familiar, but also particular space: that there is a space, let us say, less or even unimaginable, in any case with which it is important to familiarise oneself, for the paradox that one easily encounters in it, for the lack of predictability involved when you are introduced to it for the first time.

Forgive me for bringing here, in the form of a kind of toy, something whose shape we will perhaps rediscover subsequently - believe me, I have thought about it. These topological elements, to speak of those that I emphasised, the hole, the torus, the cross-cap, respectively, are really separated by a sort of distinctive world from what we could call the shapes that are called Gestaltist, which, it must be (8) said, have dominated the development of part of a whole geometry, but also of a whole significance - I do not need to refer you to well-known and very meritorious researches, let us cite here simply in passing the *Metamorphoses du cercle* by Georges Poulet, but there are many others to remind us that throughout the centuries, the significance of the sphere, with all the exclusiveness that it involves, is what dominated a whole way of thinking, perhaps a whole art of thinking, and it is not at all simply by seeing it culminate in one or other great poem, Dante's poem for example, that we can plumb or measure the importance of the sphere, and even what we can link to it as being, as I might say, "belonging to its world", the cone implying everything that had been ratified in geometry as a conic section, this is a world from which there differs the one introduced by the references to which I alluded earlier.

I am going to show you an example of it, questioning you naturally, I will not take any of the topological structures that I enumerated earlier, because they are, in a way, too complicated for our object for the moment, the little shock that I am trying to obtain, and on the other hand, the most familiar shape, the one that

everyone ends up hearing pass on his auditory horizon, that of the Moebius strip, (9) do I need to remind you what it is. You see apparently, you will see later what that means, do not bother about the multiplicity of thicknesses, but simply about the shape which ensures that something which might be, if you wish, at the beginning, like a segment of a cylinder, because of the fact that, at the same time, one can go round it on the inner wall, I am expressing myself in terms expressly referred to the material, the object, the inversion that is produced, culminates in the existence of a surface whose most remarkable point is that it has only one face, namely, that wherever one begins from, one can end up along the remaining path, on the face from which one set out, at whatever point it may be of what might make you believe to be one face and the other. There is only one of them. It is also true that there is only one edge.

This of course presumes the putting forward of all sorts of definitions, the definition of an edge, for example, which is essential and which can, for us, be of the greatest use.

What I want to point out to you, and this at first will only be, I would say, for extreme novices to consider, this same object, are you able, I would say, to foresee, if you do not know already, what happens, when this surface is constituted, what happens, if one cuts it, remaining always very exactly at an equal distance from its edges, that is to say that if one cuts it in two, longitudinally?

(10) All of those, of course, who have already opened a few books on the subject know what is involved. This gives the following result: namely, not a divided surface, but a continuous strip, which has moreover the property of being able to reproduce exactly the shape of the first surface, in overlapping itself. It is, in short, a surface that one cannot divide, at least with the first cut of the scissors. Another thing, which is more interesting and which you will not, I believe, because I have never found it there, find in the books. It is the following problem: when the surface has been constituted, can it be duplicated, overlapped by another which is applied exactly onto its shape?

It is very easy to see, to carry out the experiment, that in duplicating, with a surface exactly equal to the first, the one that we are going to apply onto it, we will reach the result that the ending of the second strip that we have introduced into the operation, this ending will stop because it has, at the other ending of the same strip, since we have said by definition that these surfaces are equal, but that these two endings will be separated by the first strip, in other words, that they cannot connect up, except by crossing the first surface.

This is not obvious and is discovered by experimentation. It is closely linked, (11) moreover, with the better known first result that I evoked for you. You must admit that this necessary crossing of the surface by the surface which duplicates it, is something which can appear very useful to us for signifying the relationship of the signifier to the subject. I mean: the first fact, always to be recalled, that in no case can the signifier signify itself, except by reduplicating itself, a point that is very frequently if not always forgotten, and of course forgotten with a lot of disadvantages. It will be all the more necessary to remember it here.

On the other hand, it is perhaps linked to this topological property that we must seek, the something unexpected, fruitful, as I might say, in experience that we can recognise as being at every point comparable to an effect of sense.

I am pushing this business still further, and perhaps you will later see its much more tangible implications; undoubtedly, if we continued the covering of our first surface, the Moebius strip, by a surface which is this time, not equivalent to its length but doubles it, we will manage in effect, in so far as these words have a sense, to envelop it inside and outside. This is what is effectively realised here. You should understand that in the middle there is a Moebius surface, and all around a surface of the type of the reduplicated surface, when a little earlier I cut it with (12) a scissors in the middle, which overlaps it, I repeat, if these words have a sense: inside and outside. In that case you see that these two surfaces are knotted.

In other words, and this in a fashion which is just as necessary, as unexpected for simple intuition, which is there to give us the idea that the signifying chain, since quite often metaphors reach a goal only as a preliminary, they only try to target things in an approximate fashion, that the signifying chain has perhaps a much fuller meaning, in the sense that it implies a link, and another link, which interlock, that we presuppose this at first.

I feel perhaps something like a hesitation before the rather distant character of what I have brought here with respect to our problems.

Nevertheless, the division of the field that this structure can contribute: if we compare the Moebius surface to the surface which completes it in the cross-cap, and which is a plane provided with special properties, it is not simply skewed, it is something, of which one can moreover only say the following, which is that it involves, it involves its eventual connection by a Moebius surface.

Imagine the internal eight, as I called it, where again it is a matter of filling it with an imaginary surface, imagine this simply as a circle, to imagine it for yourselves, (13) simply imagine first of all this heart-shape, and that this part here on the right, has little by little encroached, as you finally see it doing, on the left. It is clear that the edges are continuous, that the homology, the parallelism, if you wish, into which these edges enter with respect to their opposite, this is what will allow you to lodge more easily in it, a surface like the Moebius strip, following the surface that you generate, following thus the space between the opposite edges, you will effectively have this sort of turning back of this surface, which was what I pointed out to you earlier, towards the very definition of the strip.

But here, what happens if we complete this surface by the other one? The fact is that the Moebius strip necessarily cuts the aforesaid portion at another point, therefore in a line whose localisation does not matter but which, for intuition, reveals itself here as the most obvious one.

What does that mean? It means that if we set ourselves, eventually, to make such a cut function in that way, but instead of what the logic of classes taken in extension uses, of what are called the Euler circles, we can highlight certain essential relationships. My discourse does not allow me to push them to the end

here, but you should know as regards a syllogism, for example, as problematic as the following:

(14)

All men are mortal  
Socrates is a man  
Therefore Socrates is mortal

A syllogism as regards which I hope there are here a certain number of ears, if they are willing to admit to the debate something other than meaning, what I called the other day sense, that this syllogism has something which retains us, and that moreover philosophy did not put it forward immediately, or in a pure context; it is nowhere to be found in the *Analytics* of Aristotle who, I imagine, was careful to avoid it. Not at all certainly, that it would be simply the feeling of reverence or of respect that would have prevented him from putting into play with the rest of men the one from whom there emerged a whole body of thought; but that he did not know that the term Socrates, in this context, can be introduced without care.

And thus we are carried - here I am anticipating - into the very heart of a question of the same order precisely as the one that interests us. It is strange that at a time when linguistics is flourishing, the discussion about what is the proper name, is entirely suspended. I mean that if it appears correct, and you know I think that a certain number, all sorts of remarkable works, all sorts of outstanding viewpoints on the function of the proper name with respect to what seems to be self-evident, (15) the first function of the signifier, denomination, undoubtedly, in order simply to introduce what I mean, the thing that is striking, is that on introducing oneself into one of the different, very categorised developments which have emerged on this theme, what I might call a genuinely fascinating value on all who notice it, it appears with a very great regularity in reading each author that everything that the others say is complete absurdity.

Here is something that is well designed to retain us and, I would say, to introduce this little corner, this little angle into the question of the proper name, something which would begin by this quite simple thing: Socrates - and I really believe that in the end there is no way of avoiding this first apprehension, this first principle - Socrates is the name of the one who is called Socrates. Which does not all mean the same thing, because there is the chap himself, Socrates with his pals, there is Socrates as a designator, I am speaking here about the function of the proper name, it is impossible to integrate it, without asking the question of what is announced at the level of the proper name.

That the proper name has a designatory function, yourself as had been said, which is not true of the individual as such, for by taking this path you will see that we arrive at absurdities, the fact that it has this use does absolutely not exhaust the (15) question of what is announced in the proper name. You will tell me, well say it, but precisely in fact this requires some detour.

But undoubtedly the objection that we have to make to the "Socrates is mortal" of the conclusion is indeed here. Because what is announced in Socrates is undoubtedly in an altogether privileged relationship to death, because if there is something of which we are sure about this man of whom we know nothing, it is



that he asked for death, and in these terms: "Take me Socrates as I am, atopic, or else kill me". This, assured, univocal, and without ambiguity.

And I think that only the use of our little Euler circle - not Eulerian but corrected - allows us by writing right around the circumference in a devouring parallelism

All men,  
are mortal

Socrates  
is mortal

consider that the junction of these formulae, major and conclusion is what is going to allow us to divide up two fields of sense: undoubtedly a field of meaning where it appears quite natural that Socrates is there in parallel to "all men" and is inserted there; a field of sense also which intersects the first and through which the question is posed for us whether we ought to give to "is a man", which does not (17) come within it, and much more for us than for anyone else in a problematic fashion, the sense of being in the prolongation of this intersection of sense and meaning, namely, whether to be a man requires death, yes or no, namely to see entering, by that means, this simple problem of logic, and by not bringing into play anything but considerations of signifiers, the bringing into play of what Freud introduced as death drive.

I will come back to this example. I spoke earlier about Dante and his topology that is finally illustrated in his great poem. I asked myself the question. I think that if Dante came back, he would have found himself, at least in past years, at ease in my seminar.

I mean, that it is not because for him everything about substance and being pivots around what is called the point, what is at the same time the point of expansion and of vanishing of this sphere, that he would not have found the greatest interest in the way in which we questioned language, because, before his *Divine Comedy*, he had written *De vulgari eloquentia*, he had also written *Vita Nuova*, he had written *Vita Nuova* about the problem of desire, and in truth the *Divine Comedy* cannot be understood without this preamble. But undoubtedly in *De vulgari eloquentia*, he (18) manifests no doubt, with impasses no doubt, with exemplary points of arrival where we know that it is not at all the way to go, it is for that reason that we are trying to reform the topology of questions, he showed the most lively sense of the primary and primitive character of language, of maternal language, he says, in opposing it to everything that in his time was the attachment, the obstinate recourse to a learned language, and in a word the preemption of language by logic.

All the problems of the junction between language and what is called thought, and God knows with what an "accent", when it involves one or other of these in the child, following Mr Piaget for example, everything depends on the false path, in the going astray of research that is otherwise illuminating as regards the meritorious facts, as regards thoughtful groupings, in the accumulation, all of this going astray depends on the miscognition of the order which exists between language and logic.

Everyone knows, everyone reproaches the first logics which emerged, and specifically Aristotle's, with being too grammatical, with suffering too much from

the stamp of grammar. Oh how true it is! Is it not precisely this that indicates it to us: that it is from this that they begin. I am speaking even of the most refined forms, the most purified ones that we have managed to give to logic, I am speaking about logics that are called symbolic, mathematical logic, and everything that is (19) most refined in what we have contributed in the order of axiomatising, of logistics, the question for us is not at all to set up this order of thinking, this pure and more and more circumscribed game that, not without the intervention of our progress in the sciences, we are succeeding in perfecting, it is not to substitute it for language, I mean to believe that language is, in a way, the instrument that is involved, because everything proves and in the forefront, precisely, our analytic experience, that the order of language and of grammatical language, for recourse to the maternal tongue, to the first tongue, the one that the suckling and the common man speaks spontaneously, is not an objection for Dante, contrary to the grammarians of his time, to see the exactly correlative importance of the *lingua grammatica*, it is that grammar which matters to him and it is here that he is sure of finding the pure tongue.

It is the whole space, the whole difference there is between Piaget's mode of approach and that for example of someone like Vygotsky - I hope that this name does not sound strange to all my listeners - he was a psychologist, an experimentalist, who lived immediately after the revolution of 1917 in Russia, and who pursued his work up to the time he died, prematurely, alas, in 1934.

(20) This book should be read, or indeed - since I pose the question: "How are we going to work?" - someone, and I will say later under what conditions, must take responsibility for this work or some other one, in order, as I might say, to illuminate it in the light of the major lines of reference whose status we are trying to establish here, in order to see in it, on the one hand what it contributes, as I might say, to this water, to this mill, and also the way in which it only responds in a more or less naive fashion to it, it is obviously in a case like this the only way to proceed, for if this book, and the method that Vygotsky introduces, are distinguished by a very severe separation, besides so obvious in the facts that one is astonished that in the last article which has appeared by Mr Piaget, one that has appeared in a collection on psycho-linguistics, he maintains unyieldingly, and he could have replied in a little pamphlet that was added to the book quite explicitly in the evolution of his thinking, having regard to the function of language, that he more than ever holds that language ..... no doubt helps the development in the child of concepts which, he thinks that, I am not saying subsequent concepts ..... but the concepts in the child as he encounters a limit in grasping them, (21) that these concepts which are always closely linked to a reference to action, that language is only there as a help, as an instrument, but secondary, and all he wants to highlight in questioning the child is inappropriate usage.

Now, all experience shows, on the contrary, that if anything is striking in the language of the child who is beginning to speak, it is not its inappropriateness, it is the anticipation, it is the paradoxical precession of certain elements of the language, which ought to appear later, as I might say, the concrete elements of insertion, as they say, are sufficiently ....., it is the precession of particles, of little formulae, of "perhaps not", of "but still", which arise very precociously in the child's language, showing even that provided one looks at it with a bit of freshness, of naivety from a certain point of view, which would allow it to be said,

and after all, if necessary I will bring in documents, that grammatical structure is absolutely correlative to all the first appearances of language.

What does that mean, if not that what is important, is not at all to see that what is happening in the mind is undoubtedly something which, with time, is realised because he becomes the adult that we believe we are, it is that if at a certain stage, (22) at certain levels, there are to be highlighted in his adequation to the concept, and there we will be struck that someone like Vygotsky, I am saying it simply in passing, without making any more of it, has precisely posed his interrogation in terms that I am going to tell you, namely, completely different ones to those of Piaget, perceives that even a rigorous handling of concepts, he denotes it by certain signs, can be in a way fallacious, and that the real handling of a concept is acquired, he says, singularly and unfortunately without drawing the consequences of this, only at puberty.

But let us leave that. The important thing would be to study as Vygotsky did, and which is moreover for him the source of an extremely rich apperception, even though it has not been exploited since then in the same circle, what the child does spontaneously with what, with words, without which undoubtedly every one agrees there is no concept. What then does he do with these words, with these words that, as they say, he uses badly, badly compared to what, compared to the concept of the adult who questions him, but which serve him all the same for a very precise usage, a usage of the signifier. What does he make of them, what corresponds in him to the dependency on the word, on the signifier, at the same level where there is going to be introduced, retroactively, through his participation (23) in the culture that we call adult, let us say by the retroactivity of concepts that we will call scientific, if it is a fact that it is these in the end which win out, what does he do with the words which resemble a concept?

I am not here today to give you a summary of Vygotsky, since I hope someone else is going to look after it. What I want to say to you, is the following: it is that we see reappearing the door, in all its freshness, of what Darwin with his genius discovered one day, and which is well known: the case of the child who begins, right at the beginning of his language, to call something, let us say, in French that would be *coin coin* (quack, quack): in phonetic form, we are talking about an American child, in phonetic form it is quack, that this quack which is the signifier which isolates it, I would say, taken at its original source, because it is the cry of the duck, the duck that he begins by calling quack, he is going to transfer from the duck to the water in which it splashes about, from the water to everything which splashes about in it, this without prejudice to the preservation of the flying form, because this quack also designates all birds, and it ends up by designating what? I will give you a thousand guesses: a monetary unit which is marked with the sign of the eagle, with which it was at that time stamped, I do not know whether it still is, in the United States.

(24) One can say that in many matters, the first observation, the one that strikes, the one that makes its way in the literature, and is sometimes charged with a kind of blessing, it is two extremes of the signifier, which are the cry by which this living being, the duck, makes himself heard and which begins to function as what? Who knows? Is it a concept? Is it his name? Most probably his name because there is a way of questioning the function of denomination which is to take the

signifier as something which either sticks onto, or is detached from the individual that it is made to designate, and which culminates at this other thing, which believe me I do not believe is chance or the lucky find of an individual, that it is not for nothing that it involves some participation, very probably no one who ..... the conscience of the child, that it should be to a coin that this finally attaches itself, I see no psychological confirmation in this, let us say that I see in it, as I might say, the augury of what always guides discovery when it does not allow itself to be hindered on its path by prejudice. Here, Darwin, by simply collecting this example from the mouth of a little child, shows us the two terms, the two extreme terms around which there are situated, there are knotted and are inserted, one as problematic as the other, the cry on the one hand and on the other something (25) which perhaps you would be astonished to hear me telling you, that we will have to question in connection with language: the function of money.

A forgotten term in the works of linguists, but as regards which it is clear that before them and among those who have studied money in their text, one sees emerging as they write, in a way necessarily, the reference to language. Language, the signifier as guarantee of something which goes infinitely far beyond the problem of the objective, and which is not either this ideal point where we can place ourselves, of reference to the truth.

It is from this last point, the discrimination, the sieve, the screen to isolate the true proposition, it is from there as you know, it is the principle of the whole axiomatic of Mr Bertrand Russell, and this has produced three enormous volumes which are called *Principia Mathematica*, which are absolutely fascinating to read, if you are able to maintain yourself through so many pages at the level of pure algebra, and in that regard it seems that, with respect to the progress of mathematics itself, the advantage is not absolutely decisive. This is not our business.

Our business is the following: it is the analysis that Mr Bertrand Russell gives of language. There is more than one of his works to which one could refer, I indicate one that you can find everywhere today, you can buy it, it is the book called *Signification et vérité* published by Flammarion.

(26) You will see there that by questioning things from the angle of this pure logic, Bertrand Russell conceives of language as a superimposition, a scaffolding, an indeterminate number of a succession of metalanguages.

Each propositional level, being subordinated to the control, to the correction of the proposition on a higher scale, where it is put in question as a first proposition. I am, of course, schematising to an extreme degree what you can see the illustration of in this work. I think that this work, like any other work by Bertrand Russell, is exemplary, in the fact that taking to its final term what I would call the very possibility of a metalanguage, he shows its absurdity precisely in the following: that the fundamental affirmation from which we begin here, and without which there would not be, in effect, any problem about the relationships between language and thought, between language and the subject, is the fact there is no metalanguage.

Every kind of approach, up to and including the structural approach in linguistics, is itself included, is itself dependent, is itself secondary, is itself at a loss

compared to the first and pure use of language. Every logical development, whatever it may be, presumes at the origin the language from which it is detached. If we do not hold firmly to this point of view, every question that we pose, here, the whole (27) topology that we are trying to develop is completely vain and futile, and Mr Piaget and Mr Russell - or whoever - are right: the only problem is that not a single one of them manages to agree with any of the others.

What am I doing here, and why am I pursuing this discourse? I am doing so because I am engaged in an experience which absolutely requires it. But how can I pursue it? Since, by the very premisses that I have just reaffirmed here, I cannot sustain this discourse except from an exceptionally precarious place, namely, that I assume this enormous audacity where each time, you may well believe me, I have the feeling of risking everything, this properly speaking untenable place, which is that of the subject.

There is nothing here that is comparable to any position that might be described as that of a professor. I mean that the position of the professor, in so far as it puts between the audience and oneself a certain framed, guaranteed, grounded *summa*, forming in the communication a sort of intermediary, barrier and rampart, and precisely something that habituates, favours the thing that launches the mind on paths which are the ones that, too briefly, I was earlier able to denounce as being those of Mr Piaget.

There is a problem about psychoanalysts, as you know. Things happen among (28) psychoanalysts, and even things, as I recalled at the beginning of my seminar last year, that are rather comical, I would even say farcical, as there happened to me for three years, to have in the front row of the seminar that I was giving at St Anne, a *brochette* of people who never missed one, nor a single one of the articulations that I was putting forward, while at the same time actively working to ensure that I was excluded from their community. This is an extreme position, which, in truth, I can only explain by having recourse to a very precise dimension which I described as farce and I will situate it at another time. Another context would have been needed for me to say with Abelard: "*Odium mundi me fecit logica.*" [The hatred of the world made me a logician(?)]

That may perhaps start here. But then that was not what was in question. It was a question of the following: of a rather crude incident, among others, of things that happen all the time in what are called analytic societies. Why did this happen? In the final analysis, because if the formula that I am giving is true, the relationships of the subject to sense, if the psychoanalyst is there in analysis, as everyone knows he is, except that one forgets what that means, to represent sense up to and in the measure that he will represent it effectively, and it happens that, well or badly formed, with time the psychoanalyst more and more fits in with this position.

(29) In that very measure, I mean then, at the level of the best. You can form a judgement about what is involved for the others. Psychoanalysts, in normal conditions, do not communicate with one another. I mean that if sense - this is my radical reference - is what I already approached in fact in connection with the *Witz* of Freud, which is to be characterised in an order which is certainly communicable, but not codifiable in the currently accepted modes of identical communication and which I called, which I evoked, which I highlighted the last

time under the term of *non-sense*, as being the icy face, the sheer one, where there is marked this limit between the effect of the signifier and what returns to it by reflection of signified facts, if in other words, there is somewhere a *pas de sens* - it is the term I used in connection with the *Witz*, playing on the ambiguity of the word *pas*, negation, and the word *pas*, crossing - nothing prepares the psychoanalyst effectively to discuss his experience with his neighbour. This is the difficulty - I am not saying it is insurmountable because I am here trying to trace the paths - here is the difficulty moreover that leaps to the eyes, simply you have to know how to formulate it, the difficulty of establishing a psychoanalytic science.

This impasse, which obviously must be resolved by indirect means, this impasse is (30) compensated for by all sorts of artifices, and this indeed is the drama of the communication between analysts.

Of course there is the solution of master-words (*maître-mots*). And from time to time some of them appear. Not often. From time to time some appear. And our friend Klein introduced a certain number of them. And then, in a certain way, one could say that for myself the signifier is perhaps the master word. No, precisely not. But let us leave this.

The solution of master words is not a solution, even though it is the one with which, in large measure, people are satisfied. If I put forward, if I put forward, the solution of master-words, it is because on the track that we are on today, it is not only analysts who have the need to find it. Mr Bertrand Russell, to compose his language, made up of the scaffolding, of the Babel-like edifice of metalanguages, one on top the other, there must be a foundation, therefore he invented object-language. There must be a level, unfortunately nobody is able to grasp it, where language is in itself pure object. I defy you to put forward a single conjunction of signifiers which could have that function.

Others of course will search for master words at another end of the chain. And when I speak of master words in analytic theory, it is words like those. It is quite (31) clear that whatever meaning is given to this term, it is not sustainable in any sense. The maintaining of nonsense as signifier of the presence of the subject, the Socratic atopia, is essential for this very search.

Nevertheless, by pursuing it, in so far as its path has not been traced, the role of the one who assumes, not at all that of the subject who is presumed to know but of risking himself at the place where he is lacking, is a privileged place and one which has the right to certain rules of the game, specifically, that for all of those who come to hear him, something should not be made of the use of the words that he puts forward, what might be called counterfeit money. I mean that an imperceptible weakening of the use of one or other of the terms that I put forward in the course of the years, signalled long ago and in advance, who would be the people who would follow me in my work, and who would fall by the wayside.

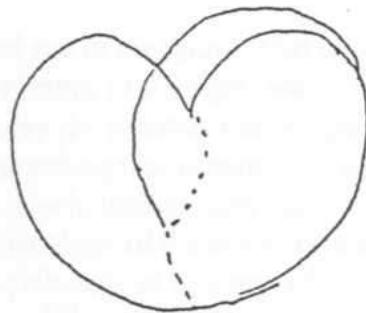
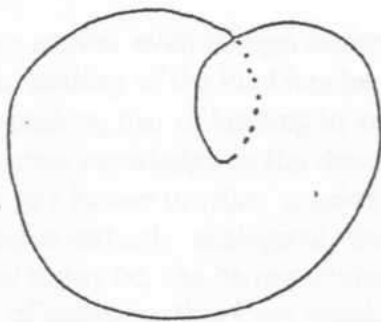
And it is for this reason that I do not want to leave you today without telling you what is the object of my concern about the audience that I am so happy to have gathered together here.

Undoubtedly, one can pursue this research for psychoanalysis, which I spoke about this year, by maintaining oneself in this region which is not at all a frontier one, because analogously to this surface about which I spoke earlier, its inside is the same as its outside.

(32) One can pursue this research concerning the point X, the hole of language. One can pursue it publicly, but it is important that there is a place where I have the response that what has been theoretically preserved in my teaching about the notion of sign, which finally only remained perhaps in the word, the word meant something, but that this takes on a locus and a place, precisely in the measure that my audience has been enlarged.

I have made the following arrangement: the fourth, and when they occur the fifth, Wednesdays, the days that I have the honour of speaking with you here, the fourth and the fifth will be closed sessions. Closed does not mean that anybody in particular is excluded. But that one is admitted on demand. In other words, given that this will not begin this month because there is no fourth Wednesday, I will only speak to you the next time and not the 23rd, the fourth Wednesday of January, anyone who comes here, and who knows, there is no reason why you should not be just as numerous, but it is not sure that all the people who are here will ask me. The relationship  $S \rightarrow D$  which is situated somewhere on the right of the graph, which at least some of you know the existence of, has in a discourse such as (33) the one that I am pursuing here, and whose function I have I think sufficiently outlined as analogous, even though inverted, to the analytic relationship, posits as a healthy and normal structure, that the people who have formulated a request to me should participate in a certain order of work. I will be, I give you notice, very open to these demands, provided I am free, on my side, to summon the person to get a sense of their quality and their measure, but it is armed with a card sanctioning the fact that I agreed to their request, that the fourth Wednesdays and the fifth, up to the end of this year, which makes - I worked it out - eight of these sessions, people will come here to work according to a mode in which, I indicate already, I will have for some people, and I would like to meet those who are willing to help me on this point, I would like to allow some people to take the floor instead of me.

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**Seminar 3 : Wednesday 16 December 1964**

If psychology, whatever its object may be, but this object itself, as it is vainly sustained, being able to be defined as unique, in some way being able to lead us, along whatever path, to knowledge, in other words, if the soul existed, if knowledge was connected to the soul, professors of psychology, teachers of psychology ought to be recruited by the same methods by which they apprehend their object and, to illustrate what I mean, they should realise what happens in some sections of the museum - let us name one at random, the most representative one, conchology, the science of shells - and ought in short to realise at one stroke, the totality of teaching personnel and the collection itself. The summary of their university titles serving well enough in this metaphor as an image for the label of provenance stuck onto the aforesaid samples.

Experience proves, even though nothing can be ruled out in the future, that up to the present nothing of the kind has happened. The attempt of a Piaget, which is properly speaking that of limiting in such a narrow way the process, the progress (2) of effective knowledge to the development of something that is supposed to be immanent to a human or other species is something which, undoubtedly, in a fashion that is certainly analogical, since no phenomenology of the spirit, however elementary it may be, can be implicated in it, has to culminate at this sort of selection, of sampling, that I am speaking of, making of the intelligence quotient, in a way, the only possible standard of someone who has to respond to a certain functioning, to a certain integration of the functioning of intelligence.

The object of psychology is so little a unitary one, moreover, that this translation of the word soul to the level at which it serves as a theory of intellectual development is completely insufficient to fulfil its use, and everyone knows that in other registers, we would arrive at the same paradox: that those who have in some way or other to recognise, indeed to administer the field of the soul, ought also to realise in themselves some types, some prototypes or some elective moments of that which, when all is said and done, must be called the beautiful soul.

Luckily, no one dreams of it any longer, the most profound distrust having been cast on this category of the beautiful soul, as you know, by Hegel; the relationship of the beautiful soul to the disorders of the world was once and for all and definitively stigmatised by the undoubtedly penetrating remark which introduces us (3) from every angle to the dialectic applied here, that the beautiful soul has no other support than that disorder itself.

It is clear however that, in the recruitment procedures that psychoanalysts impose on themselves, there is in this whole field, which I was not able to sweep completely with the beam of the searchlight, there is a place which is distinguished by something which comes close in a very remarkable fashion to this paradoxical hypothesis, and that the idea that someone who has to teach, to account for what analytic praxis effectively is, for what it claims to conquer in the real, this someone, in a certain fashion, is himself the one who chooses himself as

being a particularly well sorted-out sample of this progress. You will sense, moreover, that what is involved here is something other than something typical, than something static, it is a matter of a certain test, but then it is all the more important to specify the import of this test, and without any doubt the term identification, which is introduced here, for example, by presenting it as the end of the analytic experience, cannot fail at the same time to introduce a quite acute point of this problematic: at what level does this identification occur? At the level of an experience that is itself particular. Is the analysand someone who transmits a certain mode of the experiences of the one who analysed him, as he himself has received it, how can these experiences be (4) oriented with respect to one another, does the preceding one always have something which, in a way, goes beyond and includes the one which emerges from it; on the contrary does it leave the way open for going beyond it? This, undoubtedly, is the most difficult level at which to pose the problem, it is certainly also the one at which it must be resolved. How can it even be envisaged if we do not grasp the structure of this experience?

For in no way, in analytic theory, can anything that is found at the level of this identification as substantial, in no way can this serve as a module and a measure, and psychoanalysts themselves, even those most entrenched in one or other traditional process, which God knows must not be studied too closely, would laugh if they were told that what it is a matter of transmitting is a function of the ego-ideal type. The identification involved can only be defined, grasped elsewhere.

We cannot of course be content with something which might evoke having been exercised at one time according to a certain dynamic. How could one find there anything whatsoever that would not resolve itself into a sort of endogeny, the awareness of a certain number of displacements grasped from within, but what graspable, what transmissible, what organisable, what in a word scientific thing, (5) can be based on something which would only amount, in that case, to being at the level of a certain type of massage, if you wish, of a type of breathing exercise, even of some kind of relaxation, something as primitively close to the innermost sphere of a test that, in the final analysis, is corporal.

That is why it is so important to attempt to grasp what is involved in an experience which puts itself forward as being, in the fullest sense, which no doubt does not fail to identify itself entirely to something as absolute, as radical, as speaking about the truth, [and] can nevertheless not refuse, I mean at the level of its experience, at the level of its results, this dimension of veracity, of something which, having been conquered, is revealed not simply as liberating but more authentic than that which was included in the knot from which one had to liberate oneself.

Moreover, it is not for nothing that there occur in my discourse elements of metaphor which are so singular, so unnoticed perhaps but also so striking, if we retain them, as those of knot, which bring us back to what already the last time I brought in here, in this little model that I brought to you in the shape of the Moebius strip, by reminding you of the importance of something which is of the order of topology.

(6) And its use is, in a way, immediately suggested by the simple remark that we ought to make, even though it is beginning from a test, from a test which is in a way naive as regards this realism, like that of Piaget, which is undoubtedly that it is not difficult at one or other turning point of the text to highlight the flaw by which he claims that by simply taking language as an instrument of intelligence and by failing to recognise in the most profound fashion that far from it being the instrument of intelligence, he demonstrates at the same time, and along the same path of the same discourse, how is it then that he underlines in the same discourse that this instrument is so inappropriate, that language is precisely what creates difficulties for intelligence. What perhaps should also be brought up for intelligence are the problems posed by language. It is difficult for it to guide an appropriate behaviour at the level of the pure and simple obstacle, of the pure and simple and immediate reality, the one that you come up against by knocking your head against it.

To refer this inappropriateness of language to some primitive state or other of what is called, on this occasion, thinking, is really here only to reject the problem without resolving it in any way, for if, effectively, language was at first some crystallisation which was imposed on the exercise of intelligence as an apparatus, (7) why is it not obvious that intelligence would have made language as appropriate as it made, after all, its primitive instruments which we know to be among all instruments often the most marvellously clever, the most striking for us, to the point that we are scarcely able to restore the perfection of their equilibrium, made with the minimum of material and at the same time the best chosen material, ..... hence the instruments that we may have, these primitive ones, are in a way the most precious from the point of view of the quality of the object, why would language not have been something analogous in its own way, if effectively it was the creation, the secretion, the prolongation of an intelligent act ?

Quite the contrary, if there is something that, in a first approach, we could try to define as being the field of thinking, well then, why not provisionally, if it is absolutely necessary to start from intelligence, would I not say that thinking, and God knows it is a formula which would apply well at different levels, at least in a descriptive fashion, since it appears, at least at first sight, from an approach that thinking is intelligence trying to find its feet in the difficulties that the function of language imposes on it.

(8) Far from us being able in any way, of course - this is the first door that linguistics opens - to content ourselves with this first crude schema, which would make of language the apparatus, the instrument of some bi-univocal correspondence, whatever it may be, is it not clear that this very pursuit which is carried out of reducing it under the critical form of meaning, of logical-positivism and its myth of arriving at an exhaustion of the meaning of meaning, to carry out completely in every use of the signifier the exhaustion of different meanings which once supposedly, we are told, connoted will allow us to have a conversation, a dialogue which will be unambiguous, because we will always know in what sense, in what usage, in what acceptance such a word is brought in, who does not know, who does not see that everything that language contributes in terms of fruitfulness, indeed even in pure and simple functioning, always consists, not at all in operating upon this sort of preformed conjunction, apparatus, which, after which, we would no longer have anything to do except to collect, except to

read there the solution of a problem, who does not see that it is precisely this operation which itself constitutes the solution of the problem, that this operation of the function and what I may make bold to call for the moment ideally bi-univocal is precisely what it is a matter of obtaining at the end of every research.

(9) This being posited as being of the order of the simplest introduction of any preface for tackling the difficulty of the problem, we see that if the linguistic approach, which is far from dating properly speaking from our epoch - I was recently questioned about this use of the signifier and the signified, which as I was replying seemed to me now to be really the words that are in vogue, that one begins to hear at every street corner, and which are used, put forward, in the most common replies at meetings - these terms were not invented today or yesterday and the Stoics alone can claim to have introduced them technically in the shape of the *signans* and the *signatum*. What is more one can show their roots much further back, and that it is enough to approach the function of language for there to be introduced a certain type of division which is not unambiguous, which is something that is completely radical, and by the situation of the fact that in this radical we are so implicated that we are only subjects, I am saying, by being implicated at this radical level and in a fashion nevertheless which allows us to see what we are implicated in, and that it is nothing other than what is called structure.

The ambiguity that we grasp, and whose trace I am going to make you follow in one or other field more favourable to show it, between sense and meaning, for (10) example, which alone are capable - it is not always pure pleasure to play with the shimmering of what appears final to us because it cannot even be referred to the higher category of being a shimmering of sense, since it is already a division within sense that is involved - it is because it is uniquely at this level that there is resolved, as you will see when it is a question of a certain type of usage of the word, that there are resolved patent contradictions, patent simply by revealing themselves when in connection with the same words, for example with what is called the proper name, you will see some people seeing there what is most indicative, and others what is most arbitrary, therefore what seems to be the least indicative: the one sees in it what is most concrete, the other what seems to go in the opposite direction, what is most empty; the one what is most charged with sense, the other what is most stripped of it, so that taking things, as you will see, in a certain debate, in a certain register, from a certain angle, this function of the proper name, it is clear in the most transparent fashion, is properly speaking for what it is and for what his name indicates, and what is not at all simply the proper name, it is, as Mr Russell says, *a word for the particular, un mot pour le particulier*, certainly not, certainly not as you will see.

But let us continue .

(11) I would like right away to illustrate the function of tautology for you with something: I spoke earlier about realism, about naive realism, I will oppose to it, I will oppose to it a mode under which the materialism which commonly enters our discourse as, God knows, a very little explored reference, materialism consists of only as admitting as existent material signs. Is that a circle? Certainly not. This suggests a sense. Materiality is certainly not explained but who in our day would feel himself comfortable in explaining it as an essence, as a final substance, but that this term is here expressly referred to signs, to signs at the moment that, on

the other hand, where, as a radical reference, I said that signs are what represent something for someone, here is something that at the same time give us the model of what a certain type of apparently tautological reference, for I only said one thing, which is that materialism is what posits as existent only what we have the material signs of, has certainly not touched the sense of the word material, and nevertheless however tautological it is, it bring us a sense and shows us in a way in an exemplary, paradigmatic figure the usefulness of this little knot whose outline I drew for you the other day, this original double point which, by drawing it as being (12) the introductory circle to any possible approach to the function, whether of signifier or of sign, and here already in order to show you that we cannot make use of it as something which can in any way be reduced to the term of a punctual reference, if the circle is favourable to the mythical apprehension of its contraction to some zero point, there always remains something irreducible in a structure which cannot abolish itself by tightening in on itself; and here, after all, encouraged by the fact that there did not at all fall into a void - I was able to take note of that- what I contributed the last time about the Moebius strip, whose implication I will now point out to you in order to illustrate, provide the illumination which pushes, which begins to push to its highest point its exemplary value.

It is Saussure who, speaking about the signified, and everyone knows that he did not at all speak about it in a definitive fashion, if only because of the ambiguities which were swallowed up through the door of his theory, precisely on this point - the most efficacious thing he says about it, is undoubtedly the fact that with regard to the signifier, the signified presents itself in a back-to-front relationship, or if you wish in a front-to-back one. And of course there is something of this order which is suggested to us by the existence of the semantic sign, of the sign in language, (13) what is undoubtedly involved is that if one sticks in the closest possible fashion to phonematic analysis, it is impossible to speak about a sound element in the modern analysis of linguistics without considering it as being closely linked to what ? To what is called *meaning* and we rediscover here the ambiguity between meaning and sense.

If I began my discourse this year with this example taken from a book on grammar which is an example in which I showed you that whatever about its striving towards asemantics, from the very fact of being grammatical it did not fail to carry a sense, and undoubtedly in this connection I was able to make you feel the two paths upon which we could search for what is called here sense, and that the one was not the other, and that along the path of meaning where we saw there could be constructed in abundance and almost so super-abundantly that our only difficulty was choosing, it was in the measure that we were operating through something, along some path, and that it is not a matter of indifference to point out - this is why I chose an example in a foreign tongue - that it was easier for me, more natural to lead you along the path of translation. It was by translating it into French, that I managed to make emerge from it pretty well everything that I wished by a very simple operational procedure, and one quite like that of conjuring.

(14) But that something different was involved in the other direction which by making us end up no doubt at the impasse and the closed nature of what

constitutes the point of surprise, the charm of a poetic text clearly indicated to us that it was another dimension that was involved.

No doubt what it left in vagueness, mist and cloud as regard this poetic direction is something that can in no way appear sufficient to us. But it is here that I bring you back to the property of this singular surface which, of course, has a front and a back at every point. The important thing is that one should be able, by a certain journey along its circumference to get from any point whatsoever - whether it is from this place, or a corresponding one on the other side is fine - when I tell you that the signifier is essentially structured on the model of the aforesaid Moebius surface, that is what that means, namely, that it is on the same face, constituting the back and the front that we can encounter the material, the material which here is found to be structured on a phonematic opposition and this something which is not translated but which passes, which passes from one signifier to another in its functioning, in the functioning that belongs to language, even the most random one, this is what this poetic experiment demonstrates, in a way, that something which gets across and that this is where the sense is according as the mode that it (15) gets across is differently locatable and differently highlighted. This is what we are going to try to do, this alone is what allows us an exact mapping out of an experience which, from the very fact of being entirely an experience not alone of words but of artificial words, of words structured by a certain number of conditions which inflect the import of the discourse, ought to be mapped out with respect to what I called earlier the usage of the language by something or someone, the subject, the agent, the patient who is caught up in it.

So then I am going to introduce today, introduce one of these shapes, one of these topological shapes, one of these shapes founded on the surface, whose example I gave you the last time, to introduce you, to introduce you into this function because I think that all the same you have heard tell of the Klein bottle.

Let us take up this bottle again. Let us appropriate it to ourselves. And in the Klein bottle, ..... and off we go.

It is extremely interesting. It is going to be of great use to us and you are going to see why. I remind you that I introduced the last time this remark that space, three-dimensional space, is something that is not at all clear, and that before speaking (16) about it like bird-brains, we will have to see the different shapes under which we can apprehend it, precisely along the path of mathematics which is essentially combinatoric; and that it is a completely different thing to consider matters resolved with the shapes that one can call the shapes of the revolution of a surface that gives us what? After all nothing other than a volume, and it is not for nothing that it is called that. It is called that because it is constructed on the model, and it is not at all by chance, of something which is a rolled-up surface, a surface where one makes a roll, obviously. That takes up a particular little space. After that, you can take it in your hands and amuse yourself with it.

Turning a circle around an axis, is called a sphere. As I have said, turn this thing which I will call a triangle or simply an angle, according to whether I will limit it or not by a line which cuts the two sides, and you will have a cone, a conic section or an infinite cone according to the case.

But there are things that do not behave at all like that, which do not for the moment need to see the space as constructed and which do extremely well.

As I told you, there are three fundamental shapes, the hole - we will come back to it - the torus, as I told you, the cross-cap.

(17) The torus does not seem to be very complicated. Take what ever you like, a ring of black pudding, a bicycle tube, simply, begin in your head to pose little problems. For example the following: make a cut like that in it, exactly like that; and if you have not already done so and if you have not already reflected on the torus, tell me how many pieces that will give, for example. Which proves to you that one can pose questions in this way with what are not, as I pointed out the last time, immediately intuited objects.

But we are not going to delay on these little toys, I simply want to point out to you how these figures are constructed in a simple and combinatory fashion. They are constructed in the following fashion: the most elementary shape of them that can be given is that of a four-sided figure whose sides are vectorialised.

What does this vectorialisation signify here? That signifies that we construct these figures by a suture, that we stitch what is called here an edge, I will spare you the intermediate definition of what edge means here, that it is in the sense of the vectorialisation, namely, that a point being here on the vector, the point (a) culminates at a point (a') which does not correspond to it in a metrical fashion but (18) which is its correspondent in an ordered way, in the sense that a point (b) which is more in the direction of the vector, will then be sewn, whatever it may be and whatever may be the metrically defined distance between (a') and (b'), sewn on to the point (b'). The same thing for the couple on the other side of the aforesaid construction.

It is obviously only strictly square here for the visual, Gestaltic intelligibility of the eye. I could just as well construct it as follows: I will put the same vectors and that would have exactly the same meaning. Why? Because it constructs a torus. How is a torus constructed? A torus is constructed, it is very easy to understand, and that is why I began with it, a torus is constructed by first of all suturing this side with the other, namely by making what for common intuition is a first cylinder, or if you wish, one can suppose that the space in the interval has some function or other - there are people like that, there is St. Thomas, there are people who always want to stuff their fingers into something. It is a human type.

They make black pudding all their lives. In any case if you want to fill it, you will then have a full roll and, starting from there, you can close this roll and you will obtain what is drawn here.

(19) What does that mean? It means that in a structure which is essentially of a spatial order, which has no history, you nevertheless introduce a temporal element.

In order for this to be fully determined you must connote one and one by the same number but by some number or some connotation which implies, only coming after the two operations. You cannot perform them at the same time. It does not matter which comes before the other; it will always have the same result, a torus,

but it will not give the same torus, because in some instances that will give two tori, one crossing the other. It is even one of their more interesting functions.

So with that, it is a simple introductory exercise, what is a Klein bottle? A Klein bottle is a construction of exactly the same type, with the simple difference that, if the two vectorialised edges are vectorialised in the same direction, it is let us say in accordance with the torus mode, therefore that like the torus it is suitable for making a black pudding. The other opposite edges - as regards which it does not matter whether the operation of suturing is done before or after the other one, it will give the same result, but which ought to be done in a successive fashion - the two other edges are vectorialised in the opposite direction.

(20) I am going to show you right away on the blackboard what this involves, for those who have not yet heard tell of the Klein bottle. That involves something which, if you wish, in section, in section of course, not wanting to say anything in this register, since we are not introducing the third dimension of space; and in a way for common intuition, for the mapping out which is yours habitually in experience, and after all perhaps one can say customarily, because there is no objection to the dimensions of the topology of surfaces being more immediately accessible and familiar to you; it is enough for you to practice it a bit, this is even what is desirable; here is what this gives in section.

Good. What does that mean? That means that this, as I told you, is a section, namely, that there is here, let us say, a volume which is common, which has a conduit which passes through the centre; in other words this deserves to be called a bottle because, see here the body of the bottle and here is its neck, it is a neck which is supposed to be extended in such a way that, entering the body of the bottle, if you wish, to emphasise it better, I am going to show you the entrance here, it is going to be inserted, to be sutured, to the bottom of this bottle.

(21) So then, without even having recourse to my drawing, in words, in terms, you have a bottle, a Vittel bottle. You twist its neck, you make it go through the side wall of this bottle and you insert it onto the bottom of the bottle. At the same time this insertion opens and you can see that you have here something which is realised, with the characteristics of a completely closed surface, this surface is everywhere closed and nevertheless, one can get into its interior, as I might say, as into a mill.

Its inside communicates completely, integrally with its outside. Nevertheless this surface is completely closed.

This would only be a bit of physics-for-fun except of course for the fact that this bottle is capable of containing a liquid and even under ordinary conditions, as I am going to represent it for you, of not allowing it to be poured out, namely of containing it without one even needing to worry about a cork, this is something that the simplest reflection will allow you to conceive of. If you effectively stand this up, as I have drawn it, and you make it effectively function as a bottle, which is filled once it has its bottom in the air, but if you turn it upside down, put its bottom below, it is quite certain that the liquid will not pour out.



(22) This, I repeat, is of strictly no interest. What is interesting is that the properties of this bottle are such that the surface in question, the surface which encloses it, the surface which composes it, has exactly the same properties as a Moebius strip, namely that there is only one face, as it is easy to verify and affirm.

So that, since this may also appear to be a bit of sleight-of-hand, and is not that at all despite the fact that it could pass for something analogous, an effect of sense, and that it is not at all in an analogical fashion that I intend to talk to you about it.

I am going to try to materialise it for you in a fashion that is completely clear: if we begin from the sphere, we could make of the sphere, a bottle; it is something that is not at all impossible. Supposing that this sphere is a rubber ball, you fold it back a bit like this, onto itself, it is not even necessary that here you have this little twist, it is clearer you can always make a cup out of it by pushing it into itself. I would even say that this is the way that the process of the formation of an animal body begins it is the blastula stage, after the morula stage.

(23) Here what do you have? You have an outside, an inside, an inside; the surface, an original series and an outside. You have, in realising something which can be a container, you have modified nothing of the function of the two faces of the surface with respect to the original sphere.

Something completely different happens, if first taking the sphere and making of it this strangled thing, you take one of the halves of the sphere and insert it into the other. In other words, I am schematising. (Drawing). Have you got it?

From the dumbbell of the double ball which I constructed here by strangulation, from this spherical surface I make, imagine that here is ball 1 ..... what I am going here ... the second ball has entered the interior; here you have the original outside, the inside, and what is brought face to face here is a surface of the first outside with the inside, no longer like in my blastula of above; the inside remaining always face to face. And the inside is here, from the second part of the surface. It that a Klein bottle?

No! To get to the Klein bottle something else is needed. But it is here that I am going to be able to explain something to you which is going to show you the interest of highlighting the aforesaid Klein bottle.

(24) The fact is that, suppose that there is some relationship, some structural relationship, as is all the same well indicated for a long time by the constancy, the permanence of the metaphor of the circle and of the sphere in all cosmological thinking, suppose that it is like this that one has to construct, to represent for oneself in a healthy fashion, that one has to construct what concerns precisely cosmological thinking. Cosmological thinking is founded essentially not on a bi-univocal correspondence but a structural one, the enveloping of the microcosm by the macrocosm; that this microcosm, call it whatever you wish subject, soul, *nous*, that this cosmos you can call whatever you wish reality, the universe, but suppose that one envelops the other and contains it, and that the one which is contained manifests itself as being, as it were, the result of this cosmos, that which corresponds to it member for member.

It is impossible to extirpate this fundamental hypothesis, and it is from this that there dates a certain stage in thinking, which, if you follow what I said earlier, is about a certain use of language.

And this corresponds to it precisely in the measure, and uniquely in the measure, that in this register of thinking the microcosm, as is fitting, is not made up of a part of the world that is, in a way, turned inside-out in the way one turns a rabbit's skin inside-out.

(25) It is not earlier, like earlier, in my blastula as I drew it, the inside which is outside for the microcosm, it is well and truly also an outside that it has, and which is confronted with the inside of the cosmos. Such is the symbolic function of this stage where I am leading you to in the reconstruction of the Klein bottle.

We are going to see that this schema is, of course, essential for a certain mode of thinking and style, but to represent it for you, I will show you in detail and in the facts, a certain limitation, a certain unawakened implication in the use of language.

The moment of awakening, in so far, as I told you, I highlighted, as I located it historically in the *cogito* of Descartes, is something that is not at all immediately apparent, precisely in the measure that of this *cogito* one makes something that has a psychological value. But if one pinpoints exactly what is in question, if it is what I said, namely the making obvious of the function of the signifier, and is nothing other than the fact that the signifier represents the subject for another signifier, it is starting from this discovery that the supposedly pre-established pact of the signifier with some thing being broken, it is established, it is established in history, and since it is from there that science started, it is established that it is from this rupture, even (10) if immediately, and because simply it is taught only incompletely, and it is taught only incompletely because its final principle is not seen, that it is starting from there that a science can be inscribed, starting from the moment where there is broken this parallelism between the subject and the cosmos which envelopes it, and which makes of the subject, *psyche*, psychology, microcosm, it is starting from the moment that we introduce here a different suture, and one which I called elsewhere an essential buttoning point, which is the one that here opens up a hole, and thanks to which the structure of the Klein bottle is then, and only then, established, namely, that in the sewing which is done at the level of this hole, what is knotted is the surface to itself, in such a way that what we have up to the present taken as outside, is found connected to what we have located up to the present as inside, to what was located as inside, is sutured, knotted to the face that was located up to then as outside.

[Noises off] Is it visible, is it clear enough? Do you see from down there in the bad light? Here we have opened up an orifice crossing both what in my drawing symbolised the enveloping cosmos and what in my drawing symbolised the enveloped microcosm, and it is in this way that we rejoin the structure of the Klein bottle.

(27) Have you seen it enough? No? Well then I'll make it bigger. Otherwise we'll never understand anything. There it is now, completed.

Are you beginning to see that? Are you beginning to see it? Have you grasped the essential of what I explained to you earlier, the structure of the Klein bottle? This blackboard must be really badly lit. Is there no light, since I see down there people craning their necks? It would all the same be important for you to see what I drew. I am leading you here along a difficult path, which given the time and the necessity for explanations will not lead you today directly to its relationship to language. So that, because we have no more than ten minutes, I will try to give you a little amusing explanation of it, whose general relationship with the field of analytical experience you will see.

There is more than one way of expressing this construction. I could give you for it the figure of Gagarin, the cosmonaut. Gagarin, the cosmonaut, apparently is well and truly enclosed - let us say, to simplify and to go quickly, we do not have much more time - like ancient man, in his wandering cosmos. From the biological point of view it is, moreover, between ourselves, allow me to point it out to you in (28) passing, something very curious and which could be punctuated with respect to the evolution of animal descendance. I remind you that it is very difficult to grasp, to grasp in any imaginable way, how an animal who regularly exchanged what he had need of, from the respiratory point of view, with the milieu in which he was plunged at the level of the bronchioles, to realise this absolutely fabulous thing, of being able to emerge out of the water, in the present case, by sending into his own interior, an important fraction of the atmosphere. From this evolutionary point of view, you can notice that Gagarin, in so far as he has the slightest responsibility in all of this, reduplicates the operation, he envelops himself in his own lung. Which requires him in the final analysis to piss inside his own lung, because after all it has to go somewhere. Hence the exemplary syllogism that I will have to develop for you in the future, following the famous syllogism: all men are mortal, Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is mortal. I found useful for purposes that you will see better later on, but whose introduction is a caricature, a caricature of this famous syllogism on Socrates, that all cosmonauts are pissers, that Gagarin is a cosmonaut, therefore that Gagarin is a pisser.

(29) Which has about as much importance as the formula about Socrates! But let us leave that for the moment.

Far from Gagarin contenting himself with being a pisser, he is not a cosmonaut either. He is not a cosmonaut, because he is not wandering through the cosmos, whatever may be said about it; because the trajectory which carries him was, from the point of view of the cosmos, completely unexpected, and that one can say, in a certain sense, that any god who ever presided over the existence of a cosmos, never expected, never knew anything about the precise trajectory, the necessary trajectory in function of the laws of gravity, and which literally were not able to be discovered except by beginning from an absolute rejection of all cosmic facts. All the contemporaries of Newton rejected, indignantly, the possibility of the existence of an action a distance, of an action which is not propagated from neighbour to neighbour, because this was up to then, the law of the cosmos, the law of reciprocal interaction between its parts.

There is in Newton's law, in so far as it allows our little projectile which is called a Sputnik, to be something which is held in a perfectly stable way, at the level of a preconceived law; there is here something of an absolutely acosmic nature, as

besides from this fact, from the very fact of this point of insertion, the whole development of modern science.

(30) And this is why that the opening that is involved here, namely, that the cosmos itself, that the little cosmos which allows Gagarin to subsist through the spaces, is something which depends on a construction of a profoundly a cosmic nature.

It is with this, with the internal sphere, that we are dealing in analysis under the name of reality, an apparent reality which is that of the correspondence, in appearance, the modeling, one on the other, of something called the soul and something called reality. But compared to this apprehension, which remains the psychological apprehension of the world, psychoanalysis gives us two openings : The first, the one which from this forum, from this meeting place, where man believes himself to be the centre of the world, but it is not this notion of centre which is here the important thing in what is called, parrot-like, the Copernican revolution, under the pretext that the centre jumped from the earth to the sun, which is a clear disadvantage, namely, that from the moment that we believe that the centre is the sun, we also believe at the same time that there is an absolute centre, something that the ancients who saw the sun moving according to the seasons did not believe, they were much more relativist than we are. This is not what is important, it that is the psyche, the soul, the subject, in the sense that it is (31) employed in the theory of knowledge, is represented not as centre, but as the lining (*doublure*) of a reality which at the same time becomes cosmic reality.

What psychoanalysis uncovers for us is: this passage, this passage by which one comes to the between-the-two, on the other side of the lining, where this interval, this interval which appears to be what grounds the correspondence between the inside and the outside, where this interval - and this is the world of the dream, it is the other scene of action - is perceived.

Freud's *Heimlich*, and it is why it is at the same time *Unheimlich*, is that, it is that thing, this locus, this secret place where you walk the streets in this singular reality, streets that are so singular that it is on this that I will dwell the next time in order to begin again. Why is it necessary to give streets proper names?

You walk the streets then, and you go from street to street, from place to place, but one day it happens that without knowing why, you cross some limit or other that is invisible to yourself, and you come upon a place where you have never been, and which nevertheless you recognise as being that place where it reminds you of having always been there, and having returned a hundred times, you remember it now, it was there in your memory, like a sort of island apart, something not noticed which suddenly comes together for you.

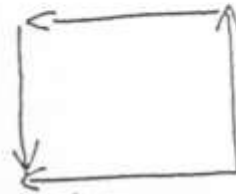
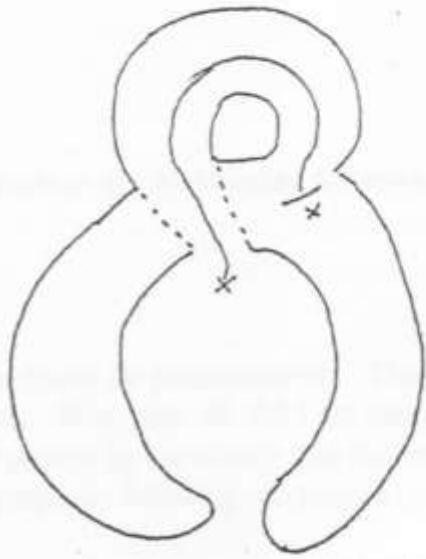
(32) This place, which has no name, but which is distinguished by the strangeness of its setting, by what Freud highlights precisely so well, precisely the ambiguity which ensures that *Heimlich* or *Unheimlich* is one of those words where, in its own negation, we put our finger on the continuity, the identity between its front and its back. This place, which is properly speaking the other scene of action, because it is the one where you see reality, no doubt you know that it comes to birth as a set (*décor*), and you know that it is not what is at the other side of the set

that is the truth, and that if you were there, in front of the stage, it is you who are at the other side of the set, and who are touching something that goes further in the relationship of reality to everything that envelops it.

At one time last year I appeared, or perhaps even something which might deserve it to be said that I spoke ill of love, when I said that its field, the field of *Verliebtheit*, is a field at once profoundly anchored in the real, in the regulation of pleasure, and at the same time fundamentally narcissistic.

Undoubtedly another dimension is given to us in this special conjunction; the way in which it happens along the most real paths, it is our companion when we come (33) to this special locus of experience, this is an indication that something, of a dimension that no one more than the romantic poet knew how to accentuate in a thrilling way. There are still other ways for us to make it heard, it is the path of non-sense, that of Alice, not in Wonderland, but precisely having carried out this crossing, this impossible crossing into the specular reflection, which is the passage to the other side of the mirror, it is that, *through the looking glass*, is presented as that which can have this singular encounter ....., it is this which in another dimension, I said, was explored by romantic experience, this is what is called, with a different accent, love.

But to come back from this place and to understand it, and for it to have been grasped, for it even to have been discovered, for it to exist in this structure which means that here, I encountered the structure of two opposed faces which allow this other scene of action to be constituted, it is necessary that elsewhere there has been realised the structure on which there depends the a-cosmicity of everything, namely that somewhere, what is called structure, the structure of language, is capable of responding to us, not at all of course, it is not a matter here in any way of something which prejudices the absolute adequation of language to the real, but of that which as language introduces into the real everything that is accessible to us in it in an operational fashion. Language enters the real and creates structure in it. We participate in this operation and by participating in it we are included, (34) implicated in a rigorous and coherent topology, so that every discovery, every decisive door pushed at a point of this structure, must be accompanied by the mapping out in a strict exploration, by the definite indication of the point where the other opening is. Here it would be easy for me to evoke the misunderstood passage of Virgil at the end of Chapter VI; the two gates of the dream, are exactly inscribed there; the gate of ivory, he tells us, and the gate of horn. The gate of horn which opens to us the field of what is true in the dream, and it is the field of the dream; and the ivory gate which is the one through which Anchises and Aeneas are sent back with the Sibyl towards the light, it is the one through which erroneous dreams pass, the ivory gate, the most captivating in the locus of the dream, the one most charged with error, is the locus where we believe ourselves to be a subsistent soul at the heart of reality.



**Seminar 4: Wednesday 6 January 1965**

Problems for psychoanalysis. This is how I agreed to situate my remarks for this year. Why, after all, did I not say: problems for psychoanalysts? The fact is that it is proved by experience that for psychoanalysts, as they say, there is no problem except the following: do people come to psychoanalysis or not?

If people come to their practice, they know that something is going to happen; this the firm position on which the psychoanalyst is anchored. They know that something is going to happen that might be qualified as miraculous, if one understands this term with reference to *mirare*, which at the extreme could mean to be astonished.

In truth, thank God, there still remains in the experience of the psychoanalyst, this margin that what happens is surprising for him. A psychoanalyst of the heroic epoch, Theodore Reik - it is a good sign, I have just remembered his first name, I had forgotten it this morning, while I was making my notes, and you will see that this has the closest relationship with my remarks today - Theodore Reik, then, entitled one of his books: *Der überraschte Psychologe*, the surprised (2) psychologist. The fact is, in truth, that in the heroic period of psychoanalytic technique he belonged to, one had even more reasons than now to be astonished, for if I spoke earlier about a margin, it is because the psychoanalyst, step by step throughout the decades, has repressed this astonishment to his frontiers. It is perhaps that now also, this astonishment serves as a frontier for him; namely, to separate him from this world from which people come or do not come to psychoanalysis.

Within these frontiers, he know what is happening, or believes he knows. He believes he knows because he has traced out its paths. But if there is something that ought to remind him of his experience, it is precisely this share of illusion which threatens every knowledge which is too sure of itself. In Theodore Reik's time this author could give astonishment, *Überraschung*, as the signal, the illumination, the brilliance, which to the analyst designates that he apprehends the unconscious, that something has revealed itself which is of this order of subjective experience which happens all of a sudden, and moreover, not knowing how he did it, from the other side of the set (*décor*), that is the *Überraschung*, and it is on this path, along this way, on this trace that he know at least that he is on his own road. (3) No doubt at the time Theodore Reik's experience began from, these paths were marked by darkness, and the surprise represented their sudden illumination. Lightning flashes, however brilliant they may be, are not enough to construct a world. And we are going to see that, where Freud saw there being opened the gates to this world, he did not yet know how to properly denominate either the frame or the hinges of these doors.

Is this enough to ensure that the analyst, in so far as he has been able since to map out the regular unfolding of a process, necessarily knows where he is, or even where he is going? Something can be mapped out without being thought and we

have enough testimonies that many things about this process, and one could perhaps say almost all, in any case the ends, remain problematic for him.

The question of the ending of the analysis and of the sense of this ending is not at all resolved at the present time. I only evoke it here as a testimony of what I am putting forward concerning what I am calling the mapping out, which is not necessarily a reflected mapping out.

Undoubtedly there is something which remains assured in that experience, which is that it is associated with we will call effects of unknotting. The unknotting of things charged with sense which cannot be unknotted by other means, this is the (4) solid ground on which the analytic camp is established. If I use this term, it is precisely in order to designate what results from this closure from which I began my discourse today, breaking through or not the frontiers of the camp. The psychoanalyst has the right to affirm that certain things, symptoms, in the analytic sense of the term, which is not that of a sign but of a certain knot whose shape, tightening or thread have never been properly named, that a certain knot of signs to signs, and which is properly at the foundation of what one calls the analytic symptom, namely, something installed in the subjective, which cannot in any way be resolved by reasonable and logical dialogue.

Here the psychoanalyst affirms to the one who suffers from it, to the patient: "you will not be delivered from it, from this knot, except within the camp". But does that mean that there is here, for him, the analyst, more than an empirical truth in the measure that he only operates it, handles it, by reason of the experience that he has of the paths that are traced out in the artificial conditions of analytic experience? Does it mean that everything has been said at the level of what he can bear witness to from his practice, in terms of demands, transference, identification?

It is enough to note the stumbling, the inappropriateness, the insufficiency of the (5) references that are given to these terms of the experience, and to take only the first one, the major one, the turning-plate, transference, to note in the very text of analytic discourse, that properly speaking, at a certain level of this discourse, one can say that the person who carries it out has no idea of what he is doing. For the kind of irreducible residue which remains in all these discourses about transference, in so far as they have still not succeeded, any more than common, everyday language, any more than what has passed of it into the common representation of an affective relationship, as long as this has not been eliminated, since affective has precisely no other sense than that of irrational, one will see as regards one of these terms, transference, and I do not need to return to the others, darkness progressively deepening in the measure that one advances towards the other term of the series, identification, that nothing is grasped, that nothing is theorised about an experience, however sure may be the rules and the precepts accumulated up to now.

It is not enough to know how to do something - turn a vase or sculpt an object - to know what one is working on. Hence the ontological mythology about which the psychoanalyst has been attacked, quite correctly, when he is told: "these terms to which you refer, and which, in the final analysis point towards this confused ..... (6) locus of the tendency, and since it is to this that, in the common philosophy of



psychoanalysis, the drive will finally and in an erroneous fashion be brought back; this then is what you are working on, you entify, you ontify, an immanent property into something substantial. Your man, the anthropology of the analyst, we already know for a long time, this old *ousia*, this soul, still as lively, intact, untouched as ever". But the analyst, though he does not name it exactly by its name, except with a little shame, it is all the same to it that he refers in his thinking, as a result of which he is quite rightly and quite justifiably completely exposed to the attacks, which as you know come at him from all sides where thinking is able, has a right, to claim that it is inadequate to speak about man as a given, of man in the numerous determinations which appear to him, internal as well as external, in other words, which present themselves to him as things, as fatalities, that man does not know that he is at the heart of these supposed things, of these supposed fatalities, that it is from a certain initial relationship, a relationship of production, of which he is the mainspring, that these things are determined, no doubt without his knowing it, nevertheless issuing from him.

It remains to be seen whether in rejoining by what I am teaching, those who correctly put in doubt the given, natural, status of the human being, it remains to be (7) seen whether by doing things in this way, I favour, as I was recently reproached for doing, and by someone very close to me, the resistance of those who have not yet crossed the frontier, who have not come to analysis, or whether the truth of what analysis contributes, can be, yes or no, a way into it. If in a certain fashion, to reject that a discourse may encompass analytic experience, and all the more legitimately because this experience is only possible because of a primordial determination of man by discourse, if by behaving in this way, by opening up the possibility of speaking about analysis outside the analytic field, I am or not favouring the resistance to analysis, and whether the resistance involved is not from within the resistance of the analyst to open his experience to something which might comprehend it.

Our starting point, our given, which is not at all a closed given, is the subject who speaks; what analysis contributes, is that the subject does not speak in order to tell his thoughts. There is no world, the intentional, significant reflection at whatever level it may be - this grotesque infatuated personage who is supposed to be at the centre of the world, predestined from all eternity to give it its sense and its reflection, do you see that this pure spirit, this consciousness announced from all time is supposed to be there as a mirror and to vaticinate - how can it happen then, let us always come back to it, that he may vaticinate in a language which of itself (8) creates an obstacle for him at every instant to manifesting what he experiences as surest in his experience, as is clearly manifested by the contradiction, always embraced by philosophers, between logic and grammar. Since they complain that it is grammar which contaminates their logic, how does it happen that people have always been so attached to speaking in a grammatical language with parts of discourse which ground like themselves, which reflect the pure mirrors, with parts of discourse which they affirm to be the parts that contaminate their logic, and that if they trust it, it is precisely at that moment that they will poke their fingers in their eyes.

We have an experience, an experience which is carried on every day in the office of every analyst - whether he knows it or whether he does not know it is of absolutely no importance - an experience which avoids us having to have recourse

to this aspect of the philosophical critique, in so far as it bears witness to its own impasse, an experience in which we put our finger on the fact that because he is speaking, because the subject, the patient, speaks, namely, that he emits these raucous or sweet sounds that are called the material of language, which first determined the path of his thoughts, which determined him at first, to such a degree and in such an original fashion, that he carries the trace of it on his skin like a branded animal, that (9) he is identified at first by this something that may be widespread or restricted, but it is now perceived that it is much more restricted than believed, that a tongue can be contained on a sheet of paper of that size, with the list of its phonemes, and one may well try to continue to preserve the old splits and say that there are two levels in the tongue, the level which does not signify - these are the phonemes- and the others which signify, which are words. Well, I am here today to remind you, that the first apprehensions of the effects of the unconscious were realised by Freud in the years between 1890 and 1900. What gave him the model of it? The article of 1898 on the forgetting of a proper name, the forgetting of the name of Signorelli, as the painter of the celebrated frescoes at Orvieto. I would point out to you that the first manifest, structuring effect for him, for his thinking, and which opened the path was not produced, and he clearly highlighted it, he articulated it in such a well supported fashion in this article, which as you know was reproduced at the beginning of the book on the *Psychopathology of everyday life*, which would appear six years later. It was from there that he began again, because it was from there that his experience originated. What disappears in this forgetting - what is called forgetting - and from the first steps, you clearly see that what one must always pay attention to is the meaning, because of course, it is not a forgetting, Freudian (10) forgetting is a form of memory, it is even its most precise form; so that it would be better to distrust words like forgetting, *Vergessen*. Let us say a hole. What disappeared through the hole? Phonemes. What he is missing, is not Signorelli, in so far as Signorelli would remind him of things that would turn his stomach. There is nothing to be repressed precisely, as you are going to see, it is articulated in Freud; he does not repress anything, he knows very well what is involved, and why Signorelli and the frescoes at Orvieto touched him profoundly, are linked to these things which most preoccupy him, the link between death and sexuality, nothing is repressed, but what disappears, are the first two syllables of the word Signorelli. And immediately, he says, he highlights: "this has the closest relationship with what we see with symptoms" - and at that time he still only knows the symptoms of the hysteric. It is at the level of signifying material that there are produced the substitutions, the slippages, the disappearing acts, the avoidances that one has to deal with when one is on the path, on the track of the determination of the symptom and of its unknotting.

Only, at that moment - even though his whole discourse is there to testify to us that he is so much at the quick of what is involved in the phenomenon and he (11) ceaselessly at every turn accentuates, as well as he can, what is involved - he says : "in this case it is an *ausserliche Bedingung*, an external condition". Secondly, when he comes back to it again, he will say : "one might object to me that there are" - which proves the point to which he senses clearly the difference between two types of phenomena which can be differentiated here - "there may be internally, in effect, some relations between the fact that what is in question is a stumbling on the name Signorelli, and the fact that Signorelli carries with it, given

the frescoes at Orvieto, since that is what is involved, it carries with it many things which may interest me a bit more than I myself am aware of."

Nevertheless, he says : "one might object", because it is all he can say, because he knows well that this is not how things are, and we are going to try to see, to enter more deeply into the mechanism, and to demonstrate what in this original case, this model, the first to appear in Freud's thinking of something initial, crucial for us, we are going to see more in detail how it should be conceived, what systems are imposed on us in order to account exactly for what is involved, that we will find some help in this, from the fact that since that time there is something that we have learned to handle like an object, and which is of course called the system of the tongue, it is a help for us but all the more striking is the fact that the first testimony (12) of Freud, of his discourse when he approaches this field, leaves completely in reserve, absolutely outlined that there is absolutely nothing to add to his discourse, it is only necessary to add to it *signans* and *signatum*.

What we have here undoubtedly is the function of the proper name, as I announced to you I would be led to make use of it, take a certain interest in it. This notion of the proper name takes on an interest because of the privilege it has won in the discourse of linguists.

Rest easy! Those to whom I am speaking up to the present to a major extent, in the most *ad hominem* way, the analysts: rest easy! It is not only you who have problems with discourse. You are even precisely the ones who are best protected from it. I would like to tell you that the linguists do not manage too easily with the proper name. A considerable quantity of books have been published on this subject, which are for us, which ought to be for us very interesting to scrutinise in the proper sense of the term, to take bit by bit with notes. As I cannot do everything, I would really like, for example, someone to take responsibility for it in what are called the closed sessions that I am reserving this year in this course in trying to reintroduce into it the function of the seminar. A book, for example by Mr Bigo Brundal on : *Les parties du discours*, an excellent book published in Copenhagen by Munsgard. Another very attractive one by a Miss Sorensen which (13) is called : *The meaning of proper names*, also published in Copenhagen. There are places in the world where one can be occupied with interesting things, and not devote oneself entirely to creating atom bombs. And then there is *The story of proper names* by Sir Allen H Gardiner, a well known Egyptologist, published by Oxford University Press, this one is particularly interesting and I would say "extraordinary". It is really a *summa*, a sort of concentrated point on the subject of proper names, of everything that one could describe as consummate, obvious, apparent, displayed error.

This error like many others, has its origin on the paths of truth, namely, that it begins from a little remark which had some sense on the paths of the *Aufklärung*. He remarks that John Stuart Mill, setting up a fundamental difference between the function of the noun in general - nobody up to the present has said what a noun is, but they talk about it - of the noun in general, it has two functions, to denote or to connote. There are nouns which carry in themselves possibilities of development, this sort of riches which is called definition, and which in the dictionary refer you on indefinitely from noun to noun. That, that connotes. And then there are others which are made in order to denote. I call by his name someone who was present

here in the first row or in the last one, apparently that only concerns them. I am (14) only denominating him. And starting from there, we will define the proper name as something which only intervenes in the nomination of an object, by reason of the proper virtues of its sonority, it does not have, outside this denotation effect, any kind of significant import. This is what Mr Gardiner teaches us.

Of course this has only some very small disadvantages: for example to force him, at least in a first phase, to eliminate all the proper names - they are numerous - which carry a sense in themselves. Oxford, you can cut it in two and that gives something. That refers to something which has a relationship to an ox and so on ..... I am taking his own examples. Villeneuve, Villefranche, these are proper names, but at the same time they have a meaning. That of itself should make us prick up our ears. But, of course, it is said, it is independently of this meaning that it has, that this serves as a proper name. Unfortunately, it is obvious that if a proper name had no meaning whatsoever, when I introduce someone to someone else, absolutely nothing would happen. While it is clear that if I present myself to you as Jacques Lacan, I am saying something which, right away, involves a certain number of signifying effects for you. First of all because I introduce myself to you (15) in a certain context, if I am in a society, it is because I am not an unknown in this society, on the other hand from the moment that I introduce myself to you as Jacques Lacan, that already rules out that I am a Rockefeller, for example, or the Comte de Paris. There are already a certain number of references which come immediately with a proper name. It may also happen that you have already heard my name somewhere. Then of course it is enriched. To say that a proper name, in a word, is without meaning, is something grossly erroneous. On the contrary it carries with itself much more than meanings, a whole sum of notices.

One cannot in any case designate as its distinctive feature, this arbitrary or conventional character, because that is by definition the property of any kind of signifier, as people have sufficiently insisted, rather awkwardly moreover, on this aspect of language, by emphasising that it is arbitrary and conventional. In reality, it is something different that is aimed at, it is something else that is involved.

It is here that we see the value of this little model that in different shapes, but in reality always the same ones, I am discussing before you, I am speaking about those who have been my listeners in this place since my course of this year and that the others know well for a long time, my Moebius strip, my Klein bottle from the (16) last time, this is what is involved. This is what it returns from, from a model, from a support which it is absolutely not proper to consider as being addressed only to the imagination, because first of all I wanted to make you, as it were, touch with your little comprehender something here, there, behind the forehead, which is characterised precisely by the fact that it does not comprehend, and it is there that Freud in his first attempts placed his hands on the head of the patient whose resistance he wished precisely to lift. It was one of the primitive forms of this operation.

It is not so easy to operate, here, with these topological models. It is no easier for me than for you. It sometimes happens that when I am completely alone I get mixed up. Naturally, when I come before you, I have done my exercises.

So then, to take up my schema from the last time, this kind of little jelly fish, this little floating nautilus; under which I have been left all sorts of figures which ought to clarify the situation for you a good deal. Are you able to see?

If I schematised this Klein bottle for you in this way the last time, namely, in the way that the mathematicians, who are not a bad crowd, tried to blow up, as I might say, this Klein bottle, to amuse the public, if I represent it for you in this way, (17) exactly as the mathematicians have done, for there is a whole aspect of mathematics which happily is introduced from the angle of recreation. A Klein bottle is not complicated. You can have one made. Someone even proposed that we should have a little shop on the way in here where everyone could get his little Klein bottle. It would be a sign of recognition. A Klein bottle does not cost very much, especially if you order a run of them.

As I explained to you, it is a bottle, it is this one here, a bottle whose neck has entered the interior and has, as I have explained to you, inserted itself onto the bottom of the bottle. And if, in addition, you blow up a little this neck that has gone in, then you have this very pretty schema of a double sphere with one comprehending the other, and, as I think you understood the last time, this is a particular happy way to make you put your finger, in the most original way, on the advantage of this model which man discovered very early, in this double and conjugated image of the microcosm and the macrocosm, namely that it would be for me a game that unfortunately I have not the time to devote myself to, I am sketching it out for you, to show you, for example, the first Chinese astronomy, which is a work of genius, I assure you, the first Chinese astronomy, which is (18) called *ka inh tien*, was composed of an earth formulated in this way, of a heavens which overlapped it like a bowl on top of a bowl and ..... the roots of the heavens being supposed to plunge into something which one tended rather to consider as aqueous and which was borne up as an upturned bowl would be borne up on the water.

This allowed, much more than the very exact mapping out of a certain number of geographical and astronomical coordinates, a whole conception of the world. Order, the order of thoughts as of things and the order of society, being entirely inscribed in a more or less analogical, homological fashion with respect to what such a schema allowed to be marked out about the relationships of what one could call the vertical coordinates, the coordinates to the azimuth, to the equatorial coordinates. When you are in China, of course, the North Pole was placed more or less like that, like a bonnet inclined at an angle, and then the ecliptic pole - people knew perfectly well that it was different - was marked out to one side, that could lend itself to all sorts of differentiations, analogies, as I told you, of classificatory inter-knottings, of correspondences in which everyone could find his place more easily than elsewhere.

This fundamental schema - I am bringing in Chinese astronomy for you, it is an example - you will always find this fundamental schema at every level of metamorphosis in a culture, more or less enriched but obviously the same, more or (19) less dented but with the same outcomes, I mean the necessary outcomes that are more or less camouflaged, because, obviously, here one does not know what is happening, but just as at the basis of analytical experience, one can also dispense with knowing what is happening, namely where the point of suture is, the point of

the suture between what I could call the outer skin of the interior, and what I could call the inner skin of the exterior.

No doubt analysis, as I told you, has taught us a certain way into the between-the-two, a certain fashion that the subject may have, in a way, of exiling himself with respect to his situation within the two spheres, the internal sphere and the external sphere, he may manage to put himself in the between-the-two, a strange place, the place of the dream and of *Unheimlichkeit*.

In short, if you will allow me to cut to the quick, I would say that the question is the following: "When you have once held between your hands, and this would be perhaps a reason to expand in effect the model of this bottle, this Klein bottle, you can pour water into it through the only orifice that it presents to you who are holding it like an object. It will pass here then, along this little swan's neck, and will come to lodge itself here in this between-the-two, thus realising a certain level. By the inverse operation, you can get a few mouthfuls to come out of it, you can (20) even drink from this bottle, but you will see that it is malicious, because once the water has been introduced into the inside it is not all that easy to get it all out."

Here we pass onto the plane of metaphor. What does it mean, in short, to explore the field of the dream or of the uncanny in analysis? It is to try to see what is stuck, as one might say, between the two spheres of a meaning, of a signified, which at first, of which at first the mixture there was made up. One puts some signified into circulation. It is a matter of knowing to what purpose. If we trust the ..... that I am expecting from this little image, it ought to be to evacuate it purely and simply, it is not to put it back again in the inside. It is not in order for us to reconstruct a soul with this soul, which already encumbered us sufficiently, of this slack (*ballant*) which resisted like, we do not know exactly either the mode or the equilibrium or the constrictions of this emptiness, played on like an absolutely unmasterable ballast, because it is enough to complicate this figure a little bit - I leave this to your fantasy and to your imagination - for you to see that with this single condition, of inscribing some little chambers in it, one can make an instrument of particular stability, an instrument for example that it is enough to incline a tiny little bit for it to precipitate itself immediately and tip over onto the ground, the (21) objective goal of the evacuation of meaning is all the same the first aspect suggested by the aims of our experiment. Up to certain degree, how does it happen that it does not occur more easily. It is because of the deceptive properties of the figure. I will try to explain myself and make you understand what I mean on this occasion.

The figure, the Klein bottle, is drawn here precisely in a deceptive way because it is the way in which effectively the structure deceives us, it is the way in which it seems that our consciousness, that our thinking, that our power to signify, reduplicates like an internal lining what seems to envelope it, which means that all you have to do is to turn the object inside out and you will create this idea of the subject of knowledge, who for his part inversely envelops the object of the world that he proposes.

Only when I said earlier that this does not mean advancing something which is of an intuitive order, that what we have here is not at all even an outline of a new

transcendental aesthetics, that I invited you to distrust the imaginative properties of what I wrongly called the model, it is because a true Klein bottle - if I may express myself in this way introducing for the first time here the word truth and at the appropriate level - a true Klein bottle does not have this shape, this shape in which (22) I draw it for you roughly, namely for clarity, in the form of a transversal section, and that, you naturally imagine, as I might say in its volume, I mean, in its roundness. You make each one of its parts revolve around itself, cylindrify itself, which allows you to see [it].

But note that a topological surface is something which requires the distinction between two kinds of these properties, the properties inherent to the surface, and the properties that it takes on from the fact that you put this surface into what is, for its part, real three-dimensional space.

In the same way, everything that can be imaged here about the fundamental meaning of the microcosm/macrocosm relationship, has sense only to the degree that the inherent subjective properties of this topology are immersed in the space of common representation, of what is usually called intersubjectivity, a word that for years I heard a certain number of people, supposedly working with me, gargling at the back of their throats, believing that they held in this word intersubjectivity the equivalent of my teaching. That it is the fact that a subject understands another subject, that a viscount encounters another viscount, that a policeman encounters another policeman, which constitutes the foundations of the mystery and the essence of psychoanalytic experience.

(23) The dimension of intersubjectivity has absolutely nothing to do with the question that we are in the process of elucidating. We can try to approach the true shape, always for your convenience, by putting it into our three-dimensional space. But you are going to see what it is going to suggest to you, about the impasses that are involved in our experience along any other path.

In its essence, what is this Klein bottle? It is quite simply something that is very close to a torus. I mean of a cylinder that you bend back so that it rejoins itself by the suture of two circular cuts which terminate, since this is a truncated cylinder, by which means you will make what is called a ring.

Instead of that, suppose that in this truncated cylinder that you are in the process of transforming into a torus, you leave the circular cut open here, but that this, the other circular cut that it is a question of suturing, you bring, as this little drawing images it for you, in such a way as to leave it open or in such a way that the suture or the stitching - you may evoke your household tasks - where the stitching is done, as one might say, from the inside, in such a way, if you wish, take the example of a sock, here the outside of the sock is going to be joined, be continuous with the inside of the other part of the sock, and the same here on the other side. You will then be able to do what? If you do not plunge it back into the three- (24) dimensional space of common intersubjectivity, you will have something which is open and closed at the same time, because these surfaces only cross one another in the measure that you are in three-dimensional space. As regards their internal property as surfaces, there is no need to suppose that they cross one another to culminate at this stage of suture.

It is exactly the same schema as the one that I reminded you of when, representing for you the fundamental shape of a Moebius surface, which is this sort of lamina as you may picture it by taking a simple strip and tying it to itself after a simple half-turn, you could only close it by a surface which cuts itself, and if this surface does not cut itself, the Moebius surface will cross it. This is a necessity implied by the plunge into three-dimensional space, but in no way defines in itself the properties of the surface. You will tell me, we are in this three-dimensional space. Well then, in effect, let's go.

Even in three-dimensional space, it remains that this structure has a privileged quality which distinguishes it from any other and which is the following. That which comes to occupy in my schema, the circumference of this entrance, of this hole, of this orifice which specifies it and which makes of it this surface where things are not orientable because they can always go from the front to the back, the (25) place of this opening is essential, structuring, for the properties of the surface. It can be occupied by any point whatsoever of the surface, as a little bit of imagination will be enough to show you, that contrary to a ring, to a torus, which can only in a way turn upon itself, you can make it remain at the same place, but it turns in its whole fabric in a completely contrary way here, since at every place in the fabric there can be produced by a subtle slippage this ring of lack which gives it its structure.

This is not properly speaking what we are trying to consider today concerning the phenomena which, from forgetting to the proper name, the thesis is the following: everything that the theoreticians, and specifically the linguists, have tried to say about the proper name, always stumbles against the fact that, undoubtedly, it is more specially indicative, denotative, than an other, but that people are incapable of saying why. That on the other hand, it has precisely, compared to the others, this property that while being in appearance the most proper name for something particular, it is precisely what is displaced, what travels, what one bequeaths, and in a word, if I were an entomologist, what would I most desire in the world, if not one day to see a tarantula called by my name? What does that mean? Why is it that the proper name, while being supposedly this part of discourse which has the (26) characteristics which absolutely specify it, why precisely is it what one can employ, contrary to what is said on occasion - for one cannot imagine the kind of slippages of the pen such a subject has given rise to among linguists - it can be used perfectly well in the plural as everyone knows, one says the Durands, the Pommodores, anything and everything, the Brosse-à-rebours, in Courteline, you remember the Brosse-à-rebours man: the honour of the Brosse-à-rebours. One can use a name verbally, in function of verbs, in function of adjectives, indeed of adverbs as perhaps I will one day let you put your finger on.

What is this proper name in the ambiguity of this indicative function, which seems to find the compensation of the fact that its referential properties are still not specifically that they belong to the field of signification, become the properties of displacement, of a jump.

Must we say at this level, which is I believe what Claude Lévi-Strauss ends up with in his thinking, and in what he articulates at the level of the chapter on universalisation and particularisation, of the chapter on the individual as a species, in *La pensée sauvage*, he tries to integrate, to show, that the proper name attaches



nothing more specific than the consciously classificatory usage that he gives to the categories in their opposition, so that, in thinking, in its relationship with language, (27) it determines a certain number of fundamental oppositions, of successive cross-checkings, of splits which, in a way, allow savage thinking to rediscover exactly the same method as the one that Plato gives as being the fundamental one for the creation of the concept.

And our proper name would only be, when all is said and done, inserted as the final term of this classificatory process, the one which circumscribes things closely enough to finally reach the individual as a precisely particular point of the species.

It is clear - I would ask you to refer to these chapters - that in the very movement of elucidation for which he strives, Lévi-Strauss encounters the obstacle, and that he designates it, he designates it, he designates it properly speaking in the fact that he encounters, that he encounters the function of the giver of the name. The proper name is the name that is given. By the godfather, you will say, and this in fact may be enough for you if you are resolved to make of the godfather, the someone other. Only it is not only the godfather, there are also all sorts of rules, there are phases, there is a whole configuration which is a configuration of exchange and of social structure, and it is here that Claude Lévi-Strauss will stop to say, quite correctly, that the problem of the proper name cannot be treated without introducing a reference that is foreign to the properly linguistic field, that it (28) cannot be isolated as a part of discourse outside of the function, of the usage which undoes it.

It is very precisely against this, that here I would raise an objection from another register. It is just as false to say that the proper name is here, the circumscribing, the reduction to the level of a unique example, the same mechanism by which one has preceded from the genus to the species, and through which one has advanced the classification, is just as false to do it, and just as dangerous, and just as heavy with consequences as to confuse, in the mathematical theory of sets, what is called a subset, which comprehends only a single object, with this object itself.

And it is here that those who are mistaken, who are committing errors, that those who plunge very deeply and persevere in their error, end up by becoming for us an object of proof. Bertrand Russell has identified the proper name to such an extent with the denotative and the indicative, that he finished up by saying that the demonstrative, the demonstrative "that", as he says in his tongue, is the proper name *par excellence*. One has to ask why he does not call this point x on the blackboard which is familiar to me, why he does not call it Anthony, for example, and this piece of chalk Honorine.

Why does this sort of result appear to us immediately to be absurd? There are many ways of leading you along the path where I want to lead you and first of all, (29) for example, the following which may immediately strike you as obvious, nobody in his right mind would think of this, because by definition, if I put this point on the board here in a mathematical demonstration, it is precisely in the measure that this point is essentially replaceable, and that is also why I would never call this piece of chalk Honorine.

On the contrary I could call by this name what Diderot called “my old dressing gown” . This is only a *hint* which introduces the function of the replaceable and at the same time, instead of, and for today, given the time, to make right away the leap which will allow us to articulate better, to link up the next time, I would say that it is not as an example, circumscribed as unique through a certain number of particularities, however exemplary they may seem to be, that the particular is denominated with a proper name, it is in the fact that it is irreplaceable, namely that it can be lacking, that it suggests at the level of lack, the level of the hole, and that it is it not *qua* individual that I am called Jacques Lacan, but *qua* something which may be lacking, which means that this name will be for what? To cover over another lack. The proper name, as one might say, is a movable function, and one can say that there is a share of the personnel, of the personnel of the tongue, on the occasions when it is movable (*volante*).

(30) It is designed to fill the holes, to be a shutter, to close it down, to give it a false appearance of suture. That is the reason, I apologise, it is too late for me to speak for very long more today, but perhaps this is only an opportunity for you, and God knows, one that is easy to take, to consult the texts, to consult the texts which concern this forgetting of the proper name.

What will you see there? You will see there something which can be much better imagined if you begin from the notion that the subject is inherent in a certain number of privileged points of the signifying structure which are in effect - this is the part of Gardiner's discourse that is true - to be put at the level of the phoneme. This means that one should highlight the following, that if Freud did not evoke the name Signorelli, he says, it is because of circumstances which are apparently quite external, quite contingent, he was with a gentleman in a carriage which was taking him to Ragusa, towards a place where he was to take the train again. What are they talking about? They are talking about a certain number of things. And then there are the things that are not said. And why are they not said? This is what we are going to see. They are certainly not said because they are repressed, far from it.

(31) He is speaking then with this man, whose name has been preserved for us by the curiosity of the biographers, it is a Mr Freyhau, a legist, a man of law from Vienna, and they are talking about one thing and another; and in particular Freud evoking, evoking what a friend has told him recently, Freud evoking it, speaks about the people of this country, which they are not properly speaking in the process of crossing, because they are in Dalmatia, but which is not far, it is Bosnia, it is Bosnia still preserving all the traces of a Muslim population - it was not long since Bosnia had been wrenched from the Ottoman empire - Freud remarks the degree to which these peasants are what? Respectful, deferential, excellent as regards the one who takes care of their health, in short the person who is working among them as a doctor, and evoking what his friend had told him, and we also have his name, thanks to Freud this time, in the notes of the article of 1898 which I spoke to you about a little earlier, that these people, when one is led to tell them that undoubtedly their relation who is there on his stretcher is going to die - “Herr!”, says the peasant, the Bosnian peasant, “Sir”, but with a note of reverence that, in a country with an archaic social structure, the note of reverence that this name involves, an accent which could easily mean Lord, *Herr*, "we know well that if you could have done something, undoubtedly it would have been done,

he would have been cured. But since you cannot, since things are happening as God wishes (32) them to happen, it is in short, it is the will of Allah.”

This is what Freud recounts. And what does he not recount? He does not tell things, God knows, that one does not tell just like that to just anyone, and very especially not to someone before whom, precisely, one has just elevated medical dignity, however little, one does not tell him that your same friend, a doctor in the Bosnian region, told you that for these people the value of life is so linked, is linked essentially to sexuality that, from the moment that as regards that there is nothing more, well, one may as well lose one's life also.

Now, no doubt, this is a term which is not at all indifferent to Freud from whatever angle it is taken, at this stage of his life, one can certainly not say in any case that it is a knot, a link which is in any way rejected by him, since it is precisely in the measure that this interests him from two points of view, first of all his practice, remember the text, for those at least who still have it fresh in their memories, remember the function that brings into play another proper name, the name of a little village, of a little village which is at the bottom of the col of Stalvio, which is called Trafoi, where he had received the news, precisely, of the death of one of his patients who had not been able to tolerate a decline in his potency and who had killed himself; he had received the news when he was at Trafoi.

(33) On the other hand everyone knows well that at this precise moment, it was on the fundamental, psychical, structuring, importance of the functions of sex, and of the attachment of the subject to everything that arises from it, that his thinking is directed. It is precisely in this measure that he will not put forward, that he will not put forward, what he could report about what he has heard, in a way, as another characteristic of his particular clientele as a doctor.

What does that mean? What does it mean that something which is not repressed, which is re-evoked, a discourse, a discourse perfectly formulated for him, and that he does not even need to make an effort to re-evoked, he re-evokes it immediately when he notices what is happening, what does that mean that the effect, not at all of a repression but of a discourse that has been withdrawn, *unterdrückt*, to use the same word that we have within our reach in Freud's vocabulary, to interest oneself about the subject of the articulation, of the distinction, of the definition between *unterdrückt* and *verdrängt*, has never been properly articulated. Here is a *Rede*, a discourse, a discourse that knitted on the silk stocking this bizarre way, a discourse which goes outside, it is *ausdrückt*, if you give to *aus* not the sense that it has in to express, but to go outside, *hinaus*.

(34) So what then? How does that happen? Why does it happen? And what is happening so that something is disturbed at that particular moment, and it is here, it is on this that Freud puts the accent, something is disturbed which has as a result that from Signorelli, what emerges? The fact is, that in this singular phenomenon, which we are calling forgetting here, and which I told you earlier was just as much a mechanism of memory, before the hole that it produces and that everyone knows by his experience, everyone knows what happens when we are searching precisely the proper name that we cannot manage to find. Well then, things happen. A metaphor occurs, substitutions are produced, but it is a very singular metaphor, for

this metaphor is completely the inverse of the one whose function, whose creative function of sense, of meaning, of sounds, of pure sounds, I articulated for you, which come, and why bizarrely this *Bo* of Botticelli, a term so close to Signorelli, so close that there is even more to it than Freud said, that it is not only the *elli* that remains afloat it is even the *o* of Signor. Boltraffio, no doubt here the other part is furnished by Trafoi, but again this *bo* and this *bo* is found by Freud immediately, he know very well where it comes from, it comes from another couple of proper names, which are properly speaking Bosnia and Herzegovina. And the *Her* of Herzegovina, is what?

(35) This *Herr* of the story, this *Herr* around which there turns then something. Is it not here -I leave the text, Freud's text - for what I want to show you is that if everything happens as if from the fact of the accommodation of the subject to the *Herr*, powerfully illuminated by the conversation, put at the high point of the emphasis in what one of the subjects had confided to the other which make of both one and the other of the subjects the confidants, it is as if the *bo* came here to place itself, somewhere, at a marginal point.

And what does it designate if not the place where the *Herr*, says Freud, what Freud does not say in this first feeling his way, because he cannot yet see it, articulate it, because the notion has not even come to the light of day, has not even fully emerged in analytic theory, what he does not see is that the disturbance that is involved here is essentially linked to identification. This *Herr* that is involved, and this *Herr* which on this occasion has kept all its weight and all its vigour, which does not want to let itself go with this simple legal chap, to go a bit far in medical confidences, the fact is that it is the doctor, the *Herr*, becomes Freud for once identified with his medical personage which takes every precaution with the other.

But what does he lose there? He loses his shadow, his doubt, which is not perhaps so much, as the text says, the Signor, this is perhaps to go too far as one always (36) goes in translating, in the sense of making sense.

I would be more inclined, for my part, to see that the *o* of Signor is not lost at all, and is even reduplicated in this Boltraffio, that Botticelli has proved that it is the sign, the sign which is just as much the *signans* as the Sigmund Freud. It is the place of his desire properly speaking, in so far as it is the true place of his identification which here finds itself placed at the point of scotoma, at what is in a way the blind point of the eye, and because all of this is so closely related to what last year I evoked with you concerning the function of the look in identification that - do not omit the following which is in the text and just as powerfully articulated and left without a solution - which is that Freud notes that in several of the cases that he has thus highlighted, there is produced something quite singular at the very moment that he fails to find the name of this Signorelli whom he admires so much, what is it that ceaselessly - allow me to anticipate my own discourse - what is it that ceaselessly looks at him?

I say I am anticipating because it is not what Freud tells us. He tells us that at this moment, during the whole time that he was looking for the name Signorelli - and he finished by finding it, someone gave him this name, he did not rediscover it himself - during all this time, the figure of Signorelli, which is in the fresco at

(37) Orvieto, somewhere on the bottom left, with his hands joined, the figure of Signorelli never ceased to be present to him, endowed with a particular brilliance.

Here I return the ball to someone who, attentive to my remarks, recently posed me the question: “What do you mean exactly, what is it that remains written in the text of your seminar when you said: where the subject sees himself from, is not the place from which he looks at himself.”

And remember also what I told you a picture was, a true picture. It is look. That it is the picture which looks at the person who falls within its field and in its capture, that the painter is the one who makes the look of the other fall before him.

Signorelli here, and in the very measure that there gleams in this false identification, in this fallacious overlapping of the surface to which Freud limits himself, to which he holds and refuses to give his whole discourse, what he loses there of this circumscribed identity, of this hole of the lost name and of this sign, of this sign incarnated to the very end by a sort of extraordinary chance of destiny which is here truly written, written in a signifier, of what emerges there; but the figure, the figure projected before him, of the one who no longer knows from where he sees himself, the point from which he looks on himself, because this S of the schema in which I showed you that there is constituted the primordial identification, the identification of the unary trait, the identification of the I, from (38) which somewhere, for the subject everything takes its bearings, this S of course, for its part, has no point, it is the reason why it is outside, that the point of birth, the point of emergence of some creation which can be of the order of reflection, of the order of what is organised, as a secret, of what is located, of what is established as intersubjectivity, this sudden illumination which is given to the very image of the one whose name is lost, of the one who make himself present here as lack, it is truly, and Freud leaves the matter suspended for us, leaves us in a way in suspense, leaves us unable to answer the riddle, as one says on this subject, it is the apparition of the point of emergence in the world, of the point of sudden appearance, through which that which in language can only be expressed by the lack, comes to be.

**Seminar 5: Wednesday 13 January 1965**

You should know that I ask myself whether I satisfy, as well as I am able, the duties of my discourse. It is not enough for me to receive compliments, that for example the last time the *faena* was very successful. What it may involve in terms of eloquence is a kindness towards my listeners, and not, as people in more than one place pretend to assure themselves, a source of satisfaction for me. And these sort of compliments, especially when they come to me from the place to which I am addressing a precise message, leave me still more disappointed.

But moreover, if there are points in this gathering where I know very well who I am addressing, there is a whole section, a whole section of these faces that I see and see again to the point that in the end I can finally pick them out, recognise them, regarding whom I have questioned myself as to what motivated their presence here. And this is one of the reasons for which I wished to establish the closed Wednesday of my seminar. Properly speaking, it is what will give again a sense to this word seminar, in so far as I hope that certain people will contribute to it.

(2) It is on this occasion, that having requested people to ask me for the right to admission, which is not designed to refuse anyone but quite the contrary, I also had the opportunity, which was precious for me, not just simply to see, I am capable from all kinds of echoes of imagining what may be gathered by so many ears straining to follow my discourse, but to gather from their lips the testimony of what each one of that part of my audience seems effectively to be seeking in what they come to listen to here.

There are those who tell me quite bluntly that they do not comprehend everything, but who afterwards, quite inconsiderately, sometimes come to bear witness to me that they reproach themselves for having done so, and that at times they found themselves to be stupid. Let them reassure themselves; they are not the only ones and they have the advantage over the others that they are aware of it.

What is meant by the fact that they do not comprehend everything? That they do not comprehend, and with good reason, because I cannot here provide them with a whole context, which is that of the supporting points on which I am trying to establish for you what seems to me can be concluded from an experience, the analytic experience, which I have necessarily taken further than they have - I am speaking about the part of my audience to whom I just now alluded. This context I cannot, I mean what allows me here to highlight for one or other more experienced section of my audience, what precise correspondences can be found to (3) the formulae which, issuing from my experience, are not entirely legible for all, in a certain style of research: precisely for example, the last time, those researches into the proper name where the vacillation, indeed the weakness, the striking paradox of the formula of one particular thinker, gave us the means of verifying, which assures us of being - when we tackle a point of consistency, of internal consistency, of a coherence that I could say is global for all our

experience, like the one I put forward the last time under the rubric of identification - which bears witness to us that in connection with the proper name, not alone the linguists but the logicians even, let us say the word, it is not unworthy to be pronounced when Bertrand Russell is involved, thinkers, hesitate, go into a skid, indeed make a mistake, when they approach this point of identification, in connection with the privileged usage the proper name is supposed to have as designating the chosen means of indicating the location of the particular, taken as such.

Undoubtedly here, we analysts are responsible, I mean that we cannot be dispensed from making our contribution, if our experience allows us to bear witness to a function of oscillation, of vacillation, of particularly indicative dynamic through which the function of the proper name finds itself taken up into something which is (4) indeed our field, the field of psychoanalytic experience, it deserves to be designated as I do it, in a certain more integrating, more specific fashion than any other, since it involves the subject. That is why it is not at all necessary that all those who are here should yet have present, at the level of their knowledge, of their culture, let us say, these terms of reference, that there can remain in this regard many points to hold on to, suspended hooks, points where they will be able later, further on, to find their feet again in the furrow of the lines to which they will undoubtedly have to refer. They will have nothing to lose in their progress by remembering here the guiding thread they may have found in it and in many this feeling of the guiding thread, of the *Leitfaden*, is given to me in a way which is not ambiguous and which assures me that language does not need to be charged with explicit erudition, with references, which the field I have to cover prevents me from being able to give you a list of every time, that they do not need all of that in order to sense that in one or other of their particular works, my discourse serves them as this guiding thread. That is why the door of this seminar is open as of right to all of those who contribute in a fashion that I believe I understand, and whose testimony I think I can be sure of, even if they do not intend, for reasons which in (5) certain cases are quite legitimate, to be in too much of a hurry to contribute to it. Each and every one, to whom I sense that this radical discourse which our experience, the analytic experience is, contributes in a close or a distant way such help, it is the presence of all of these that I wish to have and they can be sure that I will not refuse it to them.

The demand that I have made is not therefore an exigency designed, as I might say to perform an act of allegiance, to bow one's head under some archway or other at the entrance. It is a desire to know to whom I am speaking and to what degree I may have to respond more precisely to their question. It should be noted moreover, that apart from certain eminent and remarkable exceptions, I was surprised, I am pointing it out to you, it is not a lack for me, I am waiting, I was surprised perhaps by the lack of eagerness, of those who, having a greater right to come here or precisely to make a contribution, did not think, for one reason or another, perhaps because they felt that they had already acquired in advance their right of entry, did not expressly specify what I was expecting from them in terms of something more articulated, namely, in what measure they will be disposed to bring, here then, to this circle, this more restricted circle, the contribution of their work.

I think then that I have sufficiently specified, repeated, repeated in time since we (6) are only a fortnight away from what will be the first Wednesday that I have described - you have heard in what sense - a closed Wednesday. I am forced to return to the formula even though you sensed that it is not at all to be taken in any way, in an exclusive sense; this closed Wednesday means that there will only enter those who will at that date, be provided with the card that expressly invites them.

Let us come back to our remarks; the one on which I left you the last time. What is meant, what was indicated by the moment at which we had arrived? Where will I take up today, what is the meaning of this tiny apparatus regarding which some people have remarked on what I would call, or what they have called, the tenderness with which I modulated for you the shape of this Klein bottle? What is this fantasy? Must one understand here any thing more than a parable? And as very often, for some people the question seems to be new, what am I getting at with these models?

I think that I have sufficiently designated the point for which I introduced this special model, among others, because it forms part of a family - it is not at all alone - it is associated with what I called on occasion, evoking them more or less for your usage, the torus and the cross-cap, with this fundamental introduction of what can distinguish one and the other in so far as there intervenes or not this particular surface that is knotted in a specific fashion to itself, which gives it, if it is drawn, or (7) if it is isolated in a strip, the singular property of only having one face, only one edge, the Moebius surface as I called it.

My discourse focused on the fact that in the Klein bottle, where there is imaged in a striking fashion, which gives a manageable support to the imagination in its schema, that the Klein bottle illustrates something which is called, in a surface which is proper to retain us because it allows there in a way to be grasped, since like the torus, it presents itself from one point of view like a handle, by offering us the image of what results from this retrogressive point (*point de rebroussement*) which occurs in it along its own detour, by means of which that which comes from one side, finds itself in inner continuity with the outside of the other side, and that from the other side, in the same way the inside with the outside.

It is not at all, in short, so easy to imagine, but after all it is not so simple to give a schema of it that is so favourable to retain us, if on the other hand in discourse, in the Hegelian discourse for example, and this admirable prologue to *The phenomenology*, that Heidegger isolates in the *Holzwege* to give a long commentary of it, but which just by itself in two, three really admirable, unbelievable, sensational pages which just by themselves would be enough to give us the essence of the sense of *The phenomenology*, we see there being designated (8) somewhere this point of return of consciousness as the only necessary point where the loop can be completed and nowhere better than in this text is there demonstrated the character of loop that the notion of absolute knowledge constitutes, permitting, by pushing with the little finger, by pushing by one notch the sense of this "subject supposed to know", of which I often speak to you here and which you understand correctly as the "subject supposed to know" for the patient - he who expects, he who puts into the other, into the other whose nature he does not yet know, because he does not know that there are two acceptations of the other, who puts this "subject supposed to know", who as I told you is already



the whole of the transference - at the level of Hegel's discourse, by taking this term of subject identified to the loop of knowledge; and better than this metaphor, which after all is approximate and whose absolutely radical nature nothing evokes particularly to the imagination, this metaphor of the moment of the turning back of consciousness. It is not I believe vainly, or without a fundamental reason, or without us touching there what I would call, a simple formula, without our touching there what I would call, "things as they are".

After all it is quite praiseworthy for us to make a philosophical usage - I mean to lead you along a certain path - and if the most common and in appearance the least attractive formulae, indicate by their import that we intend also to keep at a (9) distance from a premature discourse on being *qua* being, still more distant from a discourse that has no doubt been besmirched, not without reason, by all the ambiguities that have been allowed to get mixed up in the usage of the term existence.

"As they are", what does that mean? That means that, to approach things more gently, we should not be too astonished to have to speak about the subject as a surface. And no doubt this is not at all the reason, but if I had to introduce to someone who is completely unused to our discourse the justification for this procedure, I would say: it is no surprise that if what is to be tackled - it might be, I suppose, someone who might come to us from science, who might claim to monopolise the title of objective because of being a laboratory science - I would say, it is not surprising that we should be accustomed here to speak about what is involved here as a surface, in short about what? About the functioning of the system that you know well as the nervous system and the nervous system, without needing to go any further into it but it is also the door through which Freud entered at the very moment of the certain discovery of internal neural connections, of the fundamental function of the network represented by the central nervous system - everything that presents itself as a network is reducible to a surface, anything that is a network can be inscribed on a sheet of paper.

(10) [Various noises] You see that we are in a police state!

I hope then that this ridiculous interlude has not made you lose the thread to the extent that you have not heard that it is proper to a network structure to manifest itself in its totality as something essentially reducible to a surface, namely, which does not, of its nature, in any way appeal to this ambiguous unresolved function, which appears to be obvious to us from our experience of real space, which is called volume.

In truth, I do not have to enter here into a preliminary critique of the third dimension, but you can take it as assured that this preliminary critique, at the point that we are at in philosophical experience, seems to me not to have been gone into at all as thoroughly as it deserves, I would say, *nachträglich*, from what appears in it in terms of asymmetries, of gaps, of the non-homology of what is found as compared to the system of two dimensions, when one passes to that of three dimensions. And in fact, there is here something of which one could say that, like an exercise in scales, these scales are so badly constructed that if it were only for that, to begin with these scales, I would say that to approach what is involved in the subjective structure, it would already be a sufficient justification

and a (11) methodological prudence for us to remain with the surface, namely something which is so satisfactory at the level of subjective experience, which sticks so well, in the closest possible way, to what is required of us to apprehend at this level.

It is not at all by chance that the board - I mean the blackboard on the stand on which I drew so much last year to show you what was involved in the structure of the scopic drive - it is not at all by chance that it is content to be on a plane, and to anyone who would object that architecture is something else, I would respond with an architect especially, and with others with whom I have since been able to speak, that architecture is defined rather as a void that planes and surfaces surround and that this is, at least on the plane of what it poses for us as problems in terms of subjective realisation, its essence and its essential structure.

The instant of seeing is always a board, and if I affirm that I am satisfied as a constructive stage, as a step in our progress with this handling of what is properly spatial in our experience of the subject, and if you wish of the *res extensa* as it can be reduced for us, I mean in so far as we are forced to carry out its purification, its extraction along different paths to those Descartes, not at all by taking this piece of wax, already so much taken as what is malleable, unformed and the most accessible (12) to the reduction of all qualities, but as regards which we may come to doubt, if we are less sure than he was about the absence of a common fabric between the *res cogitans* and the *res extensa*, if we think that the *res cogitans* for us only gives us a divided subject because it is formed under the effects of language, whether already in this *schize*, in this division, we are not called on to bring into play a schema which is not at all extended but which is akin to it properly speaking, the topological schema.

On the other hand, if there is something our experience requires us to introduce, and precisely in the measure also that for us it closely binds to the foundations of the subject the locus which is proper to it, if in effect it is in the relationship to language that it determines its structure, if it is the locus of the Other, the field of the Other, which is going to determine the structure, the field of the Other, for its part, I am announcing it here to initiate what I am going to have to open up this year, this field of the Other is inscribed in what I will call Cartesian coordinates, a sort of space that for its part is three dimensional, except that it is not space, it is time.

For in the experience which is the creative experience of the subject at the locus of the Other, we well and truly, whatever has been said in previous formulations, have (13) to take into account a time that cannot in any way be reduced to the linear property - past, present, future - in which it is inscribed in discourse, in the indicative, to what again one can call the transcendental aesthetic commonly accepted in every attempt to inscribe, let us say, in the most general terms, the totality of the world, of the universe, in terms of events.

These three dimensions of what I called in its place, in an article which I agree is difficult to find - but which I hope will be once again be put within the reach of those who wish to read what I described as its character of fundamental sophistry - logical time, where the assertion of anticipated certainty comes here to bind

closely its agency to what is involved, namely, this privileged point of identification.

In any identification, there is what I called the instant of seeing, the time to comprehend and the moment to conclude. We find there the three dimensions of time which are, even for the first, far from being identical to what offers itself to receive them. The instant of seeing, is only perhaps an instant, nevertheless it is not at all entirely identifiable with what I earlier called the structural foundation of the surface, of the board. It is something else in that it is inaugural, it inserts itself into this dimension that language establishes, that the analysis of language establishes as synchrony, which is not at all to be confused with simultaneity.

Diachrony is the second moment, in which there is inscribed what I called the time (14) to comprehend which is not at all a psychological function but which, if the structure of the subject represents this curve, this apparent solidity, this irreducible character which is possessed by a shape like the one that I am putting forward before you under the rubric of the Klein bottle, the term to comprehend is to be apprehended by us in the very gesture which is called apprehension, and in so far as there remains irreducible to this substantial shape of the surface under this aspect of envelope in which it presents itself, the fact that it can be grasped in one's hand, and that this is the most adequate form of apprehension, that it is not enough to believe that it is there crudely imaginary, or in any way reducible to the tangible, certainly not, for if it is there that the notion of *Begriff*, even of concept, can be posed in the most adequate fashion - as I hope on occasion, by one of these side-long illuminations made in passing, as it happens, that I must be satisfied with here for one or other aspect of experience - you will see that here we have undoubtedly an infinitely more subtle mode of approach than the one which poses an opposition between the terms of extension and comprehension.

The third moment, or the third dimension, of time where it would be well for us to see where we have to locate, to give, the co-ordinates of our experience, is the one that I call the moment to conclude, which is logical time as haste, and which (15) expressly designates something which is incarnated in the way of entering into his existence, the one proposed to every man around this ambiguous term since he has in no way exhausted the sense of it, and that more than ever at this historical turning point sees its sense vacillating: "I am a man". Who is not able, and more at the level of our analytic experience than any other, to see in this identification, where no doubt its initial growth from the counterpart, the experiment which is carried out along paths turned back upon themselves, cycles that are accomplished by being pursued completely around this toric shape of which the Klein bottle is a privileged shape, this phase of circumscribing the turns and the returns and the ambiguity and the alienation and the unknown of the demand, after this time for comprehending, there is all the same a moment, moreover the only decisive one, the moment that there is pronounced the following: "I am a man", and I say it right away for fear that the others, having said it before me, might leave me alone behind them.

Such is this function of identification through which the Klein bottle appears to us most suitable for designating the following, if once more I draw for you what it is, of course, quite incorrect to call its contours, because, in truth, these contours contain nothing of what I have already presented to you in two ways whose aspect

of one to the other being frankly foreign even in the utilisation that one can make of one or other of its recesses.

(16) Following the formula, the simplest shape is not an contour, but that which has this craft, this very particular shape where you find here, coming to insert itself upon the circular orifice, through which also there is marked the possible entry into each of these two enclosed spaces that this surface defines in so far as we are situated precisely in space, and that one should distinguish this relationship to space from its internal properties.

Now on this surface we are going, not because it is a game, but because it is a support, which will be essential for us to map out the major moments of the experience, we are going to mark and define that if this shape is one of those in which we can give the most adequate support to what is at the point where I have always articulated things in order to make it understood without lending to misunderstanding, about what is beneath the structure of language, not substance, not *upokeimenon*, but the “beneath” in so far as I say that the subject is what the signifier as such represents for another signifier, what is beneath the fabric of the signifier and in so far as we ought to consider any signifier system as constituting a coherent battery and implicitly which ought to be enough (and, as I have told you, there is no need for much more, which ought to be enough to make use of everything that there may be to say) ..... the subject so defined, as that which, from the signifier is represented within the system of the signifier; this is what we (17) understand by subject - the subject has a shape such that this one or two, or at the most three others, through the system of links with itself, of the stitching to itself of the surface, is extremely limited.

This being taken as the example which allows us the most accessible approach at least for the present time of my presentation, and it is here that there will be represented the effective exercise of this signifier, namely, of what is called statements or words, it will be the outline of something that we can conceive of, according to our needs, as line or as cut, it will be the outline of something which is inscribed on this surface.

Let us take for example the following, which the very shape of this toric part of the bottle seems to suggest, the curve and the returns and the succession and the circuit of something which only submits itself on the single condition of not intersecting itself. This leads us to a progression that is at once circular and necessarily progressive until it turns backwards, it cannot intersect itself, it is excluded by the definition that we have given here of a certain type of cut, we arrive at the fact that the demand as such, if what I am calling demand is this circular movement which tends to be parallel to itself and always repeated, that the demand in so far as it is in no way essentially to be reduced to the demand for the (18) satisfaction of a need, from which an empirical psychology tends to make it begin, but where it is essentially the way in which discourse is inscribed in the locus of the Other, everything that is said in so far as it is said at the locus of the Other is a demand, even if for the consciousness of the subject it is hidden from itself. And this aspect of demand and what depends on it, namely, essentially, here and now, the *schize* caused by the demand in the subject, depends the function of what I wrote in the right-hand corner of my graph in the formula S D,

to which we will perhaps, between now and the end of my discourse today, have the opportunity to return.

But for the moment, let us agree that the demand is defined as the discourse which expressly comes to be inscribed at the locus of the Other; I would say the demand from where it begins, necessarily progresses - you can make it start from the other side, you get exactly the same result - the demand progresses towards a point which is the one I designated the last time as the identification point.

This indeed in effect is what analytic experience testifies to us, and what unknown - or not to the speakers, the theoreticians - I mean whether they know or not its import has been located by them and affirmed by them. The whole doctrine of analytic experience which places its whole register on these three conjugated terms of demand, transference and identification, effectively can only be conceived, can (19) only be apprehended, can only be justified, up to a certain point, even if here I am adding on, even if here I am coming to introduce the fact that another dimension is necessary without which this one, as it is defined and described for us, is and will remain obligatorily locked into this shape which, indefinitely turning on itself, can nowhere locate the certitude of a point of arrest.

I indicated last year the sense in which, with respect to what we can call the totality of the figure, there was essentially inscribed the function of the transference and of the "subject supposed to know." We are going to have to evoke it again now but what I want simply to make present to your gaze, is this precise point where what I drew as the loop of the demand engages itself at the level of the point of returning, of retrogression of the surface, and in order to make you sense in a more simple fashion what could be enunciated much more rigorously, much more correctly from the point of view of topological theory, by the use of vectors to schematise the Klein bottle in the same way you can schematise a torus, namely, a square skin whose first cylindrical rolling up is followed by a fitting together which makes of it a circular ring, the difference to the Klein bottle is that if the first cylindrical rolling up is carried out in this way, what will be produced will be a knotting together of the two circular extremities of the cylinder, but in such a way that one is inverted with respect to the other.

(20) By the very fact of this inversion, when the demand has become engaged here, as one might say, if I can allow myself to speak in such rough terms, from the topological point of view, has become engaged - here we have the language of a mid-wife in this connection - in the forcing of the point of returning of the surface, we have a different aspect, a completely different one which is presented by the loop through which each one of the turns, which up to the present bound themselves to one another, here, if we go in this direction, what are we going to find?

Let us say that here things get to there. What happens? The fact is that the loop turns back and is reflected on the edge that we will call the circle of retrogression. Here it passes what we can call the second segment of the false torus, which the Klein bottle is, then once again, approaching the edge of this circle, it passes into that sort of half-tube which is constituted at this level by each of the parts of this torus when they are integrated in this so special fashion, in which case it is easy to demonstrate that the number of these return points can only be even, the way that

it will get out of it, is that the demand from the other side will turn in an inverse direction, namely, that if here it is in a direction like this, that is, if you wish, for you in the direction, looking at things from above, anti-clockwise, to turn the (21) demand onto the other side, it would be in the proper clockwise direction or inversely.

Because it is important to grasp that even at this radical level, the simplest possible one of the function of language, we are dealing with an orientable reality. Because if, undoubtedly, the aspects that this figure presents have only an external or contingent character with respect to the surface, because they can only be mapped out when they are plunged in space, nowhere, inside the surface, does this point of retrogression manifest itself for the surface itself in a tangible fashion.

Inversely, the surface, I would say, or whatever dwells on it, can be perceived, if enough attention is paid to what kind of surface it is, precisely because of this phenomenon, that the circuits that are carried out in it can be located as non-orientable, in other words can be located as being able, at any point whatsoever, to find themselves inverted. I repeat, if one only considers the internal properties of the surface, there is a movement to the right and a movement to the left, there is a right and a left of an outline of a pure outline of discourse; and it can be spotted that something is dextrorotatory or laevorotatory independently of spatial images, independently of the phenomena of the mirror. The surface in itself, as I said, is not reflected. And without being reflected it has this possibility that either it is (22) possible that things that turn in one direction always turn in the same direction, or if it is a different kind of surface, it can happen that something that at one moment turns in one direction, comes after taking a certain path, to turn in the exactly contrary direction.

This is something absolutely essential to define because it is this that is going to allow us to tackle this something around which there revolves the whole difficulty and the present obstacles, I mean the obstacles in psychoanalytic theory which have come with its progress, which consist essentially in the following: if things are the way I am describing them, namely, if we cannot see any development, any progress of the unconscious in so far as it is graspable in the final analysis in something which is in the nature of the trace of discourse, of the cut, in this singularly topologised veil that we are trying to give of the subject as being the subject of the word, the subject in so far as he is determined by language.

Well then, we have there the only valid support and one which does not find itself at the mercy of the crudest images which are the ones which were given in Freud's second topology - I am talking especially about the images of the ego-ideal, even of the superego. It is in so far as we can manage to grasp, to circumscribe, the problems, to circumscribe the nodal points in particular, and the one I am aiming at today, namely that of identification, it is in so far as such a schema allows us to do (23) it, that we can try to tackle in all its generality, and in a different fashion to the fashion in which it is formulated for the moment in analytic theory, namely in an extremely unsatisfying fashion for any reader who has a bit of an ear and a sense of tone, in an extremely different fashion, I am saying, which relates to what I would call the structural unconscious. For it is undoubtedly everything that justifies so many lucubrations around formulae like that of the distortion of the ego, indeed of the atypical, abnormal, overwhelming forms of the superego, for it

is in effect the research, necessitated, encountered in our experience, our experience which is made up of what? Of what have been called obstacles, the analysable points of what is incorrectly called the analysis of the material. What did I do the last time? I tried to suggest to you the following: the fact is, for one part, for example, of this analysis of material, namely what Freud called *The psychopathology of everyday life*, but in which all the same it is rather striking that this talks about nothing, when all is said and done, from the first page to the last, but the business of words. For there is not a single page, whatever the diversity of titles given to the chapters in this volume, there is not a single page where we are not confronted in the most direct and in the most radical fashion, with the fact that it is a matter of something (24) where there comes into play what, in the sense that I understand it, are called, properly speaking, signifiers; namely words and written signs, things which have the value of signifier, and with respect to which all of this is situated, without which no exchange, no substitution, no metaphor, metabolism of tendency, is ever grasped, at least in this volume, is ever grasped, made accessible, graspable, comprehensible in the sense that I understand it.

Because, of course, here we grasp the divergence, the ambiguity, the two parts which are put forward because of this and which are underlined, as much by Freud as by the authors that he integrated into his text over the years. Namely, that in certain cases there dominates what can be called the effects of meaning, but that in other cases, I must say to their surprise because that is what surprises them most, especially at a time when they had no other recourse but to see in this the contingency of mnemonic traces, there are cases that operate essentially not on the *meaning*, not on *signification*, but on something I am provisionally calling other, and which I can be content with telling you that it is other, and about which I have said enough before you, so that in calling it non-sense, this does not mean absurd or senseless, I think that I have already made you glimpse it sufficiently, non-sense in what is most precisely, what is most positive, most unitary, most nodal, in the (25) effect of sense, namely in something which is incarnated to the highest degree in the effects of forgetting proper names, which are so rich, so illuminating at the level of Freud's text and the text of those who were the first people to have heard him. It is there then that we find the field, from the first analytic discovery. What does it mean that something other was necessary, if not precisely that in a no doubt obscure, awkward and misleading way what is discovered there, behind, is the structure of the support; it is all of this that is helped, compensated for by this singular topography, which so often and so crudely falls into the paths of the most erroneous psychology.

It is here too that we have to constitute something, I would not say more manageable, but something purely and simply more true if we give to this term true here the orientation which means simply, which is not the same thing as the usage that I make of it in other registers when I say: "the word is what introduces the truth into the world", the word true here, as I am employing it, just as earlier, I am trying here to say "things as they are", the word true means real.

For either this is something in its style which is to be understood, properly speaking, as the real - even if only of this real that we are already to admit as being a dimension, the proper and essential dimension perhaps of the real, namely the impossible - this is the real where everything that I am telling you, has no place to (26) be. Now, if we start from there, from where I will illustrate the next time, by

showing you not simply how much this allows us to advance into what is at stake, namely the coherence of the tangible points of analytic experience, but which also permits us to advance in the setting up of a logic and allows us to surmount what I must call the extravagant impasses where we see proliferating in modern times these systems which are so self-satisfied, so infatuated with logistics or with symbolic logic, which do not seem to see that in criticising Aristotle, they plunge further and further into paths that have no way out, no way out in this sense, that they cannot in any way be proposed as this something that is called meta-language, as this something which would claim to surmount, to cap, to master, to determine the essence of language, while on the contrary, they are only extracted from it.

It is truly derisory, and this is a point upon which precisely I would like those who will collaborate with our work on the fourth Wednesday, I would like - since I cannot all the same in the position that I am in, I mean with all that I have to cover on my path this year, engage myself in what I would call, for example, the critique of the book by Bertrand Russell called *Meaning and truth* - I would like someone (27) to stick his nose into it. It is a fascinating book and, moreover, it is one of you who brought me the text which is difficult to find nowadays, at least the French text, this fascinating text where you will see the whole edifice of language, the entirely arbitrary even though extraordinarily seductive construction, because of all that it allows us to perceive in the impasses that it pushes us into, that this construction of language as composed, in a way, from a superimposition, from an edifice in an indeterminate number of successive meta-languages including and capping one another, which requires at the base a language which is supposed to be in some way primary and that he comes to call object-language, which I would defy anyone to give a single example of, all of this being supported by a note, which in texts like these is no less important than the text and is perhaps more so, which says that this conception of language as being necessarily determined by the theory which is called the theory of types, namely of the level of the affirmation of the truth, first language, object-language, second level, that which speaks about what has been said at the level of the object-language, namely, for example, "I said that this is green", meta-language which begins at that moment, "but I should not have said it", it was first necessary for the second proposition to have started, negation therefore supposes a third level of language. This construction of which one can say that apart from the pleasure of a logician, it would in absolutely no (28) way be able to grasp what is involved in the constitution of the subject, namely, what puts man in the position of having a relationship to everything that can be said or exist, that this which is, literally, a struggle in a desperate flight from what is properly speaking the problems of language, all of this reposes, Mr Bertrand Russell tells us, on the simple necessity of avoiding paradoxes, namely this crude paradox which I think I have said enough to you about how it should be resolved, this paradox described as that of the liar, of the supposed logistical impasse of the "I am lying", regarding which, truly, in every case, for us analysts, it is absolutely easy to see that the objection, the logical antinomy does not hold up for a single instant, and has no need to be referred to the hermeneutics of Mr Bertrand Russell in order to be overcome, any more of course, than the supposed paradox of the catalogue of catalogues which do not contain themselves, with the sequel that you know.



For today, simply, I am telling you the path along which I am leading you and the path on which my next lecture hopes to lead you to a term so that at the next one again, our next meeting, namely the closed seminar, we will be able to discuss points of detail, so that I can receive there whatever contribution, or whatever objection that may appear worthwhile to one or other persons.

(29) What is involved is something that is outlined in the clearest fashion through ..... I would ask you to refer to it, after all why should I give here, after having done it for years, a pure and simple commented reading on the text of Freud? The point is the following: the first apprehension which results from a reading of the *Psychopathology of everyday life*, consists in the following: the effect of meaning. If something does not work, it is because that is what you desire. Something which signifies something, to kill your father for example.

Now, this is in no way sufficient because it is not one or other desire which can be more or less easily discerned in a stumbling of behaviour which is not, as I told you, an indifferent one, but a stumbling which always concerns, at least in this volume, my relationship to language, what is important is precisely that language, and at a point that does not concern this desire, is involved in it, involved, not at all in its organ, nor simply as the *Imitation* says, which moreover in saying that does not simply say what I desire to put to one side, and what Freud puts to one side from the very beginning, because it is the very condition of his debate, a tripping over of a word in the sense that it might be a paraphasis in the purely motor sense of this term, where it is a tripping over words, where it is a tripping up on language, it is in function of a phonematic substitution which is itself a trace, an (30) essential trace, and the only one that is able to lead us to the true source of what is involved, it is in this sense that desire intervenes, and from the desire to kill my father I am referred on to the name of the father, for it is around the name and not at all in a diffused fashion, in the case of any stumbling on words whatsoever, it is always at the level of the name, of the properly nominal evocation, that there takes place, at least in the whole field of our experience, the Freudian mapping out.

Now, this name of the father, if we consider the structure of the Freudian experience, if we consider the theory and the thought of Freud, this name of the father is where the mystery is, since it is by reason of this name of the father that my desire is led not only to this painful, crucial, repressed point, which is the desire to kill my father on this occasion, but many others also since even this desire to sleep with my mother which is the path along which my heterosexual normalisation is accomplished, is also dependent on an effect of the signifier, the one which I designated to abbreviate it here, under the term of the Name-of-the-Father.

Now it is the trace of this that must be followed very carefully in every statement of Freud's, and even to see there the solution of what remains open, namely of that which in an awkward fashion he calls the contagious character of the forgetting of names, and in a case, which is the one found at the end of the first chapter, he will (31) show us something which is a first approach; it is no doubt because all of those present at a certain dialogue between several people, at a certain conversation, find themselves caught up together in something common, which no doubt has to do with a desire - as you are going to see, not just any desire - that the same proper name that they all know very well because it is the title of a book,

which I imagine is not very brilliant either as regards its content nor as regards theory, which is called *Ben Hur*, but what matter, we have a charming young woman who in this connection, wants to say, in order to impress the company, that she had found in it some essential ideas, something or other about the Essenes. This *Ben Hur* that the girl cannot remember, what does the author who brings us this example, who is I think Ferenczi, if I am not mistaken, anyway it does not matter, you can take any example whatsoever, you will always find the same structure. What is involved is what? It is perhaps something which has perhaps a certain relationship with a desire but which was, as I might say, or which passed, by this vocalisation, this emission of the voice, which might be formulated as *bin Hure*, I am a whore, and it is here in so far as it is a matter of what, you are going to say, what is most important, what is most decisive? Is it the fact that this declaration hides the ferret that runs through the gathering between this young girl and the young people around her, namely this something that would tend to make (32) the desires of each one emerge, where we might see the guarantee that these desires even have a common factor? But that in all of them something that involves the declaration of the proper name, in the measure that in this whole declaration the identification of the subject, and whatever may be the distance at which the relationship to the proper name is produced, the identification of the subject is involved, and it is here, it is at this level that we find the mainspring.

Now, the way that we have to define, topologically, what is involved in analysis which is quite obviously the picking out of desire, but not of one or other desire which is only the concealment, the metonymy, the metabolism indeed the defence, of which it is the most common figure, when what is involved is to pick out this desire where the analysis ought to find its term and especially its axis if, as we put forward at the end of last year, it is the desire of the analyst as such which is the axis of the analysis, we ought to know how to define this desire topologically in relationship with this pass, this phenomenon which for its part is undoubtedly linked in a certain way, which here we are only beginning to apprehend, to decipher, to approach, namely identification. This will be the sense of my discourse when I take it up again the next time.

**Seminar 6: Wednesday 20 January 1965**

I must advance into the problem for psychoanalysis that is constituted by identification. Identification which represents in the experience, in the progress, in the step forward I am trying here to make you take in the theory, the screen which separates us from our aim because it is unresolved and which we highlighted last year as being the necessary moment without which there remains in suspense the qualification of psychoanalysis as a science; I said: "the desire of the psychoanalyst".

I tried to capture identification in a topology, in a sort of bundle, a collection of threads more simple than all of those whose twists and turns the labyrinth of modern logic bears witness to, in so far as between class, relations and numbers, it sees slipping away, like the lady in the three card trick, what has to be grasped as regards the enunciating of the identical.

So that, to facilitate your entry onto our path, I am going to begin today from the shape that has been most popularised for two centuries, to circumscribe, make no (2) mistake, this problem of identification, the image of Euler's circle, so striking that there is no student who has even opened, who has approached a book on logic who is able, as I might say, to extricate himself from its simplicity. It is founded, in effect, on what is most structural, and if it is deceptive, it is precisely by fixing on what is called a particular point, a privileged point of topology, its false simplicity.

The circle which defined the class, the circle itself including, excluding, intersecting another circle or several, themselves considered to represent the attributes of the class to be identified. Do I need to reproduce on the blackboard what, I think, was already drawn when I tackled for the first time the syllogism whose conclusion is: "Socrates is mortal". Socrates, men, mortals.  
(Demonstration on the board)

This extraordinary booby-trap forged by Euler in the style of the epoch, it was a great and good century, it was the opposite of what is called moreover a century of genius, because it was fascinated, as innumerable works which were published on the subject in this century bear witness, because it was fascinated by the for them apparently unthinkable task involved in the education of women. It was for a woman, and what is more for a princess, that there were forged these Euler circles which now furnish your manuals.

(3) Such a tenacious preoccupation always conceals an underestimation of the subject that is aimed at and there are sufficient indications of this in all the works that are entitled as having this purpose, and moreover, I think, it is in the measure that Euler, who was no mediocre mind, thought that he was addressing himself to a cretin, in both senses of the word, that he put into circulation these captivating circles which, as I hope to show you, allow there to escape the whole essential of what they intend to circumscribe.

So that it is not surprising that it was at a time when the figure was in a way integrated with the common mental image of this sphere, that one is able to deal with a circle - as people did in Roman times with the circle of Popilius - without worrying that it appears, on reflection, that this circle, depending on the surface on which it is traced, delimits fields of value which can be quite different, and as regards what is involved in the sphere, it delimits exactly the same thing, on the outside and on the inside: however tightly you draw the circle around me, I can say that what you are enclosing is all the rest of the earth (*la machine ronde*).

Let us pay a little attention then, before handling the circle and, above all, let us not forget that its principle merit on this occasion is to give us, by its shape, a sort of substitute for what I called in the sense that I introduced to it, comprehension, in the double sense of the true, conceptual comprehension of *Begriff*, what the (4) *Begriff* closes in on, it is of this grasp that the circle gives the image in so far as - I introduced it the last time - it is here, a cross-section of this toric part of our surface with which our discourse today is, in part, going to deal and, on the other hand, only giving to this comprehension an image which is moreover the support of every lure, and in particular that extension and comprehension can be confused, that in the circle one imagines the numerical group of objects, without putting the emphasis on the conditions that are implied by the coming into play of number and which are radically different from classificatory characteristics, at least in what allows us to grasp it in function of meaning.

The numerical reference point is of a different order - this is a field upon which I will not engage myself today because it is properly the type of question that I wanted to reserve for the closed part of this course, which will take the name of seminar - I mean that the homology of the function which takes the name of number, the name of number in so far that it cannot be distinguished from the function of the whole number, the homology in the sense that it is still more striking, more necessary, than in the indications that I was already able to begin to give you of the function of name in so far as it covers something, that it covers (5) precisely a circle, but one of a very special nature, this privileged circle which is marked by the level of reversion of the surface of the Klein bottle in so far as it is a Moebius surface, the number, given its body, occupies here in an obvious fashion, obvious from the analysis of its structure, because of the problems it poses to the mathematician, you know that the mathematician with his modern impetus, cannot tolerate that any point of his language should be, should be constructed in such a way that it does not grasp several sorts of heterogeneous objects at the same time. The privileges, the resistances of the function of the "whole number", to this mathematical generalisation - I am putting the terms in inverted commas here so as not to introduce more technical references - this is what creates problems for the mathematician which have pushed him to make considerable efforts. The question is whether they have been successful, since they homogenise the function of number and that of class. This is what I hope will be treated here at our next meeting, a closed meeting, here at the level of the seminar.

Let it suffice here for me to indicate in connection with the figure of the circle, that one ends up, and precisely by following mathematical research, that one ends up with a schema that is strictly homologous to the one that I am advancing here

by proposing the signifier to you as representing the subject for another signifier, the mathematical theory which represents at once the solution - this is what I am putting in question - and the stumbling block, perhaps it is truer to say, this attempt (6) to reduce, to resolve the function of the whole number in logical language ends up at the following schematised formula exactly in the same way that I show you how, in a way, the subject is transported from signifier to signifier, each signifier representing him for the one that follows: beneath the one, it is the zero that is involved for the series of ones that are going to follow.

In other words, the discovery conditioned by the most recent research in mathematical logic, the discovery of the necessity that the zero, the lack, is the final reason for the function of the whole number, that the one originally represents it, and that the genesis of the dyad is for us very distinct from the Platonic genesis, in that the dyad is already in the one, in so far as the one is what is going to represent the zero for another one.

A remarkable thing, the fact which ensures and which involves of itself, for each number  $n$ , the necessity of  $n + 1$ , precisely from this zero which is added to it, an extraordinary thing, it required long detours of mathematical analysis for something which is presented at the level of the experience of the child. It required the infatuation of pedagogues, to have placed, in terms of tests, as having the lesser mental value of insufficient development, the child who says: "I have three brothers, Paul, Ernest and me", as if this were not precisely what was involved, (7) namely, that here, me must be in two places, in the place of the series of brothers and also in the place of the one who is enunciating. On this point the child knows more than we do, and trying recently to reproduce with my grandson, and in a way to put him to the test, honestly with a little girl of four and a half, the first stammerings, not at all in the enunciating of number but of its being put to use, I was surprised that nowhere does Piaget take into account - he who undoubtedly is far from lacking an adequate culture in the domain of logic - that nowhere does Piaget take into account something that one sees springing forth, and precisely at the level at which he claims to reduce the approach of the little child concerning the numbering of objects to a sensori-motor groping, precisely with a little girl of four and a half who probably, I say probably because one is never sure, who is able to count above ten, playing with her in accordance with the very formula of Piaget, namely with these famous implements, knives and plates that must be paired off precisely in accordance with the ways theoretically defined by the first formation of number, all the same, putting her to the test of counting in front of three glasses: the little girl says to me "four". "Let's see: really?". "Yes", she says: "one, two, three, four" without the slightest hesitation. The four is her zero, in so far as it is starting from this zero that she counts, because even though she is four and a half years old, she is already the little circle, the hole of the subject.

(8) This circle, regarding which I searched this morning, or rather asked someone to search for me, the famous text of Pascal, which I did not wish to evoke here without asking you to refer to it, without having re-read it myself ..... thanks to the work of innumerable university people who have each charged themselves to give their personal reclassification of these *Pensées* which were given to us in a type of dossier which was disordered enough just by itself, in general you have to spent three-quarters of an hour to find the simplest quotation in any one of these

editions. Someone spent the three-quarters of an hour in my stead which allows me to indicate to you that in the big Havet edition, it is on page 72 of the *Pensées* that you will see the reference to this famous “infinite sphere whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere”.

This is important because God knows Pascal is our friend. And our friend, as I might say, in the manner of someone who guides our every step, neurotic that he was, that is not to diminish him, you know well that here we do not involve ourselves on the path of psychopathologising genius. It is enough to open the memoirs of his sister to see the point to which his anxiety and his abysses and all this horror that he was surrounded by, was able to take root in the aversion, to which he bears witness so precociously, and which it is so striking to see his sister bearing witness to, that she undoubtedly while bearing this witness - it is obviously the best condition for giving credit to the testimony - she has not the slightest (9) comprehension of what she is saying. The horror pushed to the extremes of panic, to a fit, a black fit, to the convulsions of Pascal every time he saw the loving parental couple approaching his bed, is all the same something which must be taken into account, on condition of course, of being in a position to pose oneself the question of what limits a neurosis imposes on the subject. It is not necessarily the limits of adaptation, as is said, but perhaps metaphysical detours, and that is why this same man, to whom we owe this example of prodigious daring, which is this famous wager about which people have said so many stupid things because they were speaking from the point of view of the theory of probability, but which it is enough to approach to see that it is precisely the despairing attempt to resolve the question that we are trying to raise here; that of desire as desire of the big Other.

This neither prevents this solution from being a failure, nor that Pascal, when he formulates for us his infinite sphere whose centre is everywhere does not demonstrate precisely that he has tripped up on the metaphysical plane. Anyone who is a metaphysician knows that it is the contrary and that if there is an infinite sphere, something that is not proved, undoubtedly in the surface that is involved, what is circumferential is everywhere and the centre is nowhere.

(10) This is what I am hoping to convince you of, in the apprehension of this topology. In effect, to take up again what I indicated to you the last time, if it is the operation of this surface which determines what is happening at the level of the subject, if the subject is to be conceived of as guided by the envelopments but also the reversions, the reversion points of this surface, he does not know the reversion points of this surface any more than the surface itself, as I might say.

The fact is, that since he is implicated in this surface, he can know nothing about this circle of retrogression being himself in it; that the question is posed of from where we can grasp the function of this privileged circle, which as I told you is not at all to be conceived of in an intuitive fashion, it is not necessary that it should be a circle, it is possible to reach everything like a circle, by a cut, but notice if you carry out this cut, the surface no longer has anything of its specificity, everything is lost, the surface is presented as equal, similar in every way to a torus on which you might have performed the same cut.

The question of what happens at the level of the circle of reversion, is what today I would like to try to make you approach, in so far as we can grasp in it - I pass over the term, I am putting it in inverted commas to make myself understood - the "model" of what is put in question for us by the function of identification.

(11) The last time I recalled that the whorls of a line drawn on the outside surface of a Klein bottle, which you see here represented as a whole on the left, represented only partially on the right, namely on the point which interests us in the approach to what I have just called a circle of reversion, or of retrogression as you like.

The whorls of the demand with their repetition on an ordinary torus, as I developed it at length at another time and precisely in relation to the structure of the neurotic, will end up by coming back onto themselves, intersecting or not intersecting, but even without needing to intersect, simply by continuing as it is easy to imagine, once the circumference of the torus has been completed, inserting themselves inside these preceding whorls, can be indefinitely continued without there ever appearing, in the counting of the turns, this succession of supplementary turns accomplished by going completely around the torus, and by making the circuit if you wish of its central hole.

Here in the Klein bottle what do we see happening? I already told you the last time and the schema that I have drawn for you today already shows it to you. Through a necessity that is internal to the curve, it is necessary that the circuits of the demand upon this circle of retrogression should be reflected from one edge to the other of this circle, in order to remain on the surface, of the point in the field of the (12) surface where it is woven. It will necessarily arrive, having crossed according to - here, as you see it, I showed you the minimal incidence of it - in accordance with, for your eyes, a half-circle having crossed this pass, always having to cross it in accordance with an uneven number of these semi-circles; it will re-appear from the other toric side of the Klein bottle, with a gyration in a opposite direction, what was on the right, since it was from there that we make begin, as the tips of the arrow which vectorialise this journey indicate to you; on the right, let us say that we are turning in the clock-wise direction; if we position ourselves properly, staying in the same place, it is in the anti-clockwise direction that the movement of the spiral comes into operation.

Now this, this is for us, in a way, due to the favour touched here that this topological figure presents to us. It gives us what I might call the intuitive knot, since I am representing it for you by a figure, but which has no need of this figure, I could simply, in a fashion that would be more obscure, more opaque, have it supported for you by an arrangement reduced to a few algebraic symbols by adding in vectors which it would be much more opaque for you to represent.

This figure, then, with its intuitive appeal, I intend it to allow you to grasp the coherence that there is at this point if we define it, determine it as circumscribing (13) the conditions, the favours, but also the ambiguities and thus the lures of identification, to make you grasp also the connection at this point, which is what gives it its true sense, with what we notice in our experience, which for us is the clinic, the analytic clinic, which for us is so forced that we had to model our language on it, namely, the essential reversibility of the demand and what ensures

that in the dynamic, complexual operation there is never, for example, a phantasy of devouring that we do not hold as implying, necessitating at some moment, which outside of this theory remains obscure, its own inversion, I mean resulting in this inversion, and determining the passage to the phantasy of being devoured. This expresses the consistency with the focal point, with all the determinations that are going to allow us to tie down the localisation of this focal point, to grasp the consistency of this fact of experience with what we so confusedly call identification, at the same time, specifies what is involved in such and such an identification of this one and not of another, this is what we are advancing into and what determines our steps.

One thing is assured. I spoke to you about the spirals of the demand. You will allow me to give no further justification, because as a matter of fact it is something accessible; I mean not too difficult to grant me, simply by experiencing its (14) consequences; I cannot here pursue a discourse which is too astringent except by completely transforming the nature of what I am teaching you, about not making a logical leap; what we will call an enunciation in the sense that interests us, in the sense that there are incidences of identification, I mean here not analytic identification, but analytic and conceptual identification, this is something that in effect we would like to symbolise by a circle, except that our topology allows us to distinguish it strictly from the Euler circle, namely, that there is not to be raised against it the objection that we were able to raise earlier, namely that this circle, by failing to specify the surface on which it is drawn, may define two strictly equivalent fields on the inside and on the outside.

What is more, the Euler circle, since it is apparently drawn on a plane, I mean that in this respect nothing is specified, has all the same manifestly this import of having to be reduced to a point. A circle which, as in the whorls of our demand, turn around the toric part of the torus or of the bottle, is a circle which does not have this property in either one or other case; first of all it does not define two equivalent fields for the good reason that it only defines a single one, to open the bottle or to open the torus with the help of one of the circular cuts, simply makes a cylinder of it in both cases. Besides this circle is not at all reducible to a point. What interests us is how the circle thus defined can serve us. It is precisely this circle which is going to permit us to discern what interests us as regards the function of identification.

Let us say that, according to this circle, which as you see is a cut, it is no longer an edge, we are going to try to see what becomes of our propositions, the ones that interest us, the propositions about identification. As I already showed you once by putting it into practice, we are able to inscribe the predicative proposition - as one says to characterise it grammatically - since it is the simplest proposition, the one which in tradition is presented first, as regards identification, we can inscribe it on the circumference of this circle.

We can from this circle, written in this way, as it is here for example - do not bother yet about these letters nor about the function of the diametrical line - we can write, "all men are mortal", the "are mortal" should have been written afterwards I ought also to have written it upside down but that would not have added anything. We can also write: "Socrates is mortal"; it is a matter of knowing what we are doing by articulating these enunciations that, according to the case,



we will call predication, judgement or concept. It is here that there can be of use (16) to us the particular case in which this circle operates by having to be reflected on what I called earlier the circle of retrogression in the Klein bottle.

You see then, that by marking in blue this circle of retrogression, the other circle is made up of a line which comes to be reflected on its edge, to take up its outline again on the other part of the surface, on the one which separates the circle of retrogression from the first.

But if this is how things are, the first half of the circle, the one which was outside the first half of the surface as I have just defined it, continues on the contrary inside the same surface if we consider the inside, is that the inside of the Klein bottle, in short that the two halves of the circle at this level are in no way homogenous, that they are not in the same field - unless one wishes at all costs to blind oneself as is the function of the formal logician - that it is not in the same field from the point of view of identification, in the sense that it interests us, that there is posed the "all men", and the "are mortal", that there is posed the "Socrates", and the "is mortal", that it is not at all said in advance that the "Socrates" should not be distinguished, even in its logical function, from what is supposed to be the subject of a class (17) simply defined as predicative. And who does not sense that it is a matter of something completely different to say that a man, or all men, are mortal, that it is completely different than for example to define the class of white geese. There is a radical distinction that imposes itself here, that we support with philosophical vocabulary as best we can, from the distinction between qualities, for example, and from attributes that undoubtedly are not homogeneous; which moreover is not to say that the class of white geese does not pose us problems in so far as the usage of the metaphor will leave us with some work to do in calculating what is involved between the priority of gooseness or of whiteness.

And undoubtedly, the class of white geese can be reduced in a different way to the definition which makes us articulate that all men are mortal. In speaking of all men as mortal we are not speaking about a class which specifies, among the others, the mortal humans. There is a different relationship between man and being mortal, and it is precisely this which is in suspense in connection with the question of Socrates.

For we may become weary at evoking problems which may appear trite to us and to smell of the classroom about what is involved in the universal affirmative, namely: is there a universal of man, or does man on this occasion simply mean, as the logic of quantification strives to put it, any man whatsoever? The fact is that it (18) is not at all the same thing. But moreover, since people are still involved in scholastic debates about this theme, perhaps we, who are in a bit more of a hurry and who may perhaps suspect that there is a deviation somewhere, can re-pose the question at the level of the proper name, and ask whether it is all that obvious, even if it is admitted that all men are mortal is a truth which carries itself sufficiently for us not to have to debate about the sense of the formula, whether starting from that it is legitimate to say, to conclude, to deduce, that Socrates is mortal. For we have not said: "any man whatsoever who perhaps may be called Socrates, is mortal". We have said: "Socrates is mortal". The logician, no doubt, is going too quickly. Aristotle did not skip this step, because he knew what he

was saying better perhaps than those who followed him, but very soon in the Sceptic, Stoic schools, the example became common and why was the jump so easily made of saying that Socrates is mortal.

I was not able here, because after all as in many other things I spare you, to mark for you that precisely a step was taken at the level of the Stoic school, around which there turned the sense granted as such to the term, proper name. The *onoma* as opposed to the *rhexis* namely as one of the two essential functions of language. The *onoma*, at the time of Plato and Aristotle, as well as that of Protagoras, and moreover in *Cratylus*, the *onoma* is called, when it is a question of the proper name, the *onoma kyrum*, which means the name par excellence. It is only with the Stoics that the *idion* takes on the aspect of the name which belongs to you, in particular takes the step, and it is indeed this which permits this fault in logic. Because in truth, if we preserve the originality of the function of nomination, understand by this where to the highest degree there is maximised this formation proper to the signifier, which is of not being able to be identified with itself, which undoubtedly culminates in the function of nomination, this Socrates who is at once a *soi-disant* and an *autre disant*, the one who declares himself to be Socrates and the one others do, the others who are the elements of his descendance, whether they are incarnated or not, that others are covered by the name of Socrates, this is not something that can be treated in a homogeneous fashion with anything whatsoever that may be included under the rubric of all men.

Let us try to look at this more closely. It is clear that the venom, I would say the aggression of this particular syllogism is completely in its conclusion, and moreover, it would not have been promoted to this value of classical example if it did not involve in itself this something which is satisfied with the pleasure of reduction that we always experience in connection with any avoidance (*escamotage*) whatsoever, because after all it is always the same thing that is involved and that it is a matter of avoiding, namely, the function of the subject who (20) speaks, and makes it necessary to say quite simply that Socrates is mortal because all men are so, is also to avoid the fact that there is more than one way for a subject to fall under the stroke of being mortal.

We know very few things about Socrates, however surprising this may appear, this man from whom has emerged the whole philosophical tradition since his time, the whole philosophical tradition that is called Western, our own in fact. Open, if you wish, the five hundred philosophical/psychological volumes where you see him tackled as a subject, the more or less five hundred others where you will see being appreciated the epoch he constitutes, the philosophical step forward that he contributed, and you will see not only not a single one of these appreciations, of these references, of these accounts coinciding, but you will even see them opposed point by point, term by term. It will be impossible for you to guarantee any certainty about this, there is no subject about which the experts, the scholiasts so radically diverge. And it is not because Plato gives of him a plentiful, multiplied and sometimes seductive image as a sketch of his time, indeed even a photograph, the multiplicity of these testimonies do not add a single shadow of consistency more to this figure, if we want in our turn to interrogate this great questioner.

(21) What a mystery! There is nevertheless in this *soi-disant* par excellence, something - which thanks to those who followed him, and no doubt it is not by chance, this *soi-disant*, always *soi-disant* Socrates, which here means exactly the contrary, namely, that he does not speak about himself - there are all the same something, two things, which are irrefragable in a way, that do not lend themselves to interpretation as regards the sayings of Socrates.

The first, the first of these things is the voice, the voice which Socrates undoubtedly testifies to us was not at all a metaphor. The voice for which he stops speaking in order to hear what it is saying to him just like one of our hallucinating patients. And a curious thing, even in this great century of psychopathology, the nineteenth century, people remained very moderate in fact on this point of diagnosis. As long as one does not have a really adequate idea about what a voice is, what functions it enters into beyond its phenomenon, what it means in the subjective field, so long as one does not have what will allow us, in my discourse, to formulate it as this little object fallen from the Other - like other little objects of this kind, the *o*-object to call it by its name - then we do not have a sufficient apparatus to situate, without imprudence, the function of the voice in a case like that of Socrates, which is in effect a privileged one. And what we also know is that there is a relationship, a fundamental one, between this *o*-object, whatever it (22) may be, and desire. And then on the other hand, concerning what interests us here, very closely, namely that Socrates, it is legitimate to say, whether he is or is not mortal, we have the following, which could be said rapidly: that Socrates demanded death.

It is a way of expressing oneself briefly. There is also the demand to be fed at the Prytaneum in the same discourse, which is called the *Apology* of Socrates, and of course you will spare me, just as I asked you earlier to spare me other detours, from carrying out with you here a reading of the *Apology* of Socrates and of the *Phaedrus*, and perhaps also of this stupefying encounter with this priest which is called *Euthyphro* which he had precisely the night before, and naturally no one ever really emphasised what was meant by the fact that Plato makes him go through this encounter the night before, nor how it happens that Plato, who was all the same at that time one of his disciples, was not there either at the trial or at the moment of the last conversation, of the conversation before the death.

Perhaps the whole work of Plato is only constructed to cover this lack. The demand to be fed at the Prytaneum, will be considered an insolence. People quickly begin to construct a psychology, and I do not wish here to designate in any other way a discourse which greatly struck me at the time, an admirable discourse no doubt, in which I was able to hear in a very distinguished place, someone speaking in the last way which moved me about the trial of Socrates, something all (23) the same came to be said that, no doubt, Socrates could have, let us say the word, the nuance is perhaps a little bit too emphasised, defended himself better; one can always fight, struggle, by taking into account the thinking of the judges. There is here the animating idea of the secret of existential commitment, that something demands of us always to follow the interlocutor onto his terrain of situation, and you also see where this slope leads us, the slope of the analysis that I would call popular, the one on which my earlier declaration that Socrates demanded death constituted an ambiguity: we will soon be saying that Socrates

fled it in a fearful aggression, or again, for the more adventurous, that Socrates desired death. Socrates desired death! Precisely not.

The third thing, the one that we do not know and the one that we are called on to accept or not, something that he himself told us, he told us that he knew nothing. He knew nothing about anything except about desire and that as regards desire, he knew something about it. Only look, this desire of Socrates, of which it is not too much to say that it is at the root of three-quarters of what in reality, or what we have called such, configures all of us who are here - this desire of Socrates, the one which affirms itself in *atopia*, the one which makes of Socrates, in his time, the one who interrogates the master - and it is one of the great illusions that were able to develop around the fact that the question of the desire of Socrates is never raised (24) and with good reason, it is one of the great philosophical derisions to identify the master to pure and simple desire. This vision of the master is the vision of the slave, which means that the slave for his part has a desire. The master too, of course but the master, stupid as he is, knows nothing about it.

The master is sustained, and this is precisely the sin in the Hegelian analysis ....., the question has often being raised: if the master in Hegel is what Hegel tells us, then how can we have a society of masters? Of course it is insoluble.

It is very soluble in fact, because the great support of the master is not at all his desire, but his identifications, the principal one being that to the name of the master, namely to the name that, he for his part, carries in well-specified, isolated, primordial way, in the function of the name, from the fact that he is an aristocrat.

Socrates interrogates the master about what he calls his soul. I suspect that the point at which he expects it, where he always finds it and even in the furious revolt of Thrasymachus, is at the point of his desire and precisely by making testify who? The Other par excellence, the Other that can easily be, in his society, represented by the radical Other, the one who does not form part of it, namely the slave, and it is here, from here that he makes emerge the valid word.

(25) Such are the manoeuvres which undoubtedly were bound to end, whatever may have been the admiration, the love that a personage like Socrates was able to draw to himself, to end up by provoking some impatience. One can have enough, all the same, of always listening to that fellow! Now, Socrates says the following: "there is no choice, either you leave me as I am, even if it is to put me on the mantlepiece like a clock, at the Prytaneum, or it is death, something which at my age", he adds - it is one of the rare touches of humour in the discourse of Socrates, because it is a very curious thing, Plato is a humorist, but nothing bears witness to us that Socrates was one, it is a very peculiar case, Socrates does not try in any way to be funny; he is not tragic, and again what is this unusual tragedy of the last moments of Socrates, let us leave this point in suspension, he is only tragic at the end; in any case something that he never said, is that he was a man. "*Homo sum, humanum nihil a me alienum puto*", is a phrase from a comic poet because we no longer know very well what is involved in being a man; there is one thing certain that man is the comic.

So then, the articulation of two circles, all men are mortal, and Socrates is mortal. I cannot, because of the time push any further here what results from their

interference, it is not my fault that the road is long and that I have to make you sense all its detours.

(26) For you see being highlighted indeed at the two terms between this enigmatic desire and the following, that if this is the way things are, what we have come to, we do not know very well how, is to speak about the death drive, and to either speak about it without knowing what we mean or on the contrary to reject it because it is too difficult, we see clearly that it is towards this, towards this meeting point that we are going, and what relationship and how spell out what there is between the demand for death of a great living being and this famous death drive that we are going to see implicated to such a degree in an “all men”, of a different nature than the two logical terms which I already advanced, namely the “anyone whatsoever” or the universal “man”, in any case man without a name, and all the more without a name that what we find behind is the unconscious of man, which is undoubtedly un-nominated, because it is undetermined.

How are we going to be able to cross this space hollowed out here between the conclusion of “Socrates is mortal” and “all men are mortal”. I will only highlight my punctuation of today around a topological trait - in any case, and however these two circles are articulated, which undoubtedly do not overlap, disjointed as they are by the whole force of the topological reversion around which I make turn to-day the operation of my discourse - a punctuation I would mark by this virtual line which does not exist, which is not in the surface, which is essentially deceptive, (27) is the one which constitutes the articulation of the syllogism in the minor, namely, not “Socrates is a man” whose total fragility we have seen, but simply the introduction of the “is a man” here, diametrically in the proposition, whatever it may be. Either “all men are mortal” at the circumference, or intersecting with it if you wish, is obviously what is suggested, “Socrates is mortal”, with as a common trait of intersection this diameter which, moreover from elsewhere, because what is involved is a topology and not a metric space, can be any cord whatsoever, this diameter on which we inscribe “is a man”.

What is meant by this which, in the measure of the radical heterogeneity between the premise and the conclusion, is affirmed and is proposed to us as a lure? What is meant by this intersection of the plane between the planes which, precisely, are not so, because they are both holes, by nature holes, if you will allow me to express myself in this way? What is meant by this identification which allows this false step of the syllogism? What does it mean? What it means you see beginning in the letters with which I marked the three stages of the diametred circle which is on the bottom right. The relationship between the two halves of the circle which are, as I told you, heterogeneous - if one is identification, the other is demand and inversely (28) - the relationship between the two, in so far as it is a deceptive one, is precisely this diameter which sustains them and which nowhere exists. I put there the letter T because we rediscover here the function of transference, the function of transference in so far as it is essentially linked to the deceived Other or to the Other as deceiving, the function of transference in so far as it is the function of deception, it is around this that there will turn the dialectic of my lecture in February: the relationships between identification, transference and demand in so far as they are solidary with three terms, three terms that I think I have made familiar to you by my discourse of last year, the term of indetermination, subject of the unconscious, the term of certainty, as constituting

the subject in the experience and the aims of psychoanalysis, the term of deception as being the path on which his very appeal to identification summons him.

If things are knotted together in this way between these terms where it seems we could not find an issue which is not a lure, it is because of the structure of these big loops of this big knot, which constructing themselves and conjoining themselves in the field where the game is played out puts us, concerning the desire whose support, whose conception can only be of this very loop represented by the toric handle, whose inside we will try to make speak the next time .....

(29) Do you not recognise in it, after my schemas of last year, this issue, this exit as spasmodic outside the palpitating gap of the unconscious which, at the major hole around which we have turned today, opens and closes, the very outwards and return trajectory of the drive, in so far as it surrounds something which we have left in suspense, we should say, in the void; this desire is what determines it, and it is not at all without a face even if at the level of Socrates today - and I deliberately chose my example - there is presented an enigma. Desire introduces the fourth category after the others of indetermination, deception, certainty, introduces us to the fourth which determines everything and which is our very position - the one clearly articulated, seen and announced by Freud - which is the very one of desire in so far as it determines in reality the category of the impossible. This impossible that we sometimes find the means of overcoming, by resolving what I called the game, the game constructed, constructed in such a way that it is assuredly lost in every case. How this game can be won is, it seems to me, the major problem, the crucial problem for psychoanalysis.

**Seminar 7: Wednesday 27 January 1965**

In the relationship of the subject to the Other, in the relationship of one with others, we have learned to distinguish in its subtlety, in its mobility, an essential function of mirage; we have learned it doubly through the teaching of psychoanalysis, through the way in which, for twelve or thirteen years, I have been trying to articulate it.

We know that the failure, up to now, of all ethics, and secondarily of all subjective philosophy, to master this mirage, is due to a failure to recognise what it invisibly regulates itself around.

The function of the *o*-object in so far as it is, in its ambiguity between good and evil, is what really centres all these "I's". It is not enough to say that the *o*-object, in effect, runs and goes and comes and passes in this "I", like the lady in the three-card trick, of its nature it is lost and never found again.

Nevertheless, from time to time, it appears in the field with such dazzling clarity, that it is that very fact which ensures that it is not recognised. This *o*-object I have described, in what regards us, namely the rule of an action, as the cause of desire.

(2) It is a matter of knowing for what sort of action this recognition of a new factor in ethics or in subjective philosophy, for what sort of action it can serve. Undoubtedly, when I have desired from my public to know a little bit more about it and specifically, given the time I have at my disposal, from those who have asked me to come to this closed seminar, I was able to see something that I had already been able to get a few echoes of, which is that for some, for many and perhaps in a much greater measure, a much more varied and much more nuanced one than I supposed, this teaching takes on its value, which is that of any teaching, by sustaining, and this is not nothing for more than one person, this state of indetermination which we know has more than one trick up its sleeve, which is the one by which we are able to live, things being the way they are.

I intend that here, there will only remain those for whom this teaching has in some way a value as action. What does that mean? People here know, or do not know, here that elsewhere I have a school, a school of psychoanalysis which bears the name of Freud and the name of the city in which I have taken on the responsibility of directing it. A school is something different if it deserves its name, in the sense that this term has been employed since antiquity, it is something in which there ought to be formed a style of life. Here I demand that there should come those, who in some way or other take my teaching as the principle of an action which is (3) their own and of which they are able to render an account. The fourteen rows which are still almost full today prove that I do not want, through an arbitrary barrier, through a barrier of appraisal of whatever order it may be of experience, of quality or of presence, that I do not want to put up a barrier to anyone here.

Nevertheless if I wanted people to ask me to come here, it is to put me also in the position of asking you here to prove yourselves as regards what is required from a certain more restricted circle for whom this teaching takes on a value. I want in some way or other, and rather promptly, to obtain from those who are here some testimony and, of course, it would be completely vain and moreover inefficient necessarily to expect this testimony in the form of a spoken intervention here. I would like it. I know from experience and also from the amount of time available that it is not possible and that it is not the best way.

This testimony involved then, which is the testimony of an action interested in this teaching, I thought that to obtain it, I should proceed in the following way. There will be proposed to you here work, remarks, papers, statements having a sort of character of kernel, of key point which is manifested as particularly illuminated, renewed, highlighted, or on the contrary singularly connected up, in the thread of my discourse. Nothing will be done to make these kernels, in a way, more (4) accessible, it is not the small change of my teaching which will be given to you here, unless you understand specifically by the term small change, precisely these solid, indeed closed, opaque and resistant moments which I moreover only produce, quite often, in order to do more than to communicate the presence to you, beneath what I am articulating for you.

It will be then, in the final analysis, if I get my way, the hardest, most opaque, most localised elements which will be proposed to you, to those for whom my teaching may have this more precise value, this is meant to provoke a response, a response which will be given to me, if it is not given to me here in a consistent and articulated way, which will be given to me in the interval between our meetings, in the shape, not I would say of a letter but of a small memoir, of requests, of suggestions, of questions which I should take into account for the choice of those who, subsequently, will be here the objects of which I am speaking, the object of provocation of the presenters.

Only in this dialogue, in this dialogue which, if you do not mind, you see clearly can only be carried on with those who in the final analysis will bring here a contribution, a contribution which there will be all the necessary time to elaborate in the interval between our meetings, it is in the nature of things that this only occurs with a small number.

(5) Many of those who are here, whom I allowed in today because, after all, there is no mystery about it, will come to realise, will come to realise, for a good number of you, that if they profit, and that is what I wish in every case, from what I teach on the other Wednesdays, in long continuous discourses, where things are taken up again, which is what I have been pursuing for twelve or thirteen years, it is conceivable, it is even essential that somewhere, in a circle, things should be put to the test of an action in which each one participates, that it should be from there that there should begin, that there should radiate out, what I will continue to pursue of my discourse in front of everyone,

It is normal that three-quarters of the people who are here today will come at a moment to recognise, that after all it is not the moment for them to come here to work, or simply that they will never have anything to do here, without for all that their forfeiting any merit. It is simply that what is happening here is not their



business. I want here people who are interested in their action, in what is involved in this essential change of ethical and subjective motivation, which is what analysis introduces into our world.

I am not prejudging in any way who the people are who may take on the role which is the appropriate one for here. Let us say, that to find my bearings in it, I (6) will proceed as Josuah did at a certain detour which we are told about in his story, you will see the way they behave with their hands, when it is a matter for them of taking water to drink.

I give the floor to Leclaire.

[Leclaire's paper is missing. But cf the Laplanche/Leclaire article of 1960 translated in *Yale French Studies* 48: 118-76 for an earlier treatment of the same material.]

**Dr Lacan:** I want to preserve for this first meeting all its austerity. I am going to ask someone whom I expressly asked to be present at this first meeting, Conrad Stein, who at the time when Leclaire for the first time went into the example that he took up today in a completed and perfectly articulated fashion, I am going to ask Conrad Stein who had raised a certain number of objections, of questions, who had put in doubt the exact relevance of the articulation at this moment of the first chain which goes from *lit-la-corne*, gathers together in the *la licorne* [the unicorn] its character, properly speaking, of ideational representative of the unconscious, whether there remains in suspense for him, some question about the relevance of what he had put forward, what he has been able since then, because of these very questions, as he has said himself, to specify.

If Conrad Stein finds his question and his demand for precision renewed in any shape whatsoever - if he is in a position to formulate it immediately let him do so. We will put this question, as I might say, on the agenda, on the blackboard. Nothing more because I would like that today there should intervene those who have prepared different material, just as difficult, as you will see to understand like that, in passing, as Leclaire's paper.

(2) Here in effect, in practice, is what I propose: Leclaire's paper and those which will follow, I have no doubt deserve in every respect, it is perfectly ready, it has been more than gone over, to be printed.

This printing will be carried out and will be put at your disposal within ten days, put at your disposal for a moderately onerous sum, and I think that the most convenient way is to go and get it at the Secretariat of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Madame Durand's office on the second floor of 54 rue de Varenne, where all of those who want to have it will be able to get it.

Nevertheless, as much to see the size of this printing, which will be roneotyped, as for the security of what follows, I would ask to raise their hands those who do not simply want to have this paper as a pretty little article, but who in this connection commit themselves, and moreover their names will be taken when they get the text, commit themselves to respond to it by a text of a minimum of two pages concerning what it gives rise to for them in terms of a necessary questioning

indeed of a response. They commit themselves to have it reach me before the next meeting of this closed seminar. Those who having procured this text do not bring along this contribution, place themselves at the same time, outside the commitment which I said at the beginning is the one that I intend to bind together here. Raise your hands, then, those who want to have this text in order to base something on it and send it to me. Raise your hands.

We will print then a run of this text that is more or less double the number that I see, namely, 35 or 40 copies.

To expedite matters, Stein, are you able to reply now or would you prefer to wait until another paper has been read to allow there to mature, for example, what I am asking from you in terms of a response?

**Doctor Stein:** I would prefer to say a few words right away for the good reason that a half an hour of maturing would not be enough. It is obviously not possible to take up the discussion with Leclaire at the point at which it remained 4 years ago. I would effectively need to read his text to give a detailed commentary of it. Here I would simply like to make a few remarks, and I will take things up, beginning with the end, with what is closest therefore. Poord'jeli, this phantasy, effectively, this expression, this quite fundamental reference to unconscious phantasy because the unconscious phantasy is by its very nature unsayable, Poord'jeli is obviously constructed like a dream. Leclaire has given us the different words, the different phrases, the different thoughts formulated in language of which Poord'jeli constitutes the expression and the means of condensation and of displacement.

(4) Now you know and in this connection I would like to ask those who want to intervene on the text of Leclaire to re-read the *Traumdeutung*, the interpretation of dreams, in the measure that they don't have it entirely present in their minds. Because I believe it is indispensable in this matter, I did not do it sufficiently four years ago in this discussion with Leclaire, to see the measure in which his analysis, his interpretation, is the faithful reflection of the method, of the Freudian technique as Freud presents it to us in this fundamental work, and what the original contribution of Leclaire is, namely, what is the part in his work, the part that constitutes a development, an elucidation of what creates a problem in the text of Freud. We must absolutely distinguish these two parts I believe.

Poord'jeli is constructed like a dream in the measure that thoughts formulated in language are the object of a displacement and are contracted in accordance with the procedure of condensation, namely, condensation-displacement, the primary process, namely, that we notice here something that is completely fundamental in the original exposition by Freud namely that the dream and the phantasy treat words as if the words were images. Later he will say treat the representatives of words like the representatives of things. Words are from this point of view (5) acoustic images and they undergo the same fate as visual images.

If I recall this, it is because the term "translation into a language", obviously creates a problem. I cannot say very much to you about it now. I believe moreover that I have myself recourse to this notion of translation into language, I am less certain now that images can be translated into language. The relationship

that exists between images and language, I believe that if one looks a bit more closely, they will appear to us as being at a different level than that of translation.

This is a first remark. Second remark concerning the chain which begins from Lili and which culminates at corne: lili, plage, sable etc. Well then, Leclaire said something earlier which appears to me to be quite correct and very important to consider which is that this chain plays a privileged role *qua* key to the singularity of the personality, as I might put it, of Philip. Why? Or how? Well then Leclaire's whole argument starts from a dream, from the dream of the unicorn which he recalled for us at the beginning. Well then, this dream, as Freud says in the *Traumdeutung*, this dream is a rebus. The method for deciphering the rebus, the one which is important for Freud, namely the method which permits us, starting from this rebus which the dream constitutes, to culminate from what Freud called the *Traumgedanken*, the dream thoughts, the dream thoughts which are expressed (6) in the form of a wish, this method is free association. You know that free association, we could come back to the question, is precisely not possible. Nevertheless the fact is that this method is free association. Freud speaks in this text, where he says that the dream is a rebus, speaks about the signifying relationship, *Zeichenbeziehung* between the manifest content of the dream, of the narrative, of the dream that Leclaire gives us at the beginning, and the dream thoughts, the wishes that this dream realises, of which he did not give us an exhaustive representation but it would be very easy to do. We have what is necessary to do that.

This signifying relationship poses all sorts of problems that it is not possible to approach now but which will appear with clarity, the fact is that in the singularity which is that of the person of Philip, as Leclaire said, the chain which goes from Lili to corne, represents a privileged chain which gives us a sort of key to the rebus. You know moreover that a rebus does not have a key - if in fact, the only key that one could find for a rebus or for a series of rebuses, for a collection of rebuses, the only key would be linked to the singularity of the person who had composed this collection of rebuses. The rebus as such has no key, the dream as such has no key, there is a method - that is something else.

(7) Now, if the dream has a key a very general key, it is a key which depends on a sort of configuration which is that of the Oedipus complex but that is a complex that I do not want to develop now.

The fact remains that this chain has indeed here a privileged value and if you re-read the interpretation of dreams, what is called the *Science des rêves* in the French translation, by Freud, you will find in what concerns the dreams of Freud, all sorts of chains which he does not put forward explicitly as such but that you can reconstruct easily, its not difficult to do, completely analogously to this chain which begins with Lili and which culminates at la corne. And it is this chain that is privileged by Freud, which is easy to reconstruct, which allows him to give us the key of his dreams whose interpretation he gives in his work.

Therefore let us not confuse this chain with the dream thoughts, namely, with what belongs properly speaking according to Freud to the preconscious.

Now a final point. A final point, which is important in connection with this dream that Leclaire has analysed for us, is that the patient was thirsty. He needed a drink. If we refer again to the original text of Freud we see there a whole problematic (8) which is quite central in the *Traumdeutung*, the problematic of need. There is a whole chapter consecrated to the satisfaction or rather let us say to the sating of the needs of the sleeper, and in chapter seven of the *Traumdeutung*, you will see that there is a passage which explicitly shows us, which explicitly refers to a change of register, namely that the dream cannot allow the dreamer to continue to sleep by sating his need, there is this change of register which is the passage to that of desire and what allows him to continue to sleep is precisely giving himself over to these phenomena of condensation and of development that the dream produces in accordance with condensation and displacement, namely along the paths of desire.

I simply wanted to indicate this as a particular point of this dream, allowing us to end up with a question of desire. I do not want to speak any longer and as I told you, anyway, the new thing that Leclaire contributed today to his interpretation of Phillips dream is much too important for me to comment on, without having reflected for a long time with the text in my hand.

**Doctor Lacan:** So then we conclude. Am I to understand that the method of approach which allows the strict application of the method, namely, the prevalence of the signifier over any metabolism of images, namely, that what you have called (9) the singularity of the subject is here at best highlighted precisely to allow us to map out three sorts of question that you have punctuated here, do you think that it is the best method of approach to put in place the questions you have posed concerning in a way the sanction to be given to the long *Umschreibung*, the long circumlocution that - I am using the same term as Freud, am I not - that the *Traumdeutung* represents. Is that what I am to understand in your intervention, namely, that you sanction the method as being precisely the one which can allow you to pose the question that you have posed.

**Doctor Stein:** I would answer yes to you and I would above all answer that we have no choice.

**Doctor Lacan:** Good then, I think that it is appropriate that on this subject you should give as a reply, more precision in fact to what Leclaire has done, namely that you reply to it by a work that is in accord with it.

I regret that your questions were not - that was why I was in a way leaving you some time - tighter.

We are not going to be able to-day to cover our whole program. I immediately invite Yves Duroux to speak.

**Mr Y Duroux:** I think that in the little time that remains it is very difficult for me to give my paper and for Jacques-Alain Miller to give his.

(10) **Doctor Lacan:** Well then, give yours.

**Mr Duroux:** It is not possible in the measure that Jacques-Alain Miller has based himself on many of the points that I am giving, and I think that the benefit of the paper will be zero if we are not based upon one another in a single continuity.

**Dr Lacan:** No, not at all, that is not necessarily so. We will take things up the next time, it doesn't matter. You will give your work; people will remain in suspense, and that's it.

**Mr Duroux:** It will almost be necessary for me to begin again the next time.

**Dr Lacan:** Ah sure, why not! I had also brought along some things that were quite exemplary and I will delay them also.

Off you go!

#### PRESENTATION BY Mr YVES DUROUX

The subject of the presentation of which I am only responsible for the first part is entitled Number and Lack. It is based on the careful reading of a book by Frege which is called *Der Grundlagen der Arithmetik*.

The proper object of the investigation is what is called the natural sequence of whole numbers. One can study either the properties of number or study their nature. I understand by property what the mathematicians do in a domain which is delimited by the axioms of Peano. I am not going to state them. Miller perhaps may state them.

Starting from these axioms, kinds of properties are given to whole numbers but in order for these axioms to function it is necessary that there should be excluded from the field of these axioms a certain number of questions which are given as self-evident. These questions are three in number.

- 1 What is a number? Peano's axiom takes as a given that one knows what a number is.
- 2 What is zero?
- 3 What is the successor?

I think that it is around these three questions that the different answers can be given about what is the nature of a whole number.

(2) For my part I will interest myself in the way in which Frege, criticising a tradition, gives a reply. And the totality of this critique and of this response will

constitute the stumbling block starting from which Jacques-Alain Miller will develop his presentation.

If the zero, posed as problematic, is not reflected outside, in a function different to that of other numbers, if it is not like a particular point starting from which a sequence is possible, namely that if one does not give to zero a prevalent function one reduces the questions that I enumerated to two others that can be announced as follows:

- 1 How pass from a collection of things to a number which is supposed to be the number of these things? And that precisely is the problem.
- 2 How pass from one number to another?

These two operations one of collecting, the other of adding, are treated by a whole empirical tradition as referable to the activity of a psychological subject.

Both of these operations use both, either to collect objects and name the collection thus formed or to add an object to another object. This whole tradition plays on the word - the word is untranslatable into French - *Einheit*, which in German means unit and it is starting from a play of words on this word that there becomes possible a series of ambiguities in connection with these functions of successor and (3) of number.

An *Einheit* is first of all an undifferentiated and indeterminate element in a collection whatever it may be. But an *Einheit* can also be, one can also take it as the noun one, number one.

When one says that a (*un*) horse is a horse or one horse; the *un* can indicate either a unit, namely an element in the collection in which there is posed one beside the other three horses. Then as long as one takes these units as an element and one collects them in a collection one can absolutely not infer that there is a result to which one attributes the number three, except by a *coup de force* which is arbitrary and which causes this collection to be numbered three.

For one to be able to say that one horse and one horse and one horse make three horses it is necessary to make two modifications. It is necessary

- 1 That the one is conceived as a number and
- 2 That the and is transformed into the plus sign.

But of course, once one has given oneself the second operation one will have explained nothing. Simply one will have posed the real problem which is namely how one plus one plus one make three because one no longer confuses it with the simple collection of three units.

That is why the return of the number as contributing a radically new signification, namely not a simple repetition of a unit. How can this return of the number as the (4) emergence of a new signification be thought of when one cannot resolve the problem of the differences, the equality of elements, simply posed one beside the

others, and their difference which ensures that each number, added one after the other, has a different signification.

And a whole empirical tradition is satisfied to refer this function of the emergence of a new signification to a specific activity and a function of inertia of the psychological subject which is supposed to consist in adding along a temporal line of successions, adding and naming.

Frege quotes a large number of texts. All of them come back to this fundamental operation of collecting, adding, naming. In order to support these three functions which are the functions which mask the real problem, by supporting a psychological subject who announces and carries out these activities. If the problem is to discover what is specific in the plus sign and in the successor operation, for that it is necessary to separate out the concept of number from this psychological determination.

It is here that there begins the proper and original enterprise of Frege. This reduction of the psychological can take place in two phases:

- (5) 1) By a separation that Frege carries out in the domain of what he calls like all of those who had been caught up in psychological concepts known for a very long time, the domain of the *Vorstellungen*. The domain of the *Vorstellungen* where he puts to one side what he called the subjective psychological *Vorstellungen* and on the other side what he called the objective *Vorstellungen*.

This separation has as object literally to efface any reference to a subject and to treat these objective representations uniquely starting from laws that Frege calls logical.

What characterises these objective representations? These objective representations are themselves reduplicated in what Frege calls a concept, in what Frege calls an object. One has to pay careful attention that both the concept and the object cannot be separated and that the function that Frege assigns them is no different to the function assigned to a predicate with respect to a subject or, in the language of modern logic, is nothing other than a monadic relationship, namely what is called a relationship of an element which is the support of this relationship.

And it is starting from this distinction, that Frege carries out a second distinction which makes him refer a number, no longer to a subjective representation, like in (6) the empirical tradition, but refers the number to one or two objective representations and which is the concept.

The diversity of possible numerations never refers to, and in any case cannot be supported, by a diversity of objects. It is simply the index of a substitution of concepts in the sense that I began to speak about earlier on which number is brought to bear the number of which the number is the predicate.

Frege gives a rather paradoxical example. He takes a sentence which is : “Venus does not possess any moon”. Starting from this sentence what should "any" be attributed to? Frege says one does not attribute the “any” to the object moon and

for good reason, because there is not one, and that nevertheless the numeration zero is a numeration; therefore what one attributes it to is not the object moon but to the concept moon of Venus. The concept moon of Venus is referred to an object which is the object moon and precisely in this relationship of the concept moon of Venus to the object moon, this relationship is such that there is no moon. Hence one attributes to the concept moon of Venus, the number zero.

It is starting from this double reduction that Frege obtains his first definition of number since the different definitions of number only have as object to ground this successor operation of which I spoke earlier. The first definition of number and the number belongs to a concept.

(7) But this definition “the number belongs to a concept” is still incapable of giving us what Frege calls an individual number namely a number possessed by a definite article: the one, the two, the three, which are unique as individual numbers; there are not several ones there is one one, and one two.

But how can one know, uniquely with what one has just up to now, whether it is the one or the two or the three which will be attributed to a concept and not, for example, Julius Caesar. We have nothing yet which allows us to determine whether what is attributed to a concept is this number which is the unique number preceded by the definite article.

To make understood the necessity of a different approach to arrive at this individual number which is strictly to be circumscribed, Frege takes the example, of planets and of their moon and this time it is: “Jupiter has four moons”.

“Jupiter has four moons” can be converted into this other sentence: “the number of the moons of Jupiter is four”. The “is” which links the number of the moons of Jupiter and four is absolutely not analogous to an “is” in the phrase: “the sky is blue”. It is not a copula. It is a much more precise function which is a function of equality namely that the number four is the number that must be circumscribed and posed as equal to the moons of Jupiter namely to the concept moons of Jupiter there is attributed a number.

(8) And this number is posed as equal in the “is four” which is the number whose property, whose nature one is trying to determine in its relationship to the other whole numbers.

This detour obliges Frege to carry out a primordial operation which allows him to refer the numbers to a pure logical relationship. This operation - I will not give all its details here - is an operation of equivalence, which is a logical relation which allows there to be ordered bi-univocally objects and concepts. The “or” of concepts ought not to disturb you in the measure that, for Frege each relationship of equality between concepts, orders equally the objects falling under the concepts according to the same relationship of equality.

Once there has been posed this relation of equivalence one can come to a second, the true definition of number obviously in the vocabulary of Frege which is a little peculiar but which is absolutely analogous, and a definition which is taken up in the whole formal logic tradition. The definition is the number which belongs to



the concept "f" for example of which I spoke earlier, is the extension of the "concept" equivalent to the concept "f".

That is to say that one has posed a particular concept "f"; one has determined by the relationship of equivalence all the equivalents of this concept "f" and one defines the number as the extension of this concept equivalent to the concept "f" (9) namely all the equivalents of the concept "f". The extension of this concept is to be taken in the simplest sense, namely the number object that there is in a place.

If the definitions of number are obtained starting from this relationship of equivalence Frege thinks, having excluded the individual number, more exactly having delayed it in his investigation, and having in a way put at the end, as the crown of his whole system of equivalence, Frege is going to try, starting from this machine which can be organised in terms of two axes, a horizontal axis along which there operates the relationship of equivalence and a vertical axis which is the specific axis of the relation between the concept and the object namely between the concept and the object is continually ..... that is to say one can always, once one has a concept, transform it into the object of a new concept since the relationship of a concept to an object is a purely logical relationship of relation.

It is starting from these two axes which constitute his relational machine that Frege now claims to circumscribe the different numbers and we see that to circumscribe the different numbers comes back to simply replying to two of the three questions announced at the beginning: "what is zero?" and "what is a successor?". Given (10) that if one has a zero and that if one has the successor of zero the rest happens automatically.

It is starting from this definition of zero that one can highlight a little what is involved in Frege's definition. The first necessary definition is the definition of zero. The problem is to know whether one is going to be able to define the zero otherwise than by the tautological reference to the non-existent object falling under the concept. Earlier I was able to attribute the number zero to the moons of Venus because,

- 1) I posited that moon of Venus was a concept, namely objectively existing
- 2) I know that there is nothing which falls under it.

To give himself this number zero Frege forged the concept of non-identical to itself, which is defined by him as a contradictory concept and Frege declared that any contradictory concept, and he allowed there to appear the contradictory concepts accepted in traditional logic, the square circle or the mountain of gold; any concept under which no object falls; to this concept is attributed the name zero. In other words the zero is defined by logical contradiction which is the guarantee of non-existence of the object namely that there is - between the non-existence of the object which is noted, decreed because one says that there is no centaur and then the logical contradiction of the concept of centaur ..... is contradictory.

(11) **Dr. Lacan:** Or unicorn

**Mr. Doroux:** Or unicorn.

You can understand very clearly if it is the concept contradictory with itself, the concept starting from which there can unfold the definition of number; there is a problem which is posed and which is not resolved by Frege - I am only going to indicate it because it is posed in mathematical logic - it is whether there are several classes.

Frege does not pose himself this problem. He thinks that in the measure in which he has defined in a general fashion the relationship of number and concept by the equivalence of all the concepts, that for the class zero there are also several. In any case he doesn't pose himself the problem. For example other mathematicians are obliged to posit a class zero and a set.

The second operation which will allow there to be generated a whole sequence of numbers is the successor operation. Frege gives simultaneously the definition of the one and the definition of the successor operation.

I say simultaneously because I believe one can say and show that they imply one another and that the definition he gives of the successor is not thinkable until he has defined the one starting from this successor operation.

(12) In other words for the successor operation I will only give the definition of Frege that he posits before the one, and then afterwards I will show that he can only give himself this successor operation because he gives himself this relationship between the one and the zero.

The successor operation is simply defined as follows. One says that a number naturally follows after another number if this number is attributed to a concept under which there falls an object (x), such that, there is another number, it is the number that the first number follows, such that, it is attributed to a concept under which there falls the preceding concept and which is not (x), namely the object fallen under the preceding concept.

That is a purely formal definition which simply shows that the number of the concept that follows as compared to the number which precedes it, the number which precedes has for object the preceding concept on condition that it is not the object which falls under the preceding concept.

This definition is purely formal and I say that Frege grounds it, gives it immediately after, after he passes to the definition of the one. He is going to say, how do I give a definition of one? The definition of one is fairly simple, it consists of giving one a concept equal to zero. What object falls under this concept? Under this concept there falls the concept zero.

(13) Afterwards Frege asks himself what is the concept under which there falls the object equal to zero and not equal to zero.

Equal to zero and not equal to zero; you remember that it is a contradictory definition that defines the number zero. In other words giving itself a first definition: the concept equal to zero. Under this concept there falls the object

zero. Then giving oneself a second definition: the concept equal to zero and not equal to zero is the number zero. One knows that because one has already defined it earlier.

Starting from these two propositions Frege can say: "one follows zero in the measure that one is attributed to the concept equal to zero". Why does it follow zero? Because zero is the object which falls under the concept zero and which at the same time is not equal to zero. In other words contradictory.

Therefore the successor operation is generated by a double operation of contradiction in the passage from zero to one. One can say without going too far beyond the field of Frege, that the reduction of the successor operation is carried out by an operation of double contradiction. Zero being given as contradictory, the passage from zero to one is given by the contradictory contradiction. I mean to say that the motor which generates succession in Frege is purely a negation of negation. The whole apparatus which consisted in reducing the number, is an apparatus common to a whole part of mathematics. It is absolutely recognised that (14) it cannot create any difficulty. One can very easily admit it as included in the field of mathematical logic and not posing us questions. It functions very well all by itself. Is this apparatus capable of responding to the question: "how after zero is there a one?" How is this one a successor and how is it such a successor that the one which comes after it will be two.

Frege thinks he resolved it in the fashion that I have told you. This operation of double contradiction. I will not question myself about the legitimacy of this operation. I will leave it to Jacques-Alain Miller to do that.

I would simply like to say that among the empiricists, as in the case of Frege, the name of the number that Frege calls individual name is only obtained in the final recourse, as a sort of *coup de force*, as if you wish, like, as the ..... , abstains. And secondly in one case and the other, in Frege ..... the number is always captured by an operation which has as a function to create a fullness either by a collection or by this operation that Frege calls bi-univocal correspondence which has exactly the function of exhaustively collecting a whole field of object.

On the one hand it is the activity of a subject, on the other hand it is the operation which is called the logic of equivalence and which have the same function.

(15) I believe if you wish to answer the question which is posed at the beginning one can ask oneself how the return of the number as a different signification is possible, namely, if there are other principles which are capable of accounting for these different significations.

If you wish I gave in connection with these questions a Moebius strip, it must now be twisted. This is what Jacques-Alain Miller will do.

**Dr Lacan:** The requirements of a cut in time, then, leaves the discourse of Yves Duroux in suspense until Jacques-Alain Miller, at our next closed meeting, will show you its relationship, its direct incidence with what preoccupies us to the

greatest degree, namely the relationship of the subject to the signifier, in so far as here you see it being simply outlined - I am speaking for those for whom questions may arise in their most confused form - being outlined in the relationship between the zero and the one.

Do not content yourselves, of course, with this summary analogy. If today, we have made the effort to make you take into account, with the greatest fidelity of a text which is fundamental in the history of mathematics, to which I believe a good share of you have not been introduced and still fewer are familiar with, if we have made this effort it is because it is necessary for you to know that these are questions that are so pregnant that even for the people - the mathematicians - who do not after all need this elaboration in order to make their system function, they are nevertheless posed and they nevertheless have their fecundity.

In effect, everything that has recently been produced in terms of mathematical (2) research, and rather fruitful mathematical research because it has absolutely transformed its every aspect, is founded on the avowal of the very people who made it happen, specifically for example Bertrand Russell, referred back to this work which is inaugural and was unknown until Russell himself partially discovered its mainspring, because the work remained for more than twenty- five years in the most profound obscurity.

I think that however disparate at first approach may appear the two presentations that you have heard today, and I underline it, those to whom this discord will oblige to make an effort of mental gymnastics which may appear too difficult for them, these people precisely, are those to whom I said that after all they are not obliged to submit to it. If such a relationship must be established for you, it is very certainly along thousands of threads of communication, of which I will only quote one to you for, after all, it has been agreed for a long time that when the philosopher tries to accord his thinking with the object of his grasp, he will tell you right away that the unicorn is something, as they say, which does not exist.

Nevertheless, does a unicorn exist and in what measure? Does a centaur exist and does it exist a little more once it is the centaur of someone like Nessus or Chiron?

(3) It is a question which has for us the greatest importance. Because it is indeed this that is involved in our practice, namely the incidence of nomination, at its conceptual state or at its pure state, on the proper name with which we have to deal, to the very *initium* of what determines the subject both in his history and in his structure and in his presence in the analytic operation.

This text of Duroux will likewise [be made available], because I consider he has rendered you a very great service, by giving you of Frege's work, *Grundlagen der Arithmetik*, a remarkably short summary, which is quite substantial and which is the rock, the point, the core, of the reference thanks to which this conjunction which will be carried out at our next meeting between [the way in which] the apparently purely technical questions that he raised harmonise with our practice.

All of those therefore who desire, under conditions which are broader than those which I mentioned earlier - Leclaire's text should only be taken at the risk and peril of the one who takes it not giving any response, the text of Leclaire, it is to

those and to those alone who want to add something to it that it will be given. - For the others who are there in a way as auditors and who are still in a way in suspense, all of those who wish for the next time to have confronted, prepared what Jacques-Alain Miller will bring us are asked to raise a finger. Good, I estimate that we need to run off about eighty copies and it is in the same place and the same office, that in a fortnight Duroux, if this is agreeable to him, will have the time to look over the text which he has typed here, that you can find it at the same address, so that those, a great number, I think, who may have allowed there to escape some of the perfectly circumscribed and well modulated articulations, which were strictly equivalent to Frege's text, let them come then to our next meeting to hear what will follow.

**Seminar 8: Wednesday 3 February 1965**

Before beginning my lecture, I would like to make an announcement, and I would be grateful if Melle Hocquet would recall it at the end of the lecture by writing it on the board, namely that there will be no lecture next week, nor will there be one in two weeks time. I am in effect going to absent myself for a period of a fortnight, or a little bit more.

I will take up our conversations here then on the 24th of February, which will fall on a fourth Wednesday of the month, a fourth Wednesday which, as you now know is reserved for this form of meeting that I call the closed seminar and which, as you know, is open to all of those who ask me, which charges them subsequently with comprehending, as I tried during the last of these closed seminars, with comprehending what they have to do in this seminar, namely to draw for themselves the consequences of choosing whether they ought to remain there or leave it.

For the many among you - which renders legitimate my public communication here - who were at the last closed seminar, I specify that they will be able to find very (2) shortly I hope, namely, I think between now and the end of the week which has now begun, one of the texts and, a little later, the other one of those that it was decided to make available in a roneotyped form for the people who wished to consult them for the subsequent seminars.

It will be available for them at 54 rue de Varenne, on the second floor at the back of the courtyard, they should address themselves to Madam Durand's porters. At the same time I point out to members of the *Ecole freudienne*, who obviously have complete access to the closed seminar - I think that the majority of them will go to 54 Rue de Verenne to obtain these texts, they can at the same time get their card from the approximate pile that I made of the entry cards that they can use at the closed seminar; I apologise to those who do not find themselves there. That simply means that they did not write their name on a blue card on the way in to this closed seminar.

This having been said, I would like today for us to continue to advance into what is the crucial problem. We are trying to propose a shape and, make no mistake, a topology essential for psychoanalytic praxis. It is with this in mind that I reproduced here in the shape of the Klein bottle, a shape, if you wish, that is not unique as you know well, since it is itself is a shape which may appear to you, (3) having regard to the most widespread, the most current, the most imaged shape in the most elementary books, may appear simplified to you; it is not at all simplified, it is exactly the same but it can be represented in many other ways for the simple reason that every representation is an incorrect, forced, representation of it because any representation that I can give you of it on a plane board, is obviously a representation which is a projection into three-dimensional space to which the surface of the Klein bottle does not belong. A certain immersion in space is therefore always involved.

Nevertheless, there is a relationship which is all the same analogous between the structure, the essence of the surface, and this immersion. There is an analogous relationship, I am saying, between what the surface is designed to represent for us and the space in which it functions, the space in which it functions being precisely the space of the Other *qua* locus of the word.

I am not today going to try to pursue this analogy between a three-dimensional field and what I called “the space of the Other” and “the locus of the Other”, which is not at all the same, let us say that a certain analogy with the three Cartesian dimensions of space could be introduced here but I will not do it today.

There are four schemas on the board; the one on the top left is limited, framed by a (4) right-angled bar to isolate it from the others. It has no relation to the others. For all of those who have had the leisure to open certain *Remarks* that I made, on the discourse of one of my former colleagues, remarks implying a correction, indeed a rectification of certain analogies introduced by him between the terms which serve to define the agencies in the second topography, more especially the terms ideal ego and ego-ideal, regarding which it remains moreover in suspense, whether Freud authentically distinguished them, and it is a long time ago that I articulated that he did, but the matter can remain in effect as a question.

In any case, the passage was crossed by the author to whom I am referring, if I remember correctly, in number four or five of the review *La Psychanalyse*; the step was taken since, in fact, ideal ego and ego-ideal have a sense in psychology, and because it is this sense that the author tried to harmonise with analytic experience.

He did it in terms which can be described as terms of the person, indeed of Personalism, and I tried in these *Remarks*, without properly speaking putting in question a phenomenology which retains its value, I tried to show what analysis allows us to articulate on this point. The few strokes of the drawing that I made on the left, refer then, are a simple allusion to the schema that I gave at that time, the details of which you can see in this article.

(5) It is perhaps not useless for me to recall what is involved. The value, the spice of this construction entirely reposes on an experiment in physics-for-fun that is called that of the inverted bouquet. Thanks to which, by the use of a spherical mirror - for the moment, leave this part of the schema to one side - thanks to the usage of a spherical mirror, one can make appear inside a vase, which is supposed to be real, which would be placed here, a false bouquet. Provided the bouquet is hidden from the view of the spectator by some suitable screen, the bouquet gives, by the effect of reversal that the spherical mirror produces, an image here which - as opposed to the image in the plane mirror, beyond the plane mirror - is an image described as real.

Namely, that it is effectively something which is sustained in space like an illusion; illusionists, in certain cases, and naturally in conditions of favourable lighting, in an environment protected by black screens, manage to make emerge these sorts of phantoms in a fashion that is quite sufficient at least to interest the eye.

It was starting from there that, in a purely fictitious fashion, I took the liberty of imagining the following model, one which would give rise to an illusionary vase, around to a bouquet.

(6) It is quite clear that this illusion is only produced for an eye which is placed somewhere in the field in such a way that this can give rise to an image for it, namely, from a certain reflection of the rays from the spherical mirror, that having crossed again to constitute a real image, is going to expand into a cone at the bottom of the space in question. It is necessary of course that the eye which is able to receive, is supposed to receive the real image, should be in this cone. In other words, which is quite easy to comprehend, it is necessary that the spectator of this illusory spectacle should be within a certain rather limited field, for him not to escape purely and simply from the effects of the spherical mirror.

It is here that there lies the principle of the little supplementary complication that I add to it, namely, that this illusion of the real image, is a subject, this subject is quite mythical, it is for that reason that here the S is not barred, it is a subject who, on the contrary, is placed, as one can easily comprehend is required, on the side of the spherical mirror. This spherical mirror represents some mechanism internal to the body, which sees in a mirror the illusion that is produced here for the one who is supposed to be there.

This is not very difficult to comprehend. In effect the position of the S and of the I with respect to the plane of the mirror, even if it does not appear so in this figure, is strictly symmetrical.

(7) It is enough then that S finds his own eventual image beyond the mirror, somewhere in this cone constituted by the illusion of the spherical mirror within his range, for him to see in the mirror exactly what he would see if he were there, namely at the place marked I. It is exactly the relationship between S and the identification which is called ideal ego, namely this point of accommodation that the subject, I would say, from all time - this "from all time" is not what is covered by a history, namely the history of the child in his identification-relationship with the adult - it is then from a certain point of accommodation in the field of the Other, in so far as it is woven, not simply from the symbolic relationship, but from a certain imaginary plane, his relationships with the adults who oversee his formation.

It is in a way to fix there, to locate there, to accommodate to this point that he is going to have, right throughout that same development, in order to bring in here what he refers himself to in the genesis, that he is going to have, in the course of this development, to accommodate this illusion, which is the illusion of the inverted vase, namely, to bring into operation around something which is the bouquet - which we have here, for reasons of clarity, reduced to a single flower, indeed to this sign, this little circle or little stem - to accommodate around this something which has still not said its name, even though it is already written on the board, to accommodate around this something, here, the virtual image of the flower, to (8) accommodate, in short, this real image of the inverted vase. This real image of the inverted vase is the ideal ego, it is the succession of forms from which there will crystallise what is called, in a much too monolithic fashion, by a



sort of extrapolation which produces a disturbance in the whole theory, the ego. The ego is formed from the successive histories of these ideal ego's; these include the whole experience of what one could call the taking in hand of the body image. It is there that there always lies what I emphasised under the title of the mirror stage, in other words, the core character with respect to the agency of the ego of the specular image.

You see the greater elaboration that is contributed by this schema. It is clear that if the mirror here has its *raison d'être* because it defines a certain relationship between the body, here taken *qua* hidden, and what is produced in terms of the mastery of its image by the subject, it introduces there in a visible fashion something that is quite clear in the experience of the mirror, namely, that prior to this experience there is the locus of the Other, the field of the Other, the support of the Other, the other, in a word, who holds the child in her arms in front of the mirror. It can happen, this is an essential dimension, that the first gesture of the child in this jubilant assumption, as I said, of his image in the mirror, which is very often co-ordinated with this turning of the head towards the other, the real other, (9) seen at the same time as him in the mirror and whose tertiary reference, seems to be inscribed in the experiment.

So what? What is involved in the reminder that I have given here of this little schema, is to show that the function and the relationship there is between this flower, as I called it earlier, here designated by **o**, and which is effectively what we call the **o**-object, this flower does not have in this experiment, and with respect to the mirror, does not have the same function, is not homogeneous with what comes to operate around it as a reference, namely the body image and the ego. I can even add for those who have already followed my developments on this during the seminar on *Identification*, that on the single condition of making intervene another register, that of topology, one could say, but obviously it is a metaphor, being there only a metaphore, more especially the metaphor of this little physics experiment, do not try then to bring into it in any way, despite the fact that Freud himself used schemas that were in fact quite similar, you cannot in any case bring into it more reality than we are doing here ourselves.

Nevertheless, do not forget, that besides, and with the help of a reference much (10) closer to the real, which is precisely the topological reference, I clearly underlined that if the body-image, the *i(o)*, originates in the subject in the specular experience, the small **o** - you know the agency I give it in the economy of the subject and his identification - the small **o** has no specular image. It is not specularisable. And this indeed is the whole mystery. How, not being specularisable, can one sustain, maintain, because this is the fact of our experience, that it centres the whole effort of specularisation?

It is from there, I remind you, that there ought to begin every question, more exactly the putting in question, of what is involved in identification, and more especially in identification as it is pursued, as it is accomplished in the analytic experience.

You see there that the operation of identification, like the end of analysis, depends on an alternative between two terms which govern, which determine, the

identifications of the ego, which are distinct without our being able to say that they are opposed, because they are not of the same order.

The ego ideal, locus of the function of the unary trait, point of departure of the attachment of the subject in the field of the Other, around which no doubt there is played out the fate of the identifications of the ego in their imaginary root, but also elsewhere, the "invisible" point of regulation, if you wish, but I put this "invisible" in inverted commas because, if it is not seen in the mirror, its relationship to the visible must be completely revised, and you know that last year, for those who (11) were here, I laid down the foundations, but here I leave the point in parenthesis

Around, let us say, the  $\circ$  hidden in the reference to the Other, around the  $\circ$ , just as much, and more, as around the ideal ego, there will be played out the identifications of the subject. And the question is whether we ought to consider that the end of analysis can be satisfied with a just one of the two dimensions which determine these two poles, namely, culminate in the rectification of the ego ideal, namely, end up at another identification of the same order, and specifically what has been called, and what can be designated, as the identification to the analyst.

If all the aporias, the difficulties, the impasses of which, effectively, the experience of analysts and the sayings of analysts bring us testimony if it is not around this something, insufficiently orientated and not referred to the level of the  $\circ$ , that there operate the impasses of that  $\circ$  and their solution.

It is a reminder on the path onto which we now have to advance, and propose for ourselves a formula which re-introduces here our apprehension of the Klein bottle and what is involved in this figure, I would say the key that we are trying to give with this topology, is what is involved when desire arms itself; desire is something that we have to deal with in the Freudian unconscious.

It is in the measure that it is something completely different to what was precisely (12) called, up to then, an unknown, mysterious animal tendency. If the unconscious is what it is, this opening which speaks, through which desire is to be formulated for us, somewhere in the cut characteristic of the scansion of this language, and this is what our topological reference tries to express.

I advance the following formula. Before commenting on it, we could say that desire is the cut through which a surface is revealed as a-cosmic.

This is the order in which you must have clearly sensed it for a good while, because already as regards this term a-cosmic, I already put forward, and under more than one horizon, the profoundly intuitive character which is not seen, and as I was told again quite recently when trying, with a mathematician, to bring into play on this famous little bottle some higher exercise, "these surfaces that are horrible to look at". I mean that my mathematician, to resolve its problems which by common accord are at stake, rejects energetically and quite correctly, and even remarked effectively on the aspect of the horrible, here, of the bottle, this kind of curious double mouth, at the same time embraced, stuck to itself, but from the inside which means that one arrives at this edge from two sides at once.

There are things that can be represented at the level of reflection on this edge and I who am not afraid to draw you into the horrible, I spoke to you about it as of a (13) certain retrogression, but in fact this circle of retrogression is nowhere. If we take the surface completely rigorously, this circle is nowhere because, simply to limit ourselves to the way it is represented here, it can slide everywhere.

I already one made the comparison with you of the peculiar stocking, of a kind of immaterial nylon retrogressing somewhere onto itself. Let us suppose that this nylon is able to traverse itself without damage, in a way that is easier than on the board, well then, you will see that this circle of retrogression can be placed at every point of its trajectory. The essence of the bottle is precisely constituted by its ubiquity.

That is why, of course, the questions that I pose to the mathematician horrify him. There are other methods to formulate the consequences of this ungraspable circle of retrogression, and what I represent for you here, because I think that it is all the same, however horrible to look at its construction may be, more graspable, not to your mental habits, for once you begin to try to manipulate this bottle a little, you will see what difficulties you are going to have. But all the same, that these mirages are much more striking than if I were to content myself with some symbol and with some calculation; you would not at all have the feeling that this makes sense, but it is clear that if I ask you by means of this to locate certain things that I (14) am not going to make you sense now. You can practice it by yourselves to verify its importance: the fact is that to go from a point (a) to a point (b), which are here represented on the circle of retrogression, if we take a certain type of path there and back, we cut the bottle in a certain fashion which leaves its characteristics intact, namely, that we cut it - if that amuses you - into two Moebius strips, that is to say two non-orientable surfaces like that.

If on the contrary, we proceed in a fashion which seems to be only slightly different, if you wish, the first trait is the same, but the other trait happens in a different way, well then, we also cut the bottle, but we transform it into a sort of pure and simple cylinder, in other words something perfectly orientable, into something which has a front and a back, which is absurd, the front not being in a condition to pass, except by crossing an edge on the back side.

This only imaged, even though it is left in suspense here, we could enter into greater detail, see to what the divergence of these possibilities refers to and if we have enough time I will have the opportunity of showing what it serves to figure.

You will even see that there is here a good cut, one which reveals the surface in its true nature, which is that of a non-orientable surface, and a bad one which dodges it, and which reduces it to a different surface, and in any case one that is more banal, more common, more accessible to intuition, because moreover, you know (15) that historically, it is a curious thing, in a field like mathematics, where from all time recreation has served in many cases as a way into the true problems, it is in higher mathematics, in pure mathematical speculation that there appeared first of all these strange topological beings, and that if they descend to recreation now, it is secondary.

This is a procedure strictly opposed to all our observations in the other fields of mathematics, if only to repeat that no one should enter here if he is not a topologist, as was formerly said at the door of certain schools of thought: “let no one enter here if he is not a geometer”.

Do we have here then the function of this famous desire of the analyst: to be the one who knows how to cut out some figures in this a-cosmic surface for nothing is unannounced in the field of thought and of history; is Carlyle's work, *Sartor resartus*, the tailor re-tailored, only in a way the announcement and the prefiguring of what the subject is going to undergo with Marx and Freud?

Undoubtedly there is something of that, there is something which, in analysis, echoes what Carlyle's title alone carries: the philosophy of dress, and it is not for nothing that we begin to enter into the field of the analysis of desire with the term *Verkleidung*, which is so futile, with the presence in the word of the term dress, *Kleid*, which the term *déguisement* allows to escape in French.

(16) But *Verkleidung* is something else. It has to do with dress.

But then the phrase of a dead queen speaking about her son will serve us: “well cut, but must be sewn up again”. And also in the field of analysis, undoubtedly everything depends on the efficacy of the good cut, but also to be considered is the way that, this cut having been made, it allows us to have the garment, the garment behind which there is only ..... perhaps nothing, it is only the garment that is at stake, turning the garment it in a different way; the *Sartor resartus* in question, of which I want to speak to you today - I highlight the fact that it is not the patient, it is not the subject, it is the analyst.

Because what I want to try to bring to life for a moment, and to image for you, is a certain difficulty that the analyst has with his own theories. I will take this up in the text - I chose it because it is the last one that has come into my hands, it was not I think published in the last issue of the *International journal of psychoanalysis*, recording the Stockholm Congress where this paper was read.

It is the work, let us say, of a young woman, or one at the limit of the moment when this term young begins to take on a vaguer sense, she is not a young analyst either, she is all the same in a rather peculiar position in this curious *milieu* which is (17) the analytic community, let us say that in the English Society she represents a sort of baby for all of them. She is, faith, very active and very sharp, very intelligent, as you are going to see and after all, does not lack some daring, a daring of which the title of her paper carries the trace because, in short, she puts in question one of the terms that has passed, been woven, integrated in the most current fashion into psychoanalytic experience. She opens things out in a certain field that is properly educational, in short a really English style of psychoanalysis and of course, to speak about this style is not to decide about doctrinal orientations, for doctrinal orientations must oppose one another, even struggle with one another within this general proposition which all the same has a formative reference. The title is then: “The unconscious exploitation of the bad parent to maintain belief in infantile omnipotence”.

It is a matter here of showing along what path a practitioner comes to put in doubt, something that everything that she has been taught as being the mainspring of analytic experience revolves around, because of the paths this teaching, this direction has led her onto. She becomes aware that everything that is ordinarily said about transference, namely, a mistake about the person, the reproduction, in the relation to the analyst, of experiences one had with parents, has led to putting the accent in a more and more prevalent way on the effects that were produced in (18) the development of the subject, by what can be called for example, as a characteristic sign, an inadequate emotional conditioning. Minds are led more and more towards this developmental aspect that the good parent is the one who takes care not to contribute, at every phase of the development of the child and of the needs which correspond to it, this something which is not going to produce what is called "emotional disturbance", in short to centre the business around an ideal of affective formation, where what is involved is something about a relationship between two living beings, one having needs, the other being there to satisfy them, and that, in a way, the outcome, the good formation depends on questions of harmony, of appropriateness, of the stages of care.

That an analyst raised in this environment ..... moreover there is no reason to be surprised because this aspect, this slope, is all the same only the bottom of a slope. Analysis has in no way come out of that, and what we have to deal with is not what its praxis, in a certain field, in a certain *milieu*, directs itself towards in a fascinated way. It is of course from a completely different experience that we begin, namely that this appears as the possible source of what is effectively involved, namely the ectopia of a response in the child to these so-called educational misdeeds, which is there ectopic, present, in the analytic field with respect to the analyst: this is what is called the transference.

(19) One must all the same know, of course, if one accords importance to my formula, whether they can be applied. Meaning what? Translated, and it is I myself who contributed a translation: transference is deception (*tromperie*) in its essence. Now then, if that is how things are, one ought to be able to give weight, vigour to the equivalence between transference neurosis and deception neurosis and why not? Let us try.

Whom is one deceiving? If transference is indeed this something by which the subject, within the range of his means, establishes his position at the locus of the Other - and there is no need for a lot of references to confirm this for us - it is a matter of knowing whether the transference interpretation which limits itself to noting that what is displayed and represented in the behaviour of the patient towards us comes from elsewhere, from further back, from a long time ago, from his relationships with his parents. If he interpreted it in this way, he perhaps favoured this deception. This at least is the question that of course I am raising, but for today, I put forward to you, as being precisely the question raised by our analytic hope, by this precious person, whose first name as it happens is Pearl.

After some salutations to the authorities of her *milieu*, she correctly poses the question: how can one discriminate, in the return of the "traumatic" experience in transference, in the analytic situation the exploitation, she says, she expresses herself very well, of these traumatic experiences for the maintenance, she says, of the omnipotence, or the all-powerfulness well known in common analytic

references, as being those which belong to the child and, moreover, to the unconscious.

In other words, someone, an analyst, poses in the proclivity, the present slope, the aspect followed by analytic experience, poses the question as to whether, no doubt, this interpretation of transference which has from its import as a rectifying experience and as an operation, which is important, whether limiting oneself to this field does not mean for the analyst, in so far as he is the Other, the Other of the Cartesian subject, this God of whom I told you, that it is not so much a question of knowing whether he is not a deceiver, but what Descartes does not bring up, whether he is not deceived. And if Descartes does not bring it up, it is for a reason, it is because this non-deceiving God, to whom he remits so generously the arbitrariness of eternal truths, have people not always sensed that there is here some deception on the part of the great gambler, who here advances masked. For what does it matter to him to leave Him with His truths, if he, the subject of the *cogito*, removes from Him after all the only thing which counts for him, his certainty, of being the one who thinks, *res cogitans*. God may well be the master (21) of eternal truths, it is not even guaranteed in this remitting that He himself knows it.

Now then, this indeed is what is involved for the analyst, namely, to know up to what point that which is involved, namely the structure of a subject, is something that one can radically and purely refer to this double register of a certain normativity of needs, in the midst of which there intervene, in a more or less opportune fashion, these incidences that formerly were called traumatic, but that people tend more and more with time, to reduce to what is called cumulative traumatic effects, in other words to dissolve into something or other which gives the quite simple reason which is always necessary to account for the fact that your daughter is dumb, namely, that there was indeed something that, at some moment or other, did not go right, in other words, whether one does not follow, at least for a certain number of patients, a dangerous path, by allowing them to install themselves in a history which, when all is said and done, appears to organise itself from a lack of certain ideal requirements.

Of course all sorts of "insights", as they say, of points of view, of revealing apprehensions can be installed in this function and this register. Nor is it false to say that the ego can become supple to it, indeed re-organise itself around it, this indeed is what Figure 1, which I apologise for having stayed too long on at the beginning at this discourse today, illustrates for you: everything that is played out (22) around transference and the identifications, at once provisional and successfully refuted, that take their place there, will come to operate on the image  $i'(o)$ , and allow the subject to gather together these variants.

But is that everything? If this ends up by neglecting the equally radical function, the function at the other pole of what belongs to the secret of what analysis has taught us to locate in the  $o$ -object.

I insist that if the  $o$ -object has the function that everyone knows about, it is clear that it does not impact on us in the same way with different patients. I mean that it is necessary in what is going to follow, that I should tell you what an  $o$ -object is in

psychosis, in perversion, in neurosis, and there is every chance that it is not the same.

But today I want to tell you how the *o*-object appears to an analyst who is undoubtedly sensitive, as you are going to see, to her experience. So here then it matters little that the case with which she puts forward her reflections is a "borderline" case, as she says, with crises which have even been vaguely labelled *petit mal*, if not a crisis of depersonalisation, a subject who had up to the age of fourteen years, in the atmosphere of a couple between whom very numerous tensions, shocks, "rows" occurred up to the time the couple divorced when the (23) child was fourteen. A brother three years older and a sister older again. It does not matter to us for the moment that he is described as schizoid, that he suffers, like these subjects that we put on the edge of the psychotic field, from this kind of falseness experienced about his *self*, from this putting into suspense, indeed from this vacillation of all his identifications, all of this for the moment is secondary for us.

What is important is the following: that this patient is psychoanalysed by the analyst in question with a short interruption for ten years; that she had already given a paper on him in 1954 to the British Psychoanalytic Society. In 1954, that seems to be precisely ten years previously, but what is reported to us is from a prior time in which she herself, with regard to this patient, is able to distinguish, with what I would call her little Geiger counter, her little apparatus for radiation from the unconscious, two fields, two periods, two phases of experience possible with such a subject: those during which there is something happening - the subject, I would say, plays the game, in any case he makes astonishing progress and the psychoanalyst is satisfied, I mean that she herself knows well this whole veil effect, behind which there occurs this mysterious exchange, through which the analyst again, indeed in the fields which are closest to her, knows well that there is situated (24) her day-to-day experience of the analytic session. One knows what the discourse of the patient is addressing to you directly, and whether it is going well or not, how it is being played out and what sort of lure is at the same time presented to us, which is at the same time an opening out to the truth, and she knows well when that is happening.

But there are periods, she tells us, when I pick up, I sense something which I know well, she says, for it is far from being simply with patients specified in this way that for her this happens, I find myself in a way, she says, fixed by him.

Since she has to put her little Geiger counter somewhere, she places it there then, this is where it weighs on her, it gives her a slab on the stomach. And from there it does not budge. And what is imprisoned, it is her term, "imprisoned", what is imprisoned inside is herself, the analyst. There you are.

Now then, she has put up with that in a ..... way, she has put up with that for ten years. I am not in the process, however much of an analyst I may be, of being ironic about analyses that last ten years, I am speaking about analysts who put up with such a situation for ten years. It is something different that they put up with the slab that is there.

(25) What does that mean? That means that the results obtained gave the patient space, and that in the end, all sorts of things did not turn out too badly, including the fact that he stopped being a beatnik; he got married, things happened to him which are generally considered to be nice .

It must be said that already, on the occasion of a first return to a period of treatment, it was after one of his little “fits”, one of these crises which came on him, when, a curious thing, he was cutting down a tree. That very quickly brought back to him a certain panic. The second time, it was something analogous. The patient, faith, is on the point of having, because he can no longer articulate a word, of having profuse sweats and of being completely embarrassed because of this at his work.

It is rather striking that in these conditions an analyst who, as I told you, is very well accepted in the field of the official *milieu*, should take on the role of doing, in short, what could be called, as she expresses it herself, a sort of case supervision: she sees the patient face to face. And then, at that point, there happen quite curious things. If at the level of her paper, she says that undoubtedly they had perhaps gone astray for ten years, by allowing the whole emphasis to be put on the side of the ravages caused by these bad parents, by the father on this occasion, the (26) matter is perhaps correctable. In the ordinary theory, let us say that the healthy part of the analyst's ego as it is expressed, which up to then had given the measure of things, was obliged to make way to an extra-healthy part.

When all is said and done, it might begin to be put in question whether the father is really at the origin of these ravages. What is striking is that, in the more and more subtle remarks that the analyst is going to make, and which in a way, a rather interesting thing, in her own report, comes to her, comes to her from a kind of a spoken word, a word from herself whose message she receives. She happens one day to cry out that no doubt the patient must all the same have a great need for the myth of the unsatisfactory father. She says it before thinking. It is she herself who notes it.

In short, before the declarations of this patient, declarations that one would not be surprised to see coming from a psychotic subject, that he has the feeling no doubt that when things are going well, everything is going well, no doubt, but that, nevertheless, it is not him, that he is elsewhere.

One can let that pass as a clinical feature. One can also ask oneself to what degree, and in what measure, the analyst had worked precisely in the direction of leaving intact, of reinforcing even, this falsified aspect of the fundamental identification of the patient.

(27) The analyst is aware of all of that. She notices, no doubt with some delay, that all that can be grasped about this deteriorated relationship with the father, when one is able to see its sign and its source, is that the patient has done everything to maintain it.

The role of the analyst, or rather the reversal in her aims that is produced, is to ask herself why the patient, in short, by a sort of turn-about which comes to her from a grip in which she had allowed herself to be stuck, englobed for ten years, why the



patient, it is the least we might say, was so complicitous in the maintenance of this bad relationship.

It is here that we must say that even though the analyst perceives this possibility, the dissection that she makes of it along the path of this heart-rending revision is, as one might say, completely insufficient.

To make you aware of it, I must myself formulate, I mean not in a decisive, definitive fashion or in a radical one, but at the level of what is involved, namely of desire, there again, if one gives a sense to the formulae that I put forward, if one can admit that at a particular detour in my discourse I said that the desire of man was the desire of the Other (with a capital O), and if this is essentially what is at stake in analysis, where is this desire of the Other presented.

(28) The desire of the Other, in this radical field where the desire of the subject is irreducibly, not tied into him, but precisely constituted by this torsion that my bottle here tries to represent for you. This is untenable and requires an intermediary.

The major intermediary, the one with which there is no question, is the law, the law supported by something which is called the Name-of-the-Father. Namely, a quite precise and articulated register of identification whose major reference points I was at one time prevented from highlighting, with the consequence that I will not do so in the near future.

But at the level that we are at, what we have to see is that in the transference, what is involved is always to supply by some identification, for the fundamental problem: the liaison of desire with the desire of the Other.

The Other is not desired since it is the desire of the Other which is determining, it is in so far as the Other is desiring.

At one time I articulated this around the *Symposium*. Alcibiades approaches Socrates and wants to seduce him, to ravish his desire. And he takes the metaphor of the little Silenic box - I mean in the form of a Silenus - in the centre of which there is a precious object. Socrates possesses nothing other than this: his desire.

Desire as Socrates himself articulates it in Plato, cannot be caught just like that, (29) either by the tail, as Picasso says, or otherwise, since desire, as it is underlined, is lack.

One dwells in language - I even said recently, which is amusing, that there is somewhere in Heidegger, something I had not noticed, a suggestion that there is here a solution to the housing problem - but one does not dwell in lack. Lack for its part on the contrary, may dwell somewhere. It dwells somewhere in effect, and the metaphor of the *Symposium* takes on its value here. It dwells within the *o*-object. Not the Other, a space in which there are deployed the aspects of deception, but the desire of the Other is hidden here at the heart of the *o*-object.

The one who knows how to open the object in the right way with a pair of scissors, is the one who is the master of desire. And this is what Socrates does

with Alcibiades in jig time, by saying to him: “do not look to what I desire, but to what you desire, and in showing it to you, I desire it with you, it is this imbecile Agathon”.

So then, when the patient during a session, which is analysed at length by our analyst, brings along the following symptom : “ things have got to such a stage for him that when he is having his breakfast, he cannot hold his fork without being aware that he wants to stick it in the toast and the butter at the same time”, which are evidently made to be put together but which, at this moment, are still on (30) separate plates. Well, what is instructive, is to see what our analyst, put at ease by the face-to-face position, replies to this short communication:

"The part of you that wants to get better," I am translating the English as best I can, "and which has formed an alliance with me, is fed up with the way that you are incapable of taking a step towards what you are missing. This is the *status quo* that you were speaking about, and it seems to me that the reason why you cannot go forward and grasp one of the objects that you desire, is that you have put your own famished baby 's mouth in both of them. So, since you believe unconsciously that there is only enough food for one mouth, namely, that you can only do one thing at a time, the other one is going to suffer hunger and probably die of it. This is a reason why you have been put on notice to preserve the *status quo*, that is, not to allow yourself to feel" - this is how the patient has expressed it - "that you might do, or might have done something, because this would mean that a part of you, or one of your selves, would have been abandoned for ever and would have died of hunger."

Here is an interpretation of which one can say,

- 1) That it is very circumlocutious
- 2) That she tries to connect very rapidly what was involved at the

(31) beginning and that nevertheless the analyst even puts in question, namely, at all costs the demand; and not simply the demand but precisely what every analysis of demand necessarily converges towards, since the demand, in analysis, is made by the mouth, there is no need to be surprised that what offers itself in the end is the oral orifice, there is absolutely no other explanation for the supposedly regressive stopping point that is considered necessary, to the point of believing that it is obligatory, that it is inscribed in the nature of things, of every regression in the analytic field.

If you cease to take as your guide the demand, with its horizon of identification through transference, there is no reason for regression to culminate necessarily at the oral demand, given that the circle of drives is a continuous, circular circle and that the only question is to know in what direction one goes around it, but since it is circular one goes around it necessarily, obligatorily, from end to end and in the course of an analysis one even has the time to make several circuits.

What is striking all the same is that by a sort of feeling that she is palpating precisely what is involved, she distinguishes something which is exactly our structure, namely, that precisely because the oral demand is made through the same (32) orifice as the invoking demand, that the demand to eat is the same because it is the mouth which speaks, he has two mouths. All this is very ingenious but it completely misses the essential, namely, that in such a symptom,

which is a symptom that has been pinpointed for a long time and which posed a riddle for philosophers, the symptom that I would describe as Buridan's, namely, that of the duplication of the object and not, as it is said, of the liberty of indifference, the allusion, the reference which is made to it by the subject at that moment is essential, the fact is that what is involved is something different to a demand, what is involved is the dimension of desire, and that she does not know how to cut it properly with her scissors.

It is late and I will have to come back to this case, since I must interrupt myself here. For what follows, I hope that the time will not be so long for you to loose the thread of it in your memory.

But what we are going to see as essential is the following, it is that at no time after having had this inspiration that what the subject had maintained throughout the whole of his history is a need to maintain his hold on the adult, his all-powerfulness, the darkness is so thick about the nature of infantile all-powerfulness and its exigencies, that the analyst does not even glimpse what is nevertheless articulated in all sorts of ways in the field of observation, which is that in this case, and with respect to a father, a depressive father let us remember, namely, in whose (33) economy the partial object has a prevalent importance, the fact is that the patient, like every child, but more than others, precisely because of this structure of the father, the patient, I repeat as every child is to different degrees, the patient is himself this *o*-object.

The child's hold over the adult is all there is in children's myths, as the analyst expressed it earlier concerning his all-powerfulness, and it does not have its source where people say it is, in a kind of so-called magic that one also attributes to him, on condition of course that the patient is not capable of speaking about his own magic. Everyone is capable of speaking about this language, but that is not a reason to believe them.

There are, in this observation, very subtle moments where the analyst goes so far as to say : "these sorts of patients have a way of provoking in me a certain *mood*, a sentimental nuance which makes it irresistible for me to believe them". And it is in this fact of believing them that there lies the fatal principle, because she is also very well aware that when she believes them, the patients are aware of it. When they deceive you, they feel themselves recompensed.

There is no other source of infantile all-powerfulness, and I would not say the illusions it generates from its reality, than the fact that the child is the sole, (33) authentic, living, real *o*-object, and that he immediately learns that in this capacity he holds, he contains, the desirer.

Well then, up to the end of this revision of the observation, of this correction which terminates, I will tell you why in what follows, in a kind of general satisfaction, of "happy ending", just as illusory as everything that happened before, the analyst still does not manage to become aware of what is really involved.

She believes that the weapon of the patient becomes the bad child, after having been the bad parent; it was to reduce his father to nothing, to reduce him for his part to being an object. While in fact it is nothing of the kind, that what is

involved is not the effect that the child tried to obtain over the father, but the effect that he experienced from knowing that he was placed at this blind spot which is the **o**-object, and if the analyst had been able precisely to locate the function of his desire, she would have become aware that the patient was having the same effect on her, namely, that she for her part was transformed by him into an object. And the question is why she put up with ten years of a tension which was so intolerable to herself, without asking herself what *jouissance* she herself might have been finding in it. This is the true question and here there is highlighted what is more or less legitimately called counter-transference and which is, as is always the case in a transference neurosis, what is said to be at the source of interminable analyses.

It is true and it is not at all in vain that this word is homonymous and homologous to the term transference neurosis to designate analysable neuroses. And the transference neurosis is a neurosis of the analyst. The analyst escapes into transference strictly in the measure that he is not just right as regards the desire of the analyst.

**Seminar 9: Wednesday 24 February 1965**

I greet you as someone who is happy to see you after a long absence. I am going to specify certain points because of some little uncertainties that have arisen. It is understood that you do not have to go looking for a card every time to come here, even if it only takes place every month. The people who have got their card under different titles and who have, in short, the last time, because of the way in which things are organised, put it in a box where it bears witness then that the attendance of these people is regular. Things will regularise themselves with time. The only people who can come here are those who have their card, and this card will be in a box that the person who controls the entrance to whom one must always refer to know whether the person who passes and says: "I have my card", really has it. You get your card once and for all. For the others, their demand is being (2) processed, some have a card of various colours, a provisional card which I intend to signal the fact that I have to get to know better the person who has been admitted in this way.

I apologise to you therefore for the misunderstandings that may have occurred. Some people put themselves out for nothing. I mark here that I am very sorry about that. I think moreover that it is not extraordinary that these little uncertainties occur at the beginning of an organisation that it is a delicate matter to get right.

Today, I would like to introduce what you are going to hear, with the desire of leaving the field free as quickly as possible. I want to introduce it with a few remarks that are designed to situate for the people who coming here with different prejudices, I mean with the idea that they have of what should be done in this closed seminar, may very easily not realise immediately why you are going to hear expressly what is to come; also, for the rare people who have been coming here for only a very short time.

Today you are going to hear about logic. I suppose that this will not surprise those who come, who have followed my teaching for long enough. For these people, it must have become clearer, with time, in a firmer and firmer fashion, that there are intimate, profound, essential relationships between psychoanalysis and logic.

(3) I do not suppose that all of you here, or even very many, are logicians, and that I can at this point assume that I am speaking to ears that are already alerted, but nevertheless, however little occasion you may have to refer yourselves, for example, to the introductory chapter of any treatise whatsoever on logic, you will see that logicians, in order to situate logic itself, to place it, which is really the minimum that a logician should feel himself obliged to do when he begins a treatise on logic, you will see, you will above all be struck - if I get you to prick up your ears in this respect - by the degree to which the order of difficulty that the logician encounters in placing his science in the hierarchy of the classification of sciences, is really analogous, corresponds, to the difficulties that the analysts may also have. This is only an indication.

Psychoanalysis is a logic and, inversely, one can say that logic could be greatly illuminated by certain radical questions which are posed in psychoanalysis. To stick to the most summary phenomenology, what strikes, what strikes someone coming from outside, when he arrives and when he hears the psychoanalyst expressing himself about the value to be given, about the accent, about the translation of one or other manifestation of behaviour, of one or other symptom, is something in general which is manifested to this newcomer by the idea of a certain (4) absence of logic, or at the very least of a certain overturning, of a certain disorder in logic, and it is frequent to see the objection being advanced, that in psychoanalysis people draw the same conclusion from facts that one would improperly describe as contradictory, because facts can scarcely be contradictory, they can be opposed, operate in an opposite sense ....., one notices immediately the same conclusions.

Does that mean, does that mean that analytic interpretation, the structuring of the theory, holds logic cheap. Precisely not. This psychoanalytic use of logic is a further reason to question ourselves about what its effective rules are, because all the same it does not function without a rule. It is a precious suggestion for us, one that insists that we should devote ourselves more than ever to logic and even become aware that, as I said and as I indicated earlier, that the real question is to see whether there is not some profound relationship ..... with the question which the logicians pose, namely, on what in fact does logic have a hold. For it is not so simple. Logic does not give us the facts or, as they say, the premisses. Logic gives us what? The means to profit from them. On what miracle, on what is this effectiveness of logic brought to bear? Then, after all - the logicians (5) themselves remark on it - one observes logic, one has no need to think about it all that much to observe it, except for the fact that one becomes aware that, in observing it, one sometimes makes a *faux pas* in logic, and that this is what puts us on our guard. But after all, in principle, one is not thinking all the time, when one is reasoning, about following the rules of logic and in a word, one may very well say that to reason properly one does not need logic, namely, the rules of proper reasoning.

But when, like the analyst, one does more, people have the feeling, in any case one gives the impression, that one is going too far. It is there that there begins, perhaps, all the more, the necessity imposed on us that we cannot do without logic. One has this feeling of going too far, that what it has a hold on normally, becomes then a question that must be put in the foreground.

These are quite general truths. There is a second point, which is the one from which I started earlier, namely, the teaching that I was already able to give, to organise, to separate out for some years. In it I highlighted functions that I did not invent. They are not latent, they are patent. They were articulated within psychoanalysis, even among those, among the authors who do not express them with the same concepts, in accordance with the same functions as I do, they are (6) present, they are manifest, they are there from the beginning. One could describe a part at least, a whole slice, a whole aspect of what I articulated, as the attempt to situate, to establish, a logic of lack. But to say that is not enough. During my last discourse, the one at the beginning of February, for example, you were able to see, there being articulated, being posed, two horizons, in two poles,

the functions of the ego-ideal and of the ideal ego, for example, a pivotal, determining function that the *o*-object, in its two opposed terms of identification, you saw, heard me, articulating it in a certain fashion which it seemed to me to be able, at least for those who were already sufficiently engaged in this path, for those at least, to give some satisfaction, which means it manifests itself, it is taken up at the level of the subject, and at the level of this privileged, singular object which is called the *o*-object, at the level of different forms, that are more or less alluring, of identification, at the level of the paths through which we put to the test this function of identification, what I called the paths of deception or of transference. We have here the planes that it is not enough to enumerate, or indeed to caress in passing, to believe that we possess the key to what has to be handled there. It is from the same level that these planes are articulated, and are articulated in a way which ought to be all the more precise in that it is newer, in that it is more unusual; (7) have no doubt about it, this new logic will become, it will find in a sufficient number of minds its articulation and its practice for the subject, its commonplaces, if I can express myself in that way, expanding and becoming the organising foundation of our research and from there, passing to the outside, filtering, osmosing to the outside in such a way that someone who in other domains encounters logical impasses, precisely recognises that there there is being forged an apparatus which is of a use, which as one might expect, of course, infinitely surpasses the order of simple practical rule to be used by the therapists who might be called psychoanalysts.

Among these essential, and truly enormous, pre-eminent, almost crushing problems, and not simply in our domain, the question of whether one is essentially a subjective construction is a primary question. This question of the one, in so far as I hammered it out at length, as I might say, for almost a whole year, three years ago in my seminar on identification, this question of the one of the unary trait, in so far as it is the key to the second type of identification distinguished by Freud, this question of one is essential, pivotal for this logic whose status it is a matter of establishing, and which will be what I intend to direct the remainder of my (8) discourse towards up to the end of this year.

If this one is constituted subjectively, does this eliminate the fact that this constitution may be real? Here is the problem, here is the problem to which there was destined to contribute a reflection, a meditation, which was extraordinarily ahead, very exactly twenty-five years ahead of anything that minds were able at that moment to receive, the meditation of Frege in the specific domain within which one has to take up its status, namely that of arithmetic.

It is for that reason that we have put forward the reference, the terminal point of our discourse this year and it is also so that this may not be a kind of simple sign made in the middle of some island, of some abandoned Philoctetes who has been crying out in vain for years, and all we would be doing for our part also is repeating this passage, this indifferent cruise; that obviously here something important was happening. I do not want to insist either that its essence passed elsewhere. No. This is never true. The essence of a research does not pass elsewhere. It is to the very locus of the discovery that we must return if we really wish to receive its imprint, its brand and also pick out its repercussions for us.

This is why, the last time, I asked one of those here, who are for me a sign of the (9) truth that what, I believe, we have to say in psychoanalysis, goes way beyond its therapeutic application, that the status of the subject is essentially involved in it; it is in so far as I saw here, receiving this sort of response which effectively testifies to me that this is not a hope that is up in the air, that effectively there are interested, from a certain position, a certain number of minds on condition only, as I might say, that they are open, that they have what should remain at the basis of every layer of learning, namely a certain ignorance, a certain freshness, those for whom the usage of concepts is not something that they have always known, that ..... when one refers to the good practical wisdom of Mammy and Daddy, one can always allow to speak those who speculate, one can also allow there to pass in the distance the cries of indignation, which pass to the right or to the left between this or that disorder in the world.

Everyone knows that reality consists in not letting oneself be touched. What one calls reality is too often only, and it is with this that we have to deal in psychoanalysis, referring the function of reality, for us analysts especially, to a certain co-efficient of mental deafness. That is why the reference by psychoanalysis, which is too often put forward, the reference to reality, ought (11) always encourage us to a greater reserve, to some mistrust. Thank God, there has come to me a new class, a new generation of people who are not deaf, to respond to me. It is one of these that today I am inviting to speak, to respond to another, to one of those who the last time was kind enough to render us the service of introducing here the discourse and the question of Frege, to respond to him, to open up for you also the different ways in which we wish there should intervene anyone who has been admitted here, and the fact that this room is full, sufficiently proves that I am not putting any artificial barrier to it, that I allow anyone whomsoever to present himself, with the manifested desire of taking part in our dialogues, that I place no barrier to it, but because I make this welcome so broad, I would ask you to bring me, whatever the form of your answer may be, to bring me the testimony that this behaviour of mine is justified.

Leclaire, who the last time gave, before Duroux whose paper I am alluding to, Leclaire is not there today because he had a long-standing engagement. He had to speak in a foreign city, in Brussels specifically, so that what today may be contributed, referred to what Leclaire said here cannot take place today. Thanks to this I do not have to deplore too much something which is regrettable in itself, that after I had asked that all of those who had the advantage of (11) this roneotyped text, which was put at the disposal of one and all, that whoever wanted it should commit himself to contributing a short written remark. I did in fact receive a certain number. They do not go beyond six in number which is small given the fact that thirty-five of Leclaire's texts were taken from the place from where I said they could be found.

I make no further comment on the fact of this lack. I said, I warned clearly, that I would take appropriate action, namely, that it is certain that I cannot, it is not my aim to make of this gathering, described as a closed seminar, something to which there come too many people who, whatever benefit they may draw from it, put themselves in a position of withdrawal that I cannot but see, within this closed seminar, as equivalent to a certain position of refusal.



It is obviously necessary that I should know the measure in which each person is disposed to contribute to what should be here essentially a working session.

This having been said, I had not expressly demanded remarks to be made to Duroux' report. Up to the present I have received none. I would like to receive some after you have heard the response which was planned for, which we were not able to find a place at the end of the last seminar, the response that is going to be given to it now by Jacques-Alain Miller to whom I give the floor.

### **Presentation by Jacques-Alain Miller**

No one has a right to get involved in psychoanalysis who has not acquired from a personal analysis those precise notions which it alone is capable of giving.

“No one has the right”. You are certainly, ladies and gentlemen, I imagine, very respectful of the rigour of this interdiction pronounced by Freud in his *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.

So that a question is posed for me in your regard in particular as a dilemma. If, transgressing the interdictions, I am going to speak about psychoanalysis without having the right to do so, what are you doing here listening to someone who is absolutely incapable of producing the title which would authorise your credit? Or again, if my subject does not belong to psychoanalysis, once again, you who return so faithfully to this hall where you expect to be regularly addressed about problems relative to the Freudian field, what are you doing here?

What are you doing here, you especially ladies and gentlemen who are psychoanalysts, you who have heard this warning, addressed particularly to all of you by Freud, not to put yourself in the hands of those who have not a direct experience of your science.

(2) As Freud says “all these so-called learned men, all these literary people who come to cook their soup on your fire without even showing themselves grateful for your hospitality”.

That if the fantasy of the one who is the head chef in your kitchen, may be amused at seeing a pot-boy making away with this cauldron, which is quite naturally after all very close to your hearts, because it is from it that you draw your subsistence. It is not sure and I admit that I have some doubts that you will be prepared to drink a little of the soup prepared in this way. And nevertheless you are there. Allow me to marvel for a moment at the fact of your attendance and of having for a moment the privilege of manipulating this most precious organ of all those you use, your ear.

It is then your presence here that I am going to try to justify to yourselves by reasons which at least are avowable. This justification depends on the fact which could not have escaped you after the developments which have enchanted you at this seminar from the beginning of the scholastic year, namely that the Freudian field is not representable as a closed surface.

The openness of psychoanalysis does not depend on liberalism, on fantasy, indeed on the blindness of the one who set himself up in the place of its guardian.

(3) This openness depends on the fact that, not being situated on its inside, one is not for all that rejected into its outside, if it is true that at a certain point, which escapes from a topology restricted to two dimensions, their convergence takes place.

That I may be occupying this point for a moment, is what will allow you to escape from the dilemma that I presented to you and allows you to find the justificatory argument necessary for you to be here as listeners in all good faith.

What is at stake then is for me to manage to occupy this point. You see by this, ladies and gentlemen, the degree to which you are interested in the enterprise that I determine, the degree to which you are implicated in its success or in its failure.

What I am aiming to restore here in gathering together scattered fragments in the discourse of Jacques Lacan, ought to be designated by the name of the logic of the signifier, a general logic in that its functioning is formal with respect to all the fields of knowledge which may specify it, including that of psychoanalysis, an elementary logic in so far as there will be given here only the minimal pieces indispensable to guarantee a progress reduced to its linear movement.

The simplicity of its economy should nevertheless not dissimulate from us that the conjunctions which are accomplished there between certain functions are essential (4) enough not to be neglected without unveiling properly analytical reasoning which I will try, by involving myself on a terrain that I know badly, what I will be trying to administer the proof of in effecting, according to purely formal criteria, a summary mapping-out of conceptual aberrations that constrain a presentation, whose merit besides one must recognise, published in Volume 8 of the review *La psychanalyse*, aberrations which can perhaps be deduced from the obvious neglect of this logic of the signifier.

Its relation with what we will call the logic of logicians proves to be singular, through the fact that it treats exactly of its emergence and that it has to make itself known as the logic about the origin of logic, namely, and the point is capital, that

it does not follow its laws, that it falls outside the field of their jurisdiction because it has prescribed it.

Here, in what concerns us, we will reach this dimension of archaeology by a retroactive movement starting, from this field of logic where precisely there is accomplished the most radical miscognition in that it is identified with the possibility itself.

The guiding thread of it will be the discourse of Gottlob Frege in his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* which is privileged because it questions the terms accepted as primary in the axiomatic sufficient to construct the theory of the natural axiomatic (5) numbers of Peano. These terms are accepted as primary in this axiomatic, they were enumerated for you in the last closed seminar, they involve the term of zero, that of number, and that of successor.

None of the deviations afterwards brought to this first vision of Frege will detain us. We will keep ourselves therefore on the hither side of the theorisation about the difference between sense and reference, as well as from the difference of the concept later introduced starting from predication which then makes it function, the concept in the dimension of non-saturation which is as it were the remainder of the difference between predication and identity. This to respond to someone who might reproach the previous presentation for neglecting the concept of saturation.

It is then quite clear that I am not speaking - it would be quite presumptuous - as a philosopher. Moreover of the philosopher I know only a single definition, that of Heinrich Heine, accepted by Freud, quoted by him, which says : "With his night-cap and bits of his dressing gown he stuffs the holes of the universal edifice". The function of the philosopher, that of suturing, is not special to him. What here characterises the philosopher as such is the scale of his field, the scale which is that of the universal edifice. What it is important is that you should be persuaded that the linguists, like the logicians, suture at their own level.

(6) It will be therefore not philosophy but perhaps epistemology that I will be doing here, and perhaps more precisely what Georges Canguilhem who would be very surprised to be quoted here, calls a work on concepts. Here the concepts are the subject and the signifier.

The question in its most general form can be stated as follows : "What is it that functions in the sequence of whole natural numbers to which their progression must be referred?" The question is therefore about what? The reply I give it, before reaching, it is that in the logical process of the constitution of this sequence, namely in the genesis of progression, the function of the unknown subject operates.

This proposition can scarcely fail to be taken as a paradox for anyone who is not unaware, and no doubt, you are now in the picture, that the logical discourse of Frege tries to exclude what, in a theory which is described as empirical, proves to be essential in making the collection of units pass to a unit of number.

What allows you, in this empirical theory, to go from the collection of units to the unit of number, is the function of the subject named thus in an empirical theory.

The unity thus assured to the collection is only permanent in so far as the number functions in it as a name, the name of the collection, the name which had to come to it in order that its transformation into a unit should be accomplished.

(7) Nomination has then here the function of assuring identification. And in the empirical theories the subject guarantees this function of the name which is that of the gift of the name whose essential liaison to nomination is admitted without difficulty and as such, and one can add that [in] this gift of the name to which the function of the subject can let itself be reduced, there originates its definition as creator of the fiction.

Only this subject, specifically designated here, is a subject defined by his psychological attributes. The subject that Frege excludes at the beginning of his discourse is this subject, this subject defined as possessing a power, and essentially as possessing a memory, which allows him to circumscribe this collection and not allow there to be lost all these elements which are interchangeable.

The discourse of Frege then, setting itself up from the beginning against the psychological foundation of arithmetic, excludes the subject from the field where the concept of number has to appear.

What it is a question of showing, is that the subject is not reduced in its most essential function, to its psychological power.

You know that the discourse of Frege develops entirely from the fundamental system of three concepts: the concept of concept, the concept of object, the concept of number.

(8) And from two relations, the relation of the concept to the object, the relation which is described as that of subsumption; the second which is the relationship to the concept of number which we call assignation. The schema is therefore very simple. I reproduce it.

It is clear that this opening is the mark of the relation of subsumption as such. The definition of the concept as Frege gives it is not surprising, in that it situates itself in the line of the most classical thinking since its function is that of gathering together. But the unusual thing here, and what is specifically logical, is that the concept is defined only by the relationship that it has to the subsumed. The object which falls under the concept takes on its meaning from the difference to the thing, which is simply a body occupying a certain spatio-temporality in the world. For here the object is simply defined by its property of coming under a concept without having regard to the determinations that an investigation other than logical may discover in it. It is therefore essentially deprived of its empirical determinations.

It appears then that the concept which will be operational in the system, will not be the concept formed starting from determinations but the concept of the identity to a concept.

It is by this reduplication that we enter into the logical dimension as such. It is essential to see that the entry into the logical dimension as such is produced by the appearance of identity.

(9) It is thus that, in the work of Frege, it is only apparently a question of the concept, for example: the moon of the earth. What is involved in fact is the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth. For since it is a question of the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth what comes under the concept is not the thing as such but only the thing in so far as it is one.

The assigning of number, the second relationship, is deduced from this subsumption as extension of the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth.

One seen then that what comes under the concept moon of the earth is the moon but that what comes under the concept identical to the concept moon of the earth is an object, it is the object :”moon of the earth”, namely the unit. Hence Frege’s formula: the number assigned to the concept F is the extension of the concept identical to the concept F.

This tripartition of Frege has then the effect of only leaving to the thing the simple support of its identity to itself; hence it is the object of this concept.

The foundation of Frege's system is then to highlight in the function of identity in so far as it is what accomplishes the transformation of everything into an object to leave to it only the determination of its unity.

(10) For example, if I try to collect what comes under the concept of “a child of Agamemnon” I would have these children whose names are: Chrysothemis, Electra, Iphigenia and Orestes. I cannot assign a number to this collection except by bringing into play the concept of the identity to the concept: child of Agamemnon.

Thanks to the fiction of this concept each child will intervene here in so far as there is applied to itself what will transform it into a unit, what will make it pass to the status of an object that is numberable as such. Logic here originates from the conjunction of the function of subsumption, that is to say of gathering together, with the function of identity through which the point is capital; we will see its incidence later, the subsumed being brought back to the identical. And the name of the subsumed collection is to be a child, to be able to become four.

The important thing here as you already grasp, is the unit that one can describe as unifying of the concept as an assignate of number, is subordinated to the function of the unit as distinctive. The number as name is no longer then the unifying name of a collection but the distinctive name of unit.

The one, this one of the identical of the subsumed, this one is what every number has in common since it is above all constituted as a unit.

(11) At the point of development that we have reached, I think that you will sense the weight of the definition of the identical that I am going to put forward, in the fact that it is the function that assures identity which allows the things of the world to receive their status as signifier.

You understand, that in what concerns this definition of identity in so far as it is going to give its true meaning to the concept of name, it can be deduced that it ought to borrow nothing from it to this end in order to be able to generate the possibility of numeration.

This definition, which is pivotal in his system, Frege borrows from Leibnitz. It is contained in this short sentence: *eadam sunt quorum unum potes substitui alteri salva veritate*, things are identical when one can be substituted for the other without truth being lost.

What is accomplished in this formula, which might appear anodyne if Frege himself had not emphasised it, you can measure its importance, is the emergence of the dimension of truth as necessary for identity to function.

As a logician occupied by the genesis of number, Frege only uses this definition in so far as it allows the leisure of modifying it in a definition of identity to itself. And there we touch on a still more radical point than the one aimed at in the definition (12) of Leibnitz, since after all the definition of truth is much more threatened when identity to itself is concerned.

If one follows the sentence of Leibnitz, after all the failure of the truth, this loss of the truth in substitution of one thing for another, this loss whose possibility is opened up for a moment by the sentence of Leibnitz, this loss will be immediately followed by the establishment of the truth by a new relationship, for if I substitute for one thing a thing which is not identical to it, the truth is lost, but it is found again in that this new thing is identical to itself.

While if a thing is not identical to itself, it subverts from top to bottom the field of truth, ruins it and abolishes it down to its very roots. You understand the way in which the safeguard of the truth is involved in this identity to itself which guarantees the passage from the thing to the object. It is in the field of truth that the identity to itself emerges. And the identical is to be situated in the field of the truth in so far as it is essential to what can be safeguarded in this field.

Now let us make Frege's schema function a little, this so simple tripartition, namely to make it function; let us go through this regulated circuit that he prescribes for us: let there be a thing, X, in the world. Let there be a concept of this X. The concept which is going to intervene here is not the concept of X but the concept of identical to X. This is the object which comes under the concept identical to X, X (13) itself. In that the number, and this is the third term of the circuit, the number that one is going to assign to this thing which has become object by this translation, will be the number one.

I took X, which means that the function of number is repetitive for all the objects of the world. This repetition which ensures that everything, by passing to the concept of identity to itself, then to the concept of the object produced, makes emerge the number one.

It is starting from his ternary system, in so far that it is supported by the function of identity, that Frege can accomplish the generation that he pursues of these sequence of whole natural numbers, in accordance with an order which is the following, first of all the generation of zero, then the generation of one, finally the generation of successor.

The generation of zero is admirable in its simplicity which is to produce it as follows: zero is the number assigned to a concept which is not identical to itself, in other words, a concept not identical to itself as the truth exists: the object zero and the number, then, which qualifies the extension of this concept, is the number zero.

In this generation of the zero, I highlighted that it is sustained by this proposition which is necessarily prior to it, that the truth exists and must be saved.

(14) If no object corresponds to the concept not identical to itself, it is because the truth must persist. If there are no things which are not identical to themselves, this is contradictory with the very dimension of truth.

It is in the decisive enunciation that the number assigned to the concept of non-identity to itself is zero that logical discourse is sutured. But here I am going to go decisively beyond Frege's statement. It is clear that to realise this primary suturing, it was necessary to evoke, at the level of the concept, this object which is not identical to itself which found itself subsequently rejected from the dimension of truth and which zero which is inscribed in the place of the number, treats as the mark of exclusion.

There is not, at the place of the subsumed object itself, in that place within the system, there is no writing possible and the zero which is inscribed there, which can be inscribed there is only the figuration of a plane.

One is now generated from the fact that zero as number, is able to become concept and object. If it is necessary to pass by way of zero to generate one, it is because what I said about the X was only a fiction. We are here in the logical domain and one does not have the right to give oneself an object of the world. That is why once you have generated the number zero you finally lay hold of a first object. That means that Frege counts as nothing this object (15) that he had to evoke and reject primordially.

Now then, how is one generated starting from this first object which is the number zero? Well, you give yourself the number identical to the concept of the number zero. At that moment, the object which falls under this concept identical to the concept of the number zero is the object number zero itself. And therefore the object which must be assigned to this concept; and thus one is produced.

You see then that this system operates thanks to a translation of the elements defined at every place in the system. One has the concept of the number zero and the number zero becomes object in order finally to produce the number one.

I would like to put this formula clearly before you who are beginning to believe that this functioning is a little slow in happening. I would like to pose this formula clearly since it is through it that our whole development will give a consequence, whose value perhaps you are beginning to see, that the zero is counted as one.

This fundamental property of zero of being counted as one, while its conceptual assignate only subsumes under itself the absence of the object, a blank, this fundamental property is the general support of the sequence of numbers as Frege generates it. This is sufficiently characterised, in a less profound research than that (16) of Frege, by being called the successor, namely the successor of  $n$  obtained by the addition of one, while some people are satisfied with the simple presentation of the operation of the  $n + 1$  gives  $n'$ , the successor of  $n$ ,  $3; 3 + 1$  gives four.

This operation then can be satisfied by this  $n + 1$ , Frege opens it up to discover how the passage from  $n$  to its successor is possible, in so far as it is guaranteed by this operation. The paradox of this generation you immediately grasp, you are going to grasp it immediately as soon as I produce the most general formula of the successor to which Frege comes. This formula is the following: the number assigned to the concept “member of the series of natural numbers ending in  $n$ ”, follows in the series of natural numbers immediately after  $n$ .

In other words the definition of  $n + 1$  is : the number assigned to the concept number of the series of natural numbers ending in  $n$ . Let us take a number: you are going to see how funny it is, how absolutely astonishing this conjuring trick is. There is the number three. An honest number that we all know especially here. Well then, this number three is going to serve me to constitute the concept “member of the series of natural numbers ending in three”. It happens that the number that one assigns to this concept is four. Here the one has arrived and where has this one come from?

A moment is necessary to grasp the subtlety of the matter. Here is the number (17) three. I skip the concept “member of the series of natural numbers ending in three”, namely, I make three function as a reserve; I no longer take it as a number, I take it this time, if you wish, as a concept. I am going to see what it is made of. So I decompose it. What has three in its belly? There is one, two, three, three objects as you would say. Except that we are in the element of number and in the element of number, you count the zero. In the series of natural numbers the zero counts as one. Namely, what is more, there is the zero and the zero counts as one, this is the fundamental formula for the generation of the sequence of numbers.

From this it arises that it is from the emergence of zero as one an emergence which is produced as the trajectory of the number within the cycle, which determines the appearance of the successor number where the one vanishes. One,  $n + 1; n'$ ; the zero has risen; it has fixed itself as one to the following number which has disappeared.



In such a way that it is enough to re-open this following number once again and to find in it once again this zero which counts as one. This one of  $n + 1$  which is substitutable, you saw it earlier for all the members of the sequence of numbers, in so far as each one, because it is identical to itself necessarily evokes, if it is nothing (18) other than the count of zero, allows there to be given here this interpretation of the sign plus, from the fact that its function of addition appears superfluous, to produce the sequence.

Here then, if you wish, is the classical representation of generation and this is what one must come to: namely, that it is necessary to pass from the absolutely horizontal representation, marked here, to a vertical representation where one sees there being effected, by this so-called plus sign, the emergence of the zero which comes to be fixed here as one, and to produce the difference between  $n$  and  $n'$  which you have already recognised as a metonymical effect.

The one is therefore to be taken as the originating symbol of the emergence of zero in the field of the truth, as the sign of the transgression by which the zero comes to be represented by one, a representation necessary to produce as an effect of sense, the name of a number as successor.

You see then that in a logical representation, the schema is as it were squashed in on itself, and that the operation carried out here consists in unfolding it into a vertical dimension to give rise to the new number.

You see then that if the one constitutes the support of each of the numbers of the sequence it is in so far as it is for each one of them the support of zero. The restored schema presentifies for you the difference between the logic of the signifier and logicians' logic.

(19) It ought then allow you to isolate number as an effect of meaning. The function of metonymy as an effect of zero. You understand then that this proposition sutures the logic, this proposition formulated in the first of Peano's five axioms, a proposition that establishes the zero as a number. This proposition that zero is a number, is the proposition that, decidedly, allows ... to exist as such at the logical level.

This proposition that zero is a number is as such untenable. And its non-validity is sufficiently marked by the hesitation which is perpetuated about its localisation in the sequence of numbers by Bertrand Russell. But its singularity is sufficiently marked for us here, in the fact that this number, counted as an object, is assigned to a concept under which no object is subsumed.

So that in order to count it, it must again be supported by the minimum one in order to attribute to it the decisive one of progression. The repetition which develops in the sequence of numbers is sustained by the fact that zero passes, in accordance with a horizontal approach, crossing the field of truth in the form of its representative as one and in accordance with a vertical act in so far as its representation only takes place because of its absence.

If you have understood this, why is there any obstacle then at least for us here, for (20) no doubt, it would be normal for the logicians to start screaming out loud, why is there an obstacle for us at least here in recognising in the zero, in so far as it is a function of excess, the very locus of the subject which is nothing other than that, the possibility of an additional signifier?

The relationship of the subject to the field of the Other, for now we will put our cards on the table, the relationship of the subject to the field of the Other, is nothing other than the matrix relationship of zero to the field of truth. This relationship in so far as it is matricial cannot be, I remind you, for this proposition was advanced by Jacques Lacan, it must be three years ago, if I can believe the notes on his seminar on identification, this matricial relationship cannot be integrated into a definition of objectivity.

You have, I hope, perhaps better understood it in any case, it was illustrated for you by the generation of zero starting from non-identity to itself, under the influence of which nothing in the world falls.

And this matricial relationship - and here we hold a conjunction that is essential for this logic of the signifier so often called ....., that the representation of the subject in the Other, in the form of the one of the unary trait, is correlative to its exclusion outside of this field.

You know well enough this relationship of the subject to the Other, to the big (21) Other, means that this subject must be represented as struck by this bar of the signifier, which makes it function outside the field of the Other, provided that if one is placed on the side of the subject, it is the big Other which is struck by this bar.

You see then in this exchange, a fundamental exchange, this logic of the signifier. The bar of the big O is nothing other than the relationship of exteriority of the subject to the Other, which constitutes this Other as unconscious in so far as the subject does not reach the Other.

Now if the subject is sustained by the sequence of numbers, there is nothing that can define, define him in the dimension of consciousness, at the level of constitution and progression.

The consciousness of the subject is to be situated at the level of the effects of meaning regulated to the degree that it can be said to be its reflections by signifying repetition, a repetition itself produced by the passage of the subject as lack.

I hope that it is clear that these formulae can, that they could in any case be deduced from a simple transgressive advance into the discourse of Frege. But if there is necessary, let us say, a piece of proof which will show you that this function of excess supported by the subject, at bottom, was always obvious, I will quote for you a passage of Dedekind cited by Cavaillès in his book *La philosophie (22) mathématique*, where moreover he notes that Dedekind here rediscovers Bolzano. It is a matter of giving to the theory of sets its existence theorem. It is a matter of explaining the existence, or the possibility of existence, of an numerable

infinity. And what example does Dedekind give here? He says “once a proposition is true, I can always produce a second, namely that the first is true, and so on to infinity”. It is here then, and quite nakedly, that the function of the subject is shown as the function of the excess which receives, in the language of Cavallès the name of the function of thematisation.

When Dr Lacan substitutes for the definition, puts forward, over against the definition of the sign as that which represents something for someone, the definition of the signifier as that which represents the subject for another signifier, what is being realised here is the exclusion of any reference to consciousness as far as the signifying chain is concerned.

Into this signifying chain, it is in effect necessary to insert the subject, but this insertion inevitable rejects him outside of this chain, which means that the emergence of the subject, its insertion, as we say, or its representation is necessarily correlative to its vanishing. And we have here again a fundamental relationship of the logic of the signifier.

(23) Now we may try to represent such original generatings in time, as it would in fact be natural to do, and time, or at least its linear representation, you should clearly understand that they are here dependent on this chain. And thus that this time which would be necessary to represent this generation cannot be linear, since it is going on the contrary to produce the linearity of the sequence.

So then, if you wish, one could say, and Dr Lacan held these two propositions together: the first emphasis being put, I believe, in the seminar on identification on the point that the subject is at the origin of the signifier. It was put elsewhere, I think in the seminar on anxiety, on the contrary, that the origin of the subject depends on the fact that it is excluded from the signifier that determines it. In other words the subject is at the origin of the signifier; the birth of the subject must be referred to the priority of the signifier. There is no need to be astonished here, to see an effect of retroaction; retroaction is essentially the following: this moment of generation of a time which could indeed be linear and in which, perhaps, one could live.

By preserving simply these propositions, I found, of course here and there in the discourse of Jacques Lacan, the two propositions that must be kept together, firmly held, “the subject is the effect of the signifier, the signifier is the representative of the subject”.

(24) So that it is here that circular time belongs. You see that starting from a simply logical discourse, one can rigorously deduce from it this structure of the subject in its relationship to the signifier, as, with the greatest simplicity, Dr Lacan has hammered it out, a structure in equilibrium.

Of what appears in order to disappear. The opening or closing of a number. One discovers a zero in the number, there is a one to be abolished in the number which closes itself. And there you understand why one always finds one more than what was said, and that this lack also is, that this extra one becomes, of course, when one passes into the real, a lack.

This is the story that the doctor often told you, when he was in the mood for a joke, this story of the shipwrecked people counting themselves on an island, who always find an extra one.

**Dr Lacan:** It is Shackleton who reported that on an Antarctic exploration. They were living in very, very special conditions, a little isolated group. They always find themselves both with an extra one and at the same time with one missing.

**Mr Miller:** This plus sign, then, that we have transformed, we understand that it is not addition, that it is more essentially the summing up in this pseudo plus, and the subject who was summoned to appear in the field of the Other, and who never appears there in person. Here then is the fundamental dimension of a summons and a rejection, a summons and a rejection which structures the division of the subject, and it is there, as you know, since the end of last year, that alienation is situated.

I have scarcely the time, and in any case I have scarcely the competence to speak about this article, about this presentation which I wanted to speak about, and in connection with which I wanted to pose some questions in relation to the logic of the signifier. But after all I am going to try to do it very rapidly; in fact time here is on my side because it allows me not to have to advance too far onto a terrain that I know badly.

I am speaking about the article published in Volume VIII of *La Psychanalyse* under the title of “*Remarques sur la structure psychique: I, Ego spéculaire, corps fantasmé et objet partiel*” by Madame Pierra Aulagnier.

I will pick out then, very rapidly, these points, that alienation here appears to me to be constituted in a primordial reference to consciousness and that one touches perhaps there, I hope that Madam Aulagnier will not hold it against me, a certain Lagachian deviation from Lacanism since alienation, instead of being referred to division can only find its final reference in what is called here the reply of recognition, in fact conscious awareness.

(26) It seem to me subsequently that a sentence from this article, because it allows it to be believed that the Other is not essentially conceived there at first as a field. This sentence which says : “discourse, in this beginning that is alienating by definition, this original and initial misunderstanding, is what bears witness to the insertion of the one who is the locus of the word onto a signifying stage, a preliminary condition for any possibility for the subject to be able, in his turn, to insert himself into it”.

This term insertion, then, seems to me too convenient in that it allows there to be neglected precisely the dimension of the vanishing of the subject because of the fact that he is, at a certain point, afflicted by the adjective bad, belongs much more to culturalist interpretations, this is what is called here entering into the defiles of the signifier. Finally, and here I can only indicate it, because, let us say, I have not worked over sufficiently what Madame Pierra Aulagnier tries to articulate about castration in so far as the big Other is supposed to be the agent of it, and the subject the locus, does not seem possible to me to develop in a reference to the unary trait, which is marked perhaps by this sentence, what must be added is that

what is reflected in the mirror *qua* specular ego, closes off for ever to the psychotic any possibility and any path to identification.

The conclusion of this essential mechanism, as Madam Pierra Aulagnier, it seems to me, says very well, this foreclosure, how is it conceivable without this relationship to this - (minus phi) essentially correlative to the S, in so far as that what is diminished here is barred there.

Is it not the case that this phantasised body, this body that the psychotic sees in the mirror, definitively lacks this unification which alone would allow him to guarantee the distinction of the trait? Is not what is lacking here, then, the subordination that at the beginning we described as essential to the function of the unifying unit, to the function of the distinctive unit and thus the function of the unary trait as the heart, the root of this castration?

Once again I believe that I have done too little work to say any more about it since, effectively, I do not know any more. What on the contrary seems to me, and seemed to me quite compatible and articulated in accordance with the rules of the logic of the signifier, is the point here recalled by Dr Lacan at the beginning of this presentation, which is the **o**-object and it is well said in this article, that it has as a turning point of its constitution the phallus.

It is clear that the function of number can be referred to this function of the **o**, as an effect of metonymy, which abolishes the subject by blocking off its place, because the subject finds himself identified to it.

(28) Because finally, if I dared to say a few more words in relation to analysis, and again no doubt here from a formal point of view, I would say that what marks the metonymy of this **o**- object as the function of number, is that the infinity of desire is a pseudo-infinity, namely, that it is an infinity that can be numbered in so far as it is only a metonymy as it appears in the form of recurrence in the theory of the whole number.

Desire, and here you see the point to which the categories articulated in this logic can serve in analytic algebra, this infinity is to be conceived as the law of the passage from the zero, in so far as it abandons, as the one who is called the devil does, its trace.

By which you see that he is not so clever because one can follow his trace. Again one must put on the green glasses of the analysts to fall into step with him. The step from zero, is the one in its function of repetition.

I would like to have said a word about what this logic of the signifier can teach us in the discourse of Claude Lévi-Strauss which sometimes is apparently so connected up to Dr Lacan. I would say - it is perhaps a little elliptical and a little cavalier, I apologise for it - that it is wrong to discern in the articulation of the combinatory, and in the movement of its variations, the passage of zero, that there is expressed for him the necessity of a reference outside the combinatory such as (29) Lévi-Strauss finds it, by turning back to the most primitive materialisms of the eighteenth century in the structure of the brain. We are spared this return because of what we know about the implication of the subject in the structure and

not about his position on the outside. From this implication of the subject in the structure, in so far as this implication functions there as intimation by the summation that the signifier makes there of the subject.

I am going to end with what I had at one time thought of beginning with, which was to tell you the relationship that this presentation expressly has exactly with what Dr Lacan explained at the beginning of this year. Somebody was astonished at one point that this year's seminar was not called: the subjective positions, as he had said last year. Now it is indeed in a certain fashion subjective positions that are being dealt with this year, that continue to be dealt with here and that, perhaps, no doubt will continue to be dealt with.

What Dr Lacan explained to us right at the beginning of this year, what he tried to do, was to situate in a unique topology the relationships that obtain in the space of language, the circumscriptions of the logical field, of the linguistic field and of the analytic field.

(30) He tried to give the principle of the divisions brought about, according to their particular relevance, by the three discourses of logic, linguistics and psychoanalysis in the space of language.

The relevance for each one of these three discourses - and one sees here how psychoanalysis can give the principle of a new classification - the relevance for each one of these discourses, the position, is the position in which the subject is sustained in relation to the represented that is produced establishes. Which can, which even ought to be said as follows : “the principle of the variation of relevance is the variation of the positions of the subject”.

The totality of what I have said here only has a value of fiction. It is precisely because this has only the value of fiction that one can imagine that one might export certain of its terms elsewhere, which is what a work essentially dealing with concepts consists of, by reducing this logic to

- 1) The action of the signifier as what the subject cannot reach except by being represented and
- 2) to the possibility nevertheless of the signifier.

This action of the signifier and this possibility of the signifier seem to us, I say in parenthesis, to characterise this inversion that Marx puts at the principle of ideology.

(31) Now it may happen that one does not simply accept that this is a fiction.

To those who do not except it, I would say better then, to satisfy them completely. I would say that what was involved here was a farce of which I was perhaps the marionette, but that those who might think it was a farce, should be well persuaded that they have been the turkeys.

**Dr Lacan:** After this extremely complete presentation, which I think the attention it was given sufficiently marks, I am going, alas, simply for form's sake, given the

late hour, to ask if anyone might not complement it by a question which might have suggested itself as being quite specially urgent.

Does Pierra Aulagnier, Pierra Aulagnier who of course was put on the spot in such a flattering fashion, I might say, think that we are not going to remain there and since we already have other texts by Pierra Aulagnier, which are published or not published, and one recently delivered in public, I will have occasion to refer to it in the whole measure that you will see that this radical presentation, this core presentation concerning the function of the zero and of the one, is the absolutely essential pivot by means of which we will be able to set out, to take up questions which I became aware in the course of this period, let us say the word, of isolation that I took recently, to take up again I say in their order, in which I became aware that they had been stated in an order which, undoubtedly, for all those who refer to the text of (2) my seminars of the past years, will appear quite rigorous, I must say, I must attribute to myself a good mark from the didactic point of view, to take up again in their order, all those things whose consequence I showed at the level respectively of the position of demand and of desire, first of all and from a quite fundamental distinction that I made, and in connection with which they were produced around me, and not alone in the article by Pierra Aulaigner, certain slippages which were almost necessary, but which it is still a question of correcting, concerning the distinction of functions which I described, posed as being respectively privation, frustration, castration, which are so essential to distinguish in order to put back in their place the whole theory that we give of treatment in its most concrete form.

I think that what you heard today, which will be roneotyped and put at your disposal in the same conditions, that is to say without any engagement, as one might say, on your part to intervene immediately about it in the same conditions as the discourse of Duroux the last time, I think that you could not expect a better starting base for the rest of what I am going to develop for you now during the month of March and to which then there will perhaps be contributed, first of all in a way that will allow us the time to do it, we will have two closed sessions at the end (3) of the month of March, and in a fashion that will be diversified by the diverse shoots that I will have the time to take up between now and the end.

I pose my question again then. Is there someone who wants to pose an urgent question?

**Seminar 10: Wednesday 3 March 1965**

I apologise: the absence of white chalk probably does not facilitate the legibility of what I have written on the board. I would like to know, however, whether it is completely invisible from some parts of the room in order to be able, I do not know how to change the angle. You cannot see anything, as usual! What are we going to do?

I will speak to you, I will try to speak to you, today, in a way that represents a knot between the trajectory that we have pursued up to now and what is going to open up, I will try to speak to you about identification; I mean the way in which, presenting itself to us in analytic experience, it poses its problem as contributing an essential step in what has taken shape, in the course of a long tradition called more or less correctly a philosophical tradition, in what has taken shape around this theme.

Identification: I have tried to introduce the subject for you by a reflection on what establishes it at the centre of our experience, which is the analytic experience; the subject seems to have presented itself to us in the course of the last steps we have (2) taken; the subject, would be, if we are to believe the straight path onto which I tried to direct your gaze with the theory of numbers, the subject would be, in short, recognisable in what proves, for mathematical thinking, to be closely linked to the concept of lack, to this concept whose number is zero.

The analogy is striking between this concept and what I tried to formulate for you about the position of the subject as appearing and disappearing in an ever-repeated pulsation as an effect, an effect of the signifier, an effect that is always vanishing and re-appearing; there is a striking analogy between this metaphor and the concept that the reflection of an arithmetician-philosopher, Frege - someone asked me. since we have been talking about him here, how his name is spelt - Frege is necessarily led to give a place to the support, to the contribution to this concept whose assignation as number is zero, in order to make emerge from it this one, which is also inextinguishable, always disappearing so as, in its repetition, to be added to itself but in a unit of repetition of which one can also say that we touch in it, that never do we find, in the measure that it progresses, what it has lost, if not this proliferation which multiplies it without limit, which manifests itself as presentifying, in a serial fashion, a certain manifestation of infinity.

Thus the subject shows itself one, as originating in a privation, and, in a way, (3) through its mediation chained, riveted to this identity which, as has been said to you in a recent formulation, in an identity which is nothing other than a consequence of this primary requirement without which nothing could be true, but which leaves the subject in suspense, hanging on to what has been called, what Leibnitz - this Leibnitzian reference was admirably highlighted for you in a closed session - that identity is nothing other than that without which the truth could not be saved, no doubt, but for us, for us analysts, is the question of identification not posed in another fashion, that is, in a way, prior to the status of



truth? How could we not have the testimony of it in this shifting foundation of our experience, which puts at its root what is at the same time, what presents itself to us in a moment which is profoundly the same, as transference in so far as it is referred by us to the double pole of what is involved in love for us as the most authentic and also what is manifested to us of it along the path of deception.

Let us posit that in taking this reference to number, we wanted to find the most radical point of reference, the one where we have to locate the subject in the language that is established, in a way, before the subject identifies himself in it, locates himself in it as the one who is already speaking, before the sentence has its "I", where the subject first of all poses himself in the form of a shifter as being the (4) one who is speaking. The impersonal sentence exists, there is a subject of the sentence. This subject is, first of all, at this root point of what happens, when he says, not that the subject is this or that, but that that something is happening: "it is raining". This is the fundamental sentence and, in language, is the root of the fact that things happen; it is in a second phase that the subject identifies himself in it as the one who speaks.

And, no doubt, this or that form of language is there in its difference, to remind us that there are more diverse modes of giving preeminence, precedence to this identification of the enunciating subject, to the one who effectively speaks it. The existence of the verb "to be" in Indo-European tongues is there, no doubt, to put in the forefront this *Ich* as being the support of the subject, but not every tongue is constructed like that; and one or other logical, or pseudo-logical problem which can be posed in the register of our Indo-European tongues, with different forms of linguistic status, this is why I wanted today, simply as an indication, as a fastening point, a reference point, to put on the board some Chinese characters, and you will see later what they mean and what use I will make of them.

If the logical problems of the subject are not formulated in the Chinese tradition with such an exigent, deep, fruitful development of logic it is not, as has been said, (5) because in Chinese there is no verb "to be". The most usual word in spoken Chinese for the verb "to be" is this *iche*, naturally, how could one do without it in spoken usage? But that it is fundamentally, and this is the second character of the three written on the board on the left, in the most legible form, the most recognisable one in print in which these characters are written, on the right, in the cursive form in which this formula that I am bringing you, I found it effectively in a monastic calligraphy, and you will see the meaning that it had.

The character in the centre of this formula which is pronounced *jou che*, like the body, this *che* is also a demonstrative "this", and that the demonstrative in Chinese is what serves to designate the verb "to be", is something which shows that the relationship of the subject to enunciating is different where it is situated(?).

But we are going to see, for us, for us analysts, the level at which we must now take up the problem, to draw, to situate our current progress, the one which was achieved before our separating, before this interruption of two or three weeks, to situate the importance of what I wanted to designate for you in this relationship between the zero and the one as giving to the inaugurating presence of the signifier, its fundamental articulation.

(6) Here I must designate for you, if not commentate for you, for the commentary on it would be rather long, it is all very well for it to be no more than three pages long, in these pages that I designate for you in *Massen-Psychologie und Ich-Analyse*, translated as *Psychologie des masses*, what is involved is, effectively, a crowd, the reference is to be found in the work of Gustave Lebon, *und Ich-analyse* and *Analyse du moi* - chapter VII about identification.

I only point it out to you so that you will be able to see in it, concentrated in a way, all the enigmas before which Freud, with his honesty, which is so profound and so obvious at the same time, pauses, pointing with his finger to the place where there shifts, where there fails for him, what is satisfying in the reference that he is producing here, at the moment when he wants to give us the key, the soul, the heart of his topography.

Far from formulating for us at this level, I said in this chapter, the terms of identification in a form that is in a way happy, shifting, dialectical, re-emerging from itself, like in the approaches that he had read of it up to then in its developmental description, in short, the stages of the libido, as he had been able to sketch them out and specifically at the point where his thinking turns and where, from the register of the conscious-unconscious thematic he passes to the (7) topographical thematic, specifically in what is called *An introduction to narcissism*. Here the identification to the primary seems to open up easily, by a sort of progress in the structuring of the exterior, to these more precise identifications in which the subject, finding his bearings from the first closed field of this so-called autism, of which so many abuses have been made outside of analysis, found, with respect, with respect to the exterior world, by finding himself in it in his own image, a secondary identification and soon, with reference to what he was dealing with, found this perceptual multiplicity, this adaptation which would make of him an object in harmony with a realised knowledge.

There is nothing of the sort when it is a matter, for Freud, of tackling what is, for the thinking of analysts, a radical agency, identification.

There is nothing that it is less proper to keep distinct, as was always the central flaw of their psychology, to keep distinct this register of the mapping-out of knowledge, in what would be represented for us as purely and simply and blindly, in a way, the necessary high-point of the vital surge - I give it to you here as that which, God knows why, it has to be said, culminates in the function of a consciousness - there is nothing which distinguishes less this perspective of the relationship of the living subject with a world, which distinguishes it less, I am (8) saying, as the understanding of something of another register which is here irreducible, like a piece of waste, while this perspective is adopted as been essential for subjective progress, namely that which, from all time, in philosophical tradition, is called the will.

And what is more derisory after this opening, this profound alienation of the subject from himself, in two faculties was, once it was established, an experience that itself was partial; what is more derisory than to see the centuries continue to pose themselves the question, since these are two irreducible faculties: which then predominates in God?

Is there anything more profoundly derisory than a theology which has not ceased, at least in the Western tradition, than a theology which has not ceased to revolve around this false problem, of this problem established on a defective psychology?

This God who must know everything, from which it results that he does know everything, must then submit to the fact that he knows that he is impotent or must have willed everything, from which it results then that he is evil.

The force of atheism, of the impasses in the notion of the divine, is not in atheistic arguments, which are often much more theist than the others. The lesson is all the (9) same to look for it among the theologians themselves. Let this not lead you astray, there is no digression here, no parenthesis, because moreover this correlative of divine alienation, is the term, and we see it in Descartes indicated at its place, not at all as is said simply transmitted, inherited from the scholastic tradition, but in a way necessitated by this position of the subject in so far as the false infinity of this always reproduced ego, of this repetition which generates this false infinity simply from an infinite recurrence, it is from this that there begins the necessity of the guarantee, of the fact that something here is grounded which is not a lure, and from the deduction of the fact that there is undoubtedly necessary the field in which there is reproduced this infinite multiplication of the unit in which the subject is lost, there should in a way be guaranteed, guaranteed by this Being where simply Descartes has the advantage of designating for us understanding, against will; here we have to choose and only the will in its most radical unthinkableness, the will in so far as it is from it alone that there is sustained the assurance of truth, and that God could have made the truths quite different, but that those that appear to us to be eternal truths, that this God alone is thinkable but we designate in this way the final impasse.

Now, it is around this that there turns an essential moment of Freud's thought for, (10) going much further than any atheistic thinking which preceded it, he does not simply designate for us the point of the divine impasse, he replaces it.

If he tells us that the paternal thematic is the support of a belief in an imaginary God, it is in order to give it undoubtedly a quite different structure, and the idea of the father is not the inheritance, is not the substitute for the father, for the fathers of the church.

But then this father, this original father, this father of whom people no longer speak in analysis, when all is said and done, because they do not know what to do with him, how and what is the status that we must give to this father as regards our own experience?

This is how and this is where there is situated the perspective which now comes into our interrogation about identification in analytic experience.

What are we going, in effect, in this text which I designate for you on page 115 of the *Gesammelte Werke* in German, in volume 18 of the *Standard Edition* for those who read English, on page 500, what is it that strikes us?

It is that having spoken to us about identification there first comes, and with a priority which we must indeed sense is an enigma, that he proposes to us here as

primordial that the identification to the personage of the father is posited at first in (11) his deduction, that the very special, very special interest that the little boy shows for his father is here, put forward as a first moment for any possible explanation of what is involved in identification.

And at this moment, since the analyst could initiate, from his experience and the previous explanations, could be deceived about it, and think that in this first interest there is something that was located later as being what is called the passive position of the subject, the feminine attitude that Freud underlines; this first moment is properly speaking what constitutes an identification, he says, that is typically masculine. He goes further: exquisitely, "*typically*" is the English translation, it is "*exquisit mannlich*" in German.

This primordially which will make him say that in a second moment, what is going to come into play, in terms of rivalry, he tells us, with the father concerning the primordial object, this first moment takes on its value by being articulated in its primitive character; from which there arises also in its relief the mythical dimension by being articulated at the same time as being linked to what, in this way, is produced as the first form of identification, namely *Einverleibung*, incorporation.

So that, at the moment when it is a matter of the most mythical primordial reference, and one could say, and one would not be wrong to say, of the most idealising one, since it is the one in which there is structured the function of the ego (12) ideal, the primordial reference is made in terms of the evocation of the body.

The things that we handle, these terms, this concept that we leave in a sort of haze without ever asking ourselves what it involves, deserves nevertheless to be interrogated. We know that, when it is a question of incorporation as referring to the first inaugural stage of the libidinal relationship, the question, it seems, is not so simple, that undoubtedly something is distinguished there from what we may yield to, namely, to make of it an affair of the representation of an image, the other side of what will later be the dissemination onto the world of our different affective projections; that is not at all what is involved, it is not even a question of the term of introjection which could be ambiguous. It is a matter of incorporation, and nothing indicates that anything whatsoever is to be attributed here to a subjectivity; incorporation, if this is the reference that Freud has put forward, it is precisely because of the fact that no one is there to know whether it has happened, that the opacity of this incorporation is essential, and moreover in this whole myth which serves, which serves for the articulation - ethnologically locatable - of the cannibalistic meal, which is here right at the inaugural point of the emergence of the unconscious structure. It is in so far as there is here a completely primordial mode in which, very far from the reference being, as it is said, idealistic in Freudian (13) theory, it has this form of radical materialism whose support is not, as has been said, the biological, but the body, the body in so far as we no longer know how to speak about it, since precisely the Cartesian reversal of the radical position of the subject has taught us not to think about it any longer, except in terms of extension.

Descartes' passions of the soul are the passions of extension, and this extension, if we see it through some singular alchemy as more or less suspect after a while, and that we follow its magician-like operation around the piece of wax which, purified of all its qualities, and God knows, what are these stinking qualities that must be withdrawn in this way one after another, so that there no longer remains anything but some kind of shadows of shadows, of purified waste? Do we not grasp here something that is derived from having played one's game with the Other too well?

Descartes slides towards the loss of something essential which is recalled for us, recalled by Freud, in that the fundamental nature of the body has something to do with what introduces it, what he restores as libido. And what is the libido?

Since moreover this has a relationship to the existence of sexual reproduction but is not at all identical to it, since the first form of it is this oral drive through which (14) incorporation takes place, and what is this incorporation? And if the mythical, ethnographic reference is given to us in the fact that those who consume the primordial victim, the dismembered father, is something which is designated without being able to be named, or more exactly, which can only be named at the level of veiled terms like that of being, that it is the being of the other, the essence of a primordial power, which is here to be consumed, is assimilated; that the form under which there is presented the being of the body, this being, that which is nourished from what in the body is presented as the most ungraspable part of being, which always refers us to the absent essence of the body, which from this aspect of the existence of an animal species as bi-sexual in so far as this is linked to death, isolates for us as living in the body precisely what does not die, what ensures that the body, before being what dies and what passes through the toils of sexual reproduction, is something which subsists in a fundamental devouring which goes from being to being.

It is not in any way philosophy, or belief, that I am preaching here; it is the articulation, it is the forms of which I say that it must question us that Freud puts it at the origin of everything that is to be said about identification. And this, have no doubt about it, is rigorous, I mean that the very term life-instinct has no other (15) meaning than to establish in the real this sort of different, questing, transmutation, this transmutation of a libido that is immortal in itself. Which mean what? What should such a reference be for us? How conceive that it should be put first by Freud, in the forefront? Do we really have here an originally established necessity of what is involved in unconscious reality, in the function of desire, or is it a term, is it a stumbling block, is it something encountered by the experience that has been set up?

Let us pursue the reading for that; we see that it is in a second moment that there is established, with regard to this primary reference, that there is established the dialectic of demand and of frustration, namely what Freud poses for us as the second form of identification, the fact that, in, from the moment that there is introduced the love-object, the choice of object, he tells us, *Objectwahl*, this is where there is also introduced the possibility, through frustration, of identification to the love object itself.

Now, just as it was striking in the first formula that he gave us of identification, to see in it the enigmatic correlation, this is how I am underlining it for you, of the

*Einverleibung*, incorporation, in the same way here also Freud pauses before an enigma; he tells us that we can undoubtedly find, easily, the kind of logical reference of what is involved in this alternation which goes from the object to (16) identification, from the object in so far as it becomes the object of frustration; that we have here nothing other than the alternation, he tells us, - it is in Freud's text and it is not I who brought these two terms into circulation - the alternation between being and having.

That from not having the object of choice the subject comes then, and the terms subject and object are here put in the balance, expressly articulated by Freud, but he also tells us that this is only a mystery for him, that we find ourselves here before something completely opaque; can this opacity in any way be lightened, be settled? Is it not along this path that there is pursued the progress towards which I am trying to lead you? We shall see.

The third term, Freud tells us, is that of a kind of direct identification, from desire to desire, the fundamental identification through which, he tells us, it is the hysteric who gives us the model of it; for him or for her, for this kind of patient not much is needed to locate in some sign, wherever it may be produced, a certain type of desire. The desire of the hysteric grounds all desire as hysterical desire, the shimmering of echoing, the infinite repercussion of desire on desire, the direct communication of the desire of the other is established here as a third term. It is not at all sufficient to say that the grouping of what Freud, nevertheless, in this (17) essential chapter, thinks he is bringing together, remains not alone dissociated, enigmatic, but completely heteroclitic.

Now it is there that I think I have introduced a series of structures, destined not alone to gather together, to allow to be situated as the foundation piles, the essential points of attachment that Freudian thought maintains, when it obliges us at least to cover the field, the square, of which it marks the limits, but also to integrate to it, to situate in it what our experience has since allowed us to experience, the paths and the pathways along which the development of this experience led us, allows us to perceive the well-foundedness of Freud's initial apperceptions and, moreover, why not, where they were lacking.

You may well believe, that these lacks are precisely not at the conceptual level but perhaps, and we will see how, at the level of the experience.

I introduced at one time a tripartite division which has the merit of anticipating what someone in the course of a recent talk, recalled to you as being the title which I wanted at one time to give to this year's seminar, which it was said that perhaps I was connecting up with more than I had dared to promise myself: namely, the subjective positions. It is nothing else that is involved, in what I introduced five (18) years ago, or even more, by recalling how essential it is, the degree to which our experience obliges us, to confront, to distinguish the levels of its structures, the terms of privation, frustration and castration.

All analytic experience since Freud, is inscribed at the level of an exploration, that is more and more advanced, and more and more investigative of frustration, which is properly speaking articulated as constituting the essential of the situation and of

the progress of analysis, for example, and that the whole of analysis happens at this level.

In truth, this limitation of the conceptual horizon has as an effect, in the most manifest and clearest fashion, to render properly speaking more and more unthinkable what Freud designated for us in his experience as being the stumbling block and the end point - and here again people find this satisfactory - the end point of his experience, namely, what is picked out in his text as been the rock, which is in no way an explanation, namely castration.

Castration, in the terminal experience of an analysis of a neurotic, or a feminine analysis, is properly speaking unthinkable if the analytic operation is nothing other than this combined experience of demand and of transference, around which the subject has to experience the gap which separates him from the recognition of the (19) fact that he is living elsewhere than in reality and that this gap, this experience of the gap is all he has to integrate into analytic experience.

The articulation of castration to frustration, just by itself, requires us to question in a different way and in a more fundamental fashion the relations of the subject, than the way which can, as it were, be exhausted in the double relationship of transference and demand.

This mapping-out necessitates precisely, as a preamble, that the status of the subject as such should be posed and this is what constitutes the isolation, that I am not moreover the only one to have formulated, of the situation of privation. No doubt, in a confused fashion, but in an articulate fashion, someone like Jones who formed part, all the same, of a generation which had a greater horizon, someone like Jones gave to the function of privation - when it was a question for him precisely of questioning the enigma of the relationship of the feminine function to the phallus, that is, to the function of privation - its indispensable moment as backbone to the logical articulation of these three positions. This is what made it necessary for us to have first of all posited that the subject, the subject in its essential form, is introduced, as it were, into this sort of radical relationship, that it is unestablishable, that it is unthinkable outside of this pulsation, which is imaged (20) so well by this oscillation from the zero to the one, which proves to be necessary in every approach to number, for number to be thinkable. That there is a primary relationship between this position of the subject and the birth of the one, this is what had to be circumscribed for us around this attention given to the one, which made us see that there are two functions of one: a mirage, which is to confuse one with the individual, or if you wish, to translate this term, the indivisible; and on the other hand, the one of numeration which is something different, the one of numeration does not count individuals, and no doubt the slide into confusion is easy. The idea that this is nothing other than its function has something so easy and so simple about it, that it requires precisely the reflective meditation of someone who is a practitioner of numbers to perceive that the one of numeration is something different.

Difference and otherness are not the same and, no doubt, all of those who from the earliest times have had to meditate on the radical nature of difference, have clearly seen that what is involved in numeration is something other than the distinction of qualities, that the problem of the distinction of indiscernibles, and why, is not

simply one; anything that groups around itself even the identity of qualities, anything that falls under the grasp of the same concept, proves the fundamental distinction there is between the fellow (*semblable*) and the same, or, if you wish, to (21) give it here the resonance of a familiar term, of the similar to the same; the register of the similar is something other than that of the same. The other is joined not to the similar but to the same, and the question of the reality of the other is distinct from any conceptual or cosmological discrimination, it should be pushed to the level of this repetition of one which establishes it in its essential heterogeneity.

What is involved is to interrogate what is at stake for us in this function of the other, how it presents itself to us, and it is this that I intend to introduce today, because undoubtedly the step has I think been taken, easily, facilitated by our last explorations, of what I always meant by introducing, precisely at the level of this question of the other, what is essential for us in order to know what identification means, by introducing the question which so horrified all those around me who preferred to find my message futile, indeed gone uselessly astray, the question described as that of the mustard pots.

The question of the mustard pots, posed first of all as the fact that the mustard pot is characterised by this experiential fact that there is never any mustard in it, that the mustard pot is by definition always empty, the question of the mustard pots poses this question, the question precisely of the distinction between what is indiscernible. It is easy to say that the mustard pot here, is distinguished from the (22) one there, as Aristotle tells us, because they are not made of the same matter.

Thus, the question is easily resolved, and if I chose mustard pots, it is precisely to avoid the difficulty. If it involved the body, as it did earlier, you would see that Aristotle would not have had such an easy answer, for the body, being what has the property, not only of assimilating to itself the matter that it absorbs but, as we have seen suggested by Freud, of assimilating something quite different with it, namely, its essence as body. There you would not have found it so easy to distinguish between the indiscernibles and you might, with the monk, I hesitate to say practising Zen, because you are soon going to spread it throughout Paris that I am teaching you Zen, and what might result from it, anyway, it is all the same a Zen formula and this monk is called Tchi Un. He tells you: "like this body" undoubtedly, at the level of the body, it is impossible to distinguish any body from all the other bodies, and it is not because there are two hundred and sixty of you here that this unit is less real, because moreover in the case of the Buddha, he was something like three hundred and three million, three hundred and thirty thousand, three hundred and three, and it was always the same Buddha. But we have not got that far. We take the mustard pots, the mustard pots are distinct but I think the question is, the hollow, the void that the mustard pot constitutes. Is it the same (23) void or are there different voids? Here the question is a little bit more thorny, and it is precisely rejoined by this genesis of one in zero, to which arithmetical thinking is constrained.

In a word, these voids in effect are so much a single void, that they only begin to be distinguished from the moment that one fills one of them and that the recurrence begins because there is one void the less. Such is the inaugural establishment of the subject.



Someone, before you, in the closed part of my seminar, was able to make coincide, intersect, so rigorously the deduction which coexists between a certain form of my introduction of the subject, that it is not by chance, but the apologue that I give you here about the void and its filling and of the genesis of a distinction of lack as it is introduced at the level of the pint; the "One Tuborg, one" (*Une Tuborg, une*) - I would be the first to have substituted the *garçon de café* for God the creator - "One Tuborg, one" means, introduces the possibility, that afterwards I may ask for another, and nevertheless it is always Tuborg, always similar to itself.

The introduction of "one" is here the essential point at the level of lack. This other subsequently gives the measure or the cause of my thirst, that it also gives me the (24) opportunity to order it for another and, by bi-univocal correspondence, to establish as such this pure other, such is the level of operation where there is generated, where there is first introduced as presence the lack of the subject.

It is starting from there, and uniquely from there, that there can be conceived the perfect bi-polarity, the perfect ambivalence, of everything that will subsequently be produced at the level of demand, it is in so far as the subject is established, is supported, as zero, as this zero which lacks its filling up, that there can operate the symmetry, I would say, of what is established and what, for Freud, remains enigmatic between the object that he can have and the object that he can be.

It is precisely by remaining at this level that there can be pushed perhaps to its term, a quite particular conjuring farce, because it is not true that everything is exhausted for the subject in the dimension of the Other, that with respect to the Other, everything is a demand to have, into which there is transferred, there is established a semblance of being.

The coordinates of the space of the Other do not operate in this simple dyedre[?]; in other words, the zero point, the origin of the coordinates from which we might establish it, is not a true zero point.

What experience shows us, is that demand, demand in analytic experience, is not simply the interest that we might operate on it as the plane and register of (25) frustration, referring the subject back to this establishment, this fallacious setting up of a being, of a being to whom the comparison, the reference, the reduction to the being of the analyst would bring the path to salvation. Analytic experience shows us - after this no analyst can reject it even if he does not draw the consequences from it - that in the operation that is involved there is always a remainder, that no filling of the one, either at the level of the demand to have it, or at the level of the being of transference, totally reduces the division of the subject between the zero and the one; that the effect of the operation is never a pure and simple zero; that the subject, by deploying himself in the space of the Other, deploys a quite different system of coordinates than the Cartesian coordinates; that the zero point of origin does not exist; that the transparent, impalpable, Medusa-like form of the structure of the subject is the one, precisely, which is going to reveal to us from where there arises the quality of the one, which is not at all simply to be a sign, to be the primitive notch of the experience of the hunter, even if, for it is there it was born by chance, that the existence of one and of number, far

from being everything to which it is applied, belongs to the locus where, far from been a consequence of it, it generates the individual, has no need of anything individual to establish that the veritable priority, specificity of number depends on the consequences of what is introduced into the shapes that I am trying to (26) presentify for you under the topological aspect, in the effect on these shapes of the cut.

There are shapes which right away are divided effectively in two by a single cut; there are others of which you can make two, without the shape disappearing, they remain part of a single block. This is what is called, in topology, the connectivity number. This is the usage and the privilege of what I am trying to bring into play before you, since it is for the practical purposes of representation in the form of images, and what I drew today on the blackboard which consists of: the Klein bottle to be a part of a cutting point, a cut, a single one - they might seem to be two because they pass twice through the same point - appear, through a certain feeling of vanity that, in this presentation of my drawings on such a badly lit blackboard, I did not make the image which might have been complementary and which is easy to imagine.

At the level of this mythical circle that I call the circle of retrogression, take two opposing points. Let the cut pass through the whole longitude of the Klein bottle, up to the opposing point, since you have the possibility of making the circle of retrogression return to the first point, in this way you will have, joining apparently two opposing points of the circumference, which I call the circle of retrogression, in this way, you will have a single cut.

(27) The property of this cut is not to divide the Klein bottle; simply to allow it to develop into a single Moebius strip. Bring these two points together so that they are only one, and you will perceive that something was masked from you in the preceding operation, because this conjunction "a", as the figure that is presented here makes you apprehend it, has as a property, no doubt, to leave the Moebius strip intact. But by making appear in it a network of the residue, - the psychoanalysts know it well - this residue that there is beyond the demand, this residue which, moreover, is beyond transference, this essential residue through which there is incarnated the radically divided ..... of the S of the subject, it is what is called the **o**-object.

In the identification operation of primordial privation, there is an effect not simply the manifestation of a pure hollow, of an initial zero of the reality of the subject being incarnated in pure lack; there is always to this operation something especially manifest, arising especially from the frustrating experience which escapes its dialectic, a residue, something which manifests that at the logical level where the zero appears, subjective experience makes appear this something that we are calling the **o**-object and which through its simple presence, modifies, inclines, (28) inflects the whole possible economy of a libidinal relationship to the object, of any choice whatsoever which is qualified as objectal.

This, which is so manifest, is always present; this which gives to every relationship to the reality of the object of our choice its fundamental ambiguity; this something which means that in the chosen, elected, cherished, beloved object, the doubt which is essential for us is always there about what is involved and that

we aim at elsewhere. It is this that analytic experience is designed to highlight, is designed also to make us question ourselves whether the goal of analysis is well and truly to be satisfied with the identification, as is said, of the subject to the analyst or whether, on the contrary, the irreducible otherness makes him reject him as other, and here indeed is the terminal pathos of the analytic experience. Should the question not be for us, on the contrary, the question around which for us there ought to turn, be elaborated everything that constitutes at present difficult problems in analysis, which are not simply the greater or lesser therapeutic result, but the essential legitimacy of what grounds us as analysts, and in the first place, the fact that precisely by not knowing, by not at least having highlighted where there is situated what I call the legitimate operation, it is impossible for the analyst to operate in any way in a manner which merits this title of being a legitimate operation. He is himself a blind plaything, caught up in deception (*fallace*); now this deception is precisely the question that is posed at the end of analysis.

What is there, at the level of castration, but this point, this point that in the tripartite schema, the double entry matrix in which I tried in a first approach to make you locate the way in which there interchange, at each of the three levels of the reciprocal distribution, the terms of symbolic, imaginary and real, to make you map things out in a first approach by speaking, not at that time about subjective positions but, to take simply a Freudian schema about a certain mode of action or state, of exercise, of *habitus*, as one would say in the Aristotelian tradition, and to divide up with respect to these three stages of privation, of frustration and of castration the things to the right and to the left, on the side of the agent and on the side of the object.

I would point out to you, if you consult the summary which was made at that time, that I left completely blank what was involved at the level of the place of the agent of castration. Now what is involved is precisely this final position, the status that should be given to this dimension of the Other at the locus of the word as such in analysis.

Here you sense clearly we are rejoining the whole question of the essence, why not say it in a Heideggerian formula, form of *Weg der Wahrheit*, of the status, if you wish, of the truth.

It is towards this goal that, no doubt, not directly but after some stages in which I will try to articulate better for you the next time the dialectic of demand and of transference in analysis, it is towards this final goal that we are directing ourselves this year.

	A.	S.	O.	
Castration	r	s	i	i
Frustration	A	I	R	
Privation	I	R	S	

**Seminar 11: Wednesday 10 March 1965**

We remained the last time at the threshold of the demand, of the demand which is important for us, the analytic demand, this demand in which there is inscribed the second stage of what, in the matrix that I recalled the last time on the board, of what in this matrix is inscribed as frustration, of what in modern analytic theory is effectively affirmed as central in a dialectic expressly taken under this term, frustration.

The vagueness in which there is sustained this dialectic, which originates from a doctrinal point of view in a reference to the need of the subject, a need whose inappropriateness (*l'inactualité*) is supposed to be what is to be rectified in the handling of transference - this is what pushes me, what has pushed me ever since I have been developing my teaching, to demonstrate its error-generating inadequacies.

To rectify this conception of the function of demand, which is necessary in effect, in a more accurate reference to what effectively is involved in the function of the transference, this is the reason why we are trying to articulate in a more precise fashion (2) what happens through the effect of demand, and how would this not be required if one perceives that in referring to this dialectic of frustration, everything that happens in therapy loses its moorings, is allowed to drift, is allowed in a way to become detached, at the level of a theoretical horizon, everything that constitutes the starting point, the foundation, the root of the Freudian message, namely the way in which it originates in desire and sexuality.

The way in which, for the "I think" of the subject of the *cogito*, it substitutes an "I desire" which can, in effect, only be conceived of as an unknown beyond, always not known to the subject of the demand, while sexuality, which is the foundation through which the subject, the subject in so far as he thinks, is situated, is supported by the function of desire through which this subject is the one who, at the origin of his status, is posed by Freud as the one who, strangely, the pleasure principle radically allows to hallucinate reality.

This status, this point of departure, of the subject as desiring in so far as he is a sexual subject, which is the way that, in the doctrine of Freud, reality is originally, fundamentally, radically hallucinated, it is this that must be harmonised, recalled, co-ordinated, represented, in the doctrine of what happens in analysis itself.

(3) We cannot do it by taking our bearings from the opacity of the sexual thing, from the *jouissance* which motivates in only the most obscure, the most mystagogical, fashion the thing that is involved and that I called somewhere the Freudian thing.

Here there is only offered to comprehension what precisely gives to this word its derisory sense, namely that one only begins to comprehend properly from the moment that one no longer comprehends anything.

So then, how could a technique which is essentially a technique of the word become infatuated by introducing itself into this mystery if it did not itself contain the source of it. That is why it is indispensable to take as a reference, the reference that is in appearance the most opposed to this obscurity, which is falsely described as affective. That is why the starting point, the radical foundation of the function of the subject in so far as he is the one that language determines, is the only starting point which can give us the guiding thread which allows us at every instant to find our bearings in a field.

It may appear strange to some people that our references, this year, should have touched on what, more or less correctly, I hear from here and there in snatches, in a complaining, tone being described as higher mathematics. High or low, what matter. It is certain that it is not for being situated, as it is, at the level of an element, that it is (4) in effect easy. And you should have no doubt, that this misfortunate little bottle, called the Klein bottle that I am putting before you this year, it seems, it seems that for the mathematicians themselves who busy themselves in this domain, which is rather new, or not all that new, everything depends on the reference point that one takes in history, it seems that this little bottle has not in effect, if I am to believe them, the people that I discuss it with sometimes, that it has not yet delivered up all its mysteries.

What matter! It is not by chance that it is there that we have to search for our reference, since mathematics, mathematics in its eternal development, since its Euclidian origin, as you know, for mathematics is Greek in essence, and its whole history cannot deny that it bears the original trace of it, mathematics, throughout its whole history, and always in a more striking, more submerging way in the measure that we approach our own epoch, manifests something which interests us to the highest degree, which is that whatever may be the side that one or other family of spirits takes in mathematics, preserving or on the contrary tending to exclude, to reduce, to anathematise even the intuitive, this intuitive kernel which, undoubtedly, is irreducible (5) here and gives to our thinking this indispensable support, the dimensions of space, the inadequate phantasmagoria of linear time, the elements more or less well articulated by Kant in the *Transcendental aesthetics*, it remains that on this support where, as you see, I did not include number, even though this number, intuitive or not, offers us a so much more resistant kernel, with a consistency, an opacity, as you see, the whole effort that is involved in knowing whether it is successful for the mathematicians to perform this logical reduction of this number, that however successful it may appear for some, leaves us suspended nevertheless on something which the mathematicians testify remains irreducible, this something which makes these numbers be described by the predicate of natural numbers.

But it remains, and I underline it, testified in the most striking fashion, everything that has been constructed more recently and of whose dimension you should have an idea from the fabulous expansion that it represents for about a century, that one grasps there what is already graspable at the level of Euclid, which is, that it is along the path of logical requirements which ensure that, for whatever operation of mathematical construction it may be, everything must be said and in a way that resists contradiction.

(6) And this “everything must be said”, namely, that whatever may be the bridle, the extenuated support of intuition which remains in this something which, assuredly, is not the triangle drawn on the board or cut out on a piece of paper, and which nevertheless remains a visualisable support, the imagination of the relationship between two conjoined dimensions which suffice to subjectivate it, that nevertheless, we have to justify in words the slightest operation, that of a translation, of a superimposition, what legitimates this application of one side onto another side, and of such and such of the equalities on which we are going to establish the most elementary truths about this triangle, this “everything must be said” which carries us, now that we have learned, not alone to manipulate but to construct many other things of a much greater complication than the triangle, we know that this “everything must be said”, that it is starting from there that there has been constructed, elaborated, erected, everything that in our day this mathematics allows us to conceive of, in this extraordinary liberty which can only be defined by what is called the body, namely, the totality of signs which are going to constitute this thing around which for a theory, around which we circumscribe this limit, by imposing it on ourselves to make use only of elements individualised by these letters, plus some signs which join them together. This is called the body of a theory; (7) you introduce into it any equality whatsoever from one of these equations borrowed from this body, with something new that is purely conventional, by means of which you give it its extension, and starting from that, it works, it is fruitful. You are, starting from there capable of conceiving of worlds, not alone of four dimensions, but of six, or seven.

I was reminded recently that the last prize awarded, the Nobel prize for mathematics, which is called Field’s Medal, was to a gentlemen who showed that starting from the seventh dimension, the sphere which up to then remained completely homologous to the three-dimensional sphere, the sphere completely changed its properties.

Here there is no longer any intuitive support, we no longer have anything but the operation of pure symbol. Now this exhausting “everything is said”, because in connection with the smallest theorem, this “everything must be said” leads us to write volumes, this fruitfulness of “everything to be said”, about which I was recently speaking to a mathematician, it is from him there emerged the cry: “but after all, is there not something there which has a certain relationship with what you are doing in psychoanalysis?”.

What do I answer him? “Precisely”. From another angle, this “everything to be said”, once it is done, no longer interests the mathematician, the mathematician and moreover those who imitate him on occasion, the best of the phenomenologists.

(8) As Husserl says somewhere, and precisely in this little book on the origin of geometry, there is, once it is done, this truly “everything said”; it is there once and for all, it only has to be ratified, to put its result somewhere, and start from that result.

This vanishing aspect of the “everything said” exhausted upon a point, of which it remains the construction of which it can be the homologue, or more exactly the

difference when it is a matter of this “to say everything”, if it is here also that we should look for the direction of our operational efficacy.

Undoubtedly, the difference appears here, for otherwise why would there be a need to recommence with each one the exploration of this relationship, which is nevertheless a relationship of saying, that psychoanalysis is.

This is why the radical interrogation about what is involved in language, reduced to its most opaque agency, the introduction of the signifier, brought us to this interval between zero and one, where we see something which goes further than a model, which is the locus in which we are doing more than sense, where we articulate, where there is established, in a vacillating way, the agency of the subject as such, first of all sufficiently designated by the ambiguities in which this zero and this one remain, in the very loci of the most extreme logistical formulation.

(9) I hesitate to make a too rapid reference, which may reach only some ears, to the fact that zero or one, appearing at the final term, are indeed effectively articulated. Why is it one or the other, according to the operations, it is one or the other which will represent what are called, in the formalisation of the aforesaid operations, neutral elements. Or again, that it is in the interval between zero and one that there is situated this something through which, in the set of rational numbers, there is differentiated two intervals between the zero and the one, we can demonstrate the existence of an un-numberable, which is not the case outside of these limits.

But what matter if, once it has been recalled, situated, and provided I can verify its foundations more radically with some people, we have this statute, which notes that whatever degree of logicity, of purification, of symbolic articulation we might arrive at in mathematics, there is no means of putting its development before you on a blackboard in a kind of dumb show. It would be impossible, if I were here in the process of giving you a lecture in mathematics, to make you follow and understand - this is recognised by every mathematician - in a dumb show, by simply putting on the board a sequence of signs.

There is always a discourse which must accompany this development, at certain of its (10) turning points, and this discourse is the same as the one that I am giving at the moment, namely, a common discourse in everybody's language.

And this signifies, the simple fact that this is the case, this signifies that there is no metalanguage, that the rigorous operation, the construction of symbols, is extracted from a language which is everybody's language, in its status as language.

That there is no other status of language than common language, which is moreover that of uncultivated people and children.

You can grasp what results about the status of the subject on the basis of this reminder, and attempt to deduce the function of the subject from this level of signifying articulation, from this level of language that we will call the excise (*l'excise*) by isolating it, by isolating it properly, and as such, from this very



articulation, that here the subject situated somewhere between zero and one manifests what he is and that you will allow me for a moment to call, to give you an image, the shadow of the number. If we do not grasp the subject at this level in what he is, which is incarnated in the term privation, we cannot take the next step which is to apprehend what he becomes in the demand, in the *aphasis*, in so far as he addresses himself to the other, that we only grasp the most insubstantial shadow for the shock of what happens when the subject, does not use language, but arises from it.

(11) In the introduction of a sort of little apologue borrowed, not by chance, from a short story by this extraordinary spirit that Edgar Poe was, specifically *The purloined letter*, which by reason of a certain resistance that it offers to these sort of pseudo-analytic lucubrations, as regards which one can only think that there ought to be renewed in the domain of investigation, something equivalent to what you see on the walls, “dumping prohibited here”, *The purloined letter*, unlike the other productions of Poe, seems to defend itself rather well, since in a certain two-volume book on Edgar Poe that many of you know, by a titled person, *The purloined letter* did not appear to be ready for the rubbish dump.

*The purloined letter* is, in effect, something different. This subtle passage, this sort of fatal destiny, of blindness, that a little piece of paper covered with the signs of a letter which must not be known, which means that even those who know it, namely, everybody must organise themselves in order not to have read it. In the introduction to this apologue, in effect, which is very suggestive for us, I put forward a sort of first attempt to show the autonomy of the determination of the signifying chain, from the simple fact that there is established the most simple succession by chance, as in a (12) binary alternation, what can be generated from it starting from congruent but not arbitrary groups, from this triple grouping which, entitled, in the articulation that I gave of it, in Greek letters, overlaps a different fashion in which I could have expressed them, which is to give to each of these letters the substitute of three signs, each one of which would have been a zero or a one.

Why three? What is the central sign? I will only concern myself with the two extreme signs. The consistency, the original determination which results from this pure combinatory, depends in the final analysis on the fact that it recalls radically, the minimal sufficiency that we can make for ourselves from the alternation of two signs: the zero and the one. What from these three terms, I told you, leaving the central term empty for the moment, goes from one to one, reminds us of the radical function of repetition in the status of the subject, and how the enunciating of truths is based on a fundamental untransparency.

The passage from one to zero, symbol of the subject, of zero to one, reminds us of the pulsation of this most radical vanishing which is that on which there reposes, when it is rigorously analysed, the fact of repression, and the fact that it includes in itself the possibility of the re-emergence of the sign in the opaque form of the return of the repressed. Here I said the sign.

Finally, this pulsation from zero to zero, which would be the fourth term of this (13) combinatory, reminds us as fundamental, the most radical form of the agency of the *Ich* in language, which is the one that at another point I tried to have

supported by this little fleeting knot that one can do without in language, which is the one which is incarnated in the “*je crains qu’il ne vienne*”, in the “*avant qu’il ne vienne*”, in this fleeting immediacy of the subject who speaks himself by not speaking himself.

But this being posited simply to point you in the direction you should look to rediscover a reference point in my past discourse, I want also today to emphasise something different whose importance, perhaps, is not, when all is said and done, even though I always try to make its importance vivid enough, what relationship, what relationship there is between this subject of the cut and this image, and you are going to see this image at the limit of the image - for in fact it is not one - that I am trying here to make present, with certain mathematical references such as those that are called topological, and of which the simplest shape, I will content myself with it today, you know that it is fundamentally the same as that of the Klein bottle, besides I will recall it for you and it was written on the board earlier, is the Moebius strip.

I know that the beginning of this discourse today must have tired you - that is why we are going to try to do a little bit of physics-for-fun.

(14) Something that I already did. I am not going to surprise you. The Moebius strip, you know how it is made. For those of you who have not come here before, the Moebius strip consists of taking a strip and making it perform, before sticking it to itself, not a complete twist but a half-twist, one hundred and eighty degrees. By this means, I repeat for those who have not yet seen it, you have a surface such that it has neither a front nor a back, in other words, that without crossing its edge, a fly, or an infinitely flat being as Poincaré said, who travels along this strip arrives without mishap to the point on the other side of the one from which it began. This has no kind of sense for what happens on the strip since, for whoever is on the strip, there is neither front nor back. There is a front and a back only when the strip is plunged into this common space in which you live or at least believe you live.

There would then be no problem *vis-à-vis* whatever may be situated on this surface, no problem of front or back, and therefore nothing that allows it to be distinguished from a common strip, from the strip for example that might serve as a belt.

I would not have the malice to give this final twist. Nevertheless, there are in this strip properties that are not extrinsic but intrinsic, ..... which allow the being that I (15) supposed to be limited here by his horizon, it has to be said, which allow him all the same to notice that he is on a Moebius strip, and not on the belt around my body.

It is the following, which is defined by the fact that the Moebius strip is not orientable. This means that if the supposed being who moves along this Moebius strip starts from a point, having picked out in a certain order its horizon a, b, c, e, f - put as many letters as you wish - if he makes a word, in a certain sense, it is the most rigorous way on this occasion of defining orientation, if he continues his path without meeting any edge, coming back to the same point for the first time,

he will find the opposite orientation, the word will be read in a palindromic fashion in the exactly opposite sense.

This is what constitutes, for the one who subsists on it, the originality of the Moebius strip.

Good. These first truths having been recalled, I begin, as I already did before you, to cut the edge of the strip, and I remind you of what I already told you at one time, namely what comes out of it. There comes out of it these two rings, one of which remains the heart of what was primarily the Moebius strip, namely a Moebius strip, and the other of which, let us take out the Moebius strip, is not a Moebius strip, but a strip rolled twice around itself, an orientable strip on which there will never happen to the (16) being who subsists on it the misadventure of seeing his orientation reversed.

If I make what I take out larger and larger, I will manage to make a cut which passes, as they say, through the middle of the Moebius strip; this as you realise having strictly speaking no sense. By making the cut pass through the middle of the Moebius strip, what do I obtain?

I obtain what would have happened if I had reduced more and more the extraction of the edges, there is no longer anything in the middle, namely, that in withdrawing from my Moebius strip what I can find in it, as I wish, namely, everything that is orientable, I become aware that what constitutes the essence of the Moebius strip, namely, its non-orientability is strictly speaking nowhere if not in this central cut which brings it about that, by simply cutting this Moebius strip, I can make it into an orientable surface.

It is therefore not in any way the disposition of the parts of the Moebius strip which gives it its non-orientable character. Its property is nowhere other than precisely in the cut, which is the only thing that has the shape of the Moebius strip, namely, what required the turning over of my scissors at a given moment.

(17) Whether you see in the final operation, in a word, the analogy there is between this Moebius surface and everything that supports it, namely shapes that we can call, for your satisfaction and to go quickly, abstract shapes like those of which some are here represented on the board, what gives it its essence depends entirely on the function of the cut.

The subject, like the Moebius strip, is what disappears in the cut. It is the function of the cut in language, it is this shadow of privation which ensures that he is in the cancelling-out that the cut represents, that he is, in this form, this form of the negative trait, which is called the cut.

I hope that I have made myself sufficiently understood, and at the same time justified this introduction of the Klein bottle, in so far as, if you look closely at its structure, it is what I told you, namely the conjunction, the sticking together in a certain arrangement that you must now see as being purely ideal, or better abstract, the arrangement of the two Moebius strips as what I have inscribed on the board here represents it for you and would represent it still better, if, for the orientable character in opposite fashions of the two edges of the Moebius strip which are

here, I substituted their duplication in the (18) following fashion; such is the schema of the Klein bottle.

This introduction of this shape of the Klein bottle is designed to support at the state of question for you, what is involved in this conjunction of S to O, within which there is going to be able to be situated for us the dialectic of demand. We suppose that O is the inverted image of what serves us as a support for conceptualising the function of the subject.

It is a question that we pose with the help of this image. Is O, the locus of the Other, the locus where there is inscribed the sequence of signifiers, is O this support which is situated, with respect to the one that we give to the subject, as his inverted image.

For in the Klein bottle, the two Moebius strips are conjoined in the measure that - you see it in a very simple fashion in the square shape that I have myself modified here on the board - are conjoined in the fact that the twist of a half-turn is made in the opposite direction. If one is levogyrotory, the other is dextrogyrotory.

This is a type of inversion that is completely different and much more radical than that of the specular relationship for which, with the progress of my discourse, it comes effectively, progressively, in time, to substitute itself.

If a Moebius strip can operate in this way with respect to another one, is there another (19) shape which is able to perform this complementary function, this function of closure?

Yes, as has been very obvious for a long time, since I produced it before you in different forms, this shape is the one that is called the interior eight.

In other words, this, which is a perfectly orientable surface, a little ring whose edge is simply twisted in an appropriate fashion. It is an orientable surface which has a front and a back and in which it is enough for you to make the cut favoured by this disposition of one edge to the other, to see that you create there, effectively, that you create with the help of this shape, a Moebius strip.

This shape, whose function I already introduced to you as demand to be substituted for the Euler circle, is supported for us by being an indispensable instrument.

You will see how. Let us say right away that it is what allows us to raise this other function, the one that I call that of the **o**-object and the *rapprochement* of these two complementary ..... ; the other Moebius strip in the Klein bottle and the **o** in this one, allows us to pose a second question: "What are the relationships between the **o**-object and O?" It is worthwhile all the same to pose the question.

If analytic theory leaves in suspense, indeed to the extent of letting it be believed that (20) to leave the door open to the fact that this **o**-object, which we identify to the partial object, is something which can be reduced to a biological relationship, to the relationship of the living subject with the breast, with the faeces or scybal,

with one or other more or less incarnated shape of the **o**-object, the function of the phallus being here altogether present.

Whether the **o**-object depends or not on the relationship with **O**, with the Other, with the status we have to give to the Other, to the **O** with respect to the subject; this indeed is the question which deserves to be posed. And if it ought to be, in what measure does it depend on this specific relationship to the Other that we symbolise by the letter **D**, namely, that of demand.

Simply, in passing, let me note for you as regards the usages this shape of the interior eight can have for us, but not alone for us, also for logicians; observe here, observe here the degree to which it can be, for us in any case, of great service. For suppose that we have to define, and we do not fail to do so, and Freud himself, when he furnishes his text with one or other little schema which illustrates it, the fact, if we have to finish with a limited field, with a field of the type of the Euler circle, the field in which is valid, or there prevails the pleasure principle, we find ourselves from the doctrine as well as from facts, in an impasse.

(21) This impasse which leaves us to speak about a beyond of the pleasure principle, namely, how a doctrine which had made of the pleasure principle its foundation as establishing as such the whole subjective economy, can introduce into it what is obvious, namely, that the whole pulsation of desire goes against this homeostasis, this level of least tension which is the one that the primary process takes care to respect.

Observe how, on the contrary, and this perhaps is a different path to the one that is called purely dialectical to conceive of it, how on the contrary, it is not simply because a limited circle defines two fields which are opposed: good and bad, pleasure and unpleasure, the just and the unjust, that the liaison is established between one and the other, if we oblige ourselves, on the contrary, to consider that everything that is created in the field of language finds itself required to pass through these topological shapes which, for their part, are going to highlight, for example, the following, that if we define the field of the Moebius strip as being under of the reign, as being under the reign of the pleasure principle, this field will be necessarily traversed on its interior by the other residual field which is created by this line, that we will obligatorily, if we impose it on ourselves, have to define the opposing fields, not as is usually done, on a sphere, an infinite sphere if you wish, that of a plane, but on a sphere cutting out an interior field, an exterior field, we oblige ourselves to do it on this, where you recognise - I cannot today began the whole deduction of it - the image of what is called a cross-cap, which is exactly the one where we can create the division from a Moebius strip, examine it, you will see that this field is a Moebius strip, and this, this internal field, the field of the **o**-object of which I make the following logical usage here: field excluded from the subject, field of unpleasure, this field of unpleasure necessarily traverses the inside of the field of pleasure.

And it will remain for us, starting from this way of conceiving things, to think about pleasure as necessarily traversed by unpleasure and to distinguish in it what it is in this traversing line that separates out pure and simple unpleasure, that is desire, from what is called pain, with this power of investment which Freud distinguishes with such subtlety and for which the inside, the very inside of the

surface that we have called **o**, that we could just as well call quite differently on this occasion, namely the part in ..... or whatever you wish, it is in the measure that this surface is capable of traversing itself in the prolongation of this necessary intersection, it is here that we will situate this case of narcissistic investment, the function of pain, otherwise, logically, (23) properly speaking unthinkable in the text of Freud, even though admirably elucidated.

Of course, this only overlaps things well known for a long time and I spared myself from giving you the first sentence of chapter two of the Tao-tse Ching because moreover I would have had to comment on each one of the characters, but these characters are so significant for anyone who gives himself the trouble of learning their reference, that one cannot believe that there is not something of the same logical vein in what is announced at this original point for a culture, just as much as Socratic thinking for us, about what was original as regards everything that is of the heavens and of the earth, that everyone, the term universal is well and truly isolated, posing the function of the universal affirmative so that everyone knows what is involved in the good, so then, it is from this that there is born the opposite; that everyone knows what is involved in the beautiful, so that it is from this that ugliness is born and it is not pure vanity to say that, of course, to define the good is at the same time to define the bad, it is not a question of frontiers, of a bi-coloured opposition, it is an internal knot; it is not a matter of knowing what is distinguished, in a way, as one would distinguish the upper waters and the lower waters in a confused reality, it is not about whether it is (24) true or not, whether things are good or bad. Things are. It is saying what is in the good that gives birth to the bad, makes it, not that this is, not that the order of language covers the diversity of the real, it is the introduction of language as such which makes there be not distinguished, noted, ratified but which above all constitutes the traversing of the bad into the field of the good, the traversing of the ugly into the field of the beautiful.

This is for us essential, capital in our progress. We are going to see it. For it is now a question of passing from this first articulation of the effects of the *lexis* isolated, in a way, in an artificial fashion, into the field of the Other and to know what this Other is.

This Other interests us in so far as we analysts have to occupy its place.

From where will we interrogate this place? Shall we begin, in order to advance, and because time is at our heels, shall we begin from the formula around which we have tried up to the present to centre the attachment, the approach of analytic activity, namely: the subject who is supposed to know, because of course the analyst cannot be conceived of as an empty locus, the locus of inscription, the locus - it is a little different and we will see what that means - of reverberation, of pure and simple resonance of the word of the subject.

(25) The subject comes with a demand; this demand, I told you that it is crude, it is summary, to speak about a demand purely and simply as originating in a need.

The need may happen to present itself, to be incarnated, by a process that we know, and which we call the process of regression, to present himself, to appear in

the analytic relationship, it is clear that the subject at the beginning, has installed himself in a demand, but that we have to specify the status of this demand.

It is certain that to specify this status requires us to reject immediately the schema, which is in any case inadequate and summary, promoted by the theory of communication. The theory of communication, reducing language to a function of information, to the link between an emitter and a receptor, may on occasion be of service, a service moreover that is limited because as a matter of fact, in any case, their origin, since they are not detached from language will imply in their usage - I am speaking about the schemas of the doctrine of information - all sorts of confused elements; it is inadmissible to refer to any ordination or cardination - in function of a reduced horizon, the reciprocal function of the code and of the message - everything that is involved in communication. Language is not a code, precisely because in its least enunciation it carries with it the subject present in the enunziating.

(26) All language, and still more the one that interests us, that of our patient, is inscribed, it is quite obvious, in a density that goes far beyond the linear, codified, one of information.

The dimension of commanding, the dimension of soliciting, the dimension of *to demand* in English, the *demand* is a stronger formula than in our tongue, demand in English is requirement, and one can only smile at the article of someone who, having specialised in the tact of analysis, made a great discovery, a marvellous discovery of the catastrophic effect that he had by approaching the interpretation of one or other of the detours of the discourse of his analysand, by telling her that she *demande*, by employing *to demand* instead of *to need*.

Only a profound ignorance of the English tongue, as indeed was the case at that epoch, of this newcomer to America, can explain the brilliance of such a discovery.

*Quémander*, namely *to beg*, the opposite position, it is between this *to beg* and this *to demand*, this *commander* and this *quémander* which, between ourselves, I point out have absolutely not the same origin; it is not because words come to be assimilated to (27) the same fate and signification of the usage of the tongue that you can in any way refer *quémander* to some conjugation of *que* with *mandare*.

*Quemand* comes from *caiman*, which in the fourteenth century designated the name of a beggar.

This having being said in passing, it is in this dimension that we ought first of all to interrogate demand in the dimension of knowing whether, for lack of any way, of course, of being able to refer ourselves to any extra-flat theory about the transmission of what happens in language as something that is inscribed in terms of information, where are we going to search for its density? Is it in the direction of the expression of the person who expressing himself as follows, that after all every word is sincere because in any word whatsoever, what I express is indeed my state of mind as Aristotle says somewhere at the beginning of the *Peri psyche*.

These people undoubtedly had noble souls and, moreover, there would be some bad faith in isolating what Aristotle wrote at this level from its context. What Aristotle wrote is never to be rejected so rapidly. In any case, to read him in a certain fashion is the source of many errors.

The thought that language, in any way, always expresses, as opposed to what is communicated, something which is supposed to be the basis of the subject comes from (28) a radically false thinking, and one to which an analyst especially cannot in any way abandon himself.

Do you imagine that when I am speaking to you I am speaking to you about the state of my soul? I am trying to situate what the consequences are of having precisely to situate oneself as dwelling in articulated language. And this could be pursued to the final limit, namely, to the most elementary, the most reduced form of what an enunciation is, an enunciation reduced to itself, an interjection, as the authors have said since Quintilian, concerning the parts of discourse, the interjection, this ultra-reduced sentence, this compression of sentences, this holophrase, as some would say, using one of the most questionable terms, the interjection is, in the thinking of ancient rhetoric, something which is to be isolated within the sentence, and very precisely something which gives rise to the image and the function of the cut. Is an interjection, in whatever way we may advance it, as one sees it too easily and frequently referred to as something which is supposed to be a pure and simple exclamation, something whose shadow is traced by this punctuation which is called the exclamation mark. Is it not the case, that looking at something as it happens beyond simulatory appearances, you (29) can see that there is not a single exclamation, however reduced you may suppose it to be in vocalised terms, which is - you sense here that there is a word that I still do not want to pronounce, it is the word scream (*cri*) - which is a scream. If I say "ah!" at any moment whatsoever, and even if I am waking up from a knock-out, I call you and I say "oh!" it is a sort of breathing space, it is an "oh!" that I am going to depose somewhere in the field of the Other so that it may be there as a germ, I other you or I ostrich you as you wish, and if I say "eh!", it is, "eh! yes I spy you, yes".

There is always in the interjection this infinitely varied function. I took the crudest and the most summary terms, but there are of course other interjections. All of those who have considered the problem a little, and I have only to ask you to refer to the book by Brondal on the parts of discourse, where you will see that he finds the need to notice that, as regards interjections, there are those which should be qualified as situational, resultative, supputative. There is no interjection which is not situated exactly somewhere in the cut between S and O, between S and the locus of the Other, the locus of the Other where the Other is present.

Will I be able to get as far as the scream today or will I reserve its function for the next (30) time? I think I will adopt second position because, moreover, this is where the cut takes place fairly well. I will begin the next time by speaking to you about the scream because I cannot separate what I have to say to you about the scream from what I have to say to you about what supposedly well-intentioned persons, who are, it is true, in the process of valorising themselves elsewhere, in places where people speak very strangely about analytic relationships, what a well-intentioned person declared to have searched wholeheartedly for, with a



magnifying glass, in my writings. Supposedly, there is nowhere a place for silence.

Well then if this person had better searched and located in my graph the formula, the schema, the articulation which conjoins the S with the D, joining them with a diamond, conjunction, disjunction, inclusion, exclusion, he would perhaps have perceived that if it is precisely in correlation with the demand that there appears there for the first time the S, it is perhaps not altogether unrelated to this function of silence, but in truth people prefer to speak about it in certain places in terms of emotion or of effusion. It is at this moment of silence that an analyst, whose profile after all I have no need to sketch out here, because I will have to come back to him as a typical example of a (31) certain fashion of assuming the analytic position, that it is at the moment that the solution of the transference neurosis, according to him, and a very large public came to hear such sureties, where the solution for the transference neurosis is to be found in the procedure described as that of airing, as he expresses it : “one opens the windows”, a solution indicated for the transference neurosis. It is true that according to a certain fashion of articulating the transference itself, it is hard to see in what order of reference one could find the indication of the solution. I shall speak to you then, to begin my discourse the next time, about silence, after I have spoken to you about the scream.

But to end today on something which, God knows, after such a testing session may distract you so that you may take away something amusing, I am going to tell you a story which you can see reproduced in the year 1873 of Dostoievsky's *Journal*. It is an illustration which I picked out, as I might say, for you, as a way of making present, of imaging what I have just said about interjection, in other words about the ultra- reduced, even monosyllabic sentence, and you are going to see that an interjection, however one may see it as arising from some ultimate radicality or other, is something quite different to what we may thus think of it, that it is on the contrary essentially ..... (32) not simply at the limit of the subject and the Other but in the presentation of the world of the subject to the Other in the very establishment of his most radical foundations.

This having been said, prepare yourselves to see it illustrated in a humorous fashion. Dostoievsky tells that one evening, making his way through the streets of Moscow, he finds himself moving in harmony with some people who are well vodkaed. These people, as one might expect, were involved in a very animated debate which involved nothing less than the most universal, cosmic references and what he depicts for us is the following. All of a sudden one of them concludes this debate in uttering, he tells us, it is in Russian, I cannot start playing vain games here with a tongue which I do not know, we will search for an equivalent, what is involved is a word he tells us that is in any case unpronounceable. This word he pronounces decisively as a kind of jet of universal contempt; all of that, all you are thinking, comes from that. This is said in the most convincing fashion, at which another younger person who is flying just as high, approaches and repeats the same still unpronounceable word in a questioning tone. Following which a third arises who shouts the same word like a roaring, a howling towards the sky almost breaking his voice, a sort of enthusiasm, after which the second person who had spoken comes up to the first and says: "Oh, well done! We were talking about serious things, we were at the level of philosophical debate, and you

have just introduced ..... , he said, wearing out your voice." At which point the fourth, for you will have noticed that only three have intervened up to now in the four remarks that I have given up to now, the fourth then intervenes speaking to the fifth and reproduces the same word, this time in the manner of a revelation, of a eureka! The truth has dawned on him, it is this word which is the key to everything. At which point, another gloomier looking fellow, Dostoievsky tells us, repeats this word several times in a low voice as if to say, we must not lose our heads, which results in something more or less like: "Shit", "Shit?", "Shit" "Shit" "shit, shit, shit, shit."

**Seminar 12: Wednesday 17 March 1965**

Perhaps I might have had a pretext for asking you for a little rest to-day. But how could I send away so many people, and on the other hand up to a certain point, I am pressed for time; it is almost insufficient for me to hold to the trajectory that I have assigned myself this year.

I would ask for your attention, especially in the measure that I may be led to go rather quickly along the line that I intend today to stretch from one point to another, and which responds to what I already announced, indeed began, the last time concerning what at the point that we are at, in terms of a correction, I would say, ..... of the experience of analytic technique, starting from this affirmation that it is only thinkable, I would not say practicable, that it is only thinkable starting from a quite articulated notion of the subject, of the subject as such, of the subject at least as I have tried to focus it for you around a certain conception of what is involved in the experience of the Cartesian *cogito* and the novelty it introduces from the point of view of being, as regards the thought-out position of the one who is going to offer himself to something which is called psychoanalysis.

(2) It is not at all necessary, for all that, that the subject knows it, if the key formula giving us the place in the experience of the unconscious, is : "He did not know that .....". This is the status, as I introduced it for you last year, of this pulsation in which there appears this something of which one can say that however little it reveals itself, it betrays itself, and already as the screams (*cris*) lighten for us the formula of Heraclitus speaking about Ophanax: "About the prince, about the one to whom there belongs the place of divination, the one at Delphi, he does not say, he does not hide" - there is no other possible translation, it is not ..... that is used here, there is no other possible translation than this one, "he makes something signifying".

He is the one who collects this signifier, who makes something of it and literally, what he wants.

Everyone knows that with respect to this : "what he wants", the analyst is not in a simple position, that from this : "what he wants", he separates himself by all sorts of walls, which come from experience, from principle, from doctrine.

But, when it is a question of approaching what I called the last time the second stage of the usage of the word in analysis, it is important for us, as regards this stage, which one can say was very well explored, very well developed, during the (3) Freudian and the post-Freudian years, it is a matter for us of situating what belongs to this second stage and also what constitutes its frontier and its limit.

As a reference, in this pioneering work which I am carrying out here, and as regards which you may well imagine that it is not by chance, if at the moment of taking up today my discourse, I indicate, designate for you, if it is a different

gesture to the one that I evoked earlier, that it is from the position of the analyst that for me, and for you because you are waiting here, it is a matter of starting.

I recalled on the board, in a still simpler, I would almost say crude fashion, what in the first phase of this pioneering work, when, for the analysts, of whom it must be said that up to then, very often in language, for them the three kinds of forms of the dialectic of lack, which are entitled privation, frustration, castration were used in an almost interchangeable fashion, when I recalled that at the level of the reference to the symbolic, to the imaginary and to the real it was appropriate to see that there was something at these three levels which was radically different; that frustration, I would simply say to analyse it in a semantic fashion, is something which carries in itself, at its centre, its essence and as one might say its act, it is in vain, this thing which escapes, this fraud, this frustrating which makes of it, (4) incontestably from its status, from disappointment in its most imaginary aspect, and that this did not exclude that its objectal reference was something real, that on the other hand, what was its support and agent, the Other to call her by her name could only be situated for us in the most general form, from the locus of the symbolic, that there is only frustration, properly speaking, where something can be claimed and that moreover, it is the dimension that one cannot eliminate from its definition, that moreover this is the broadest frame in which, in the experience of psychoanalysts, there appeared to be situated the daily situation, the day-to-day of what an analytic experience can discover, in stages, when it is a matter of conjoining it in the *hic et nunc* of the relationship to the analyst.

Is this something with which we can in any way be content? When it is a matter of articulating this frustration, it cannot but be that everything that is enounced in the discourse of the analyst [analysand?] is inscribed in the double register of the demand which speaks, which is a question which is posed from the beginning, the first step in analysis; the subject comes here to demand analysis.

What does he come to demand in analysis? The whole psychoanalytic literature, when it is brought to bear on this experience, on, as some people say, this living experience of analytic stages, is employed in unveiling, in manifesting what through (5) something which is made up of mapping-out, but also of construction, and here the thinking of what the analyst lives out, has demonstrated, has conjoined, has justified the succession of what is presented at different stages of the analysis as demand.

Now the conjunction of this demand with some developmental conception or other cannot come into play without there being made of it, without there being presented, a certain margin of arbitrariness.

For in truth what is done, I mean effectively by the authors - it is not that this ought not to give us pause - is referred, dares to refer itself, to a function that is in a way, I would not say biological, for this would already be to make intervene a register of a high level which is certainly not in question, to this simple level that we will call that of a living relationship (*rapport vital*) quite simply, and even, let us go a little further, of a carnal relationship. The dependency, the physical, animal dependency in which the little child finds himself with respect to his mother, is invoked as being this something which defines, gives, gives as the main

background of what the demand is going to develop upon, what we will call, with the majority of analytic authors, the anaclitic position.

That there is conjoined there besides to this conception, whose central term is taken from Freud's pen, that there is conjoined to it a notion like that of primordial (6) auto-erotism and again of primary narcissism, from this epoch, where at a quite initial stage of his coming into the world, the subject, in Freudian theory is conceived of constituting - as is very commonly explained in more than one place - only a single being, or a single individual, as you wish, with the being from whom he has just detached himself, with the being from whose belly he has emerged, this is something which is associated with this so-called anaclitic position which is revealed in the exercise by the subject, of the function of demand.

Now, there is incontestably here a leap because, after all, if it is not impossible that this anaclitic position which, all the same, if it is there present in the treatment, has nothing to do with the position of vital dependency of which I spoke to you earlier, of which I spoke to you just now, if this anaclitic position can be conceived, given doctrinal form exactly as being at the same level in the imaginary structure as the narcissistic position, does not mean that the question of the primary relation to the mother is settled, nevertheless, at least something will be required which justifies the connection and which assures us that it is not a matter, in this image often evoked in the course of an analytic treatment, of a support taken as fusional, of an aspiration to return, as it were, to origins conceived, as I was saying earlier, in their most carnal form, that it is not a matter here of a phantasy properly speaking, that (7) we can on this point find support in some continuity where there is expressed the imprint which for its part is supposed to be beyond language.

Now, up to the present, nothing guarantees for us that this domain of the demand having been explored, we can always justify the most paradoxical things that appear there without referring ourselves to their concrete origins, which are those which should be conceived, as fundamentally those of feeding, of feeding, if it is a fact that it appears essential in something which, here or there, can appear as constant or engraved in the history of the subject, it is not at all so much because it was so in fact and really, that in a function, that in a function that is different, which makes in particular of what serves in analysis as a symbol for this feeding, namely the maternal breast, is absolutely, exclusively given the metamorphoses under which we have to locate it and to see it translated, absolutely exclusive of a pure and simple concrete experience.

What is, at first appearance, this symbolic, metabolisable, metonymical, translatable character, and this very early on this is the interest of the Kleinian experience, its appearance very early on - why not say it? - in the disguised, *entstellt*, displaced form of the phallus, this is something which ought to attract our attention and (8) ensure that we do not content ourselves with some ....., whatever may be the weight, the convenience, of seeing the often fallacious intersections that we can find in direct observation which ought at least make us put in suspense the status of its origins.

For this experience of demand, this analysis centred on the stage at which the subject incarnates his word, this is no longer the subject whose status we have marked at the most radical level of language, of the unary trait and of the status of privation where the subject installs himself in it.

How can one not sense that there is to be retained from the experience centred in this way, articulated in this way, that what has come in the course of years and by stages and providing material to argue in a way that is undoubtedly nuanced, subtle, because extremely divided, I would say from school to school, if it is a fact that this term allows there to be assured quite clear limits within analysis, that this something, of which this experience brings us the testimony, is the discovery, is the handling, is the perfecting, is the precise interrogation which has been centred from Abraham up to Melanie Klein and since, multiplied in multiple efforts to assure its avenues, the partial object, what in our discourse here, I articulate as being the **o**-object.

I apologise, I am a little tired. You really cannot hear properly? Thank you for letting me know.

(9) I think that the diversity, the variety of this **o**, in so far as the list that I gave you of it here does not surpass, but undoubtedly articulates in a different fashion, their range, without at all, for all that, going in the direction of not retaining the major reductions to which analytic experience subjects these **o**-objects.

The prevalence of the oral object, in so far as it is commonly called the breast, of this faecal object, on the other hand, if we put it on the same table or in the same circuit as the one in which there are situated all the objects articulated no doubt in analytic experience, but in an infinitely less assured way as regards their status than ours, namely the gaze and the voice, we have to question ourselves about how, that we have to question ourselves about the fact of how analytic experience can find in it the fundamental status of what it is dealing with in the demand of the subject.

Because after all, it is not self-evident that first of all this list should be so limited. And no doubt the privilege enjoyed by these objects is illuminated by each one of them being in a certain homology of position at this level of joining, that I evoked the last time, between the subject and the Other.

Nevertheless, it is not to be said, that what the subject demands in the demand to the Other is the breast. In the demand to the Other, the subject demands (10) everything that he may have to demand, in the first place, in analysis, for example, that the Other should speak.

There is something abusive, excessive, to immediately translate what is characteristic of the demand, namely, that it is true that there is demanded something that the analyst is supposed to have, but what is demanded as what he has, is in function of another thing that the analyst himself poses as the true aim of what the subject demands.

This is worth pausing on. This is worth pausing on, when this **o**-object is thus set up, less as the point of what is aimed at than as what arises in a certain gap which

is the one created by the demand, and that I insisted upon the last time, throwing my beam of light in the direction of going to look for the demand and the sentence in the most compact form, the one that could pass for being at the level of pure and simple expression and that there, in the interjection, I insisted on showing you that what gives it its value and its price, its specificity that is all the more graspable in that it is here more compact, because it always comes to strike at the joining of the subject and the Other. That what the simplest-looking interjection imposes on the interlocutor is this common reference to a third who is the big Other, and it is something which always has, more or less, is an invitation to step back, to temper, to reconsider, to review, to reoppose, to redirect the gaze towards some previous (11) interlocutor, undoubtedly one can pose the question, glimpse whether it is not some more reduced, simpler, more efficacious incidence also of language.

The whole theory of Pierre Janet is constructed upon the theory of commandment; the order given, in so far as from the one who speaks, to the arm which acts, he establishes a sort of common, inaugural status in the agency of human conduct.

Everyone know that analysis cannot be content with this reconstruction which is only a reconstruction on the blackboard. And that as regards the governor on Egyptian boats, the one who with his baton gives rhythm to the beat of the oars, is not something which belongs to the status of the effective subject, that there is no order which is not a reference to a super-order.

Undoubtedly the question is posed of the cases where the order goes straight to its goal and effectively manifests itself in what is called suggestion. But what does analysis show us if not that, in this case, suggestion functions with respect to this third term which, in this case, is that of the unknown desire.

It is on the level of the repercussion, of the interest obtained from the unconscious desire, that the one who knows how to handle this sort of remote control, what is called suggestion, takes his point of support and if he does not have it, the suggestion is ineffective.

(12) That it can be caught by extremely primitive means, like that of the crystal ball, is simply there to show us the eminent function, for example, of a bright point at the level of the *o*-object.

There is then always this third reference in the effect of demand and nevertheless, is it not possible to discover somewhere, this something which would have the privilege of making us grasp that something of which we nevertheless have need, namely, what is the status, what are the limits of this field of the big Other, to which we have been led, led at the level of the experience which is that of the field, of the artificial field guaranteed to the word in psychoanalysis, it is here that I hope that the object which I had circulated among you earlier, namely, a reproduction of the celebrated painting by Edward Munch called *The scream* is something, a figure, which seemed to me suitable to articulate for you a major, fundamental point on which many slippages are possible, many abuses are committed, and which is called silence.

It is striking, that to illustrate silence for you, I found nothing better in my opinion than this image which I think you have all seen now, and which is called *The scream*. In this singularly deserted landscape, denuded by means of concentric lines, outlining a sort of bipartition at the back which is that of a form of landscape, in its reflection, a lake also forming a hole there in the middle, and on the right diagonal edge, crossing, barring in a certain way the field of the painting, a road which disappears. At the back two passers-by, thin shadows who distance themselves in a sort of image of indifference, in the forefront this being, this being of whom, in the reproduction of the painting, you were able to see this strange appearance that cannot even be said to be sexed. It is perhaps more emphasised in the sense of a young individual and of a little girl in some of the repeats that Edward Munch made of it, but we have no further special reason to take it into account.

This being, this being here in the painting with a rather old-fashioned appearance, and also a human shape so reduced that for us it cannot fail to evoke that of the most summary, the most crudely treated images of the phallic being, this being covers his ears, opens his mouth wide, and screams.

What is this scream? Who will hear it, this scream that we do not hear? If not, precisely, that it imposes this reign of silence which seems to rise and fall into this space which is at once centred and open. It seems there that this silence is in a way the correlative which by its presence distinguishes this scream from any other imaginable modulation. And nevertheless, what is tangible, is that this silence is not the ground of the scream, there is no Gestalt relationship; here the scream (14) literally seems to provoke the silence and in abolishing itself in it, it is tangible that it causes it. It gives rise to it, it allows it to hold its note, it is the scream which sustains it and not the silence the scream, the scream in a way makes the silence curl up in the very impasse from which it springs, in order that the silence may escape from it. But it has already happened when we see Munch's image. The scream is traversed by the space of the silence without dwelling in it; they are not linked either by being together or by succeeding one another, the scream creates the abyss into which silence rushes.

This image in which the voice is distinguished from any modulating voice, for in the scream, what makes it different even from any of the most reduced forms of language, is the simplicity, the reduction of the apparatus that is involved. Here the larynx is no longer anything more than a pipe. The implosion, the explosion, the cut are lacking.

The scream here cannot give us the assurance of this something in which the subject no longer appears except as signified but in what way? Precisely in this open gap which here being anonymous, cosmic, all the same marked in a corner by two absent human presences, is manifested as the structure of the Other, and all the more decisively because the painter chose it as divided in the form of a reflection, clearly indicating to us, in this something, a fundamental shape which is the one we rediscover in the confrontation, the sticking together, the suture of everything that affirms itself in the world as organised.

(15) This is why in analysis when what is involved where the word has its place, and an approximate usage is made of silence, "*Silence and verbalisation*" an



excellent article written by the son of Wilhelm Fliess, the companion of Freud's self-analysis, Robert Fliess; Robert Fliess, then, undoubtedly names in a correct fashion what is involved in silence, in what he explains to us. This silence is the very locus where there appears the fabric on which there is unfolded the message of the subject and the place where the nothing printed allows there to appear what is involved in this word, and what is involved is precisely, at this level, its equivalence with a certain function of the *o*-object.

It is in function of the object of excretion, of the urinary or faecal object, for example, of the relationship to the oral object, that Fliess teaches us to distinguish the value of a silence by the way in which the subject who enters it makes it last, sustains himself with it in a way, he teaches us the quality of this silence; it is clear that it is indistinguishable from the very function of verbalisation.

It is not at all in function of some defence, of some predominance of the ego apparatus that it is appreciated, it is at the level of the most fundamental quality which manifests the immediate presence in the operation of the word of what is indistinguishable from the drive.

This analyst of the old stock and of great class, no doubt, this work, this reference (16) is undoubtedly of great value showing how the paths of a certain apperception of what is involved in the erotic presence of the subject, is something upon which we have a right to depend and which is very illuminating.

Nevertheless, this silence, if, in a way, denoted in its musical function, however integrated into the text may be silence in all its varieties, and the musician knows how to make of the pause or of silence, a moment that is just as essential as that of a sustained note. Is this something that we can allow ourselves to apply simply to the fact of the arrest of the word?

Silence is not simply not saying something : *Sileo* is not *taceo*, Plautus said somewhere to his listeners, as is the ambition of anyone who can, or wants to, make himself heard : *Silite et tacete atque advertite animum*. Pay attention: "be silent" and "shut up" are two different things; the presence of silence in no way implies that there is not someone speaking, it is even in that case that silence takes on its quality to an eminent degree, and the fact that it happens that I obtain here something which resembles silence, does absolutely not exclude that perhaps, before this silence itself, one or other person may be busying himself in a corner in order to furnish it with more or less loudly spoken reflections.

(17) The reference of silence to "shutting up" is a complex reference. Silence forms a bond, a closed knot against something which is an understanding and something which, speaking very quietly, is the Other, is this closed knot which can reverberate when the scream traverses it and perhaps even digs into it.

Somewhere in Freud there is the perception of the primordial character of this hole, of this hole of the scream, when Freud himself in a letter to Fliess articulates it, it is at the level of the scream that there appears the *Nebenmensch*, this neighbour whom I showed should effectively be named in this way, this close neighbour because he is precisely this hollow, this uncrossable hollow marked within ourselves and which we ourselves can scarcely approach.

Here we have perhaps the model, sketched out in this way, for silence, and you have sensed, confused by me with this space enclosed by the surface, and of itself, by itself unexplorable, which constitutes the original structure that I have tried to image for you at the level of the Klein bottle.

What must we distinguish then in the operations of the word and of the demand? At first appearance, in the first phase, this cut that the schema of the bottle allows us to image as being that of its division into two fields whose character, a Moebius surface, is there to picture for us the side closed in on itself, not a double-sided but (18) a single-sided surface, the side which in the signifier constitutes the prevalence, the unity of the effect of sense in the measure that it does not, of itself, involve the reverse side of a signified, in the measure that it closes in on itself and that it is above all this cut to which there could be reduced, as I have told you, everything that is essential in the structure of the surface since, carried out in an appropriate fashion, it makes disappear from it this essential function of being sense and pure sense; it makes appear there this duplicity, this front and back which for us picture the correspondence, the division of the signifier and the signified.

Now, what is meant by the fact that in the demand there is separated out, there appears then, something which is a different structure, which appears as one might say beyond the expectation of what is demanded; this is pictured for you by the relationship which I reproduced once more here on the board, between the peripheral Moebius strip and this reduced ring of this independent thing that can be detached from it, which is something that falls, which is the apparition of a residue, of a remainder in the operation of the demand, and which appears as the cause of something taken up again by the subject which is called phantasy, and which, at the horizon of the demand, makes there appear the structure of desire in its ambiguity, namely that desire, if it can detach itself, arise, appear as absolute condition, and (19) perfectly presentable as being this something which the subject who desires it, who takes it as such at the level of the Other, makes it simply subsist by sustaining it as unsatisfied - a hysterical mechanism whose essential value I have marked.

That this is the only point, the only term where there converges, in explaining it, the junction of demand and transference, that in the deception of transference, what is involved is something which, without the subject knowing it, turns around the capturing in some way which is imaginary, or which is acted out, of this **o**-object, that this is the term and the common measure around which function the whole level of what is called frustration. It is there that it is a matter of posing, in a fashion which allows there to be posed questions, starting from there, and only starting from there: of distinguishing what experience can allow us currently to ratify concerning what is the origin, through what door the function of this **o**-object has come.

It is here that there must be emphasised, always recalled, that all our knowledge as regards what is concerned in a development which is supposed to be psychoanalytically justifiable begins, and always originates, in experience and in the experience of the treatment.

That is why it is not sufficient for us for the moment, here, simply to ground the status of the analyst, in a way, in an arbitrary fashion prefigured by our categories; (20) it is a matter of seeing whether our categories are not those which allow us precisely to construct the map, to understand what is involved in one or other theoretical tendency in the analytic milieu, in the community of analysts, with this position which in each analyst - and quite naturally not simply in an isolated fashion but in the measure of the experience that he has had of it, namely his formative experience - of what in each analyst can be located in terms of a desire that is an essential reference for him.

For here there results from what is affirmed and is picked out in the theories of the technique and in papers, that to put the emphasis, for example, on a technique which makes there appear, for the subject, in phantasy, at the level of the Other, the phallic image in the positive form where it is conceived and represented as the object of fellatio, that there is here something which already is distinguished by the fact that in the cut, it is on the side of the O that this object falls, and that this object is charged at least in certain nosological registers, especially for example in the case of obsessional neurosis for the author and practitioner whom I am indicating, and whom many here may be able to spot. It is clear that to centre around the emergence of this phantasy, in so far as it appears at the level of the Other, namely (21) of the analyst, a mapping-out, an approach, a critique of the approach to reality which might seem, in this perspective, to be the key, the hinge, the door through which there may be resolved the harmonising of the subject with a particular object that is supposed to be real, this is something which is distinguished in any case from another way of thinking, from another theory, which holds there can be no analysis which could in any way be said to be completed, if it is not at the level of the subject himself that, at a phase which is precisely a phase which goes beyond this purely identificatory stage of mapping out, of highlighting, of the feeling of a certain real that a certain technique entrusts itself to, it is in the measure that the subject himself can come, beyond this identification, to live the effect of this cut as being himself this remainder, this waste even, if you wish, this extremely reduced thing from which he has effectively started, at an origin which it is a matter of conceiving, not so much as that of his history, but as that origin which remains inscribed in the synchrony, in the very status of his being, that something should at one time be experienced as if he himself was this object which is either demanded from the Other, or is demanded from him.

Breast, even waste, excrement properly speaking, in other cases in other registers, in other registers which are not those of neurosis, this function of the voice or of the look.

(22) Here the reference that I made at one time about transference is essential. At the point where in the history there appears the emergence, emerging in a primordial fashion that has since been veiled, but in a celebrated text by Plato which preserves this testimony for us, what is in question is the text of the *Symposium*, at the end of this series of discourses in which there is constituted the *symposion* of these discourses which are ..... praise or illumination, in any case praise and celebration of the function of love, there enters the procession of these revelers, who are certainly not inspired, real trouble-makers, the real

people to come and upset here all the rules of this extraordinarily civilised celebration.

It is Alcibiades, it is Alcibiades who nevertheless finds himself in this way at the high point of the dialogue and even though the majority of translators in the French tradition, from Louis Leroi to Racine, and up to Monsieur Léon Robin, did not believe, of course, that they could in any way do without this essential complement, we know that certain translators in the past cut it there, retreated, as if this were not the last word, the secret of what is in question.

To understand what is at stake between the subject and the analyst, what better model than this Alcibiades, who all of a sudden comes to recount, to recount the adventure that happened to him with Socrates.

(23) This before Socrates and before the assembly of the other eminent and learned guests. He says then about this Socrates, first of all he praises him and in what terms, in these terms which picture him as related to a box, as something which envelops a precious object and which often on the outside is presented as a grotesque, caricatural, deformed figure.

The ancient figure of Socrates looking like a Silenus, if it is not true, it is not beautiful, comes from that, as you know, and at the origin of his *Grand livre*, Rabelais takes it up when he addresses himself to those who are made to hear him, the very precious drunkards and the syphilitics. From all time, an assemblage which chooses itself as being from the outside, is taken up with humour from the inside, as specified by some trait of caricature, it happened that those who constituted my audience for ten years, were not from the outside, although in other terms, described in the most favourable fashion.

Here we have Socrates. At first then, in this enigmatic, praised, chanted, exalted form; and what is Alcibiades going to testify to us? It is that in order to obtain what is in that box, what the secret of Socrates is about, as I might say, of what was he not capable? What does he tell us he was capable of, of nothing less than of lying, at least, he is the one who says it: because moreover everything that he depicts for us about his behaviour, about his declaration of love, of seduction with respect to Socrates, is something that he presents to us as being entirely directed towards obtaining, no doubt, for a moment from Socrates, what is at the bottom of him, in terms of this mysterious, enigmatic, profound science, of which nothing more assured is given to him than this extraordinary *atopia* of Socrates, this something which, in his behaviour leaves him on the outside, distinguishes him from everything around him, leaves him, let us say the word, without dependencies.

And if Alcibiades pushes things as far as to have the appearance of having had the occasion of giving a demonstration of the virtue of Socrates, since in the course of these assaults he is going to push him to sleep the night under the same cloak, the cloak of Socrates - and after all, God knows, it was probably something which was worth pointing out, since, if we are to believe the testimonies, Socrates sometimes washed, but not always. And here, if according to the declarations of this individual to whom moreover it is said that Socrates paid particular attention, and which was a loving attention, there is a fact, which is that Socrates sends him

away and that the whole fable, I would say, for how are we to know if in telling it Alcibiades is lying or not, undoubtedly he testifies to it, I was devious, I lied, but how describe this lie when its goal was something which he himself could not give an account of, because what does he want? Is the truth so precious to Alcibiades (25) who is the one who is the very image of desire, who always goes straight ahead, breaks down every obstacle, wards off the flotsam of society up to the term where he arrives at the end of his journey and is slain?

What then is this *agalma* that is involved and which is here the centre of the captivation of Alcibiades by the figure of Socrates? And what does it mean, what is meant by what Socrates replies to him? “Everything that you have said, everything that you have just said, is here something that has no reason or purpose for you, except for the fact that you love Agathon”.

Let us leave the figure of Agathon whose name might allow us to dream. Let us only indicate that I made the discovery that the remarks imputed to Agathon in the *Symposium* can only be qualified as caricatural, that the fashion in which he praised love is that of a *précieux* but which, in its effect, only articulated the most derisory lines, even the way in which they are alliterated underlines it, this excessive trait which makes of him what we could clearly pin-point, much more legitimately than Nietzsche did with Euripides, as being a tragic figure, undoubtedly going in the direction of comedy.

But what does it matter. Is what is involved here not to make appear for us the structure, the structure of deception that there is in the transference which accompanies this certain type of demand, that for the hidden *agalma*.

(26) That this very special transference, that we have the right, which is placed there at the *culmen* of what is involved in love, do we not see there being dismissed, though with contrary accents, two words of love, that of Alcibiades and that of Socrates which, as I said, with accents which are not the same, fall under the key of the same definition: love is to give what one does not have to someone who does not want it.

It is true that Alcibiades, who cannot give what he does not have, namely, the love that Socrates demands of him, the love which would send him back to his own mystery, and which in the dialogue of Alcibiades is unbelievably pictured in a way that seems to me to be so contemporary for our reflection here, because it is to this little image which appears at the back of the pupil, it is to this something which in vision is not vision but is inside the eye, it is at this place that we situate this foundational object which the look is, that, in the text of Plato, Alcibiades is referred to, and that Socrates does not blame him, this too is an essential articulation which demands to be retained. Why does he not blame him? Because, as a matter of fact, everyone knows that Socrates is said not only to be attached to Alcibiades, but to the point of being jealous - it is the text and the tradition that tell us this. And what Socrates returns to Alcibiades is also something that he affirms that he does not have, since he does not have any knowledge which is not, he says, accessible to all.

(27) And the only thing that he knows, is the nature of desire; and that desire is lack.

It is here that things remain suspended in Plato's text and that, after the merry-making of one part of the weary gathering, the passage through sleep of another part, things take up in the morning with a discussion on tragedy and comedy.

What is essential, is this suspension around the point where Alcibiades is sent away, towards what? What we would call the truth of his transference. And what does he try to get from Agathon, if not, properly speaking, what is defined in Freud as hysterical desire. What Alcibiades simulates is what had been previously defined in the *Symposium* as the highest merit of love, the fact that the desired and the desirable make themselves, pose themselves, devote themselves as desirers.

And it is here, and it is through this that he thinks he can fascinate the gaze of the one who, in any case, we have already seen as being a person of the type who is extraordinarily uncertain as regards the foundation of his word.

This is the path through which there is open to us, and since the time, as you see, of an antiquity which gives it all its titles of nobility, the dialectic of the transference as one might say, the entry into history of a properly speaking analytic question.

(28) I would propose to test this on a text that I have chosen, and that I already proposed to some people, and that I hope will be chosen and accepted by one or other person, to show you in connection with a text precisely chosen because of the fact that undoubtedly through choices, that were perhaps premature - it is an article in which the author in question entered battle for the first time - but the value of this article is to bring the testimony, to bring the proof of his first analytic experience, and of his first analytic experience with silence.

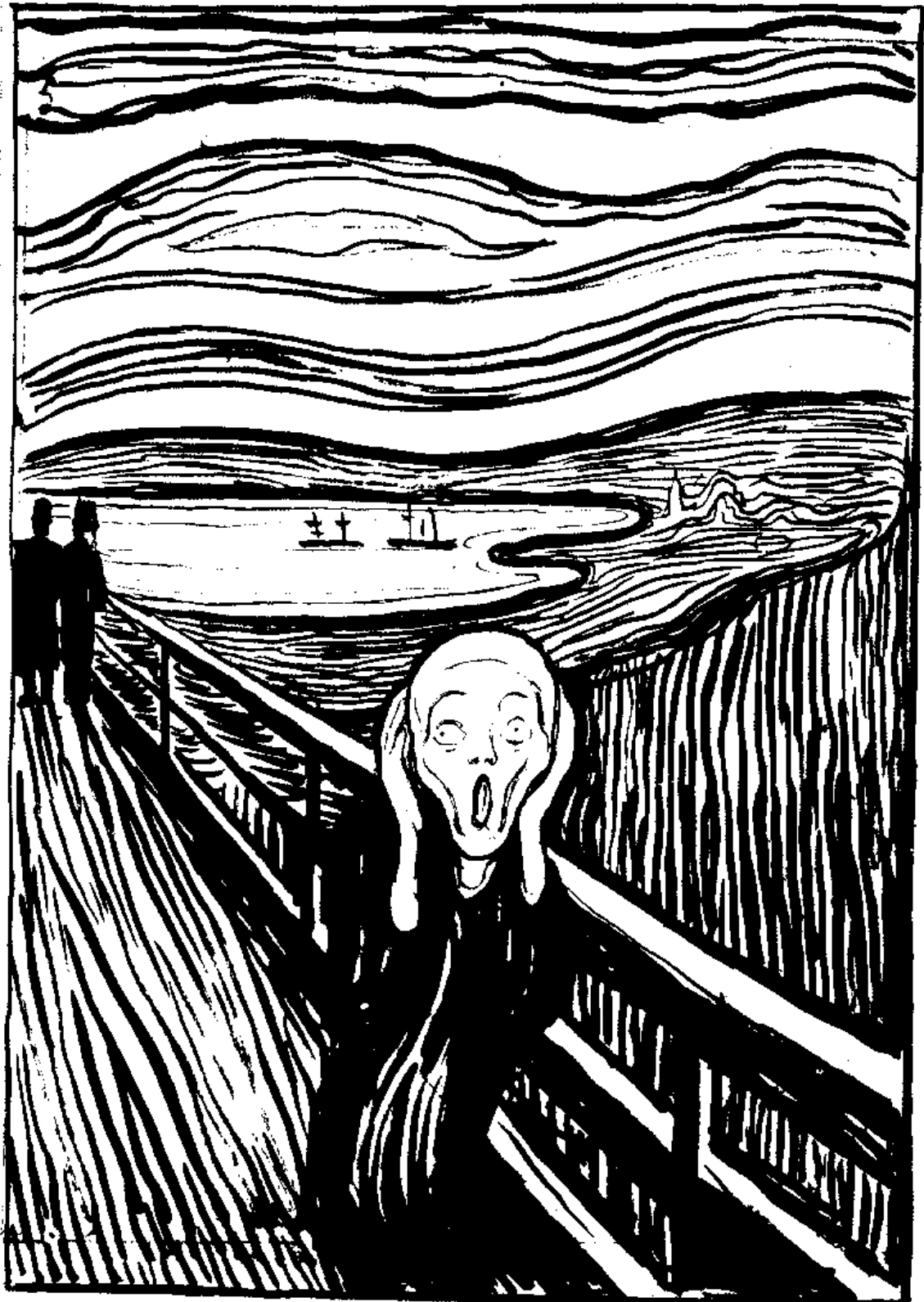
Whether it is correct or not that he calls this silence, is another question for, after all, it is perhaps not really a silence that is involved. But where he is led, quite consistently, and one cannot say, at first sight, under the influence of some doctrinal guidance, where he is led in his conception of the relation of the subject to the partial object and of the other, to this enigmatic total object whose fate and future it is believed can purely and simply be deposited into the hands of the analyst. Where he has been led, and the fashion in which he has to find his bearings with the different references that he has at his disposal, which are offered to him by more or less current doctrines with all their diversity, is something that undoubtedly I cannot pursue except in a smaller seminar than the one here, but which is, in the final analysis, the essential thing that we are aiming at. If these (29) categories, if their articulation, that of S and of O and of  $\circ$  have some meaning, it is not because they can be joined to some cultural baggage or other destined to be applied where it can be, more or less blindly.

These things are constructed around the analytic experience, and in terms of analytic experience, it is not the least precious thing to know how the analyst thinks about it, whether he wishes or does not wish to do it in terms of thinking.

That he says : "I am not one of those who philosophises", changes nothing about the question. The less one wants to do philosophy, the more of it one does and, moreover, it is absolutely necessary that in an experience like the analytic

experience the subject allows there to be seen what we will call the bottom of his sack and that, in an analysis, the analyst is as much in question as the analysand.

And the sense and the perspective of that towards which I am directing you, and it is not for nothing that at the level of this experience of a prolonged silence with a patient, the author puts forward the bringing to light of what he calls, in fact incorrectly, his counter-transference - as I have often said, the term is incorrect - and everything that is involved in the position of the analyst, everything, including the totality and the baggage of its rules, of its indications, of its doctrine and of its theory, ought always to be taken into account in what we call transference; namely, that there is in no case, whatever it may be, that should not be suspected, suspended by the analyst as participating for him in some unwarranted identification.





**Seminar 13: Wednesday 24 March 1965**

Will we manage, before the end of this year, to find some rule, some style? The time is undoubtedly short. We have already had two closed seminars in the course of which you have heard papers (*communications*). Who does not agree? They were indeed papers; it is the name that what you have heard deserves. You were able to take notes and things were arranged, in principle, for you to be able to procure these texts. Those who were lucky enough, who came at the right moment, were in effect able to get them.

Since I was imprudent enough to say that for those who took Leclaire's text, that I was expecting from them a collaboration which, probably, in the minds of my listeners, implied that those who having taken the text did not bring any contribution would be, as one says at school, and it seems that we are still there, noted. The result is that I learned with astonishment that some people did not take Leclaire's text so that they would not subsequently incur the reproach of not having replied to it. One learns at every age! It must be that there remain corners (2) of naiveté among some people who believe themselves laden with experience. Happily I am not too naive about this.

So then, now, we find ourselves with the necessity of recalling that what we are doing here is something to which I gave this closed character, not that we could hope to give the line and the field for what ought to happen elsewhere, namely the analytic perfecting of the consequences of the research that I am carrying out before you this year and which, as it happens, this year, for example, could be entitled subjective ontology, the term subjective being taken here in the sense of a qualifier or of an objective predicate. This does not mean that it is the ontology which is subjective. The ontology of the subject and what the ontology of the subject is from the moment that there is an unconscious.

This, of course, I am trying to trace the line for you this year, this has consequences at the level of - not so much criticism as is said - but of the responsibility of the psycho- analyst. A term just as difficult to evoke in the context of a psychoanalytic society. What this involves in effect at this level, ought to be constructed, articulated elsewhere, and it is not easy to reunite a college where things can be posed at this level here, in the margin of what I am pursuing this year as teaching before you to give a certain sampling, there will always be (3) then a certain arbitrariness in the choice of what supports the line that we are trying to stick to here at its level of foundation necessary for what supports it, coming from different domains - you were able to see it illustrated by what we extracted from the theory of numbers.

A sampling also of what may interest the analyst in a work of concrete articulation in connection with a case, a work of articulation essentially animated by our line of research and which today is going to be put to the test of a number of responses whose relevance we are going to have to address.

I will say no more about it today, but advancing then into the experiment, we are going to see what this will produce.

I would not like to leave you all the same without highlighting, at the right time, because, all the same, we cannot let slip this event, the value as image that this week's exploit ought to take on for us, the one which happened at some hundred and seventy five or more kilometres out in space, and which, as I said, in our eyes takes on the value of an image. I will not comment on it today because it would take us too far.

I would simply ask you to dream about the value that our major in space, the man called Leonov, may take with respect to what in this ontology of the subject, represents precisely the way in which man can be properly speaking this thing that is ejected and connected at the same time which is the **o**-object.

(4) In that case, today, I am a little awkward at drawing things but all the same it is not very difficult, here is our major and here is the **o**-object; the capsule would be the S and then where is desire if not at the level of the big Other, the USSR.

I am glad that that makes you laugh, because, this exploit, one of the most sensational all the same that can be attributed to man, this exploit is from a certain point of view a *gag* which depends profoundly on the fact that it is effectively the final structure of phantasy, as realised, one can find it of course in other registers, one can say that it is not unimportant either that we have it here in its most perfectly desexualised form.

You know that it is not in this connection that I introduced some reflections about the cosmonaut, because those who listen carefully to my lectures may remember that in connection with the classical syllogism about "Socrates is mortal", I tried to make another of a caricatural kind about Gagarin.

It was certainly not at the high point of the perspective of what is found here, not to articulate it, I will come back to it, but to outline it.

I do not believe that in saying it today, moreover, I am completely outside of our field, about what is involved in the subjective position, namely, whether it is (5) entirely reducible logically or whether we ought to direct the consideration of this subjective position, in so far as it involves the subject of the unconscious, towards the side of the remainder, namely, precisely, this **o**-object; it is indeed between these two terms that there is going to be suspended, if the matter is pursued rigorously, the question which can be posed in connection with the literal, almost graphic formula, the literal formula decanted by the extremely subtle operation of Leclaire.

I am now going to ask who are the people present among those on whom we are counting, I enumerate : Valabrega is there; Irigaray, Lemoine is there; I hope that Oury is there; Cotsonis Diamantis is there, thank you very much; Jennie Lemoine is there; Francine Markovitz is there; Melle Mondzain is there; and Major.

**Dr Leclaire** : I am going to propose that we begin the discussion about this text perhaps by considerations that I would arbitrarily describe as theoretical. As it

happens, in fact, those of Oury and of Valabrega are directed precisely to the question of phantasy. So perhaps Oury could begin.

### **Presentation by Monsieur Oury**

I am very annoyed to have only twelve minutes because I have a text which if I read it very quickly would take thirty minutes. So I am certainly going to have to skip a lot of things which might be important.

Anyway perhaps in the discussion they can be reintroduced.

Leclaire's presentation the last time certainly inspired me in a rather poetic way, I wrote a little exergue which can be developed afterwards.

Let us admit that Poord'jeli is a phonematic gestalt which is organised from the proper name of the subject, it is demonstrated in the text or more exactly around his first name and the name of the father, an exploded fragmented figure which is readjusted according to the laws of a primary process and utterance at the moment of evanescence of the subject, the crystallised cry of a primitive *jouissance* which is inscribed to indicate the almost inaccessible path. I take up, perhaps in a different formulation, what Leclaire said, a sort of ..... of the most intimate signifier, a sign of prohibition for the phenomenology of meaning, the entry into a domain of nonsense a forerunner of the unconscious, a vectorial dimension of a more or less mythical point of origin, this point of seeing outside the reflecting field, from which one can see arising the essence of the image.

(7) There where the *Wo Es war* concretises the history of the speaking subject.

Before formulating some criticisms about Leclaire's presentation, I would like to indicate by way of hypothesis, the possible function of this genesis of this phonematic gestalt, Poord'jeli.

Here is where I am going to be obliged to reduce things as far as possible because I carried out a very rapid and partial survey of the neurological literature to try to see what its factors were.

I note that I employ this expression of phonematic gestalt in a sense close to that given by Conrad, the neurologist, when he takes up the gestaltic study of aphasia, starting from Goldstein, etc., and I note that Conrad distinguished in the genesis of the gestalt, a *Vorgestalt* or pre-gestalt and a final gestalt.

I pass over all that and I think that this gestalt poord'jeli is close to another aspect of this pre-gestalt, whatever this pre-gestalt poord'jeli may be, it may evoke for us another conception which is the conception of Guillaume in connection with the period of the undifferentiated word sentence, a secret ejaculation accompanied by a sort of somersault, as Leclaire says, this poord'jeli is a sort of word-sentence containing in itself the origin of all subsequent syntactic developments.

(8) But let us pause again for a little moment to indicate that this phonematic pre-gestalt can be situated in a very marginal fashion that Luria and Ludowig describe under the name of syntactic language in the article on *Mutisme et les silences de*

*l'enfant*. The authors commenting on the analysis of Luria's conceptions defining syntactic language as differentiating itself from real language by the fact that there does not emerge from it reality and action. It is confused with immediate activity, it is only a way of underlining the gesture, mimicry or action. They distinguish it from planning language and from informing language. I pass on.

Nevertheless even if we recall the possible articulation of these concepts with notions such as the motor schema or the theoretical developments of Silver, we could also quote what Ombredanne says, which is very interesting, on the subject of the genesis of the language of the child but all of that does not seem to us to circumscribe in a very precise fashion the problem and it seems much more important, much more urgent and much closer to our subject to refer to a study by André Thomas a very precise study. This study of which I will only indicate the reference is called - this study appeared in an article of the *Presse médicale* of February 1960. "The auditory caresses to the nursling, the first name and the pseudo-name".

From the first days of childhood the child is exquisitely sensitive to his name and (8) this specific sensitivity seems to be something very special and simply different to the phenomena described for example by ..... in connection with the first sounds to which the child responds, those which reproduce his own babbling, provoking, he says, the end of his prattling.

Finally let us recall here the fundamental data articulated by Jakobson in an old paper of September 1939 on the phonic laws of infantile language and their place in general phenomenology. He says that one cannot explain the sorting out of sounds during the passage from babbling to language in the proper sense of the word, except by the fact of this passage itself, namely the phonematic value that the sound acquires. Further on the phonetic richness of babbling gives place to a phonological restriction.

Thus, even before what I am calling here the phonological introduction that the organisation of the word inaugurates from the time of prattling, of babbling, before language is determined in a closed system, there is created a potential phonematic polyvalence, a phonetic super-abundance, in which the child individualises himself following a schema which is personal to him.

From this time on, and this is the hypothesis that I am formulating, is there not the putting into place of a sort of personal grid, a system of phonological sieve, in the (10) sense used by ..... whom I do not quote. These phonological sieves are the key, in the sense of a key of musical notation, which allows to be deciphered the articulation of the subject with the signifier and his fellows. Now is not this key close, precisely, to this phonematic gestalt which we previously spoke about.

This gestalt would function a little like a resonating system, cutting out in the surrounding language, forms of meaning in order to be organised into a message furnished by the personal sieve.

It is the problem analogous to the one that we are quoting about the relationship existing between foreign tongues and the maternal tongue, but also, on the

pathological plane, one could relate these phenomena to that of verbal illusions or again to delusions of self-reference.

But it seems that it is also the mode of functioning of the preconscious system through which there are organised the *Fort-vorstellungen*. In this connection I think it would be interesting to recall very rapidly some quotations by Lacan in a seminar of January 1962. He says : “what interests us in the preconscious, is language as it effectively is when one hears it being spoken. It scans, articulates our thinking. In the unconscious structured like a language it is not easy to have it (11) express itself in a common language. The articulated language of common discourse is outside, with respect to the subject of the unconscious; an outside which conjoins in itself what we call our intimate thoughts. This language which carries on outside and not in an immaterial fashion, this discourse is entirely homogenisable as something which happens outside; language fills the street and there is effectively there an inscription; the problem of what happens in consciousness comes to make itself heard and there is the problem of the mimicry between the unconscious and the preconscious.” And again : “if we should consider the unconscious as the locus of the subject where something is profoundly restructured without the subject knowing it by the retroactive effects of the signifier implied in the word, it is in so far as and for the least of these words, that the subject speaks, that he can do no more than always once more name himself without knowing it and without knowing by what name.” And finally “the status of the unconscious is established at a more radical level, the emergence of the act of enunciating.”

It is a simple reminder and we can suppose that this gestalt poord’jeli is very close to the point of emergence or of the birth of the subject, a subject, for example who emerges from a coma always responds to the summons of his name well before he can become aware of the noise of any sentence whatsoever. A supplementary argument to signify that this gestalt indicates the speaking subject.

It is here from this aspect, from this point, that the phantasy can be located and it is (12) here that I come to this criticism of Leclaire but this point of reference is not a phantasy. And this is a reproach that I would make to Leclaire that he has assimilated his poord’jeli to a phantasy.

Fundamentally, phantasy is much more scopical in its essence. Of course we can quote Freud who in the letter to Fliess of 25 May 1897 puts forward the hypothesis that phantasies are produced by an unconscious combination of things experienced or things heard, following certain tendencies.

But the problem still remains. The phenomenological grasp of phantasy poses the problem of the imagining of the phantasy. But this problem implies the equating of a certain symbolic framework. It seems to me that to be rigorous, this phonematic, sonorous gestalt, indicates the point from which one can see arising the privileged image of a fundamental phantasy which is very conjuratory and with an opening marking the bringing into play of the big Other. Posed in this way, it seems to me we can better articulate what Leclaire says, by avoiding the risk of getting involved in a specular jousting with the patient. And what can result from an obsessional-ascetic search for a fundamental key to the problem which is posed by the analytic relationship, it seems that there is here in effect the

search for a guarantee which ought to be a beyond of anxiety towards the mythical locus of the *jouissance* of the Other, the big Other, with an avoidance, with a possible collapse towards a (13) possible alienation of the desire of the analysed subject into the desire of the analyst.

We can formulate that in a different way. What seems to be in question here is the problematic of the phallus in the analytic relationship; the path which leads towards the unity of the subject signified by the name of the father ..... which phenomenologically is the appearance of the phallus in the progress of making meaning.

Here I make a reference to a note by Lacan from the same seminar of January 1962 which, after a mathematical development of a periodic function, comments on the first thing that we encounter and this: it is the essential relationship of this something that we search for being the subject before he is named, to the usage that he can make of his name as being the signifier of what is signified about the question of the addition of himself to his own name, this is to split him, to divide him in two.

On the other hand, the phonematic gestalt by its essence from the order of the big O, from the big Other, is what is the point of ambiguity, namely for oneself and for the others, the coming to light in the analytic relationship on this point of ambiguity deserves in fact to be circumscribed in a particularly precise fashion, it has something to do with the point of reversion, the point of articulation between the imaginary and the symbolic.

(14) I tried to reduce my presentation as far as I could.

**Dr Lacan:** Thank you for having done so. The longer piece you have done, we will see what we can do with it.

**Dr Leclaire:** In the choice that I have of responding immediately in detail to every intervention on the one hand, or, on the other hand of underlining a point in it, while leaving it in suspense and leaving somebody else speak, I chose the second formula because I do not think that it is opportune that either I or Lacan should take things up to begin the speaking again. I think that it is appropriate that those who have expressed themselves in writing should do so today before you. The particular point that I would like to underline, and which poses a problem for me, is the prevalence of the scopic element that Oury advances as being constitutive of phantasy.

No doubt this is what is usually evoked when people speak about phantasy but I wonder whether, analytically speaking, we do not precisely have to distinguish the forms of phantasy according to the nature of the object, the object in the Lacanian sense, namely the *o*-object implied in the phantasy. In other words, if what is involved is an object from the scopic sphere, from the visual sphere, OK, but in the example I chose what is involved is an object of a different nature, which is precisely an object from the domain of the voice, from what we could call the vocal and acoustic sphere. I do not know if it is necessarily appropriate to reduce this object to a scopic dimension. I leave the question open because I think that

one should make distinctions there. On the question of phantasy does Valabrega, who had a terminological question to specify, wish to speak?

### **Presentation by Monsieur Valabrega**

What I had to say rejoins one of the points raised immediately by Oury. It was a very short remark to which I give only a terminological importance, which terminological remarks naturally may have, because I would like to tell Serge Leclaire that on the whole, I found his presentation extremely satisfying.

I come back as Oury did to the formula Poord'jeli of which Leclaire has made, as Oury has told us a phantasy, and even a fundamental phantasy, *Urphantasie*. It is also on this point that the remark I want to make will bear. Can a formula of this kind be considered to be a phantasy? I do not think so. I think that the formula contains basic elements or signifying elements of a fundamental phantasy. Only one cannot be reduced to the other.

On the scopic content, on the scopic form that has just been spoken about, I would not be fully in agreement what Oury said but I would rather align myself with the indication that Leclaire has just given.

(16) For my part I would say that what can create an agreement between those who hold with a copy, as I might say, and those who hold with the distinctions that are necessary to make at the level of drives in the constitution of the fundamental phantasy, I would define the phantasy as a story that one tells, or rather more exactly as a story which is told, which happens to be told, which implies nothing as regards who tells it and where it is told and by whom it is told.

The only thing is that a story that is told can refer to a scopic content or to different one; what I would see as essential in the phantasy that is described as fundamental, in the *Urphantasie*, is that for me, at least, it opens out necessarily onto a myth.

This is why, moreover, in psychoanalysis one cannot do otherwise than pass perpetually from the signified to the signifier through signification and in every sense of this passage. This definition of analysis is obviously applied to the discovery of the phantasy and of the fundamental phantasy.

I add a little point: what seemed to me interesting to ask Leclaire as a complement to his presentation is the following: what are, in his case, the clinical conditions for obtaining the aforesaid formula? On what I said about analysis which passes from the signified to the signifier by signification one can only say it, moreover, it is not (17) a critique, there is nothing of the sort in what I said there, it is what Leclaire did in his presentation which once more reduces the importance of my remark to a question of the distinction between terms.

**Dr Leclaire:** I would have great difficulty in responding in a few words to the question of the clinical conditions for obtaining this formula. It comes, it emerges, it is given. Moreover this formula is a typical example.

But what I would like to pause on for a moment is the question of phantasy as Valabrega argues it.

He says that for him a phantasy is something like the impersonal argument of a story. I agree. The critique is directed perhaps at this formula but it is not directed completely at it. For this formula seems all the same to represent for the subject the outline, however slight it may be, of a history and not just of a history, of a sort of action.

When I evoked the gesture of somersaulting, even its somatic accomplishment which accompanies the formula, or which the formula realises, I think that there is produced something at the level of a summary accomplishment of the model of a story. I will come back perhaps in a more precise fashion on this later if I have the time. I would like now to ask Mme Irigaray to communicate her remarks for it seems to me that they refer to, that they complete on the one hand the ones made by Oury on the question of the first name, or the question of sensitivity to the first name and perhaps also on the other hand because they take up again the problem of the body in the case of this observation.

**Mme Irigaray:** In connection with Leclaire's seminar I would like to make three remarks on rather different things. The first remark has to do with the difference that exists in my opinion between the first name and the surname, a difference which in my opinion was not sufficiently noted by Leclaire.

When Leclaire speaks about the proper name, he gives as example George Philip Eliany and when Lacan speaks about it, moreover, he gave as an example Jacques Lacan.

It seems to me that between Eliany and Lacan on the one hand, and Jacques and George Philip on the other, there exist important differences. Lacan and Eliany are not proper names. *Qua* Lacan or Eliany the subject is only the element of a group and one could invoke in this connection what a line of descent requires of those who carry its name to the detriment of the singularity of each person.

George Philip, Jacques, are in a way, the sound image of the subject. They take into account the singularity of the subject, at least within the group Eliany or Lacan (19) but they take it into account above all at the imaginary level which does not already exclude, obviously, the presence of the symbolic.

One can note in this connection that the young child is always called by his first name, especially by his mother. Moreover if another person in the line of descendants, and particularly the father is called George Philip or Jacques there is proposed a crucial problem for the subject and the homonymy of the first name especially between father and son or mother and daughter is often, it seems to me, a handicap in the becoming of the subject.

Obviously when the subject emerges from the Eliany or Lacan group he can only signify himself as George Philip Eliany or Jacques Lacan because he encounters at that point other George Philip's or Jacques's. One can note that this is situated generally speaking when he goes to school, a key moment for the positing of the Oedipus complex and the access to the symbolic order. To this primordial and



more imaginary George Philip or Jacques there is added at that point the Eliany or the Lacan which are going to situate the subject in the society which he then really enters, the family in the last resort being more another mother than a true society.

The proper name is therefore the conjunction of a sound image, of a symbolic brand. But there always remains, it seems to me, a difference, notably at the level of identification between the George Philip's or the Jacques's or the Elians and Lacans.

(20) For example the subject does not react in the same way to the death of a George Philip and to the death of an Eliany.

A second remark then: When Leclaire speaks about the empty mask of the unconscious, I would really like him to explain what he means. Because in fact his text does not seem to consider the unconscious as empty. Moreover it seems to me if analysts consider the unconscious as empty, they are much closer to Claude Lévi-Strauss than they say.

If the unconscious is empty, it manifests itself only by chains of behaviour, this word being understood in a very broad sense, and not by imaged or phonematic contents.

The problem of a full or empty unconscious appears to be quite fundamental and if the analysts are able to speak about the unconscious with such difficulty, is it not precisely that it is above all a structure that can be located through its opposition or at least comparison with other unconscious's, a structure that is at once the same and different between one or other subject.

A third remark: If the unconscious is born from the encounter between the organic and the signifier, why does Leclaire invoke experiences of exquisite difference, of movements of somersault, of attitudes of reversal which are situated, it seems to (21) me, at a properly corporal level? Does Leclaire mean by this that the corporal behaviour of the nursling is already organised in a way that is parallel to that of the signifier? But is that not to suppress this problem of the insertion of the signifier into the organism, a drama from which the unconscious is going to be born.

It seem to me that the originality of the organic is not sufficiently preserved at least unless that what Leclaire is suggesting is that what is involved here is a kind of *fort-da* that the subject tries on himself to master precisely this primordial meeting between the organic and the signifier. But is he touching then the most archaic unconscious level since he has already mastered it?

**Dr Leclaire:** Several questions are posed. Three at least. To the first I can only allow its whole value to - I was going to say to the clinical arguments which are advanced about the privileged value of the first name. The question that I would pose at that level when Madame Irigaray says that first names take into account the singularity of each person but that they take him into account above all at the imaginary level, I think that a question is posed at a particularly tangible point because, of course, here there remains to be specified with greater rigour what one means precisely by this imaginary level and to what it is opposed. To the

symbolic of course but how and in what way precisely in this case at the primary level?

(22) On the question of this expression of the empty mask and of the void in particular, I think that this gives rise to or that this activates the whole series of phantasies which are familiar to us and which, if I may say, refer to the opposition between the full and the empty.

The word that I chose is perhaps not a very fortunate one but it is this image of the mask which struck me for reasons that I will no doubt have to take up again. The term of empty there is employed in a precise sense, namely, where there is no sense close-by, where there is not a ready-made meaning, which is the contrary of a full or too full meaning, if empty has a meaning, in connection with the mask of the unconscious or the empty mask of the unconscious, it is in this direction that I would want it to be understood.

As regards the question of the involvement of the body, the question of the encounter between the organic and the signifier, I consider this to be a crucial question and if I have a little bit of time at the end of this discussion I think that I can take up again in a precise fashion what I have to say there, precisely in connection on what I underlined already earlier in what one could almost call the animating value on the muscular plane of this Poord'jeli formula, for it seems to me, I told you immediately, that would not have a lot of meaning for us, that that (23) formula is already in a certain way something like a mime of the signifier. I will come back on it later, as I was telling you, if we have the time.

**Dr Lacan:** I would like simply to make a little remark about this question of the first name. The next time I will put on the board an indication in German of a work on the psychology of the first name by somebody called Rose Katz, if I remember correctly.

I think that all the same on this subject, the essential was given by Luce Irigaray, the essential in the distinction between the first name and the family name is that the first name is given by the parents, while the family name is transmitted. It is much more important than the classificatory aspect which opposes the generic nature of the family name to the singularity of the first name. A first name in no way constitutes a singularity. At most, the essential is that it expresses something which accompanies the birth of a child and which clearly comes from parents. The child already has a determined chosen place in the universe of the language of the first name, illustrations that are at the same time very superficial .....

**Dr Leclaire:** Lemoine with whom we will end, as I might say, this first part very arbitrarily divided as what we can call theoretical remarks or commentaries of a theoretical nature.

(24) **Mr Lemoine:** I do not have the impression that what I am going to say is theoretical because what I said was suggested to me by reflections that I had after having heard the brilliant presentation that Leclaire made to us at the last closed seminar.

What I have to say concerns two points :

- on the one hand the fact that Leclair made no illusion to the last sentence of the dream which seems essential to me because precisely this sentence was an appeal to him, and made of this dream a transference dream.

In effect what does the last sentence say? "We were going, all three of us, towards a clearing that could be seen down below". Well then for me, the clearing (*clairière*) is clear (*claire*). What is involved precisely is Leclair's name which is invoked in a way by the patient and then this is already an appeal to the name. There is a second appeal to the name and another name which is the name of the father and which is indicated by the unicorn because what is the unicorn? It is a fabulous animal which is only appeased - and Leclair tells us this in his article of 1960 *Temps Modernes* - when he rests on the lap of a Virgin.

Now this is precisely the problem of the taboo of virginity and it must be remarked moreover that this Virgin is perhaps the mother but he makes no allusion to it (25) anywhere to it in this dream. This Virgin is Philip's mother. Now Philip's mother is the one who responds to the desire of the father. If the father had married a Virgin, a Virgin mother, Philip's name, Philip's identity is ..... from that moment on uncontested. But precisely Philip is an obsessional. And the desire of his mother is precisely what creates a question for him. That is the reason why Philip has the greatest doubts about himself and about his identity. And it is the reason why he entered analysis.

That is why this parallelism between the name of the analyst which is found for its part outside the circuit - and moreover I would ask Leclair as I wrote to him whether there is not here a counter-transference indeed an excess of counter-transference if precisely he refused to implicate himself by not listening with such an attentive ear as he did to the beginning of the text of the dream to this last sentence which was addressed to him. In any case this last sentence is directed at the name of the analyst on the one hand on the other hand the name of the father.

And then at this point I would like to touch on what was called here earlier the body, namely the anxiety of the patient. I believe that this is essential if, in effect, the patient speaks about Lili and if everything has deviated in a way towards the Lili of Licorne and if everything that can be described as a horn (*corne*) is hidden and is gathered together in a way in this fabulous animal, it is because on the side (26) of Lili finally something equivalent to the relationship to the mother, but a displaced equivalent, that is to say one that is much less anxiety-provoking.

In the same way, the evocation of the name of the analyst is much less charged with anxiety than would be the evocation of the father. And that is why the father is masked in this dream or condensed if you wish in the image and why the analyst is on the contrary much more apparent because what is involved is a clearing.

This leads me to speak about the formula about Poord'jeli. It was said earlier, and I agree, that it is a reversal, there is a sort of symmetry in a way between the two elements of this formula. There is in effect on the one hand George and on the other hand Lili and in the middle the little d which is the arrow of desire which Lacan has taught us to use. I mean by that that this symmetry is a false symmetry and it is a false symmetry because George is found in the final analysis with Lili, namely that Lili, he finally, with Lili, he understood, he held in his grasp, he had

signified in a way, experienced his desire. And it is this kind of traversal of desire which modifies the formula Poord'jeli, a reversal that we also find in the symmetry formula *Lili j'ai soif*; *Philippe j'ai soif* (Lili I am thirsty; Philip I am thirsty).

(27) It seems that this sort of reversal, namely, this turning back on oneself and this way of finding oneself perpetually back on oneself is evidently the fundamental problem, the fundamental attitude of Philip.

So then what use is this formula? It serves to fill a lack in the signifying chain and it serves by its singularity and I believe that there is a difference between the image that one encounters very frequently and very easily in numerous analysis; whether it is for example a tower that looks at you with two eyes, or whether it is a siphon which suddenly turns towards the mouth of the patient, or whether it is a Punch also which suddenly becomes an erect penis, well one finds all of these images at an essential turning point of an analysis and each time there is an anxiety to be covered over. This formula Poord'jeli is a much older formula, this moreover has been said, and it is a formula which allowed perhaps to go further in the analysis of the subject and which allows the subject finally to do what? To recuperate himself when he finds himself, through anxiety, brought to a halt in the course of his associations and in the course of his life.

For what must be clearly said is that anxiety is experienced in the body and that this is the problem and that what constitutes analysis is nothing other precisely than to (28) put the signifying chain in motion and thus to modify what is incarnated in a certain way by the subject. And besides, is not analysis precisely and in the final analysis a reincarnation of the signifier. Does it not in the final analysis heal the subject by allowing him to reincarnate himself in his language?

**Dr Leclaire:** Lemoine was right and I apologise for having classified him in the first category. I must say, because we are already in the second series of arguments, namely, clinical arguments that on that point I will allow to each testimony its value as an association because I do not think, even though we are in what is called a closed seminar, that we can enter into the dimension of a discussion of a case or indeed of the analysis of a counter-transference.

Not that this is something to be excluded, but I believe that we will not have the leisure or the possibility to do so here. What comes as an echo to an analytic text is in itself sufficiently eloquent. I would like now to invite Mme Cotsanis-Diamantis to speak who I think, precisely, is going to present us a very short observation of something different.

**Mme Cotsanis-Diamantis:** In an article like the one Leclaire has proposed to us it seems to me that in connection with these groups of words he proposed to show us (29) how through a chain of signifiers the unconscious appeared to us.

I said, it seems to me, for if our own experience did not make us encounter such notions, we would be condemned to believe it on his word.

It seems to me, in effect, that at the level of a theorisation, of an explanation, of a reference to a third, the one who is neither the analyst nor the analysed, to

someone like that these notions may appear as arbitrary. This means that if temporally we accept to believe it on his word it is only through the detour of our own experience that we will be led to convince ourselves more surely.

The analyst-analysand relationship being a relationship of two, the third, the one who listens, the hearer, has no access to it. I will record here an example of an exchange between the analyst and his patient where the dialogue is engaged between two unconscious's and where the reference to a third become difficult.

In the course of a child therapy I am suddenly asked : “where is the orange, where is the orange?” And since I was asking myself inwardly what might this orange mean I made a lapse which informed me, if not about this meaning, at least about (30) my own phantasies: I wrote: “where is the organ?”.

I would like now to report a history I heard being reported to me by people who know who is involved, a little while after Leclaire's paper. This story I heard completely outside the analytic field. And if there was an analytic intention it was because of my listening for it. It is by that special opening that was brought by Leclaire's paper and in particular by the teaching of Lacan in general to which the story that I heard brought me back and which I will call the story of Norbert.

The story is about a couple. The husband is twenty-five, he is a doctor with the promise of a brilliant future, and who is supposed to become gynaecologist. He has a two-year-old daughter. The mother, who has fixated herself on her own mother, is rather indifferent to the child. On the contrary the father experienced a real passion for his daughter. The father was doing an exam that he failed, because that day his daughter had swallowed a brooch and he was extremely upset. He gives up his studies and goes into the navy to do his military service. There, even though he is an excellent diver he kills himself by breaking his skull on a block of cement. The child is two years old at the time.

We rediscover the widow twenty years later with her daughter aged twenty-two at (31) the time. This widow has got married afterwards to a man that she does not love. Her daughter gets married immediately to a man she does not love either. This man has the same family name as her and what is more his first name is Bernard while his own father was called Norbert. The marriage goes badly. The young woman cannot tolerate her in-laws and persuades Bernard her husband to go to live on an island. There while Bernard is driving an accident takes place which disfigures the young woman. She does get back a more or less normal face but a different one after several surgical operations.

A little while afterwards they have a son whom they call Norbert. This child is the object of a great passion on the part of his mother. As regards the father he finds himself rejected by the mother-son couple. The mother is constantly afraid that Norbert is going to swallow the noxious products that the father, who is a farmer, makes use of, and in particular insecticides. One day the father brings his son out into a field where he had work to do. He pours the insecticide into a recipient and goes to work a little bit further on. And leaves the child to play. When he comes back he notices the level of the bowl has dropped; at least he suspects it, thinks about his son but does not dwell on. An hour later the child got sick and by the time father had brought him to hospital had died.

(32) From the angle of this story I found myself coming back on what Leclaire spoke to us about, and it showed me here a little of what he showed in what concerns the appearance of relationships, in the phantasy, between the name of the subject and, a fortiori, in the story of Norbert, with the name of the father.

From what angle do we find it here? We have seen a young woman who loses her father when she is two years old, who grows up alone with her mother and who takes a husband and surely a phallus at the same time as she.

Her choice is the following : Mr X who has the same surname as the father of the young woman, therefore the same surname as the young woman. She marries Bernard and she lost Norbert. In fact Bernard, as a rather miserable farmer, is exactly the opposite of Norbert, a doctor with a promising or a brilliant future. The inversion of syllables between the two first names seems here to reveal to us the most unconscious and the most secret phantasy of this young woman. Perhaps Bernard is only the virtual inverted image of Norbert who is so much desired but is absent, or rather is so present.

How is this woman going to be able to accommodate this virtual image with respect to the real image of Norbert, her father? In fact everything happens as if Bernard had a mission to cancel out Norbert.

(33) Who gave him this mission? It is a reply to his wife, perhaps, but much more surely to Norbert himself insofar as he is manifested through the desire of the other.

What is Bernard for this woman? Is he not the antidote, the anti-poison, the one who will cancel out Norbert? The first patricide that the young woman is going to commit is getting married to Bernard. From then on it seems that it is Bernard himself who will take charge of it. First of all by destroying the brand, the imprint of Norbert on the face of his wife. Then by killing his son, the resurrected Norbert for two years, and with, one could hardly choose better, an insecticide.

There are other elements that would be worth while exploring here. For example the references to the *mère/mer* that we find constantly. Norbert who wanted to be a gynaecologist doing his military service in the navy, and killing himself at sea, the couple going to live on an island.

But neither the example, which is a story that was told, for which we have no analysis at our disposal, nor my present experience allows me to go any further than these few elements that I have just given.

**Dr Leclaire:** There is very little to be added to this extraordinary story. Have you started to write it up, this story of Norbert?

**(34) Dr Lacan:** I wanted people to remember this. It is worth the trouble. It is a story which was not analysed and which cannot be analysed. But the name Norbert was not heard. I wanted it to be written out.

**Dr Leclaire:** I still have a lot of papers. Mme Lemoine. It is in connection of the dream of the unicorn.

**Mme Lemoine:** I am neither an analyst nor a doctor. Besides I think you will see this very soon. But I was invited to communicate to you my intuitive reflections, so here they are.

“One could go much further”, Serge Leclaire said at the end of his presentation. In fact no, one cannot. It is all very well for him to propose a new variation on the theme of inverted gold and which would give rose like the scar, or like the inverted sex or the inverted rose of the woman, but neither the signifying chain nor the cypher of Poord’jeli nor above all the dream itself are themes but texts which are open to infinite variations. Therefore, in order to go further, we would have to be the analyst himself and to have before us the analysand, namely to continue the analysis. Finally, we would have to know the real name of the patient this name Eliany, son of the Lord in Hebrew, I believe, but I do not know Hebrew, was probably put forward for the needs of the case.

We would then see, if we knew this surname, operating in function of Leclaire, the (35) clearing of the dream. But we do not have the man or his name, so we can only dream in effect, or worse conclude. For example, to the castration complex.

But the analysis is, it seems, the opposite to a diagnosis, even if it was concurrently made by the patient himself. Simple conscious awareness is not very effective.

But Serge Leclaire also says and from the beginning that the proper name is linked to the most secret aspect of the unconscious phantasy and it is from this sentence that I would like to begin.

Let us take up a little of the history of the dream. Philip is thirsty. He succeeds in deceiving but obviously not in satisfying his thirst by appeasing other thirsts in a dream, a preconscious echo of a fundamental unconscious lack. The dream then is like an echo chamber.

In a day-to-day context on the contrary when Philip happens to say “Lilly I am thirsty”, he expresses at least two desires: he needs to drink and he loves Lili. The most important one is not the one that is formulated, because any word is first of all the sign of a need of love, of an appeal. But he wants all the same something, to drink, at least in the first phase. Therefore things happen very differently in the dream and in reality at the level of language. In reality the thirst is expressed to (35a) obtain satisfaction, in the dream it is not expressed and far from being satisfied it awakens other thirsts which for their part are asleep during the day.

In Philip's case one can say then that the language of the night before shows certain splits. No doubt it is lacunary, like his night-time language, since it allows there to appear rather frequently a formula stripped of meaning like poord’jeli.

Why then in Philip's case does the original pressure, instead of being normally represented and occupying therefore from substitute to substitute the psychic life

up to language, why has the displacement being cut short and culminated at this blind alley of *poordj'eli*.

No doubt because there is no anchoring point at the desired moment. No doubt because a brutal weaning dispensed the father from playing his separating role. This is what the remainder of the analysis would no doubt teach us. Perhaps also the father was completely missing in person, how can we know? There is a Jacques who is a brother of the father who seems to have operated sometimes in his place. Therefore the original metaphor did not operate. It did not come to separate what should have been separated establishing thus the subsequent oppositions, conditions of the discourse. The psychic life of Philip has remained like a marsh where one *nenuphar* displaces another *nenuphar* indefinitely.

(36) Underneath the original drive the death drive has remained gaping. In order to fix the circle of fallacious substitutions, Philip posed on his need a seal, a scar that he masks but which at the same time castrates him. The scar is on him but the rose is elsewhere, in the clearing perhaps.

It is not just anyone at all who can show him the path, the patient therefore appeals to the analyst so that he will help him to reconvert the scar into a dart.

This appeal of the analysand to the analyst, takes on from the beginning and at the end the form of two proper names. George-Philip, the son of the Lord with a question-mark, appeals to Serge Leclair so that he will take up with him his history at the moment that his father was lacking, and so that he will allow in this way to be reknotted the signifying chain as closely as possible to the first symbolic link.

Philip will end up perhaps later in the clearing where he can perhaps become a man and pick the rose. Having become a man he will also be able to have himself called by his own name, which we do not know, and not the son of the lord. Until then he remains a child who is suckling his nurse to the great satisfaction of the nurse herself, but the patient has to liquidate his transference in order not to become the child of the analyst after having been the child of his nurse.

(37) It is only then that he will be authorised to bear his own name which will no longer be that of his father who is symbolically dead. He will also be able to speak in the first person and to allow to speak in him the second and third persons. That is the end of the dream of the unicorn carrying his sleeping dart.

Philip, finally, twice baptised, will have conquered his own identity. The transmission of the proper name is no doubt a sociological fact, but the proper name sticks to the person like the common name to the thing which we would not be able to distinguish if it were not named.

In that way, to bear a name has a meaning and an action on the person and one could perhaps speak about the conquest of the name.

It is a matter then for the analyst to authorise, however little, the unconscious after separation of the persons to found, to ground, the first. Literature in this perspective is a magnified analysis in and through the person of the author, while



according to the expression of Jean Paulhan, it is an enlarged language where metaphor and metonymy appear as seen in a microscope.

But the dream is not a text with an author's name. It is only the reverse of a poem.

**Dr Leclaire:** We still have at least three texts: Melle Markovitz.

**Presentation by Melle Markovitz (not in French typescript)**

(48) **Dr Lacan:** Without prejudice to the others, we will see the decisions that we will have to take, we are going to have this really remarkable paper reneotyped.

Since you will only have the text of Jacques-Alain Miller next week you will be able to get this one probably a little later.

**Dr Leclaire :** I would wish for my part first of all of course that we should take up this text of Melle Markovitz, that people should also have before their eyes the sequence of tapestries of the lady with the unicorn, which is not so difficult, but I would wish perhaps, rather than replying, to add myself a commentary to this discussion to give the opportunity which will not be very long to two people who again wrote something, namely Melle Mondzain and Mr Major, the opportunity to communicate their reflections to you.

**Melle Mondzain:** After the papers that have been given I have the impression that the clinical reflections that Leclaire's text suggested to me are going to overlap things which have already been said and may appear a little bit like repetition.

Nevertheless I will give them as such since I have been asked to do so and by beginning perhaps with the end of what I wrote to Leclaire because the preceding (49) interventions put the emphasis on the term *poordj'eli*.

Leclaire told us in his text that it was extremely difficult in general for analysts to obtain the communication of such formulae whose unveiling, he told us, which is apparently so anodyne has something which resembles something extremely shameful or even at the limits sacriligious.

He put the accent especially on the question of sacrilege in showing us how the term of *poordj'eli* was linked to the name of the father, to the name of the patient, to the surname.

Madame Lemoine alluded earlier to the possible signification of this name Eliany, the son of the Lord. It is a question that I also posed myself, but I do not know Hebrew any more than she does. Besides I asked myself whether the name Eliany was the real name or whether it was a forged name. In any case the convergence is all the same rather striking.

It is a name which has a Semitic resonance and there is in the tables of the law a commandment which says : "you shall not pronounce the name of Jaweh, your God in vain." I have thought that someone who is called George-Philip Eliany, whether he is a Jew or even perhaps a Christian, could scarcely be ignorant of

such a commandment and that the term of Poord'jeli might appear, in a certain measure, like a sort of swear (50) word and a sacrilege in the religious sense, a way of saying : "nom de Dieu", very cleverly and this form of disguise, which is proper sometimes to certain neurotic symptoms, to clinical features that we know well as analysts where the transgression unveils itself in a fashion that is all the more clear because it wants to appear camouflaged.

I was struck by another aspect of this phoneme poordj'eli as Oury and others have spoken about it on the phonematic plane. I have not sources that are as precise or as plentiful as those of Oury. I consulted books on child psychology, rather banal sources, because I had the feeling that that reminded me of something, that reminded me more of words or of terms that children easily invent and of the verbal games of children.

What I found disappointed me a little and satisfied me a little in the sense that all the observations are practically unanimous in noting that certain sounds appear before others and that for example a sound like "r" is one of the earliest and is particularly associated to agreeable physical experiences: so that it would be rather characteristic.

The letter "p" is supposed to be one of the first consonants to be pronounced and people frequently speak about babbling. This link between verbal games and agreeable physical experiences led me to pose the question of a possible link (51) between a phonetic expression of this order and the agreeable physical side, this physical pleasure which can be associated to it or has been associated to it and I asked myself, I posed the question to Leclaire as regards whether the difficulty that there was in finding such formulae, of collecting them as a general rule, could not be caused by an extremely early forgetting which is contemporaneous or of the same order, which might go in the same direction as the perhaps forgotten, the first agreeable physical experience, indeed the first masturbations which even children at the breast apparently carry out. This would rejoin a problem which Leclaire said he would speak to us about which is that of the unconscious and of the signifying chain with respect to the body and other bodily problems.

This question of the body and of Philip's body, I also posed at the level of the dream. It has already been remarked here how one could situate the place of Leclaire in the dream with respect to this clearing.

Leclaire spoke to us about this dream telling us that it was a thirst dream if one takes the term in the sense of a dream whose origin is thirst, which has a somatic (52) source. It does not correspond quite to what is classically known about such dreams in which one would expect for example that Philip would at least dream of a spring, that he would dream about water, that he would dream about some liquid or other to be consumed. There seems to have been a certain delay between the dream which ends up in a clearing which is not reached and the manifestation of the thirst. I would like to pose the question to Leclaire of whether the term of a thirst dream is not to be taken in the sense that it is a dream which made Philip thirsty because there is here fundamentally in the movement of the narrative that Philip makes to Leclaire, two phases, there is a moment of the dream in which Philip sleeps, Philip who is lying down, Philip who is dreaming about Leclaire, to Leclaire, as there is on the analyst's couch a Philip who speaks to Leclaire, and he

posed in the discourse a Philip who emerges from the dream, who wakes up to have a drink and who at that moment is no longer the Philip linked to the desire of Leclair but the Philip linked to the Philip-I'm-thirsty, to the very body of his childhood and who orients himself in the direction, at bottom, of another desire, Philip-I'm-thirsty, it is a Philip who is unique in the world, unique and distinguished from all other Philips of the world perhaps by his mother who perhaps fed him when he was a child or in his narrative at least, what appears is a different figure of (53) a woman, it is that of Lili who had nicknamed him Philip-I'm-thirsty and who had thus greeted him as such.

**Dr Lacan:** What Melle Mondzain has said is really very important. Does Israel, whom I asked to intervene, have something ready.

**Dr Israel:** It will keep.

**Dr Lacan:** So we will ask Major.

**Dr Leclair:** I will leave to Major the responsibility of concluding by asking him to come right away, through a sort of analytic commentary that is extremely close it seems to the material that was brought up here and I would like to have the opportunity the next time to tell you what I would like to underline at the end of this discussion and what I would like to emphasise in this connection, namely, the quite particular nature of what is involved here, of the object of which there can be a question, in so far as it is a matter of a formula, of an ejaculation, of something which is said aloud or quietly and I wanted above all in this connection to remind you of another element of the analysis of Philip which is that of the dream of the sickle (*serpe*) to which moreover Major refers, in which we find in a still more precise fashion something that is of the order of an appeal.

(54) **Mr Major:** I would say that this could turn around the encounter of the desire of the analyst, and the becoming of the subject, on the track of the proper name.

I will go to the most central point.

It is indeed on the privileged terrain of the unconscious from which sense emerges from non-sense where in connection with the proper name and its relationship with the fundamental phantasy Serge Leclair has led us to the edge of a transgression with the rigour of a non-logic of a primary type.

He has illustrated for us the fundamental mechanisms of the unconscious - metaphorical substitution and metonymical displacement.

To the unconscious text of the dream with the unicorn with Philip, Lili, beach, thirst, sand, skin, foot, horn elaborated in 1960 he added last January the phonematic transcription of the fundamental phantasy of George-Philip Eliany, Poord'jeli.

He has given us the criteria which led him to distinguish, retain, underline, one phonematic couple rather than another in his analytic progress. The criteria that he has retained take essentially as an axis three fundamental concepts in

psychoanalysis, the repetition of significant elements, the irreducible drive whose (55) representatives undergo the effect of repression, of displacement, and of condensation and finally the constitutive absence of logical relationships and of contradiction at the primary level of the processes of the unconscious.

Unconscious, drive, repetition in their insoluble link summon nevertheless a fourth concept just as Jacques Lacan has insisted in his seminar on the fundamentals of psychoanalysis, transference, and it is indeed on transference that a number of the people who have spoken before me have come back to.

The temptation came to me given account of it by applying the very method that Serge Leclaire has used and in particular in his articulation with a proper name. But it is necessary for me in my turn, to raise myself, to the limits of a new transgression, that of lifting the veil on the analytic situation where as a real third person I am excluded, to interrogate the desire of the analyst. A difficult position if there ever was one where one risks surprising one's own gaze on the invisible.

It is starting from the two dreams of Philip that I will first try to uncover the traces of transference in the proper names in the dreams. Then I will take the risk of opening up a path into the locus, into the singular dialogue of analytic experience, of the becoming of the subject in place of the desire of the analyst through the (56) phonematic transcription of the fundamental phantasy of Philip.

Is it not from this conjunction that there is born in analysis what in another place Leclaire has called the incestuous encounter? This incestuous encounter that I try here to highlight in the articulation of the collusion of the proper names of the analyst and of the analysand. Of this encounter it would be necessary to speak more at length. Let it be enough for me on this occasion to say two more words.

In virtue of the assimilation of the barrier of repression that is constitutive of the unconscious to the barrier of incest, the aim of the analyst which appears as an unveiling of sense, indeed of the sense of origins, in attempting to modify the systemic equilibrium, makes conscious what is unconscious, becomes an incestuous adventure in potency, the only veritable transgression of incest, such as the one committed by Freud in an exemplary manner when producing his major work, the *Traumdeutung* he resolves the enigma posed to him, even down to his trip to *Roma* whose anagram is *amor* and accedes to a ..... that is hence forth symbolic.

Do we not have here in the renunciation of the fascination of desire in its incidences linked to the mother and to the origins, e.g. Oedipus, where its assumption in its indissoluble link to castration that there occurs the accession to (57) meaning, to self-consciousness, in opposition to universal consciousness which is an overlooking of desire and of castration.

Let us come back to Philip's two dreams of which I recall only the two final sentences

of the dream of the unicorn: "we were all three walking towards a clearing which could be spotted down below." (This element has already been underlined.)

And the dream of the sickle the final sentence of which also seems to me to be linked to a transference : “ he would thus have wounded himself against an object hidden (*caché*) in the hole. I look for him thinking about a rusty nail. It was more like a sickle (*serpe*) “ (I underline sickle, a picturing of the analyst in his place ).

Philip tries to satisfy his desire to drink in the unicorn's fountain, a patch of water in his memory to which there is associated the li of Lili and to which there becomes associated the day's residues, an evocation of his walk in the forest with his niece Anne. Already we recognise the phonemes that constitute his name : Eli an y.

Seeing the game, they had noticed towards the bottom of a valley where there flowed a stream, the clear water, the clearing of the dream, numerous traces of stags, of hinds indicating one of the points where the animals come to drink. The unicorn as we know is represented with the body of a horse and the head of a stag (*cerf*).

(58) Let us try to reconstitute the discourse by filling the lacuna like a rebus, by giving again to the phonemes of the unconscious chain the support of a preconscious discourse. “On the track, and at the head of a stag, I come to drink the clear water of the good word” Philip might have said, in a formula not without ambiguity which is an obsessional one. “Or being reflected in the fountain and only offering itself as an unattackable fortress the better to resist, this pretty body serves only me and is only for me” where there is rediscovered the unicorn and in the radical contraction of the second piece of the sentence, the first name of the analyst trimmed down to the ego, *je*, which served to name Philip.

Or again constituting himself as the phallus of the analyst and seeking his complicity in masking his lack of subject, according to the formula of Leclaire, "of the stag, I am the horn." But in fact who am I? Where can I situate myself and to what locus and place can I come?"

Taking his support on the "I" of the analyst in his name Serge and making of him in this way, for a time, his serf, he constitutes himself as a desiring subject: George, who desiring the phallus, the one that Lili desires, will carry in his head like in the onomatopoeia given by the analyst, a translation of the fundamental phantasy, Poord'je. Here there is found in its ineluctable inversion the apodictic operation of the Cartesian "I think".

(59) But let us continue in attributing to Philip, in connection with the second dream, the following discourse: "It is a sickle which inflicts on me this injury to my foot." And behold, the exquisite difference, mark of the unconscious element, comes to lodge itself in two phonemes, *pe* and *je*, the opposition of penis-phallus, and of the throat as the representative of the two poles of bi-sexuality of the *sapens* and of the "*je suis*", a commentary on the *Wo Es war* but above all of two phonemes starting from which the analyst had forged the name George Philip Eliany, while leaving in it the imprint of his own, from the *pe* of *serpe* there came Philip in 1960, a name completed in 1965 with the help of the *je* of Serge to give George and finally Eliany, where his becoming as a subject is situated between the fascination for the *lit* of Lili and the free (*libre*) knowledge of his analyst, like

Freud doubly fascinated by his young, pretty mother and by the biblical knowledge of his father.

Three phonemes, pe, je, li that we rediscover in the transcription of the fundamental phantasy, poord'je li. If between the pe and the je of poord'jeli, there appears the or which in the reversal gives rise to the rose, in the poor of the unicorn, in an identical movement there arises the rock, that of the death drive, the stumbling block of desire and of castration, a death drive constitutive, in the words of Serge Leclaire, of the desiring subject, but again, the rock of the irreducible singularity of the subject.

(60) This injury, inflicted on the foot by the sickle, the analyst will try to raise, not without allowing it to stay at its proper place, to the head, the head of the stag with a single horn, where the *je* of George Philip will tighten around the proud symbol to constitute his phallic identity, *joli porc*.

**Dr Leclaire:** I will try to reply and to conclude next Wednesday.

**Seminar 14: Wednesday 31 March 1965**

**Dr Lacan:** The intention is that, in a way, a part of what I am trying to develop before you this year will be put on the agenda of the closed seminar; it does not remain in this sort of academic suspense in which in the debates of scientific societies, which are given this title in psychoanalyse, things too often remain.

In a word, I prefer that we should have, at least at the beginning, the feeling of consecrating perhaps a little bit too much time to deepening the same subject, I prefer to fall into that mistake, into that disadvantage, than into the opposite disadvantage, namely, that one should have the feeling that one has got nothing out of it except questions that are still in suspense.

Perhaps on the subject of Leclaire's paper, which will thus be on the agenda again today, you could have the impression, when you part, of things still unspecified or of a dilemma that is unresolved or incomplete, I think that I will be able to take the responsibility subsequently of providing a closure to what will indeed have been posed as a question. I want, in a word, the question to develop and in a direction which is far from this thing that we encounter *en route*, originalities. No one (2) would have known otherwise the testimony that he is capable of giving of what people are able to understand here.

It is a matter of benefits which add up at different levels. The essential is the articulation of the question. Of course the people who expose themselves in this way contribute precious elements. Exactly, there are things that cannot be said with the required precision except in the measure that certain questions are elaborated here in reply.

I believe that the rest of the course that I am giving you this year can only be nourished by the way in which questions are opened up here at the level of the difficulties that they pose, let us say, not necessarily to everyone but to more than one. This can give rise to precisions at a much greater level than what I am able to do by my first intention.

I point out, that since everything is not running smoothly, or as perfectly as it should do, there are people who last Tuesday, namely, on going on the eve of the closed seminar found at rue de Varenne neither Leclaire's report nor that of Jacques Alain Miller. They are there since last Wednesday morning. You can still find them and acquire them.

Now, Leclaire, I think that you have something to say right away?

**(3) Dr Leclaire:** I think that the best thing to the continue discussion is still to give the floor to a certain number of people who manifested a desire to speak.

I myself also want to speak, not precisely to reply but to participate in the discussion. We will see then, at the point that we have got to, whether other unprepared interventions arise.

So then, Safouan asked to make a few remarks. I give him the floor right away.

**Dr Safouan:** I asked Mr Lacan if I could speak because the last time we heard a lot of things that were correct but we also heard some propositions which were frankly false.

So that it would be useless to pursue this discussion if we do not bring the mistakes to light.

For example, we were told that the barrier which separates the conscious from the unconscious is the incest-barrier. I ask myself where that came from. There was a temptation perhaps to make a sort of generalised theory. Here we have psychoanalysis and anthropology which are ..... That is all very well provided one knows what one is doing.

But to begin, what does that mean? That means that the barrier which separates (4) the conscious system and the psychic system of the unconscious is the very one which is erected between the child and his mother to stop him sleeping with her.

I am forcing things perhaps. But I would like to hear another definition of incest.

I will be told that there is no need to really sleep with her and that it is enough to imagine it for incest to be involved.

That is all very well, but the categories of Mr Lacan are there to come to our help again and it must be asked if there is not here an abuse. Because, what happens in that case is that one is obliged to use it more than is said, it is imagined but invisibly.

This is correct on the whole. I say on the whole, because it also happens sometimes that the subject sees himself for example at the end of a corridor, in a blind alley, you know what is going to happen to him, what never fails to happen to him.

But if he sees himself invisibly and without knowing it, the question is only posed with still more insistence, namely, what is it that pushes the subject then to emerge from this retreat?

Still more. How can he come to suspect that he is there without knowing it?

(5) Even when he for his part has completely forgotten it. Here the psychoanalytic experience leaves no doubt about the conclusion, it is exactly in the measure that something of the incest barrier remains in place, namely, in the measure that the name of the father still has some meaning for the subject - and I said the name of the father because we know that in what concerns the father, the real one, namely of the father in his irreducible reference to the position of the child, this father has already been dead for a long time in accordance with the wish of the subject.



It is therefore in the measure that the name of the father still has some meaning for the subject that something precisely ..... from the unconscious and makes its way towards consciousness.

If it was possible to sustain the contrary idea, the exactly opposite one as you see, it was because there was, perhaps, a play on a sentence like the following one: the law does not strike simply desire but also its truth. It is a sentence that was perhaps said, written somewhere, but I never heard Mr Lacan saying it like that. Even if he had said it, it would not be difficult to see what he means by the law here does surely not designate the condition of incest. Law here designates the censorship or more precisely the law of the Other, the law of the authority of the Other, this authority is, as Mr Lacan says, this obscure authority which confers on (6) the Other this first word and which gives to his words their value as oracle.

In short, far from being what strikes the truth of desire, the law, the morality of the father is precisely the only thing that determines the truth.

Another proposition which was not spoken here and on which it is just as important to take up a position, because it is necessary to clarify what is involved in the material that Leclaire brought us, and this all the more so in that it is Leclaire himself who is the author of this proposition, which is namely that psychoanalysis and the analytic experience ought to lead the subject towards the following: towards something which is supposed to be a transgression or is experienced as a transgression - I tell you in passing it is exactly the same thing, everything is there - towards an incestuous encounter.

On this point also, I think, there is no possible doubt about the conclusion that psycho-analytic experience imposes on us, namely: if the subject in the course of the psycho-analytic experience ought to be led to accomplish some transgression or other it is well and truly the transgression of the permanent temptation to transgression.

..... a transgressor precisely. We have not led the subject towards an (7) incestuous encounter for the simple reason when he comes to us, he arrives with that encounter already.

It must not be forgotten that wherever there is an analysis, we are dealing precisely with failed, unsuccessful Oedipus complexes.

We do not have to lead the subject towards a breaking of the limits or to imagine that he is breaking the limits because, what else is he doing in his imagination. We lead him precisely to the fact of putting his finger on the fact that there is a limit which may not in any case be crossed.

What ..... at the end of a psychoanalysis is the paternal figure, the paternal figure as he operates in the complex, namely the lack as it manifests itself in a subject of the male sex in the form of the threat of castration, and in a subject of the female sex, in the form of penis envy which has nothing to do with the demand for a penis.

In other words the recognition by the one of the fact that he can only make use of his phallus when he submits it to a precise jurisdiction even when it is not written down, and the extraction from the other, I mean from the female analysand, of every identification to the mother as omnipotence.

Now, these obvious facts having been affirmed or reaffirmed, I can pass to the (8) material that Leclaire brought us, this *poord'jeli*. First of all this *poord'jeli* is not a phantasy. Here I agree with Oury, namely, that there is here something that is much closer to that from which the subject fantasises himself, than a phantasy itself. To be more precise, I would say that the phantasy is not in the *poord'jeli*, it is in the fact that the subject in stammering it, names himself.

Let us take another little step forward, he names himself against a background of a "he does not know". And it is precisely this "he does not know" that I would consider for my part as the fundamental phantasy of the subject, I mean that it is under the shelter of this "he does not know" that all the phantasies are nourished.

Now, in this phantasy, Melle Mondzain did not fail to pick out with a truly admirable perspicacity, the transgression rumbling underneath and what does that mean? That means that one cannot take one idea of Mr Lacan and leave the other one to one side. I mean by that, for example, Mr Lacan's theses about the proper name are verifiable at every turn of psychoanalytic experience. I mean that there is really no analysis where the subject finds himself lead to that radical point where his desire is seriously put in question without their appearing in the forefront of the (9) analysis, the proper name and more precisely, the relationship of the subject to the proper name, as a point where his desire can be still suspended for a time before this radical vacillation that analysis alone can provoke and effectively provoke.

Now what happens? What happens is that we hear sometimes remarks like the following, and I quote : "Basically, that is what the name is; it is the first name. The name is always the name of someone or of something else. It is the name of the father or of the family or again the name of the husband. But not really, it is my real name, that is where I really am."

And what is meant by such despairingly naive remarks even though they have the merit of coming straight from the source, namely, of coming to light as it were for the first time. That means that the lack from which the subject draws what one can call his unitariness (*unarité*), this lack is the one from which the subject guarantees, or believes that he can guarantee, himself on the basis of the fact which has always been recognised by serious psychoanalysts as the psychic reality of the unary, and which is called the hatred of the father.

And it is only once this limit has been crossed that we can begin to pose questions which are really interesting.

(10) For example, we call the ..... position, like the position called primordial castration, that we also qualify sometimes as imaginary, even though one forgets sometimes or tends to forget sometimes that, however imaginary, this castration may be it is well and truly operative, namely, that it dispossesses the subject, it takes from him nothing less than his flesh.

But we say that this is a primordial castration, and we recognise that as long as he is riveted to this position, we cannot say that the subject has any desire whatsoever. What is it that grounds desire? We reply that it is the law, but that it grounds it in an indissoluble link to castration. About the question of what does that mean? Does the ..... position necessarily find itself in the relationships between the sexes?

To express myself in more precise terms which I borrow from Mr Lacan, what does it mean to become a creditor in the great book of debt after having been a debtor? More precisely still, what becomes of ( ) in this operation? What becomes of the desire of the analyst in the ruin of the supreme good? And if the desire of the analyst, as Mr Lacan has said, in a sure and certain way, is a desire for maximum difference, a difference between what and what?

(11) These are not just questions that I am posing, not from a speculative or theoretical interest, still less because I just feel interesting myself in it, like that, but for reasons that are well and truly ....., which takes nothing from their pressing character.

For example it can happen - it is an example among many others - we can happen to have to occupy ourselves, for example, with a patient who is stuck in a position described as that of a claim for masculinity, and it happens sometimes, with respect to such a patient in particular that we perceive that this person, that this patient organises her whole position by betting on the certainty that there is no man who can encounter a woman without feeling some anxiety about it. This is a certainty which undoubtedly has something to ground it, otherwise how would she have come to sustain it? It nevertheless remains that it is a well and truly mistaken certainty and it is important to know how it is mistaken and what it is grounded on, so that we can discover the strategy that is appropriate to adopt vis-à-vis this patient.

For the rest, it is self-evident that I am not launching these questions like so many challenges. These are not questions without a possible response, in truth, this seemed to me to be perfectly soluble and even already resolved. They are certainly (12) not either the most difficult or the most interesting ones.

All I meant to say by this, is that it is time, it is time if we want to get anything more than boredom out of this seminar, it is time for us to question the teaching of Lacan from a more advanced point than we have done up to now. That's all.

**Dr Leclaire:** I will allow myself to respond immediately to Safouan, on marginal points of course.

And I will take the same tone of liberty and perhaps incisiveness that he himself used. I would say to him that more serious, in my opinion, than the mistaken certainties that he evoked in connection with his patient are guaranteed certainties. It seems to me that in his whole discourse there is something like a passionate reference to a dimension which is that of orthodoxy. Lacanian orthodoxy you should understand. I am altogether in favour, of course, of questioning Lacan's teaching but this questioning does not presuppose at the outset any orthodoxy.

Everything, moreover, in Safouan's discourse is marked by the fundamental problem of the relation to the law. And what seems to me above all to characterise it, is a way of situating oneself with respect to the law by right away putting one's (13) interlocutor in the wrong. Whatever he says, it is wrong, he says something stupid or indeed something asinine. This he situates right away in effect with respect to the law. So that when he questions or interrogates this proposition, we are quite close to Freudian formulations, namely, that the incest barrier is close to, is almost the equivalent of the barrier of repression, it is not sufficient, I think to invoke the law to reject that position as being false.

I know that this is one of the axes of the seminar that Stein has been giving for a long time and I would like, because as it happens Major has been put in question, that he should reply, if he is agreeable, in perhaps a more precise fashion, about this particular question of Safouan.

I was specifically put in question in connection with another subject which is also related to the question of transgression. I do not think that I introduced it into the paper that I communicated to you here but it is a question of something that was said elsewhere. I am caught red-handed in my mistake. It is not difficult of course, all the more so because Safouan bases himself on something he heard, he does not have my text. I did not say what he reported, namely, that analysis is experienced as a transgression or ought to be experienced as a transgression or that some (14) transgression ought to take place. What I did say is that the question was posed in analysis, and in connection with analysis, of the relationship between the analytic perspective, a certain analytic perspective, namely, the search for a particular point, of an irreducible point, of a point of origin, the forgotten memory, the focal point of the origin, that the question was posed of the relationship between this conception let us say of analysis or this phantasy about analysis, and on the other hand, the signification of incest and I specified clearly of incest, not in its dramatic context, but in its essential reality, namely the concrete putting in question of something which represents the point of origin.

It is the question of the relationship between this process of analysis and the reality of incest that I had posed. Perhaps the fact of posing it may be experienced in effect as transgression.

On the question of phantasy, I will come back to it in a moment, I said the last time that with respect, in effect, to an orthodoxy, it would be appropriate perhaps and it was perhaps usual to consider phantasy as being something different to this formula, but this would lead us I believe to take up the whole question of an orthodox definition of phantasy. After all, it would be better, I believe, at the point that we are at, to try to define and to examine other phantasies at the level of analytic practice.

(15) I know that I have not entirely responded to Safouan. Major have you got something to say?

**Mr Major:** What is involved is an assimilation of the incest barrier and the barrier of repression in so far as the barrier of repression ..... of the

unconscious. What is involved here is an analogy of structure which is to be situated at a completely different level to the one that Safouan alluded to.

**Dr Leclaire:** I have no intention, for my part, of closing the discussion. Nevertheless I would like it to advance. I would therefore ask Mannoni to take the floor.

**Dr Lacan:** I would like to specify all the same that what Safouan said is that the incest barrier thanks to which there is produced the return of the repressed.

**Mr Mannoni:** I regret being introduced in this way because I am afraid I will not take the discussion any further. I think, on the contrary, that Safouan brought it to (16) a very high level and that now we are going to go downhill.

I would like to apologise because I naïvely believed, not having looked at my diary, I thought for a while that it was for the closed seminar of the month of April. So that what I have done is a little bit telescoped.

What I would like to examine is the passage, that I found a little bit rapid for me, in Leclaire's presentation where he exposes the non-sense of the fundamental phantasy in the sense of these translations into a tongue.

It is true that he does not exactly say sense. He speaks about a certain analytic comprehension which I believe in his mind is an incomprehension. It seems to me that there is here a knot of problems of the greatest importance which remains posed. Since he held to the strictest Freudian formulations about it, it must be granted to him that the primary processes are always at work behind the secondary processes.

But it seems difficult to deny, still in the Freudian topology, that poord'jeli is precisely a secondary production in which there is recognised the effect of primary processes. It is on this point, he tells us, that there were already directed the criticisms which were previously addressed to him and which, moreover, I do not know.

(17) But in my opinion, to reply to these criticisms is not necessarily to accept their demand, as one soon will be demanding of an astrologer to come back with a mineral sample from the moon. One cannot ask him to give us the element of the unconscious, just like that. We will never have of it anything except what we can read of it in secondary structures, in the measure precisely that this secondary is subjected to the effect of the primary.

It is in this secondary it seems to me, that sense and non-sense meet in a certain fashion as long as one holds to Freudian terminology, and I cannot see any other place where one can grasp either one or the other.

Only the passage where Leclaire deals with this question is more elusive than allusive. Discussing it would come back to opposing a way of looking at things, a different way to his way of looking at things which is not very interesting.

I will therefore abstain, at least until my conclusion, when I will come back to the question, I will then abstain with the certain hope that this problem is going to be taken up again, it has already happened, moreover, in a less succinct manner and I am going to take a path that is quite different by turning very freely, too freely around the question of the proper name, a little bit at random with the idea of (18) encountering one or other remark which very indirectly may refer to what Leclaire presented to us.

I believe we have nothing to expect from sociology or from ethnology, except occasionally some convenient examples. The proper name, as it interests us is just as much Toto as Gaetan de Romorantin, what in our society is called the surname, it is not the name of the father, the father of Jean Dupont is not called Dupont he is called, for example, Paul Dupont, and there are countries like Madagascar, where at the birth of Lacoute, his father can change his name and call himself in future the father of Lacoute. It is then “father of Lacoute” which is the name of the father in the most simple fashion.

This systematic use of a name and a first name is a limited, recent, historical accident and I do not believe its study would lead us towards anything that is very interesting for us.

On what Leclaire has called the irreducibility of the proper name, I could contribute, perhaps, a sort of indirect illumination by telling of a personal experience which has the advantage of being entirely artificial and almost axiomatic.

(19) It is an experience that many people have had but not perhaps on such clear basis. For the characters of a book that I was writing and which appeared in 1951, I had to invent proper names. A proper name being only a succession of phonemes one could take a succession of syllables in any sense whatsoever. This book was written in 1949 at a time when the Lacanian theory of the signifier was not yet formulated.

The majority of the names in the book were constructed in that way. But not all because some of them came to me as it were spontaneously. For the others, I have completely forgotten today the unimportant sentences from which I drew them. This happened, it seems to me rather quickly, and perhaps there were more complications hidden in it than I was aware of, but about that I can say nothing.

But for one of these proper names, I remember very well the details of its construction. I took it from what I believe to be a line in this song about Marlborough, though in fact it is an inexact quotation. But for the use I wanted to make of it that was of no importance. And I had already used sentences that were probably more fanciful. This incorrect line is : “*ensuite venait son page*”. One could take for example *te venait* and by adding th to it that gives a very pretty proper name. So pretty even that that makes one want to look up telephone (20) directories. Now between the Thévenins and the Thévenots one finds in it for Paris alone, 38 Thévenaits. Having discovered that, I had the impression that I was competing too much with the registry office, or rather that the registry office was competing too much with me and I immediately gave up this construction. I therefore took the following syllables which gave *venaison*. *Venaison* is also a

pretty name and if one looks in the telephone directory there is no trace of a *Venaison*. Not even of a name which resembles it in the slightest way. It was therefore perfect. The name of *Venaison* was thus adopted.

I will not question myself about the reasons which escape me for which I choose Marlborough. I see clearly that *Venaison* is the only character whose death I spoke about and the only one of whom I could say in all strictness that he had a page. But in fact it is now that I notice it. Moreover I would have completely forgotten all of that by now if a few months later I had not gone through a little crisis which I am going to tell you about now. The manuscript was finished and I was going to take it to the publisher when I became suddenly aware of the existence of a critic whose intelligence and humour I was very fond of and who signed some of his articles with a *non-de-plume* which was terribly like *Venaison*.

(21) Since this pseudonym is very well known and because I am saying too much to hope to hide it now, I may as well say what the pseudonym is, it is in fact Gabriel Venaissin. When I made this discovery I was terrified; it seemed to me that if I had called my character Dubois, all the Dubois in the world would have nothing to say about it. But the close encounter of two names that are more than rare, singular, not in the directories, this appeared to me to be impossible to accept. The name *Venaissin* had to be changed.

I set about doing it using the same method and I remember nothing, naturally, about the numerous substitute names that I constructed. But, and this is the obscure fact that I can only note, I could not change the name of *Venaissin*. It seemed to me that he was called *Venaissin* and that I, for my part, could do nothing about it and that I was not involved in it. He defended his name like *Sosie* before *Mercury*. I knew well that it was I who had given him the name but he answered me to say, as it were, like *Sosie* that he always had it. I was obliged to leave it to him.

Since this experience has taken on the form of an anecdote I will add that Gabriel Venaissin published an extremely laudatory critique of my book but he did not sign it *Venaissin*. He signed it with his real name. At the time I was not surprised. (22) *Venaissin* was a pseudonym, an alias, which could not hold up before *Venaissin* because, in a way, *Venaissin* was the real name of my character. It is a funny story. I believe it to be instructive even though I cannot see very clearly what it is trying to instruct us about.

The name *Venaissin* has obviously no meaning by itself. Has it a signified? Undoubtedly, but on an identity card there is a photograph, fingerprints, and a description or the signature of the bearer which is just as physiognomical in its fashion, if not, the identity card would be a visiting card.

It also requires, and this is not negligible, a police stamp. *Venaissin* had nothing of all of that. I had constructed the simplest elements of a personality, a sequence of phonemes which were not sufficient of themselves and what was said about an imaginary person with this sequence of phonemes, was attributed by me. The fact is that this extremely simple construction was enough to make there appear in subjectivity, in this case, obviously in mine, a not to be neglected form of the powerful adherence of these elements if one wants something which resembles the

irreducibility of the name. What is involved, I said, is what attaches the signifier to the signified. Such an attachment has absolutely nothing surprising about it. It (23) exists even for common names, and if it surprises me in the example above it is because I believed I was the master of nomination. In a sense I was not.

Here now is an example of the attachment of the signifier to the signified in the case of the common name. It is the case of an Iranian who arrived in France at the age of eight or nine years and who now as an adult, discovers quite suddenly retrospectively, the reasons why he refused when he arrived in France, the French *café au lait*. It was not the coffee he was refusing, it was the bowl. At the time he did not know. The word *bol* in Iranian has naturally a different meaning. It is not simply half of the word *bol-bol*, which designates the nightingale, it is also the monosyllabic word by which one designates the sexual organ of little boys.

For him with his arrival in France every word has changed with all the possibility of bilingual puns. But there was one which stuck much more than the others which was as one could say rooted.

It resisted, alone among all the others, in this rather simple situation of a change of tongue. I am sure, even though obviously I cannot prove it, that he would have accepted the bowl of coffee if he had been given a French name for his sexual organ. He found the translation too partial or too biased. In the change of tongue (24) he was losing something.

I do not know anything about what might have been involved in the George, Lili encounter marked in the fundamental phantasy, but the fact that it is a boy's name and a girl's name has perhaps something to do with its irreducibility.

Proper names change under certain conditions. For example, among the nobility, by the death of an ancestor, among women by marriage or indeed by going into religion, etc. These changes are institutionalised. Outside any institution hysterics sometimes give themselves first names which do not belong to them. .... the spelling of the one they have.

Casanova who gave himself the name Stengal was questioned by the police authorities about the reason why he took on a name which was not his own; he replied with indignation that no name could more legitimately belong to him because he was the one who had invented it. A bad reason but one which makes him a little like Venaïsson. What is interesting is to compare the police authorities and Casanova from the point of view of their spontaneous linguistic attitude. For the police, Stengal is an alias, which has as a signified Casanova. The argumentation is :

- 1) Stengal is Casanova,
- 2) Casanova is not Stengal.

(25) On both sides there is a mistake. For Casanova the formula is less clear but more simple. It is formulated as follows: Stengal is me. The signifier Casanova can disappear.



One cannot imagine, without a sort of vertigo, what would happen precisely to the ego, the “It’s me” if one gave the same first name to two identical twins who even their parents could neither call individually or recognise. Nevertheless homonymy of itself is tolerable. There can be, this happens, two Jean Duponts in the same family. It is a homonymy like many others which may cause mistakes and misunderstandings like the others.

After all we are much less troubled by meeting a homonym than by meeting a double. The speaking subject who knows he is such a person by his proper name, recognises himself also in another way. He has at his disposition to speak, the first person singular. His name draws him towards the third person. There are cases of telescoping between these two people. Is the slang signifier *bibilolo* a proper name or a personal pronoun? Try to put it in the vocative to see. This is perhaps of no interest, a purely grammatical problem *bibilolo* being a ..... which designates a subject but imposes a verb on the third person. I am, therefore *bibilolo* is but it (26) would be very remarkable if this was only a grammatical curiosity and that this manner of speaking did not have subjective implications.

I am skipping over a little of it because ...

So - this is a little bit improvised - the proper name is far from being established in a nuclear fashion in a subjectivity as if one was trying to point to a subject in the way in which Descartes situated himself.

It is certainly the name which marks the subject. It acts on him like a provocation. It makes him become ..... but at the same time it denounces him, objectivises him, transforms the speaking subject into an object which is spoken about and the “I am so- and-so” is confronted with the “I am me” and is distinguished from it. This “I am so- and-so” only brings to the “what am I?” a reply that is experienced as insufficient. Hence the obligation, as they say, to make one’s name, an obligation for all and not simply for the ambitious. The obligation that everyone fulfils with the help of all, and even of the police, to assure themselves that their name has a signified something that is always more or less badly assured.

Like the young Iranian was not assured of the signified of bowl, which was like a partial proper name, and like Venaisson which became a name in the measure that I was speaking about him. I constituted him in that way, and only his proper name (27) could have the sort of signified for his very particular case as a literary character.

Again with the idea of contributing to the questions raised by Leclair a distant and very indirect illumination, so indirect that we cannot easily be assured that we are speaking about the same thing, I would like to contribute very briefly a fragment of an observation which bears upon the operation of phonematic elements of proper names in an obsessional.

It is a rather serious case, in the style of the Ratman but more severe. A very intelligent and open subject who was obsessed at the beginning by the idea that he had for his wife an attraction of an incestuous character and this tormented him in a very painful way. At present his analysis is continuing. His life has become

more easy but not without symptomatic accidents like the one that I am going to speak about.

He has for a long time a colleague, almost a friend, that we will call Lemarchand. Now one day when he was carelessly looking in the direction of this Lemarchand and thinking about something else, what he does not know, he suddenly notices that the maiden name of his wife was let us say Martineau, the two names have then the same syllable *mar* in common. I changed the name but not the syllable. He is for a number of seconds terrified by this, and there remains with him for a (28) fairly long time an obscure uneasiness.

I do not at present have a sure way of accounting for this symptom. It is obviously useless to question the syllable *mar*; it is, as we might say, on the non-sense of the matter. If his colleague had been called for example Artigues or Ostineau I am sure almost without being able to prove it that it is the syllable *ti* which would have sent him to Martineau.

The totality of his analysis leads me to think that in this symptom there is condensed and displaced his fear of homosexuality, the effects of his identification to a girl and his fear of castration; he might take his colleague as his wife, the syllable *mar* could become detached, etc.

But what is more sure and almost obvious is that this syllable plays the role of a revolving platform, and that it makes him pass from the circuit which contains the signifier which refers to his wife, to the circuit where there appears the signifier which refers to his colleague.

Obviously I do not know anything about these circuits as such. It clearly involved a symptomatic element, namely, something to which, from the point of view of technique, one should not give too direct an interest. But from the point of view of the theory it is another story.

(29) It seems to me that he teaches us at least that the phoneme *mar*, or any other phoneme playing the same role of revolving platform, does not need to be accorded some primary characteristic. What is primary there, is the pure possibility of the phonematic decomposition and recomposition, namely of metonymy and metaphor reduced to phonemes with their amputations, the forbidden contacts, the terrible confusions that they lead to through the intermediary of what one could call the primary circuit, with everything that this implies, in particular the field of unconscious desire.

Thus one could say that the primary mechanisms manifest themselves as non-sense in a symptom for which a meaning, after all, is required. The fact that it is a symptom and not a simple sequence of associations gives to the thing, as I might say, a seriously obscure character. The symptoms are, in analysis, even if in the treatment it is not good to attack them directly, something like what in theology are the witnesses who have themselves massacred, as absurd as they are authentic.

I cannot leave entirely open, without getting involved in it, the possibility of a comparison between the phantastical poord'jeli and the symptomatic *mar*. I simply think that a discussion taken far enough on this point would allow us to see

(30) more clearly. Either that it is necessary to bring the two formulae together or that it is necessary to oppose them radically.

**Dr Leclaire:** No doubt I was a little affirmative and a little decisive earlier in my response to Safouan and I did not underline sufficiently, as I might say, how much of the question remained open.

Mannoni said himself earlier that he had the feeling that his text, I ask myself why, was not posing the questions at such a high level. After all, I will let you be the judge of it.

What I am going to say, simply, is that I would wish that the questions thus posed should not fall into oblivion. No doubt we cannot here, however closed this seminar may be, it is all the same rather large, raise the discussions in as free a fashion as one could do effectively in a small group.

I retain, to come back to Safouan's intervention, the question which was posed, namely, that of the relationship between the law and the prohibition of incest, for his affirmation changes nothing about it, the question remains posed.

I believe that this is the one that is really posed, and that one can, from some angle or other tackle, to get to and even no doubt to the formulations that he himself gave.

(31) As regards the questions posed by Mannoni, happily they do not allow themselves, and that is why they are really open, questions, I think, that will remain very insistent, one cannot summarise them better than the way in which he presented them himself.

I will now take the floor to participate in the discussion. Because I am certainly happy that my work, written in fact essentially in 1963, has given rise to so many responses. I know of course the importance that must be given on this occasion to certain vigorous encouragements. But the fact is there: a dialogue seems to be opening up.

I would like to thank all of those who are willing or who will be willing or have already announced that they have something to say, all of those who were willing to manifest their interest here, it is because by coming forward in this way they allowed something to begin.

It is quite clear that my attempt, if it had not been sustained by your remarks, would have very quickly, like so many other exercises, become a dead letter. And in the same way no doubt certain words of truth that we have heard would have remained in the secret of a filing cabinet or in the limbo of the unformulated.

I would also like, and in fact for the same reasons, to thank all of those who have (32) shown their interest for this enterprise without for all that committing themselves, against their feeling, by participating here now immediately in this dialogue, because they know that often in analysis a word has to come in its own time.

You will understand then that I have no intention here of playing at being a lecturer who, by his response, is supposed to put an end to the discussion or as is said, to close it. On the contrary. If I take the floor again before others take it, it is indeed to pursue the dialogue by contributing to it here, directly, another contribution, and no doubt because, I am tempted to say, some people may find in it an allusion, a taking up again or a reply to what they said.

I announced the other day that I would speak about the body and about the signifier. I am going to try to do so. Even the least clinical people among us know that a constant concern about a certain mastery is a common trait in obsessional neurotics. That Philip enters this category is, I think, a fact that has escaped no one. It is this passion for a certain mastery that, to begin with, I would like to question. The gesture of the two hands held together in a cup to drink, realises in an exemplary fashion what I want to underline here.

(33) Surely this bowl made of the palm of the hands, as a way of drinking responds, or summons by its hollowness the fullness of the breast. But to go more quickly, I would say that the gesture appears to me to be a way of mastering the problematic conjunction of two elements.

Problematic, it is tangible in the well known fact that this makeshift cup made by the hands is characterised in general by the leaks that run out of it. Philip's pleasure in this gesture seems to have been, just as much as drinking, that of producing a goblet which staunches a momentary grasp of what in fact flows, a mastery that he consecrates by drinking this water.

In a word, it seems to me that what is involved here is a mime or a ritual gesture which represents or actualises with the body or a part of the body the pure materiality of the signifier. I would even add something that appears to everyone, that this gesture gives rise precisely to the symbol in its primary sense, namely, in the fact that it tries to stick together the elements of what can also be the support of an appeal, indeed of a beggar's bowl.

When I speak about the pure materiality of the signifier I am designating here the opposed couple of two elements: no doubt to constitute a signifier it matters little whether these elements are acoustic, graphic or tactile.

(34) The essential is that the articulation of these two traits which are, at the extreme, pure materiality, totally stripped of signification, the essential I am saying is that this opposition should be a connotation of antinomy.

I believe that it is correct to say that the signifier is pure connotation of antinomy. And to sustain at the moment of grasping what you can try to grasp of this formula, I would add that this antinomy is fundamentally in our experience the one that is constitutive of the subject.

Antinomy or again, as Lacan says "radical heteronymy"; it is the dimension that the Freudian way and our experience as analysts necessarily imposes on us.

Finally I must add here that the object, in the Lacanian sense

a) Is precisely that which escapes from signifying connotation and certainly in its nature what escapes antinomy.

In this perspective, namely, that the signifier is a pure connotation of antinomy, one will understand better perhaps what I mean to indicate in presenting this gesture of the two hands together in a cup as a certain attempt at mastering - a ritual gesture - of the very nature of the signifier.

(35) You should clearly understand that if I do not evoke here immediately the imaginary and death, the elective domain of the obsessional, it is only because constrained by time I am aiming rather at a linear precision of this outline, than the shimmering of the play of shadows.

I add simply that the other gesture, that of the two hands joined in a shell to make the appeal resonate seems to me to be able to be inscribed along the same line of a certain attempt at mastering and I will come back to it by way of conclusion.

The next phase of my interrogation dealt with the term of mastery. How could we not evoke immediately, especially in connection with this gesture, the movement of grasping, to grasp with the hands, but in fact what can the hands grasp?

What kind of grasp is possible here? I will leave it to others the responsibility of speaking about *Begriff*, of the concept, so that I will only delay here for a moment on the problem of the body trying to grasp. But what precisely? Well then, precisely nothing. Or, still more precisely, the object in its nudity. I am going to try to explain myself briefly. Let it suffice for that for me to recall to you the pure difference or again, more modestly, the little difference that we irreducibly find as the pivot of our experience as analysts, of course, but also as living beings, that is of delusional patients.

(36) This pure difference interests us to the highest degree by designating it first of all at the level of the body, the body of evidence or the tangible body as they say, this is what I underlined about the term of exquisite difference.

This exquisite difference can certainly be illustrated secondarily as was the case for Philip by the punctual and annoying irritation of the grain of sand contrasting with the unity, the smoothness of the skin, but I would like here to give a purer example of it that I recently quoted as an irreducible term as one finds it in analyses that have been taken far enough, namely, the acid fringe of sweetness.

In its precision as a reminiscence and its in determination as a memory.

I think that I am using these words properly?

At this point there is posed, without any possibility of escape, the necessity of pure sense, namely, the pure taste of one on this occasion the taste which here underpins, connects and produces this pure difference and the acid, acid-like fringe.

To pass in this way from the field of sweetness to that of the acidulous is the vector of pure sense, the taste which issuing from this very gap of the body makes,

as it were, an excursion, the circuit of another body before rejoining the other side of the dehiscence of which it was the issue.

(37) This other body which causes the vector of sense to be reflected, it is sufficient at the beginning that it is nothing or almost, a ball of red acidulous sugar on a little stick, a cherry, and which, moreover, ends up by effacing itself when it melts.

Nothing or almost and nevertheless, as I experienced the other day, it is for example the very full odour of a Williamine, a pear alcohol, that is so dense that before drinking it and experiencing it by taste I felt on my tongue with an hallucinatory precision the rather crude grains of this sort of pear that it is distilled from.

But if it happens, and it is artificially of course that I distinguished these two possibilities, that this other body in the image of the first, is also possibly the locus of a pure difference, then there appears finally, clearly, the dimension of desire.

In other words, if we substitute for the sugared cherry, the nipple of the breast, the pure sense of taste will complete its excursion just as if it were making the complete circuit of the mother, approaching at the same time, or tending to approach with his mouth, namely, from his own gap, a dehiscence of the maternal body, on this occasion the nipple, for his orifice. And simultaneously the maternal body, is easily represented, constructed by the voice, by the sense of touch at least, but also it must be hoped by other means, by other senses above all by the gaze (38) makes the round of the gaping body of the child. It is clear, already, in this figure, at least I think so, starting from an exquisite difference that by attempting to grasp the other body in its inevitable gap, to protect against one's own, the body is affirmed as desire, the body affirms itself as inextinguishable desire.

I will leave you, starting from this little sketch, which could be easily drawn on the blackboard by a double loop, to imagine the possible games in the variety of senses, between one and the other, and I leave you also to highlight, for a correct classification of the neuroses, the possible traps and impasses of all the circuits of the senses, of all the senses. In these games, the pure difference escapes, of course, from any grasp, but what best connotes it, this pure difference, is the signifier such as we have defined it earlier, as pure connotation of antinomy.

Undoubtedly Philip, in his neurosis, did not understand it that way, and if I already said how he strove to mime the signifier by the quasi-ritual gesture of the hands united in a cup, I would like at this point to underline a little better the way in which, in parallel, the jaculatory formula *poord'jeli*, seemed destined to master, while fixating it in death, the circuit of desire. The vocalisation of the secret formula contains in itself this acme where the reversion is accomplished.

(39) And above all, the movement of the body that it connotes, namely the somersault, develops the very figure of the loop around, no doubt, some nothings of the formula itself, or more precisely around another absent body.

This movement, best summarised by the sequence: nothing at all, something, underlines the apparition, like at the end of a conjuring trick, of this something

which is supposed to be there, at the outcome of this exercise of miming the signifier and it seems that in this case, it is in fact an excremental remainder of an object.

It appears there as a remainder, as the point around which there is completed the loop, a present and derisory object whose opaqueness replaces the other absent body. Thus sustained by my example and leaving for today deliberately to one side the fascinating operations of the sense of sight, which habitually serve to illustrate the moments of reflection, of reciprocity and of lure, I will limit myself to this particular mode of trying to grasp which is the voice.

The voice seems to me, first of all, to have this privilege in so far as it is no longer a simple scream or that it is to be in principle grasped, mastered, as an echo of the discourse that the voice of the other supports. There is no mother who is not taken up again from the voice of the other and, because of that, the voice constitutes a sort of privileged model of this first relationship to the other. Then, (40) because the voice necessarily brings into play another organ, namely the ear, which pictures in a more singular way, the circuit of sense, from mouth to ear as people say. Finally, and all the same because the voice is all the same the privileged vector of the signifier which, because of this fact, becomes or is above all a verbal signifier. In Philip's story the siren call produced by blowing into the hands that are joined like a shell and offered to the echo of the forest is presented as an imitation, a reduplication, an empty reproduction of the appeal of the voice.

But it is also, in the obsessional style, a game of mastery. We must evoke here the dream of the sickle to say a little bit more about the voice, the scream and the call. In this dream, Philip produces a scene of a young boy whose leg has slipped into a hole. He is wounded by a sickle no doubt but one only sees a slight scratch on his heel. The boy screams out very loudly. It is an unusual howl, at once a scream of terror and an irresistible appeal which makes Philip evoke the scream that is in question in the Zen tradition and which is supposed to be capable of raising the dead. The scream reminds him above all of a memory of noisy panic. Philip is eight or nine. He is travelling with his parents and finds himself alone in the grounds of a hotel. A few older boys who are playing cops and robbers attack him.

(41) Seized with panic he runs away howling. But not just anything. He screams very loudly as in an appeal, the boys' names: Guy, Nicolas, Gilles in order to change things and to make his attackers believe that he too is a part of a larger gang.

He tries not to utter names that are too well known. Pierre, Paul or Jacques. The summons must seem to be precise. And he remembers precisely having invoked Serge in this way. At that time Serge was either Lifar or Stavisky.

Many of you have sensed that the theme of an appeal to Leclair was undoubtedly an important mainspring of the treatment. But I am not going to dwell on this any more today.

This scream, this cry for help, completes and illuminates from another angle the appeal of Lili I'm thirsty, or the invocation of Poord'jeli.

Of the Lili I'm thirsty, I would simply like to underline once more its ambiguous character as a model or echo with respect to the other sentence or phase of the circuit of the path, namely, Philip-I'm-thirsty articulated by the intermediary of Lili. But it is obviously to the level of the ejaculatory formula of Poord'jeli that I want to return to conclude.

I already showed that in itself this formula displayed, even gave rise to this (42) movement of reversal that is necessary to understand anything whatsoever about the reality of the drive and also, of course, that of desire. But what I would like to accentuate again here is that this other formula constitutes in this way a taking up again by Philip of the voice which called him by his name and more literally again, this could be the taking up again of the loving voice of his mother, caressing him at the same time as she articulates something like my dearest treasure (*trésor chéri*).

But if we have in this interpretation of: my dearest treasure one of the necessary poles of the analysis of the formula, I believe that we will fail to recognise its essential, all the same, if we do not come back to this limit of the sacred which is perceptible to us in this incantation.

Philip, as you suspected, is a Jew. And the theme of the incantatory formula as well as the almost sacred character of the treasure that he represented for his mother, leads him to remember some rudimentary elements of his religious formation.

Of the Hebrew that he learned to read he remembers almost nothing. Except for this essential prayer which is called the Shemah. It is, he had been told very early on, a prayer that must never be forgotten because it has to be recited at the hour of death. It is a viaticum but it is also, in his rather confused memory, something like a blessing.

(43) Concretely, in his memory, these blessings, incomprehensible mutterings which were accompanied precisely by the placing of hands on his head, a paternal and above all a grand-paternal gesture, tend nevertheless in this memory, to be confused with maternal fears. But this prayer is also, undoubtedly, on the one hand an invocation to God whose name one must not pronounce, but also, and in its very formulation, an appeal to the one who ought to say it. Here is more or less the text, or at least its beginning, this formula that at the moment of death one must be able to say: "Listen Israel, the Eternal One is our God, the Eternal is one". And we see here that this prayer to God is also an appeal to the one who says it. In the strictest sense, and this is how Philip thought, the articulation of the first word Shemah, as the prayer is called would be enough to serve as a viaticum.

At bottom, and this is where I wanted to get to, what does the voice say here? The voice says: "Listen, listen". And now as before this invitation, the speaker finally shutting up, can like the analyst setting himself up in his armchair, mark the moment of the end or of the beginning in saying: "I am listening to you".

(44) Which in truth you have already done and I have already done also.



Many of the interventions will necessarily remain in suspense. There are some written and some not written and some announced. I say necessarily in suspense, for today.

**Mr .....**: I did not prepare a text to tell you what I thought of the presentation of Leclaire because I wanted to write it to him but he gives me the occasion today to say it to him without having prepared it and I would like to articulate something on the subject of the poord'jeli and in particular on the subject of what is happening at the level of the breathing of the one who falls asleep and who begins to hear his breathing no longer knowing too well whether it is his own breathing or whether it is an echo of something else. And it is at this level that one can find this kind of strangely inverted rhythm at a place even of this breath, which is a moment of inspiration that is perceived, a time of exploration that is also perceived and containing, in a way, this kind of reversal.

This kind of reversal is, in a way, not enough to explain the formula entirely, even if it is perceived in this way but it introduces, in a way, a possibility of phantasising about this basic sound and, when we question our patients about what is emitted from them by this kind of listening system inside themselves, one can find very (45) often sentences which have an enormous importance for them and with which they play. It is certain that subsequently all sorts of other terms may be brought out by this one and I totally rejoin your successive interpretations with which I find myself very much at ease, but I mean by that there is in a way a possibility of entering on a very profound path of listening to the other by sensitising him to his own respiratory rhythm which is moreover a way of bringing to the level of the voice what you have so admirably articulated.

**Dr Lacan**: Does Israel want to take the floor now. I had not foreseen, even though I had tried to be sure of it by calling him a week ago, I did not believe that Durand de Bousingen would be here today. I asked Leclaire earlier for the text that Durand de Bousingen sent me very early on, one of the first about Leclaire's intervention.

**Dr Leclaire**: Yes, I asked Durand de Bousingen precisely before beginning, if he wanted to begin by taking the floor, he told me that he preferred, since he had not reread it, to have the time to prepare a presentable and spoken form of it.

**Dr Lacan**: You can be there then at the closed seminar next month. That is one (46) point out of the way. Israel is going to tell us what he brought along today and I will conclude by giving an indication of some reading that I think is important.

**Mr Israel**: I suffer from an unfortunate atavism which means that when one of my god's calls me, I reply : "here I am" and always in accordance with the same atavism I act without reflecting. After having responded : "here I am" I unfortunately had more time than Abraham before acting which means that rather than sacrificing one of my sons - I do not know moreover if a ram will be found in time - I sacrifice a part of my text and interest myself strictly only in the theme of Poord'jeli, and come to this mouthful of a word and which comes in the place, perhaps, not of the desire to drink but of the object of desire, but in fact all that has been said.

.....*Bedeutung* and that is why this word, which is made of bits and pieces, I ought to say this object more than this word so much does it evoke surrealistic objects, and if it were a portmanteau-word, I would be tempted to see in it a bloody trunk, a suitcase containing dismembered corpses.

Corpse, to drink, immortal fragments, the fragments of my ..... and here I am then off on a little game which was perhaps the only thing not spoken about - one (47) cannot know everything - the fragment of this surrealistic object evoked has another form of composition which is exactly the one that is called in Talmudic studies the *no taikon*. The *no taikon*, is the signifying assembling of pieces of names with which one constitutes a new term.

I am going to give you an example of it. In fact I am very encouraged to speak about the proper name and about my own since it has been invoked. I wrote my name. But this name, as everyone knows was given to my country, to Jacob but why? Is it simply to connote or to bring to mind a battle?

It was above all a question of closing a period which was the patriarchal period and this was what was summarised in this name. Namely, that we have the initials of all the patriarchs and their wives - there must be seven of them if I am not mistaken - and also this metonymical association becoming metaphorical by its effects could not correspond to some kind of phantasy, since it is a phantasy that is dear to me.

Naturally, what I have just said there is to infiltrate it too much with my personal imaginary, one could carry out a chronological research on this object; many others have done it, and in this poord'jeli one would see a series of openings in a chain, (48) the opening first of all of the lips, of the teeth, then of the tongue unsticking itself from the palate which would lead us to find at the limit of the object which, as Leclair says, makes appear, appear concretely something where there was nothing, at the limit we would find perhaps no longer a meaning even but a pure ..... namely a rhythm so well manifested by this feeling of Philip of being rolled up and of being unfolded, this movement distinguished, this exquisite difference which is finally perhaps only a perception of variation.

A final remark : I asked myself after having heard Stein speaking immediately after your presentation, whether the rebus that he evoked in which the dream was utilisable in a single tongue or in several tongues, a rebus is written in a single tongue, it is the same for this phantastical object that you have produced, I asked myself if this was not an example of a term valid in every tongue. This phantasy would bring us back also to a period when the whole world had a single tongue and similar words - you recognise the quotation - but let us beware of this apparent simplicity because it is not enough to read the text; one single tongue and similar words, you must still ask yourself what were these words and the commentator, (49) Rachi in this case, explains that these words consisted in saying: God did not have the right to choose for himself the upper world, let us climb up to heaven and wage war on him.

This would be still too simple, there is another explanation: they said to themselves, once every 1,656 years the world undergoes a cataclysm like the

flood, let us make a construction then to support the firmament. That is what I have been doing.

**Dr Lacan:** ..... to conclude ..... many particularly valid points, fruitful points in each one of these interventions. I raised earlier something which deserved to be retained in the very first place as the axis of what Safouan contributed in terms of the very important questioning of everything that he unfolded today.

I would like that Safouan's intervention, perhaps, because of its size, added to another one, should be put at the disposition of listeners so that it can be obtained.

In Mannoni's paper which he told us was at an early stage because he could not do any more, what he said to us, on terminating, about the symptom, seemed to me to be extremely important.

I will pass over what Leclaire said because it is with that that I am going to end.

(50) On what Israel contributed today what appears very important to me is this old phantasy: the single tongue renewed and renovated by the way in which he poses it, the question of which is respectively posed by the *Interpretation of dreams* and by analytic experience.

I told you that in leaving you today I would indicate some reading to you: I would like for the remainder of the time you spend listening to me, I would like all, all those who are here today and who are therefore are supposed to be interested in a closer way with what I am unfolding before you, I would like you to consider it extremely urgent to read this book by Michel Foucault which is called *The birth of the clinic*.

Michel Foucault who is for me one of those distant friends with whom I try, from experience, with whom I am in very close and very constant correspondence, despite the fact that I see very little of him because of our reciprocal occupations, Michel Foucault whom I saw last evening, I asked him a question in connection with this book, the question as to whether he had in some way been informed - it is not rare, there are many people who write in our field - about the thematic that I developed last year around vision and the gaze. He told me that nothing of the kind had happened.

(51) It is all the more remarkable that the work of Michel Foucault happens to have adopted, finds itself from the beginning infiltrated in a way by the first phase of my teaching in 1953, that the work of Michel Foucault, without any other reference since then which might converge towards this theory of the *o*-object which he knows nothing about, in speaking about *The birth of the clinic*, and very exactly what corresponds, at the level of medicine, to this point of interrogation that I brought before you as intimately linked at the beginning of my discourse this year, happens to correspond exactly to this questioning. Just as there is a moment at the beginning of the 17th century at which quite simply science is born, our science, in the same way at the level of medicine, there was produced at the beginning of the 19th century this mutation which radically changed the meaning of the term clinic.

The fashion in which he resolves this problem is so intimately co-extensive with everything that I have developed before you on the function of the look, that I cannot but see in it at once the encouragement, a comfort, and the certainty that it is indeed something that is on the agenda for current thinking that is involved, here being realised at distinct, autonomous levels that are dependent and nevertheless really identical.

This you can see for yourselves in reading this book which is of a really original (52) interest for any doctor and it is also the symptom of the present condition of different professions, that French medicine, to which it is addressed, since it is written in French, has absolutely and totally ignored it.

Michel Foucault told me last evening that 475 copies of this unique book, of which there is no equivalent, that only 475 copies of this book were sold. I hope that there are enough people here to make that figure leap forward.

I repeat, that everything in this book is absolutely virgin, has never been said, and it is the only book that I know which, in short, allows doctors to situate exactly this kind of world and of medical productions which is that of everything that was done, all the same, before the beginning of the 19th century and access to which, outside of this book, is absolutely closed.

The operation which tried to pose the principle of historical exploration in a work, in a style like that which is indicated in the work of Lucien Fèvre, for example, concerning the problem of unbelief in the 16th century, this programme, sometimes we are led to question ourselves about the appropriate way of reading what was expressed at that epoch on the subject of unbelief and which is so distinct from the (53) way in which that problem is posed for us now, that it is only along this path that we can comprehend the degree to which the phenomena of unbelief were at once more radical even than they are for us, at that time, so much more advanced on certain points and also, on others, so much on this hither side of what is our position, this restoring of co-ordinates which allows its authentic sense to be given to what was produced at that time, here we have an absolutely extraordinary example of it, something which means that the history of medicine is only ever done at the level of little stories, at the level of Lenôtre, for example.

This is absolutely, radically transformed by the work of Michel Foucault, even though this aspect of the little story and the anecdote, the breaking up of texts, the choice of paragraphs which highlight something in someone who is so much of a researcher, so much of a ferret, I would say, as Michel Foucault, is present in the work, that you will find a thousand little snacks in it; this takes on its sense and its importance only because of the profoundly directive line which carries everything to the limit from one end to the other of a work of articulated erudition, the sense of what Michel Foucault has done which, in opposition to Lenôtre, I would say, is not placed at the level of the work of Marx to understand all previous history.

(54) In this regard, I will extract from this very rich text that Serge Leclaire gave us today, I will extract this really remarkable point which is the one by which he made the approach to the term of sensoriality in the genesis of the *o*-object.

You will see, if you know how to read this book attentively, and to highlight its major passages you will see how this will allow you to map out what Leclaire has contributed, at the level of a certain gap, which is very precisely in the book the one which designated what separated the thinking of Cabanis from that of Pinel. Or, if you wish, more precisely, because that of Pinel, who is one of the authors most profoundly explored by Michel Foucault and because the position of Pinel remains ambiguous, of what separated Cabanis from Bichat.

I cannot develop this point today. I would like that when I come back it will on the basis on your part of a thorough knowledge of the text of Michel Foucault, *The birth of the clinic*, published by P.U.F.

**Seminar 15: Wednesday 7 April 1965**

This Churchillian gesture is made to show those who for three weeks, having been here either at my open lectures or at my closed seminar, did not see that there had been wrapped up in a sort of doll, as it is put, these fingers, which after all I perhaps allowed to get caught in this door that I am trying to open for you.

I had the satisfaction of making it tangible at the closed seminar that some work is being done, and can be done, along what I am trying to outline for you as a path to be travelled.

This path, this year, we are following around the function of the signifier and of its effects, of its effects by which it determines the subject in a singular way by rejecting him, by rejecting him at every instant, from the very effects of the discourse.

Since I learned that a remark was made in a report last year on the aggregation lectures, namely, what was involved was a title, if I understood correctly, which was: "*On the true word and the lying word*". Namely, that the subject had not been invented by Lacan and by Claude Levi-Strauss, that Plato already, or Parmenides perhaps, had been interested in it.

This is a remark that, in truth, is excellent. Which will allow me to reply to those who having heard me in past years, are growing impatient at the fact that this discourse, in their eyes, is not reaching sufficiently rapid conclusions.

Why, people are saying, not without relevance and not without humour, since he is speaking to us about the truth, why does he not tell us the truth about the truth?

Some of these impatient people have changed camp, content after all to rally to those forms of teaching where people are satisfied to take as assured certain opaque reference points, which may give the feeling that in them one has a good hold of the final object. Is it so certain that people are right to be satisfied with this, and that this very opacity is not the sign that what we have there is a true illusion, as I might put it, namely, that people are satisfied too quickly, and that the true honesty is perhaps where one leaves always an opening in the path ..... the incomplete truth.

This is, in truth, what I found in following the indication of this report, I found of course, this was not the occasion on which I discovered it, but what I am referring you to, namely on the same subject as we are dealing with this year, is this book of Plato which is called *Cratylus*, where you will see being pursued between Hermogenes, Cratylus and Socrates, a very useful dialogue which terminates with nothing other than the highlighting of a complete impasse in the debate and with Socrates sending Cratylus off, ..... incontestably, sends him off with the formula: "Then, my friend, at another time you shall give me a lesson when you come back, namely, when you have well reflected on everything that created such

a problem for us today". To which the other replies: "Very good. I hope however that you will continue to think about these things yourself".

Such a dialogue, this one among others, in any case, if not all, is there to make us grasp that Plato's dialogues, far from saying the truth about the truth, are expressly constructed to leave it in suspense, really giving the feeling that he knows more (2) about it than he tells us, and this, undoubtedly, in an unequivocal fashion. If he knows more than he tells us about it, and if he does not say it, there is indeed some reason; that in truth, even if he told it to us, we would not be any more advanced, but that already in the traces of what he gives, there can be read, beyond, what constitutes our path after him and very precisely the place is marked, for example, of what the experience of the unconscious leads me to say to you.

Perhaps during the holidays you will have the opportunity of opening this book. I hope so, in the measure that you would be able to find there clearly marked what has constituted the kernel of the clear, perfectly legible tradition, of the *lekton* considering the status of the signifier, and you will find confirmed there what at the beginning I am going to try to summarise here, in a fashion which has nothing original about it, what is inscribed at the beginning of this tradition and which reposes on the opposition, as regards the function of the signifier, between these two great functions that Aristotle admirably distinguishes, posits, affirms in their simplicity, and from which it is appropriate to start to find one's bearings in everything that has been said since, and which undoubtedly does not date either from de Saussure or from Troubetskoi [?] or from Jakobson, this theory of the signifier which the Stoics, and specifically for example somebody like Chrysippus, for example, had pushed to an extreme point of perfection. *Signans et signatum* are in circulation already for some two thousand years. The opposition is that between a moment and a *rhexis*.

The function of nomination deserves to be reserved as original, as having a status opposed to that of the enunciation or of the sentence, whether it is propositional, definitional, relational, predicative, of the sentence in so far as it introduces us into the effective action of the symptom, culminates at this grasp whose *culmen* is the formation of the concept, is something which leaves in suspense, on the other hand, the function of nomination in so far as it introduces into the real this something which denominates, and which it is not enough to resolve around a fashion of sticking to something which is already given, a label which allows it to be recognised.

We have already sufficiently insisted on the fact that this label is not at all to be considered as something which is simply the duplication, the list, the list that is kept, purely and simply, of something which is supposed to be already in the store, as one might say, properly ordered like a set of accessories. The nomination, the label that is involved starts from the brand, starts from the trace, starts from something which, entering into things and modifying them, is at the beginning of their very status as things, and that is why this function of nomination involves a problematic, a problematic around which Hermogenes, Cratylus and Socrates turn; Hermogenes taking this aspect of the truth, by announcing about nomination what will subsequently develop, in the insistence on the conventionalism of nomination, on the arbitrary character of this choice of phoneme which, taken in its materiality, has something undetermined, fugitive, why call this that rather than something

else, nothing obliges us to grasp what one could call a resemblance, a coming together of the word and the thing and nevertheless, and nevertheless Socrates, Socrates the (3) dialectician, Socrates the questioner, shows us his very clear leanings towards the enunciations of Cratylus who in a different radicalism insists on showing that there could not be an effective function of nomination if the name, in itself, did not involve this perfect fit with the thing that it designates.

It is in the often amusing, always paradoxical operation of an insouciance well designed to liberate us from all sorts of prejudices, from certain traditional habits concerning the genesis of meaning, and specifically everything that is called etymology, shows us by this ease, by this casualness, almost this game with which this questioning of the phonematic signifier is put to use before us, the way in which in the debate the words are cut up, solicited, by the way in which the game is carried out, around a supposed expressivity of the phoneme, undoubtedly shows us something other than what is taken to be naiveté.

For I believe that what Plato shows us in this exercise, in this way of seeking, as if he believed in it, the primary element in words thanks to which we can question them about the fashion in which they respond to what they are led to designate, in the way in which he plays with the word *skleros*, which means hard in Greek, and regarding which he points out that the labial and the *ro* of the *ros*, means flow in Greek, is little adapted to the hardness to be expressed by the word *skleros*, that what he shows us in truth is something, namely, this exercise which consists in showing us in everything that refers to this function of nomination, what is important, what he shows us in this game with words, is the way of cutting them up with a scissors.

It is also what is essential in the function and the existence of the name, it is not the cut, it is, as one might say, the contrary, namely the suture.

The proper name towards which, at the beginning of this discourse, I directed your attention, at the same time as on the other hand the function of number, the proper name, for a moment direct your attention to what is essential in it, the proper name already in its nomination, *onoma idiom*, involved this ambiguity which has allowed all the errors, of meaning on the one hand the name which is proper to someone or to some thing, to this or that object, which is the name specified in the pure function of denotation, to designate, but proper also means properly speaking. And is it not here that there is to be seen the essential of this function of the proper name, namely, that among all the names [nouns?], it is the one which shows us in the most proper fashion, the most proper to the function of name, what the name is.

Now if, with this empty formula, you set about looking - I am giving you this responsibility, the time, as well as the technical incident which delayed the start of my discourse today, the time being lacking for me to illustrate it for you in a great number of examples - you will see that of all names whatever they may be and whatever extension we may be able to give to the function of the word name, that of all the names that we have to interrogate under this aspect of nomination, the proper name is the one which presents in the most manifest fashion this feature which makes of every phonematic establishment of the name, of the founding act of the name in its designatory function, this something which has always in itself



(4) this dimension, this property of being a collage. Into the very structure of the proper name there has slipped something more essential than this so-called particular name which is supposed to be given to the individual. With regard to which, the statement of Claude Lévi-Strauss in *La pensée sauvage*, when he makes of the proper name that which pushes to its final term, to the term of the designation of the individual, the high point, and in a way the completion, of the classificatory function, is too partial and too one-sided.

What I already advanced here, that the proper name is going to place itself always at the point where precisely the classificatory function, in the order of *rhexis*, stumbles, not before a too great particularity, but on the contrary before the tear, the lack, properly speaking, the hole of the subject, and, precisely, to suture it, to mask it, to stick it. Here certain of the things that were said at the closed seminar take on all their value, and specifically when someone came here to bring us his experience as a literary author and spoke to us about his difficulties with the proper name given to a vain character who nevertheless was invented. The proper name did not appear to him to be something that was so arbitrary that he could be given any other one whatsoever.

The fashion in which the sticking, in which the suture, destined to mask this hole, which is all the more evident because what was involved here was the hole represented by an invented character, is here the testimony of this experience which is, as a matter of fact, marked in that of all those novelists, dramatists, of having the function to give rise to characters that are more true than living characters, designate them in a fashion which makes them tangible to us.

Will I on this point, echoing older periods of my teaching, have to remind you of the degree to which this takes on a relief in certain works and, specifically, in those of Claudel: Sygne de Coûfontaine, a strange and resonating designation for this character who shows us something quite singular in the work of Claudel.

Are we at the front or at the back of Christian revelation, when Claudel forges for us, in the character of a woman, this sort of singular Christ accumulating onto herself all the humiliations of the world, and who dies saying "no".

Sygne de Coûfontaine who bears, masked in her name, this singular signifier, the first moreover ambiguous between the name of the bird with the curved neck, and the proper designation also of this sign, which is given to the world of something with a very singular actuality at the moment that this trilogy of Claudel emerges, and this strange Coûfontaine where we rediscover the echo of this shape of the swan, where there is designated for us that there is coming towards us the reopened, although inverted, spring of an ancient message [lie?]. This word which carries in itself again this care, this trace of the elementary signifier in this u (with a circumflex) which he insisted so much on that - I said it before, I recalled it in my seminar - it was necessary to forge a typographical sign which does not exist in the French tongue for capital letters, so that the circumflex with which the u of Coûfontaine is crowned could be printed.

(5) "Sir Thomas Bollock", what an invention! Since already with this extraordinary designation we do not know so much about the character of the exchange, as about everything that is going to unfold in the drama. This singular

life of the proper name, you will rediscover it if you know how to listen, if you know how to hear, in all proper names, whether they are ancient, accepted, classified, or whether they are those which may be forged by a poet.

In truth, I believe that if we had to add something to this sort of residue, this scar around which the attention of the people at the closed seminar was recently called on to give an opinion, namely this *poord'jeli* of which Leclaire's analysis, as regards his part in this inaugural report on the unconscious, in which something had been promoted by him and by his co-author to the attention of a larger psychoanalytic audience, concerning the originality of what I had emphasised in the teaching of Freud about the unconscious, this something which I was able to read, not without satisfaction, from a writer who was certainly not friendly, that since Freud's time everyone knew that the fact of the enunciation that the unconscious is structured like a language, is since Freud a commonplace.

Undoubtedly this is indeed what I for my part think. Even for the person who only pretends to say it in order to contradict it, well then, God knows, something comes out of it, all the more so because the personage in question who makes of it an objection to what I announce, feels the need to connote it, to comment on it, with a series of remarks which, just by chance, are very exactly what I teach about the meaning of the formula.

There would be much to say starting from this notion, from this statement that every nomination in its usage ought always to be mentally referred by us to the fact that it is a memorial of the act of nomination. Now this act is not carried out at random. To emphasise its conventionalism, in so far as it tries to give its status to the signifier, is only one aspect of the problem. Conventional is the name of someone who accepts the tongue in its actual facticity, in its result, but the moment at which the name is given is where precisely we have the role, the function of the one who, very brilliantly and in a fashion that has never, when all is said and done, been taken up again, Cratylus designates as a necessary actor in this history, namely, what he called the *demiurges onomatom*, the worker in names. He does not do just anything whatsoever, nor what he wants, in order that the denomination of something may be accepted, and it is not enough to say that it is universal consent, for who will represent this universal consent in the field of language? This denomination operates somewhere. What makes it propagate itself? I spoke to you the other day about the collective exploit that is represented by the appearance in space of this extraordinary swimmer who, for a moment, I showed you could spark off for us in the imagination all sorts of singular ways of imaging, as I told you, the function of the *o*-object.

I did not insist. What matter! I will come back to it. But what a strange thing it is, after all, that no one up to now has thought of calling him by the name which seems undoubtedly the most prepared and the most suitable for him. How does it happen that no one answered the call, when people are so rash, so tranquil about designating as cosmonauts people who are propelled in a field that undoubtedly no cosmos, at the time that there was a cosmology, whose trajectory no one ever (6) forecast. Why should we not call this Leonov, because of the place that it occupies, as I might say, for a very long time, ever since the time that there are people who mark for us the messengers who arise somewhere in space, with this

ridiculous plumage which makes their image really in all the paintings properly speaking unbearable. Why do we not call him an angel?

There you are then. You laugh. Well that is why he will not be called an angel. He will not be called an angel because, in any case, each one of you holds onto your own good angel. You believe in him up to a certain point, just as I do. For my part I believe in them because they cannot be eliminated from the scriptures. I remarked this one day to Père Teilhard de Chardin who almost broke into tears. It is also the difference between my teaching and what is called progressivism. I find that the weakness is on the side of the progressivism.

This little test has all the same a decisive aspect. Because you see clearly that you cannot call a novelty anything you please, even when it appears precisely to fill with a new wine an old wine skin. The wine skin angel is still there.

You see how this experiment concerning nomination also leads us straight towards the functions of dead languages. A dead language is not at all a language that one can do nothing with as experience proves. When Latin was a dead language it served very efficiently as a language of communication. It is even because of this that we were able to have throughout this whole period of the scholastics, extraordinarily good logicians. The *rhexis* functions admirably well and all the better perhaps precisely because it remains mistress of the terrain, the *rhexis* functions admirably in a dead language.

But not nomination. I had humourous echos of it. My momentary infirmity having prevented me from turning over as many pages as I have recently been in the habit of doing, I regret that I cannot extract for you, from the acts of the Vatican Council, the way in which people there expressed the designation of bus, for example, of bar, which it appears was functioning there in a corner that worked rather badly.

How can you make new nominations in a dead language? I mean new nominations which inscribe themselves on the language. On the contrary, the whole of the *De vulgari eloquentia*, to which I alluded in my lectures at the beginning of this year, I mean this purely admirable work by Dante in which there is defended the properly literary function, the *lingua grammatica*, that he intended to give to his Tuscan, chosen from among three others; read it, it is less easy to find than *Cratylus*, read it and you will see what Dante tends towards, a reality of which only a poet can speak, which is properly speaking that of this adequation, which only a poet can sense, of the phonematic shape that a word has taken, and this exchange between the signifier and the signified which is the whole history of the human spirit.

How a signifier imperceptibly passes into an aspect of the signified which has not yet appeared; how the signifier itself is profoundly changed by the evolution of meanings, this is something again that I must skip over, but at least I indicate a reference to you.

(7) The weight that the Latin *causa* took on from the day that Cicero translated by *causa* the Greek *leita*, this is the turning point which ensures that in the end, this cause which is still the juridical cause, first of all, the Latin *causa* is finally there

to designate the *res*, the thing (*chose*), while the *res*, the thing, has become for us the word *rien*.

This history of language is something which, since it is not properly speaking the field in which the psychoanalyst has properly speaking to pursue his practice, shows him at every instant the paths and the models in which he ought to grasp its reality.

And in the presentation that Leclaire gave of the poord'jeli in connection with a paradigmatic example, people question themselves about what field it was in, preconscious, unconscious, is it a phantasy? I believe that the initial image to which we ought to fix ourselves to understand what is involved, is that what it is closest to, and here we rediscover psychoanalytic experience - who among the analysts has not put his finger on the function for each one of his analysands of some proper name, of his own or that of her husband or his wife, of his parents, indeed of the personage in his delusion, the proper name plays in so far as it can be fragmented, be decomposed, be rediscovered, infiltrated into the proper name of someone else. The poord'jeli of Leclaire is above all something which functions as a proper name.

And if I have to designate the point of the Klein bottle where this poord'jeli has to be inscribed, it is, as I might say, on the edge, the orifice of reversal through which, by taking something that is involved in this double entrance of the Klein bottle, it is always to the front of one that there corresponds the back of the other, and inversely, and if you want an image which will satisfy you still better, the action of the poord'jeli, or anything else that in the history of one of our patients might correspond to it, well then it is the proper function with respect to a pattern, in the sense that this word has for a dressmaker, the pattern which represents the piece of cloth ..... which will serve to split such and such a dotted line of the garment, or such and such a sleeve, ..... with little letters designed to show what should be sewn onto what.

It is starting from there that there can be grasped, be understood this function of artificial suture, which ought to allow us with sufficient attention, with a method which is precisely the one which we are trying to create here, to suggest to you, at the very least will allow us to grasp, to differentiate even, in this image a sort of primitive support in connection with which there could be distinguished the fashion in which these sutures are made in one or other person, I mean by that, that this is not done to the same point nor with the same goal in the neurotic, the psychotic, nor in the pervert, the way in which these sutures are done in the subjective history is properly in the image, the paradigm of Leclaire, for there is something which gives it its value and which is not simply that of a pure and simple phonological curiosity, the fact is that this suture is closely linked to the grasp of what Leclaire designates as the exquisite difference, the sensory difference, and it is here that there is specified the obsessional trait: here is the new element which can be added to what is called, properly speaking, the clinic, in so far as psychoanalysis has something to add to this ancient word clinic.

In this very suture there is caught this exquisite point of the tangible, this scar-like, I would almost say colloidal aspect to use a metaphor, this elective point which

designates in the obsessional something which remains caught in the suture which is properly speaking to be opened up.

Here is what allows us to situate the original point of what can serve on the other hand as a demonstration for the function of the signifier, but which also designates for us the particular function and what occupies it in the example thus isolated.

Undoubtedly all of this demands that we should give ourselves a little trouble to bring into circulation these notions which, in effect, are in no way new, which are already locatable in Freud and that it would be easy, I do not need, I think, for all (8) of those who have read him a little, to designate at what point we find its homologies, from the *aber*, *abwehr*, the *amen*, which is *samen* in the *Ratman* and many others, but moreover, if it is here that we ought to locate something whose secret and whose handling we are trying to rediscover, it is not of course by turning away, by sticking to what we were given, but by trying to pursue, according to Freud's formula, the construction in connection with the subject, that we ought to take advantage of it in an appropriate way.

This separation, this separation which leaves in each name this suture that it represents, if you know how to look for examples of it, you will find it in every one; Oedipus, I take it because after all I am attracted by the fact that he is indeed the first one who may come to mind, Oedipus, swollen foot, is that self-evident? What is there in the hole between the swelling and the foot? Precisely the pierced foot; and the pierced foot is not said. It is the swollen foot with its enigma which remains open in the middle, and perhaps more in relation with the hole ..... than appears at first.

And since someone amused himself by presenting my name in this debate, why not amuse ourselves a little since Jacques, on one side is Israel, of which one of our witnesses spoke in the closed seminar ..... that being Lacan in Hebrew, namely the name which preserves the three consonants which is written more or less like this, well then that means: "and nevertheless".

This fabric, this surface which is the one on which I am trying to draw for you the topology of the signifier, if I give it this year this shape from the history of mathematical thinking, then of logic, it is not by chance that this shape came so late, that Plato did not have it and, nevertheless, it is so simple, this Moebius strip which reduplicated gives the Klein bottle.

What is the enigma that lies there? What do I mean? Do I believe that it exists? It is clear that it evokes analogies, and in the properly speaking biological field. The last time, for those who were at the closed seminar, I indicated, I repeat it here because the slogan can be given again to my complete audience, I spoke about *The birth of the clinic* by Michel Foucault. I said that it was a work to be read because of its great originality and for the method by which it is inspired. It is very striking, very gripping, to see that the accent that he puts, as regards the change of direction of the anatomical agency in nosological thinking, on this incidence, I mean, of pathological anatomy, the change of look, the change of focus, which brings about a passage from the consideration of the organ to that of the tissue, namely of surfaces taken as such, with the model taken essentially from what distinguishes the epidermis from the dermis, the layers (*feuilletés*) of the pleura

from those of the peritoneum, in the total change of meaning that the term sympathy takes on from the moment that it is by following these leaves, these cleavages, rendered so tangible since by the whole evolution of embryology, in short that it is since the treatise on membranes by Bichat that anatomy changes direction and changes, at the same time, the meaning of everything that one can think about sickness.

The way in which these layers, specifically in the embryological field, envelop one another, tie into one another, twist around one another, arrive at this point of stricture like the closing of a sack, the closing of a purse, to isolate themselves in their adult form, is something which will also deserve to be mapped out almost, in a way, as a sort of aesthetic exercise but which would have on the biologist this effect of suggestion, which for the rest, I do not doubt, that very quickly, because it is already happening, and is highlighted in a certain order of reflection, that it is in an original structure of torsion of space, comparable to the style of this curve that the physician knows at a certain level of the phenomena, in a different form of torsion, of involution, as already the words seem quite prepared to welcome them, that there would reside the originality of the living function of the body as such.

(9) This is really only a suggestion in passing in order, at the point where I am leaving you before the holidays, to scan this something by which I would like to illustrate in a more living fashion what is contained by formulae like those to which I came back on several occasions and that I hold to be essential, telling you first of all that it is the key link to avoid slipping into some one of these errors of the right or of the left, too quick or too slow, to illustrate for you this formula that the signifier, as distinct from the sign, is something which represents a subject for another signifier. Perhaps there were here still more things before which, for want of being used to the formula, at which you pause and do not draw the consequences; I did not remain with that because last year, giving you the formula of alienation that is perhaps new in the eyes of some people, it represents, I said, a subject for another signifier but in so far as the signifier determines the subject, in determining it he bars it, and this bar means at once vacillation and division of the subject.

Undoubtedly there is here something which in its paradox, and I affirm to you, nevertheless, that I am not trying to make it any heavier, that the paradox did not have there the means for me to capture the attention, that the paradox forces my hand, as I might say, cannot be materially similar to a sign, a sign representing something for someone. The theory of the sign is pregnant, imposes itself so much on attention at this moment of science that we are living in, that I was able to hear a physicist with whom I had long discussions, hear a physicist say that, when all is said and done, the basis, the foundation of the whole theory of physics, in so far as it requires the maintenance of a principle of conservation, described as the conservation of energy, will only find this basis, this final certainty, when we have managed to formalise the whole discovery of modern physics in terms of an exchange of signs. The prodigious success of the cybernetic conception, which is now going towards this strange thing that is described as information, puts in the register of information every kind of long-distance transmutation, provided that at some moment it presents itself as cumulative. Here I am going a bit too quickly. Let those who know how to estimate in their way and as they wish what I am saying, the relevance of what I am saying.

In biology, people talk about information, for example, to define what emanates from one of other glandular system, in the measure that this is going to reverberate further on in some part of the organism.

Does that mean that one must understand that there are here two poles, by calling them the emitter and receiver? Whatever one does, one subjectivises, which is properly speaking ridiculous.

Why, after all, along this path not consider as information the rays of the sun in so far as they accumulate somewhere in chlorophyll, or that quite simply in reheating the bud of the plant they determine and are accumulated in the effects of opening out, of development, in the living plant.

(10) The naivete with which, it seems, people adopt, in this formulation of the theme of information, the function of the emitter and of the receiver, without being aware of the point to which here, they are marking time on the grass borders of the old subject of knowledge, namely, that when all is said and done, to take this path where every point of the world would be judged by the fashion it knows more or less well all the other points, has something singular, paradoxical, in which a loss is manifested in the most tangible fashion, and whose model obviously cannot be given other than by the fact that we are now used to seeing the handling of objects that we can distance almost indefinitely from ourselves, which are machines, and with respect to which in the measure that we make them, precisely these machines, subjects, that we think about them like machines that think, that effectively they receive from us information thanks to which “they direct themselves”. There is here a sort of evolution, indeed a slippage of thinking to which, after all, I see no objection in a certain domain, provided one defines it, it can render and render extremely important services. The equivalence information-..... seems to have some fruitfulness in physics but is this what we can content ourselves with concerning the status of the subject with respect to the *signum*, the sign. It may appear to you to be tenable in a way, if we understand it precisely in this fashion, for us to continue to say that it functions always for someone.

The reverse of this position, namely, that amongst the signs there are some which are signifiers, in so far as they represent the subject for another signifier; you see the measure in which, after all, it responds to this slope, to this succession of thinking, that this subject allows us to make of it something else, something else determinable, localisable and whose metabolism can be graspable with its consequences. And why?

I forged an example for you or rather I took one at random, I took it from an article by a linguist who, literally, even though advancing it to define what the linguistic sign is, fails completely at it, I must say.

And I take up the same example to try to make something of it for you: a young girl and her lover. They agree this sign to see one another. When the curtain - I am modifying the example a little bit - when the curtain is drawn across the window, that means I am alone. So many flower pots, so many hours; there is

designated in that way, five flower pots "I will be alone at five o'clock" (*Je serai seule à cinq heures*).

In function of this, is it in words, in a language, that this convention was grounded. Is it in so far as there is a nomination, the founding act which makes of this curtain something different to what it is, but how is it that we can identify this purely and simply to a sign, to a combination of signs because there are two of them; in other words to a green light to which there is joined an index?

I say no. And since that cannot be seen immediately I am forced to use what I have to hand or, in other words, to question it with my formulae.

"Alone", we put "alone" in place of the curtain. I defined that the signifier is what represents a subject for another signifier. Whether the lover is there or not to receive what is involved changes nothing in the fact that "alone" has a meaning which goes much further than to say: "green light".

"Alone" what does that mean for a subject? Can the subject be alone while his constitution as subject is to be, as I might say, covered by objects. Alone means something else. It means that the subject fails in the measure that we do not have: that we can reduplicate the formula: in the measure that there he is not simply one.

Second element: five o'clock. With the addition of this second element there is established the elementary structure of the seduction. If you wish I will illustrate it for you as quickly as possible, I mean that one or the other can serve as subject or as predicate. Alone: predicate of five o'clock. Five o'clock: predicate of alone. That can mean just as much alone at five o'clock or only at five o'clock. This is quite secondary compared to what I have to show you which is, namely, that in this interval the only, which is in the denominator of the only one, which determines what it is, this alone, in its good function of *o*-object must emerge, namely, that between the two between alone and five o'clock, the lover is expressly summoned as being the only one who can fill this solitude.

In other words, what we see being produced, what ensures that this holds up and subsists as a signifying structure, is in the measure that the *lekton*, or what is legible of what is thus expressed, leaves open a gap where there is structured the function of desire.

The one to whom this *lekton* is addressed, whether he reads it or not, is summoned in this *lekton* to function in the gap, in the interval, which determines two directions: on the one hand, the "alone at five o'clock" is the direction of what the Stoics called, not without reason, *tukanonon*, the rendezvous, the elective meeting. In the opposite sense, what the subject divided in his statement of being alone, hides and dissimulates, and what is his phantasy, which is to be the only one. In the division of the subject, there is, as object, becomes: the only one functions here as desire, entirely in suspense with respect to the desire of the Other.

Only the desire of the Other gives its sanction to the functioning of this appeal. The desire phantasied by the subject who announces herself to be alone, in order to be the only one, this desire is the desire of the Other.



The accent put here on the formula: "the signifier represents the subject for another signifier" consists, as you have remarked, in differentiating the signifier, not from the side of the receiver, as is always done and where it is confused with the sign, but from the side of the emitter. Because if I say that the signifier represents the subject for another signifier, it is in the measure that the subject in question is the one who emits it.

Now what do we mean when we speak about the unconscious? If the unconscious is what I teach you, because it is in Freud, there you ought to put the subject behind the signifier which is announced.

And you who receive this message from your unconscious, you are at the place of the other, of the idiot, and - to address myself to you in the same terms as the other day - "The most illustrious drinkers and most precious syphilitics", which in our day is translated, as it was expressed from behind a window, considering my large audience at Ste Anne to be a public of homosexuals and drug addicts, the public of others is always made up of homosexuals and drug addicts; all of you then, psychotics, neurotics and perverts who form part of my audience *qua* Other, what does it mean that you are before this message?

Well then this is an important point to specify because this is a trait of the clinic, I mean of an opening up of what questioning should be directed at.

If you are psychotic, that means that you are interested in the message essentially in the measure that she knows that you are reading it. This is always forgotten in the examination of the psychotic. He for his part does not know what the message means, but the subject generated in the signifier of the message, knows that he is reading it. This is a point on which - I will not say that it is not insisted enough on - it is a point that has never been seen.

If you are neurotic, you are interested in the rendezvous. And naturally in order to miss it, since in any case there is no rendezvous.

If you are perverse, you are interested in the dimension of desire. You are this desire of the Other. You are caught in the desire of the desire of the Other as such. You are the pure victim, the pure holocaust of the desire of the Other as such.

Because of the fact that I was delayed, I cannot show you today on the Klein bottle itself that these are the fields that this first step determines.

You should know that it is here that I will take up my discourse on the first Wednesday in May. I am saying this since the last time again I was asked if my seminar was going to take place, after I had expressly announced that the last Wednesday of this month of April will be a closed seminar.

**Seminar 16: Wednesday 28 April 1965**

Missing to be corrected

**Seminar 17: Wednesday 5 May 1965**

If to be a psychoanalyst is a responsible position, the most responsible of all because he is the one to whom there is entrusted the operation of a radical ethical conversion, the one that introduces the subject to the order of desire, which orders everything that is involved in my teaching as regards historical retrospection, trying to situate the traditional philosophical position, showing you that this order has remained in a way excluded from it. What must be known are the conditions required in order that someone may be able to say of himself: "I am a psychoanalyst".

If what I am demonstrating to you here seems to culminate in the fact that these conditions are so special that this: "I am a psychoanalyst", cannot in any case descend from an investiture, in no case can come to the candidate from some other place, there would appear to be, it seems, some contradiction to found that while listening to me or at least taking seriously what I am saying, which seems to be implied in coming to listen to me, people can in fact continue to find it sufficient to (2) receive this investiture let us say, it is the least that can be said, from places where what I am saying is a dead letter.

This undoubtedly forms part of the constitutive conditions of what I would call: the difficulty about being serious in our material.

I will come back to this prelude, since in fact my discourse today will only be an attempt at gathering together the logical conditions in which there is posed the question of what we can conceive to be involved in being an analyst, what we expect to get to know.

Everything that I have brought before you from the beginning of this year concerns this place that we can give to what we operate on, if it is the case that it is indeed the subject that is involved, that this subject is situated, is essentially characterised as being of the order of lack, this is what I tried to make you sense in showing you at the two levels of the proper name on the one hand, of numeration on the other, that the status of the proper name is only possible to articulate, not as a further additional connotation approaching what, in classificatory inclusion, would manage to be reduced to the individual, but on the contrary as the making good of this something of a different order, which is what, in classical logic, was opposed to the binary relationship of the universal to the particular, as something in a third place (3) that was irreducible to their functioning, namely, as the singular.

Those here who have a sufficient formation to understand this reminder that I am giving of the attempt to homogenise the singular to the universal, who also know the difficulties that this *rapprochement* opposed to classical logic, and the status of this singular can not only be given in a better fashion in the approximations of modern logic, but it seems to me, can only be completed in the formulation of this logic to which analytic truth and practice give us access, which is what I am trying

to formulate before you here and which can be called, which could be called, if I succeed, this logic to formalise desire.

That is why I wanted these remarks about proper names to be completed by this modern logic of numeration, where it also appears that it is essentially in the function of lack, in the concept of zero itself that there takes root the possibility of this foundation of the numerical unit as such, and that it is only by this that it escapes from the irreducible difficulties which oppose to this functioning of the numerical unit the idea of giving it some empirical function or other in the function of the final term which is supposed to be individuality.

(4) Moreover, I thought that it is essential, precisely, to get to that point, to make you sense the distinction there is from any conception of the tendency *qua* scientific, in so far as it brings us to the order of the general; that the tendency is specific, and that the error of translating *Trieb* by instinct, consists precisely in the fact that it would make of the tendency some property, some status, which is supposed to be inserted into the living thing in so far as it is typical, that it falls under the order, under the sway, under the effect of the general; while it is along a singular path whose question it remains for us in short to invert as regards how it happens that we are able to lay hold of something of which we can speak scientifically. What is this something? You know it is the *o*-object, you know that it is along the opposite path, that of an incidence that is always singular and from the incidence of a lack, that there is introduced this result upon which, through an effect of remainder, we can operate and about which it remains to be known in what position we must be, we must maintain ourselves in, in order to operate correctly on it.

Thus it is that today, in order to arrive at the end of our discourse for this year, to give the formula of this status of our position, I will take up today this discourse, (5) by gathering it around two fundamental positions of what I am teaching you as regards our logic, the logic of our analytic practice, the logic implied by the existence of the unconscious.

- 1) The signifier, over against the sign which represents something for someone, the signifier is what represents a subject for another signifier.
- 2) What is meant in our field, in the field that psychoanalysis uncovers, what is meant by the formula: the subject who is supposed to know?

To link up with what I proposed to you as a model to clarify a certain tripartition of this field, during my lecture of the 7th April, I remind you of what is here reproduced for you on the right of this board, the signal at the window made by our hypothetical lover, to the one to whom she is offering a welcome: on the left the drawn curtains, “alone”, and the five little flower-pots, “at five o’clock”. Why are we going to say that here we are dealing with signifiers? I said the last time that it was signifiers that were involved, even though it only seems to involve semiological elements, because this has no import unless it can be translated into language, that it is a code no doubt, but that this code can be translated, this is tangible specifically at the level of the first term, of the “alone”(*seule*), it can be (6) translated into something whose not only fundamentally ambiguous but also sliding character I pointed out to you: what does it mean to be alone, if not to

articulate this term which gives rise in the hollow which immediately follows it, to the ambiguity of what is going to be articulated under the desire to be the only one (*la seule*), for the rendezvous to whom the only one (*le seul*) is summoned, under the movement that there is created, in the two senses, of the direction that is indicated by the line where there is articulated this signifying couple, on the one hand the rendezvous for the meeting and on the other hand the desire which underlies it, which arises from the formulation itself.

That is not all: the status of what is articulated there is in a way independent of any fact whatsoever: it is offered at first as something signified, as this beyond which I called by the term in which the Stoics designated it: the *lekton*; just as it was from the Stoics that I borrowed the term of *tukanon* to designate what is produced in the direction towards the right in which there is constituted the summons to the only one for five o'clock.

This example, this model, which is rudimentary or summary, in a way, which can perhaps be given, allows you to grasp that the discussion may remain open about the status of what is involved in this framework of the window which is here what overlaps the real in its movement, in its multiplicity, which gives it shape, which makes of it the subject of the sentence.

(8) This sentence is a sentence, in so far as, at least tangibly in the first term, in this alone, something emerges which is of the order of the subject only, which does not have, in a way, any real correspondent; as I told you: what is it to be alone, in the real, what is alone.

This alone could at the limit evoke self-sufficiency, but it is precisely what it is there, not alone not to evoke it but to evoke the opposite, namely the lack.

Taken at this level of logic where there is shown the primordially of desire with respect to any distribution, we see being inverted, in a way, what classical logic presents to us in the register of necessity: it is necessary and sufficient.

It is in the inverse order that there is presented the following, that what is apparently announced as being self-sufficient, essentially it is necessary, there is lacking something that is going to arise between the alone and the hour.

In other words, the level at which we have to grasp everything that is of the order of our field, is distinguished by a fundamental distribution that I am going to try again to underline by other examples.

In a reference that we will call, to simplify things by convention, that of the (9) traditional knowledge of the function of the sign, and what is more, besides, in certain logics, and specifically, I would ask those who are tempted by this, to look at it in what is involved at the level of the Buddhist teaching on logic, the function of the sign is put in the forefront in an admirable way, the sign is essentially: there is no smoke without fire, as you know, as a matter of a fact, moreover, there is nothing better than smoke to hide the fire. The fire a real referent, the smoke, a sign which covers it, and there somewhere the subject, immobile, universal receptacle of what there is to be known behind the signs, the supposed real.

How is the function of the signifier opposed to this and what results from it for the status of the subject?

It is not easy to get you to know about it by a sort of spelling out and, moreover, if it is possible, it will only be along a kind of maieutic process, where at every crossroads there will only be too many opportunities for you to escape from the chain. That is why, while asking you to note that I will not entirely make use of it today, I am giving you the complete function in which there is distinguished the relationship of the subject in the status of the signifier.

“It is necessary for us,” says the formula that I advanced before you, “that the (10) signifier should be what represents a subject for another signifier “. What is suggested to us by this formula?

Well then, why not? The key and the lock. It is not what the lock is going to allow to be discovered when it is a matter of the bolt or the pin falling, it is its relationship to something that makes it function.

But what is the key? Between the key and the lock, there is still the number (*chiffre*): the key is deceptive here, which interests us in the following: a lock which is a signifying composition is the internalness of this composition, with the polyvalence, the choice, the riddle on occasion of the number which is going to allow it to function.

In a certain state of the lock, there is only one number that can operate it: the one which presupposes a subject reduced to this one of a combination. There is no play here. The subject is not the universal receiver. He has the number or he does not have it. And the role of the key is very suggestive, and very amusing, because it represents for us the following, that it is in effect a remainder, a little operational something, a piece of waste in the affair, but one which is no doubt indispensable, which, in the final analysis, represents the effective and real support where the subject will intervene, in other words, in the formula that you see here in the second place, which is substituted for the first in so far as the first designates for us (11) the S1 which represents for S2, the \$ which is the subject; underneath you see the S, if you wish in the case of the number, representing for the S of the lock what is the one of the subject, in so far as it is reduced to being or not the key to be supplied.

This little presentation, preamble, is essential to pose what should be put in question : “What is, at this first level, in so far as it is the one at which we have to operate in analysis, what is, what ought to be, how is there presented, what we will call the status of knowledge?”

For after all we have said, and even if we had not said it it is clear, that the psychoanalyst is summoned, in the situation, as being the subject who is supposed to know.

What he has to know is not a classificatory knowledge, is not knowledge of the general, is not the knowledge of a zoologist. What he has to know is defined by this primordial level where there is a subject who is led, in our operation, to this moment of emergence, which is articulated: “I did not know”.

I did not know, or indeed that this signifier which is there, which I now recognise, it was there that I was as subject, or indeed that this signifier which is there and which you designate for me, that you articulate for me, it was to represent me to you that I was this or that.

This is what psychoanalysis uncovers, and here I am going to emphasise for you, (12) by taking, almost at random, some examples in the first articulations of Freud, the degree to which that it is in this way there ought to be expressed in an appropriate fashion what is called the structure of the symptom.

The aphonia of Dora is only recognised, is only recognisable as representing the subject Dora, in relation to this signifier which has no other status than that of signifier, if one targets correctly the functioning of the symptom, and which is articulated “alone with her”.

“Alone with her”, namely Mrs K. She can no longer speak in the very function that she is alone with her and the aphonia represents Dora, not at all to Mrs K, with whom she speaks and even too much in ordinary circumstances, but when she is “alone with her”, when Mr K is travelling.

Dora’s cough, Dora’s cough, where does Freud locate it? Read the text. When he designates a symptom there, it is in function of this cough taking on the function of signifier, of warning, I would say, given by Dora of something that arises on this occasion and which would not have arisen otherwise, and you have to read Freud’s text to follow the purely signifying journey of word play around the father who is a man of fortune, which means, Freud says, without fortune, in the sense that the word fortune also means, in German, sexual potency.

(13) Without, *Vermögen*, this is what is most purely signifying, this homonymic play on words, and what is more, the negative reversal of what it means, without which nothing in Dora’s cough would have this sense that Freud gives it, which is also the one possessed by this symptom, which is that of the substitution that the couple of her father and Mrs K bring to this impotence, specifically what Freud articulates, moreover, without pushing things absolutely to the end, as an oral-genital relationship.

Take little Hans, the extravagant story about the departure for Gmunden with the governess riding on the horse pulling the sledge, how does Freud interpret it for us? It means: “I am well able to spin you yarns like that if you spin other ones to me. I ask you how children are born and you talk to me about the stork.” The signifier has value for the other signifier, the only person who does not know it, until he is told, is the subject, is little Hans.

Moreover, it is not quite the same thing. For the signifying function here is that of a much bigger molecule. It is a great fable which little Hans indulges in.

And to take a third example and complete our hysteric and our phobic with an obsessional, remember in the *Ratman* what happens in the desperate attempts to (14) slim which the Ratman devotes himself to in function of what? In function of the fact that at the same time there is among his beloved’s acquaintances someone called Dick: it is in order not to be *dick* that he wants to slim.

His whole effort to slim, he forces himself to slim to the point of dying very precisely in order to signify himself with respect to the signifier Dick and nothing more.

But, but, but, something whose general features have never, to my knowledge, been picked out, it was indeed nevertheless the case, because we are still, there, more at ease in laying hold of it, is what results from a simply naive examination once the category has been set in motion, as I might say, the category of knowledge.

The fact is that it is here there lies what allows us radically to distinguish the function of the symptom if in fact we can give the symptom its status as defining the field of the analysable: the difference between a sign, a dullness for example, which allows us to know that there is hepatitis in a lobe, and a symptom in the sense that we ought to understand it as an analysable symptom, and precisely what defines and isolates as such the psychiatric field and what gives it its ontological status, is that there is always in the symptom the indication that there is a question of knowledge. There has never been sufficiently underlined the degree to which in (15) paranoia, it is not simply the signs of that the paranoiac receives, it is the sign that somewhere it is known what these signs mean, and that he does not know.

This ambiguous dimension of the fact that there is something to be known, and that it is indicated, can be extended to the whole field of psychiatric symptomatology in so far as analysis introduces into it this new dimension, which is precisely that its status is that of the signifier.

Look at the degree to which - of course I am not claiming to exhaust in these few words the infinite multiplicity, the shimmering brilliance, in a way, of the phenomena - the degree to which in neuroses it is implied, given, in the original symptom that the subject has not come to know, and that the status of perversion also is closely linked to something, here, that one knows, but that one is unable to make known.

The livid (*livide*) indication in the symptom itself of this dimension, of this reference to knowledge, is where I would like to start from, in a meeting that I announced at the end of the closed seminar and which will take place, not as I said on the 20th June but on the 27th June, by the invitation of a group that the people qualified will receive and that those who are not qualified have only to make themselves known to receive, that I would like to see there beginning a certain nosological revision properly speaking, that I would like to see it begin at the level (16) of this element of symptom, the highlighting of this dimension, of this agency and its variety. Its variability, its diversity which I manifested the last time as tripartite, I must say, simply by way of introduction, of engagement in this matter by saying that this knowledge that is in question, in so far as it is also lack, indeed failure, is diversified according to the three planes isolated here of the *lekton*, the *tukanon* and of desire, according to the three varieties: as regards psychoses, who knows that there is a signified, I would even say dwells there, it is a *lekton*, but which is not for all that sure of anything.



The neurosis with its *tukanon*. When will it be encountered? When will I have, not the key but the cipher (*chiffre*), and that of the pervert for whom desire situates itself properly speaking in the dimension of a secret that is possessed, experienced as such and which as such develops the dimension of his *jouissance*.

But what is to be said again about this knowledge which first of all was inscribed in this subjectivity of the “I did not know” where it is the pursued I of the vibration of what is not pure and simple negation, but the “it is necessary that I do not know”, the “before I know”, “with the help of God I did not know”, which is the prolongation of the I itself, to which there must be left stuck, where this I has a completely different status to that of the shifter. It is not the same I who says: “I (17) am speaking to you”, for the “I am speaking to you” is only a reminder of the actuality of an articulation which itself remains perfectly ambiguous as regards its very value, even if it always proposes itself as establishing a relationship.

This I of the “I did not know”, where was it and what was it before knowing? This is indeed a propitious moment to evoke the dimension at which there culminates and tips over the whole classical tradition in so far as there is completed in it a certain status of the subject. All the same, there are many among you here who know where Hegel proposes the completion of history in this incredibly derisory myth of absolute knowledge.

What could be meant by this idea of a totalising discourse, totalising what? The sum of the forces of alienation through which a subject would have passed, moreover, you know well that it is ideal since, moreover, it is not conceivable that it should be realised as such by any individual.

What could be meant by this strange myth, and in truth is it not obvious that it would have been rejected a long time ago as the dream of a pedant, if it were not articulated precisely from a quite different dialectic than that of knowledge, and if we were not told that it is the being of desire who completes himself in it in so far as the paths along which this desire has passed are ruses of reason.

(18) But who is the wily one (*le rusé*)? It is the one who is completed in this Sunday of life, as a humorist has very well articulated it, of absolute knowledge since it is the one who will say “I’m still yapping” or the one who will say “from now on I fuck.”

Where is the ruse? In desire or in reason? Analysis is there to teach us that the ruse is in reason because desire is determined by the play of the signifier. That desire is what emerges from the brand, from the brand of the signifier on the living being and that, henceforth, what we have to articulate is what is meant by the path that we trace out of the return of desire to its signifying origin?

What is meant by the fact that there are men who call themselves psychoanalysts and are interested in this operation?

It is quite obvious that in this register the psychoanalyst is first introduced, by introducing himself as a subject who is supposed to know, is himself, himself receives, himself supports the status of the symptom. A subject is a psychoanalyst, not as a scholar barricaded behind categories in the midst of which

he tries his hardest to construct the drawers into which he will be able to put the symptoms that he registers in his patient, psychotic, neurotic or other, but in so far that he enters into the signifying operation, and this is why a clinical examination, a (19) case presentation can absolutely not be the same in the days of psychoanalysis as in the times that preceded it.

In preceding times, whatever might have been the genius that the clinician brought to it - God knows, I had recently to refresh my admiration for the dazzling style of Kraepelin when he describes these diverse forms of paranoia - there is a radical distinction between what, at least in theory, potentially, between what is required in terms of the relationship of the clinician to the patient even on the plane of the first presentation.

If the clinician, if the doctor who presents, knows only a half of the symptom, as I have just articulated it for you in reminding you of the examples of Freud, only half of the symptom, it is he who has the responsibility that there is not a case presentation but a dialogue between two people and that, without this second person there would be no complete and filled out symptom as is the case for most.

By allowing clinical psychiatry to stagnate on the path from which Freudian doctrine ought to have removed it, we have to define the symptom as something which signals itself as a knowledge that is already there, to a subject who knows that it concerns him, but who does not know what it is, in what measure can we (20) analysts say that we are equal to this task of being the ones who in every case know what it is. Already simply at that level there is put, there is posed, the question of the status of the psychoanalyst.

The question is facilitated by a long-term evolution. For a long time we were able to believe that the whole status of science depended on an examination that was put to the test of feeling, of perception, but what is meant by this opposition between the lure and the real?

If it is not the real that is involved, even in the most ancient science, it is the real of the scholar and what is not seen, is that this real of the scholar, namely, what a knowledge is, is well and truly a body of signifiers and absolutely nothing else.

If the notion of information has been able to take on this anonymous form which allows it to be quantified in terms of what is called a *bit*: it is in so far as the collecting, the storing, of elements of information is sufficient in itself in our eyes to constitute what is called a knowledge, except for the fact of course that this only begins to have a sense if you circulate somewhere, wherever it may be and you can in no way avoid the shadow of it, a no doubt infinitely mobile subject, if you want to inscribe in terms of information the internal functioning of a biological organism, for example, this means that even though you may have it, you have to put (21) somewhere, like Descartes, not necessarily in the pineal gland, but wherever you may put it, it will always be somewhere, in some other gland with internal secretions, a subject, a subject who slips away, a fleeting subject.

This knowledge is such that we have to give it its status, it is not at all an Aristotelian logic that corresponds to it. For, as you are going to see, it is enough to pose the question at the level of science, of a modern science, of a science

which is our own to find ourselves before the very curious impasse of problems which are the very ones that brought Aristotle to a halt.

For him, it was in connection with the contingent. An event which will take place tomorrow, is it true now that it will take place or that it will not take place? If it is true now, it must be because it is now that it has taken place. Aristotle of course had too much common sense not to escape from such a constraint by pointing out to us that it is not always true that a proposition has to be either true or false.

Good or bad, this solution has been discussed. This is not what interests us. It is to become aware that we can pose the question of whether Newtonian doctrine was true before Newton formulated it.

(22) Well then, I would like to know how the audience is divided on this point? But for me, I will happily put my cards on the table by saying that it seems to me to be very unlikely to say that Newtonian knowledge was true before it was constituted by Newton for the good reason that now and in the first place it no longer is so. It is no longer completely so.

In the very necessity of knowledge, of signifying articulation, there is this contingency of being only a signifying articulation, an assembled lock.

We analysts do not even have to go so far, only this roofing is constructed so that we will not be so disoriented in having to deal with a quite different requirement.

What is this requirement? It is placed at the level at the original signifying incidence, the one where the subject finds himself at once emerging and at the same time being alienated because of this signifying incidence.

This signifier, of which it is required that to represent a subject, it should be addressed, signifying him, it should be the diplomatic representative of the subject to another signifier, is it going to be required of us that we should find it on every occasion?

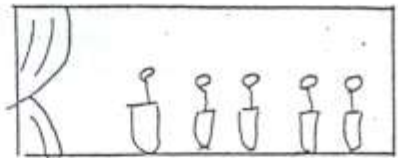
What would be the paradox of a requirement and of a duty, which is not the one that the scholar like the sophist has always assumed, which is to have an answer to (23) everything. To everything that has been organised as discourse, to everything that has arisen as a signifying combination, to be always equal to the discourse; not of this absolutely original something which is what this unique and supporting signifier would be, this primordial *onoma*, where the subject is specified with respect to the whole world of the signifier.

The absurdity of this position is sufficiently shown, and this is the point of vertigo that the very idea of interpretation involves, is at the same time what allows us to escape from it, this is what relativises it, it is not at all with this that we have to deal, any more than our knowledge of psychoanalysis would culminate in this sort of fatalism of knowledge, that the answer is already in us and not because of the fact that from us, an answer is expected.

The chances of the encounter, which is what is involved in the appeal of desire, are in themselves more than improbable, and moreover the horizon of signs, of

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signifieds on which subjective experience is deployed is of its nature enigmatic, and announced as such at the level of the *lekton* as regards what is involved in desire, I will not put forward the term today, except to say it is the real of desire and its status that is involved in the analytic operation.

Let us simply say that in the first place and phenomenologically, it announces itself to us as being the field of the impossible.

There we are, well circumscribed. Might not the position of the analyst be summed up effectively in this something that we might call, not at all the fatalism of knowledge but fetishism, that the analyst would be something like the boundary mark or the joist of a knowledge that is impossible to sustain.

This is the point of impasse at which where I intend to conclude today in order to try to open it up the next time we meet.

**Seminar 18: Wednesday 12 May 1965**

The signifier

The subject

Knowledge (*le Savoir*)

The subject supposed to know

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The subject supposed to know

The signifier as singular

The missing signifier and the Dyad

Sex and Knowledge

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I left you the last time on the question posed about the status of the analyst: can the analyst be, quite simply, the subject who is supposed to know?

I ended on the image raised about what such a supposition would involve, what it would force us to sustain, in terms of a sort of fetish function of the analyst with respect to this position of knowledge.

In order that the analysis may be engaged in and sustained, the analyst assuredly **is** supposed to know. And, nevertheless, everything that the foundations of psychoanalysis involves, precisely in terms of knowledge, affirms to us that there cannot be this subject who is supposed to know for the reason that the discovery of Freud excludes the fundamental knowledge of psychoanalysis.

I will go no further today. Here I am tracing the limit from which my discourse ought to begin or to end. My discourse today will only be the development of this antinomy opening out perhaps, but only to some people, the fault, the gap through which we can conceive - because this fault, this gap is already traced out - that the position of the analyst effectively is sustained.

(2) Nevertheless, we already remained on this question about the analyst the last time, not at all of course about his capacity, it is too easy and mythical to imagine some virtue or other, an innate or acquired gift which would put him in the position of assuming what he has to do, it is his radical position as subject that is involved when we say that, at the foundations of analysis, he ought to be the subject who is supposed to know, and I began to say the last time how this could have a meaning; this can only, given the outlines of what Freud gave us about the analytic experience, represent nothing other than a certain availability that he provides and which defines him as such, so that he would be equivalent to a certain availability to be provided in the order of the signifier, and this of course is not without a reply, an echo, a preparation in the fashion that I define the signifier for you, and not without reason, as being what represents the subject for another signifier.

This indeed, moreover, is why the analytic conjuncture is the point from which there is dissolved this case of short-sightedness in the linguist, this distinction that he believes he is making or ought to make, as being essential, between two so-

called linguistic levels, one involving the inherency of meaning, opposed to the other which excludes it, in other words, to go quickly, the opposition between the word and the phoneme.

(3) From our point of view, from our experience, which is that of lack, there is never given anything but the word of whatever it is and at whatever level it is, the phoneme being here strictly equal in experience as it abundantly proves in this field, one of those from which Freud began, the forgetting of names, the phoneme, its forgetting, is at the principle of the fact that this forgetting is not at all the forgetting of the word as meaning, which quite often subsists, but comes from the lack of a signifying articulation.

I remembered in this connection, in order to tell it to you, that, curiously, the very expression in French, *le mot me manque* (the word escapes me), can be dated, it was not used in French before a certain epoch; namely, that we have an attestation of it from someone from the circle of the *précieux*, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, who is able to note then, because he does it from day to day, collecting the well-made expressions that he sees arising in his milieu, that this expression, he collects it, he underlines it, *le mot me manque* was invented somewhere among these people who were dialoguing one opposite the other, seated on what are called *commodités de la conversation*, in other words, armchairs.

He goes as far as to say of this trait, this notation, that it is legitimate to affirm that before this dictum of the *précieux*, the expression *le mot me manque*, since it was (4) not in use in French, left in suspension an unthinkable part about this lack of the signifier, and that it is indeed there, always at the level of the signifying creation, that there is introduced something which opens up the path to what can later be grasped; *le mot me manque* does not imply the whole of Freud, but it is a way for me of introducing, of taking up on this occasion, the form of a question that I had introduced the last time of what is involved in a knowledge before this moment, however we may designate it, when it emerges, without our being able to say in virtue of what maturation, unless it is perhaps, the possibility of its signifying composition.

What was meant by *le mot me manque* before Freud? In any case it is clear that it did not have the same signifying value.

But it is not there that we ought to seek the source of the incidence of this signifying conjuncture which for us is what we are going to structure the notion of knowledge around. By way of proof I need only indicate the sterility, the lack of openness, that the other side involves, the one that is called logical-positivism which, searching for the *meaning of meaning* by assuring itself, by being on its guard, I would say, against the surprises of a signifying conjunction by dismembering, in a way, - how can it be done if not always in a retrospective fashion - the diversity of these significant refractions only ends up with this curious (5) skeleton which, in a particular work entitled *The meaning of meaning*, by Ogden and Richards, by Richards and Ogden, ends up for example in dealing with the beautiful, by laying out for us for whole columns, with brackets and parentheses, a whole section of the different acceptations in which this word can

be taken, thus rendering it strictly impossible to understand why these diverse meanings find themselves united there.

Logical-positivism makes one think, I would say, by the very contrasting and bracketing of the two terms in which it affirms itself, of something like these monsters who peopled the mediaeval bestiaries, and so as not to be always coming back to our eternal unicorn or to some chimera, sufficiently worn out by the risky, doubtful usage made of it by logicians, for it is well to be always prudent as regards the exact status of these monsters, I would compare it here to another one which you hear less spoken about, the mirmicoleon. It has the breast of a lion and the hindquarters of an ant. It is not surprising, as the scholarly authors of the aforesaid bestiaries affirm, that it can only die. The ant, even if it was raised by Prévert to the fabulous dimensions of the famous eighteen metres - and why not says Prévert - the ant, in any case, not being able to evacuate what the lion devours. Such is the positivist or logical-positivist fly-speck after an abundant (6) chewing-over of what it cannot grasp in the dialectical virtue of a term like the beautiful, of which one could say in this connection, when one gives a sigh of relief at seeing the end of the painful elaborations of the authors of *The meaning of meaning*, that the first idiot who might point out to us that *beau* rhymes with *peau* would tell us much more about it.

*Le mot me manque, le mot me manque*, before Freud, had its value as an unveiling. *Le mot me manque*, involved from its very composition as a precious artefact, the opening of a path of truth which was to find, with Freud, its completion in knowledge.

I understand the word truth here in its properly Heideggerian sense. The ambiguity of what is unveiled but still remains half-hidden.

A certain medical lack of reflection with which I am surrounded, may undoubtedly, when I say, when I said the last time that a question can be posed about the status of a knowledge, whether it is Newtonian or Freudian, before it effectively comes to light, may say to me: what are you saying there, you who are interested in us, who teach us such risky things? So the unconscious is an invention of Freud's, and why not? The subject represented by the signifier is something which only dates from your discourse. Now, what is at stake, is precisely the status of the subject with respect to a knowledge.

(7) This subject, as we first encounter it as affirmed, effectively supposed, in every knowledge which closes in on itself, where was it before? When a knowledge, like Newtonian knowledge is completed, let us observe what happens as regards the status of the subject,. It is worth our while delaying on the matter for a moment, even though I raised this problem before you a long time ago.

Newtonian knowledge realised, in the history of science, a sort of exemplary acme, that was at once paradoxical and really exemplary, paradigmatic, not to say pleonastic, an example then of what is really involved in the status of the subject. For in this formula which suddenly rooted the enigmatic phenomena in the heavens which had captivated the attention of calculators throughout the centuries, gathered them together, enclosed them in a formula which had nothing else for it than its exactitude, for it is so unthinkable in the name of any experienced

property, in anything that man knows in his relationship to the world, that what it teaches him has no action to be transmitted and presupposes a medium which transmits it, which proposes to him this action at a distance which is properly speaking unthinkable, and makes there arise from the mouths of our contemporaries with a single cry, as it were, but how can such a body, as it were, such a mass isolated at some point in space, know the distance it is from another body, so that it is linked to it by this relationship?

(8) And of course, for Newton, there is in effect no doubt the fact that this presupposes in itself a subject who maintains the action of the law. Everything which is of the order of physics or appears here to relate to the action and the reaction of bodies following the properties of movement and of rest, but, the operation of gravity does not appear to him to be able to be supported except by this pure and supreme subject, this sort of acme of the ideal subject that the Newtonian God represents.

This indeed is the reason why our contemporaries have quite correctly made Newton equal to this God, for it is the same thing to create this law and to see it articulated in all its rigour. But it is no less true that a too perfect subject like the subject of knowledge, which is the first true model of this absolute knowledge which haunted Hegel, that this subject leaves us completely indifferent and that belief in God gained no renewal from it.

That this subject is nothing, that he is the only one not to know it. And this indeed is precisely the sign that he is nothing. In other words, it is in the ambiguity of the relationship of a subject to knowledge, it is in the subject in so far as he still lacks knowledge that there resides for us the nerve, the activity of the existence of a subject. This indeed is why it is not as a supposed support of a harmonious group of signifiers in this system that the subject is grounded, but in so far as somewhere (9) there is a lack, which I articulate for you as being the lack of a signifier because it is this articulation which allows us to rejoin in the simplest fashion the Freudian articulation so that we can extract from it its essential principle.

Undoubtedly, so as not to leave for a moment this horizon of the starry heavens before which Kant still prostrated himself, note that if, from all time, it is there that man has done his scales, his exercises in signifiers, it is uniquely for the reason that he had always been looking for the supreme subject, never finding him there for that matter, but such is the force, the pregnancy of the functioning of the signifier, that it is still there that he keeps his gaze turned when from all time he knows well that the Gods are among us. They are elsewhere than in the heavens. It is only their eponymous constellations that he is going to situate there.

The final taste, after this decisive expulsion from the heavens by Newton of any divine shadow, remains to us in the form of these signals that we are waiting for and which might come to us from somewhere, and paradoxically, as they say, from some life on another planet.

I ask, whether if there effectively came to us some sign or signal that we could qualify as signifying, in the name of what would this assure us of any life whatsoever, if not for the reason that in the least well grounded fashion we identify (10) the possibility of articulating the signifier with the fact of a life which



might be its support. Is there not something other than life that can produce a signifier, and if we are so sure of it, in the name of what?

Undoubtedly the first criterion would be to know where we will define the limit, the definition of a natural pulsation, since the last I heard, it seems that we have received nothing other from some distant galaxy or from what might be properly speaking a signifier. How could we define it except in Lacanian terms?

I mean that we will only ratify as attesting for us somewhere the presence, not of a living being, but of a subject, a signifier that we could very precisely articulate as orientated with respect to another signifier. The first condition is alternation, but one which one would, in a special fashion, bear witness to one of its members, and thus some variation is needed and, in a word, the shape of which Morse gives us an indication, namely, the existence of dactyls or of spondees so that in the first phase we would clearly know that a signifier only has a value in this case for other signifiers, but that is still not sufficient.

It is necessary to have this element of oddity, of exception, of paradox, of appearance and disappearance founded as such, which would show us clearly that something is alternating, which is precisely the relationship of one of these (11) signifiers with a subject. In a word, oddity and alternation: we need to have the testimony that the signifying ordering of something in which the subject would show himself to be capable of assuring pure chance, namely, a succession of heads or tails grouped together under a signifying form.

In other words, the best proof that we could have of the existence of a subject in the starry heavens, would be if some message with a minimum of four terms was found to correspond to the syntax that, in the introductory chapter to Poe's *Purloined letter*, I tried to articulate as alpha, beta, gamma, delta which those who have read this little introduction know are composed from a sort of grouping of pure random selection, and that the fact of grouping them, of naming them in a certain unitary fashion, whatever it may be in fact, culminates at a syntax from which already one cannot escape. If an analogous syntax were discovered in a succession of signs, we would have the assurance that what is involved there is indeed a subject.

If you believe you have the right to justify why, at the same time, you could describe it as living, try to articulate why. This will lead us, perhaps, along the same paths on which I am now going to try to advance.

(12) Freud escapes from the objection that my unreflective interlocutor put to me earlier, as follows: the fact is, that replying to the question, where is the subject of the unconscious before Freud discovered it, the reply is precisely that what Freud defines for us as subject is the new, original relationship, unthinkable before his discovery, but affirmed, of a subject to a not-knowing.

Must I dot my i's? The unconscious means that the subject refuses a certain point of knowing. The fact is that the subject is designated by deliberately trying not to know, it is that the subject is established - this is the step where the Freudian articulation is enriched by what I outline in the margin concerning the relationship to the subject to the signifier - the fact is that the subject is established from a

rejected, *verwerfen*, signifier, from a signifier about which one wants to know nothing.

What is this “one”? It is no more strange than the subject which disappears in total disinterest at the basis of an absolute system.

What Freud designates for us, is the subsistence of the subject of a not-knowing. The question for us is to elaborate a status for this subject such that we are not forced to give it a substance, namely, to believe like the Jungians that this subject is God.

This is where there should be of service the reminder that I give you that what (13) represents the outline of the whole dialectic which has culminated in our science, rests on a more and more articulated approach of the subject as designated by a relationship which overlaps this affirmed, concrete, experimental relationship with the missing signifier by Freud.

What the whole dialectic, the one which begins with Plato, has forged for us - and this is the sum of the major texts concerning the elaboration of a thinking about knowledge in our tradition which bears witness to this - I remind you from time to time about its essential articulating points, I will remind you or indicate to you, for my listeners who are here for the first time, of the really fundamental text which is Plato's *Sophist*, which I would ask you to consult; you will see there intervening in filigree the essential articulations that you will see overlapping with the greatest rigour, to the point of emerging in certain places as something which breaks through the canvas, the definition that the linguistic reference today allows us to give of a subject as that which corresponds to the position of the signifier - I mean the elementary signifier of the phoneme - in the system where the signifying battery, where there is established the concrete reality of every existing tongue.

It would be well here to recall two themes which are included in the fundamental aphorism of the signifier representing the subject for another signifier.

(14) Everything is in the status of this other. Everything that I will say about this other in what is going to follow, emerges, is already perfectly articulated at the end of this *Sophist* that I evoked for you just now and precisely under the rubric of the Other.

If the modern status of the subject is not given in Plato, it is in so far as there escapes there, that there is not articulated there, the tension that there is between this Other and the One, and which would allow us to ground this Other as what I call the One-more (*Un-en-plus*), it is One-more that you only see emerging in the theory of numbers at the level of Freud. In other words this conception of the singular as essentially lack.

Two relationships are outlined in this tertiary relationship that I articulate for you of the signifier representing something for another signifier and of the signifier representing the subject in a function of alternation, of *vel*, of either ..... or, either the signifier which represents or the subject and the signifier which vanishes.

Such is the form of the essential singularity which is indeed the one that would be required of the analyst if he had, irreducibly, fundamentally, to reply to this phantastical domination which always appears on the horizon, and which you saw (15) being discussed recently at my closed seminar in connection with a certain example, with this specific, onomastic, formulation by which this lack is supposed to be filled by the formulation of a name.

The composition of the signifying dyad of the couple, whatever it may be, that every usage of the tongue and especially the poetic one knows well, the one which is expressed in the poetic formula that words make love, or again to quote another poet: “to every night its day, to every mountain its valley, to every day its night, to every tree its shade, to every being its no (*non*)” ..... as in Plato who speaks of nothing but this no and of the distinction between this no and non-being, “to every good its evil.”

Which must be understood here, not as contraries in the real but as signifying oppositions. Now, it is around this that there revolves the whole Platonic development. This dyad, since it subsists in Plato’s thinking, requires the introduction of the Other as such. In order that being and non-being should not also be contraries equally existing, and thus giving shelter to all the conjuring tricks of the sophist, it is necessary that the non-being should be established as other in order that the sophist can be rejected there.

The astonishing embrace between Plato and the sophist, which I would like one of you to give a commentary on at our next closed seminar, by showing us in it what (16) appears everywhere, the extraordinary similarity, the shimmering reflection which means that at every turn of the page we read in it the characteristics of the palpitation that is current and present in the history of the psychoanalyst himself.

The psychoanalyst is the presence of the sophist in our time, but with a different status from which the reason has emerged, that there has come to light the reason, why these sophists operated with so much force and also without knowing why. The moment of force is based on something that analysis teaches us: the fact is that at the root of every dyad there is the sexual dyad. The masculine and the feminine (*le masculin et le féminin*), I say it like that because there is a tiny little oscillation in the expression if I were to say, the male and the female (*le male et le femelle*).

The ambiguities in the tongue about the function of gender, of what someone like Pichon, who believed a little bit too much in thinking not to have singular variations in his way of analysing phenomena and words, had called the *sexuiseblance* - I agree, but I would prefer *sexuilatence* - because the fact that the armchair is called the (*le*) armchair, the chair, the (*la*) chair, does not have any *sexuiseblance* except for very imaginative people, but the presence of gender as simply correlative of the signifying opposition, is for us, by underlining for us precisely the distinction between gender and sex, is designed to remind us that in what grounds the dyadic opposition - and God knows that it gives Plato a lot of embarrassment because he has to invent the Other in order to make the individual (*l’etre*) subsist - the dyadic opposition has as a radical foundation only the opposition of sexes, of which we know nothing.

Because Freud himself articulates in many texts that we give to the masculine-feminine opposition equivalents, metaphors, the parallels of active and passive or of seeing and being seen, of penetrating and of being penetrated, so favoured by a celebrated cuntesse; but we do not know what the masculine and the feminine are.

And Freud recognises it and affirms it. What is at stake so that knowledge, I mean the knowledge capable of giving an account of itself, the knowledge that knows how to articulate the subject - there is no other one to give its status to the unconscious, the unconscious means nothing else outside of this perspective - what is there in this knowledge which ensures that at the approach of this knowledge there functions, and in a unilateral fashion, namely, in the sense of the pure eclipsing, of the disappearance of the signifier, not simply the *verwerfen* which grounds the subject, but of the *verdrängt*, repression of everything which may approach it, even from a distance, and which bears witness to us of the presence of the subject in the unconscious, where the subject of the unconscious is the subject who avoids the knowledge of sex.

(18) You must admit that this is a state of affairs that is a little bit surprising which, moreover, in order to give you a rest for a moment, will allow us to throw a look backwards and to make the observation that perhaps some of you have made along this path that I try to elaborate for you in the hours that I reserve for it on my Sabbath day: all of a sudden I struck my head saying: "But there is no word in Greek to designate sex!"

Since I had only Greek-French dictionaries within reach, I was reduced to searching in the authors, in the treatise *On animals* by Aristotle - this made me do things which were not new discoveries, for I am very fond of this treatise *On animals* - I was able to confirm that Aristotle, in short, had said almost everything that is important in zoology, but has all the same on the subject of reproduction - not to mention sex - of reproduction ideas that are necessarily a little vague. Microscopy was missing and the common nature of the term *sperma*, this sort of liquid which spreads out and from which there begins the equal attribution of the *sperma* to the male and the female, the only difference being that the female spreads it in herself and that the male spreads it outside is a rather valid phenomenological distinction but perhaps one designed to give us the idea of the embarrassment people were in effect in for centuries about what is involved (19) essentially, simply in reproduction.

As regards sex, let us not mention it. And this may explain a lot of things to us.

With some scruples I telephoned someone who is here on my left and who never refuses to perform this service to me, to ask him how, in a French-Greek dictionary, sex in Greek was expressed.

He replied with some little things which meant that it was ..... gender, ..... nature, and that it was on occasion ..... , namely, the difference between the male and the female.

You see what a periphrasis this is. These things are very interesting and one cannot blame Plato too much for completely failing to recognise this dimension

which, perhaps, would have been of service to him in his embarrassment, the aporias of the *Sophist*.

But he was not without some awareness of it because, as a matter of fact, the horror that he manifests for the category of ..... of the contrary, concerning the oppositions which are characterised by the yes and the no, is in fact the testimony that here there is being approached a mystery which is undoubtedly one to which a wide berth should be given.

(20) The Latins obviously have *sexus*. And here I will only allude in passing to the fact that this *sexus*, if we can designate an origin for it, it is on the side of [secus?]. You are approaching a little the Freudian truth. But indeed this still does not go very far.

There is something strange. It is that about sex we know, I mean know because of scientific investigation, we know much more. There is something that is striking simply from the examination of what happens at the level of animals that are called protistae or their near neighbours, something that every naturalist not only knows but can clearly articulate. I am not going to quote the authors for you but almost all of those who have studied the problems of sexuality have said it and have perceived ever since we have known a bit more about it thanks to the microscope. We know, but we do not draw the consequence of it, that sex is not at all something that is related to reproduction, first of all because there are organisms which reproduce in an a-sexual fashion and because among those which are intermediary between a-sexual reproduction and sexual reproduction, in other words depending on the stage of the shoot (*rejet*) of the line of descendance, reproduce themselves sometimes in an a-sexual fashion and sometimes do something which gives us the idea of a relationship with sexed reproduction, what (21) gives us the idea of it among elementary organisms - and I am not going to be so pedantic as to tell you their categories here because I do not want to overload my presentation - the fact is that what happened when I spoke about sexed reproduction, it is above all something whose essential is rather the reverse of fecundation than fecundation itself; namely, that a meiosis, that is to say a chromosomic reproduction, and after that there can be a conjunction, but it is not necessarily a reproduction; it can also be considered as a rejuvenation and this perhaps is what sexual conjunction essentially is.

In other words the relationship, the bond, between sexual differentiation and death is here manifest and tangible and in an ambiguous fashion. It is the relationship with death which undergoes here, something like the characteristics of a genuine relationship: this fundamental pulsation that sex is, at one and the same time, the sign of death, and that it is at the level of sex that there is waged the battle against death, as such, but not at the level of reproduction. Reproduction here is only a consequence, a usage on this occasion of cells that are more specialised than the others *qua* sexed, in other words at the moment when there appears the autonomy of the *germen* as compared to the .....

But of its nature nothing indicates that sex is in its origin a reproductional mechanism.

(22) If we delay on this fundamental phenomenon of chromosomic reduction, in other words, what is called meiosis, and what results from it by way of expulsion, of what on the desks of the secondary school we were told were the little polar globules, in connection with the formation of the sexual cells, we see there, in the concrete, in the material, the expression of a different polarity, that of the support of the organism with something which is a remainder, something which is the complement of what is, precisely, lost, reduced, in the meiosis and which, perhaps, may be destined to illuminate us about what is involved in the phantastical function of the lost object, metaphorically incarnated by objects which do not always have, perhaps, only a quite external relationship with this form of residue expelled from the organism.

I am speculating, I am dreaming. *Schwärmerei!* But it is strange that these sorts of *Schwärmerei* were never, never, never, done in the psychoanalytic field. All the discoveries about sexuality and what is more, besides, they are abundant, they swarm, there are things added to it every day: chromosomes are fascinating, they are the object of feverish discussions for all those who are effectively occupied with this thing that is called the reproduction of living beings, whatever they may be.

(23) For psychoanalysts this is strictly a dead letter. I never saw any text whatsoever in an analytic or para-psychoanalytic review which interested itself in the slightest in this field of the discoveries of modern biology on sex nor the questions that it poses. There is here a phenomenon that we cannot but consider, considering what that involves in terms of indications, moreover, that are not necessarily illegitimate about what is really involved in the position of psychoanalysts concerning what? This something which takes on a more and more pregnant shape, namely, the subject who is supposed to know *qua* subject of the unconscious, namely, the subject who is supposed to know what must in no case be known.

This then is of a nature to show us the mistake, the paradox there would be in thinking of the psychoanalyst as being the one who has to furnish, who has to answer for the singular signifier because it is lacking in its relationship with the other signifier. For if this radical relationship involves the original covering over, the *Verborgenheit*, the fundamental exclusion of what through analytic doctrine itself constitutes its final link, namely, what is involved in the correspondence, whatever it may be, between the male and the female, it is quite clear that everything indicates that the position of the analyst finds itself no less excluded (24) than that of any established subject who preceded him. This indeed is why analysis remains completely in the tradition of the subject of knowledge on the single condition that we should carefully note that for a long time knowledge has been let go far from the subject and that the subject that is involved is only the subject in relation to the missing signifier.

On the contrary, what experience teaches us is, effectively, what arises in this field of experience: it is precisely this metaphor regarding which, all the same, it is not for nothing that a little earlier I evoked for you the correspondence that it has with respect to one of the most fundamental realities of sex, namely, the loss of this little something in which there is established the closest possible relationship of the subject of the unconscious with the world of phantasy.

That it should be here that analytic experience has in fact taken the psychoanalyst, now allows us to open up the question of how he is solicited by this point, this point of lateral deviation, this indicated point of a relationship to sex which in any case would not be able to overlap a mythical image that we might construct of the male and female relationship, this is what emerges from the divine text: “man and woman he made them”. As Mr Ernest Jones armed with his Protestant tradition does not hesitate to take up again.

(25) Do we not grasp here that for other traditions of thought - by way of illustration, that of Taoism for example - which begin entirely from a signifying apprehension in which we do not have to look for the meaning it represents for them because, for us, it is quite secondary. Meanings always pullulate. You put two signifiers opposite one another and that gives little meanings. They are not necessarily all that pretty.

But that the beginning should be, as such, the opposition between the Ying and the Yang, the male and female, even if they do not know that this is what that means, this just by itself, involves at once this singular mirage that there is here something more adequate to some radical foundation or other, at the same time, moreover, as this may justify the total failure of any culmination on the side of a veritable knowledge, and that is why it would be a great mistake to believe that there is the slightest thing to be expected from the Freudian exploration of the unconscious that would in a way rejoin, echo, corroborate what has been produced by these traditions that we qualify, that we label - I detest the term - oriental, of something which is not from the tradition which has elaborated the function of the subject. To fail to recognise it is to risk all sorts of confusions, and if something on our part (26) can ever be won in the sense of an authentic integration of what for psychoanalysts knowledge ought to be, undoubtedly in a quite different direction. I will pursue this discourse about the position of the analyst the next time.

**Seminar 19: Wednesday 19 May 1965**

Like in the game of love, of *amora*, where scissors, stone, and paper catch up on one another indefinitely in a round, stone breaking scissors, paper enveloping stone, scissors cutting paper, you can state in an analogy, which undoubtedly conceals something more complex, that the three terms of my last discourses, and very especially that of the last time, set out before you, under the rubric of the subject, the one that I devoted the greatest care to honing, for your understanding, of knowledge, which, moreover, was the second term to which I tried to give its whole weight, concerning what is involved under the name of unconscious.

The unconscious is a knowledge, whose subject remains undetermined, in the unconscious. What does it know? Well sex, and it is not by chance, nor from haste, if, having marked only the last time in all its relief, that the meaning of the Freudian doctrine is that sex is one of the stumbling points, around which turns this triple relationship, this economy, where each one of these terms is referred on from one to the other in accordance with a relationship which, at first approach, may seem to be the one through which I introduce you to it, a relationship of circular dominance, the (2) subject being undetermined in knowledge, which is brought to a halt before sex, which confers on the subject this new sort of certainty through which his place as subject being determined and only being able to be so from the experience of the *cogito*, with the discovery of the unconscious, of the radically, fundamentally, sexual nature of all human desire, the subject takes his new certainty, that of finding his lair in the pure default (*défaut*) of sex.

This relationship of rotating dominance is essential to ground what is involved in my discourse from its beginning, regarding what status of the subject is involved in what is regenerated for him by the analytic operation, and, moreover, since this analytic operation alone gives him his status, what will be involved today, after this introduction, is not to affirm as a given in the world this dominance which is rejected by each one of the three terms, but to reformulate it, to make its effects felt, in terms of this form under which it is exercised for us, which is properly speaking the form of a game.

I think that even those who might be coming here today to listen to me for the first time, know enough about Freud to recognise what an essential term the relationship between knowledge and sex constitutes in his teaching.

(3) Whether it is a matter of his approach, of his discovery of the psychoanalytic dynamic, it is in terms of what the subject knows more about it than he believes, says more about it than he wishes, and demonstrates, from his own resources, this form of ambiguous knowledge which, in a way, renounces itself at the very moment that it avows itself, that Freud introduces the dynamic of the unconscious, and when he theorises it, it is around this oscillating point of the question about sex, of the epistemological drive, of the need to know what is involved in sex, that there is introduced genetically into the history of the child everything that will



subsequently expand in the shape of his person, of his character, of his symptoms, of all this material which is ours and which interests us.

But it is here that we have the incidence of what I wanted to articulate for you in its dialectical difference, when I spoke to you about truth in connection with knowledge; where that knowledge is, where it has its status, there where we have constituted it, there where not unconsciously but external to us, it is grounded in science. Where was the truth before the establishment of knowledge?

A question which, as I reminded you, does not date from yesterday. It is exactly contemporaneous with the first logical articulations: it is in Aristotle, it is the status of the contingency of truth before it is authenticated in knowledge, but what the Freudian (4) articulation shows us is a divergent relationship between this truth and knowledge.

If we must wait for knowledge, if the truth is in suspense as long as knowledge has not being constituted, it is quite clear that if someone had formulated three hundred years earlier the Newtonian formula itself, it would have meant nothing, because these truths would not have been able to be inserted into his knowledge.

It is the Freudian structure which reveals and lifts the seal of this mystery for us. The orientation of the truth, what is discovered, is not towards a knowledge, even one to come, which is always, with respect to a point X, in a fundamentally lateral position, what we have to bring to light as truth, as *alethia*, as Heideggerian revelation, is something which for us gives a fuller sense if not a purer one to this question about being, which is articulated in Heidegger and which is called for us, for our experience as analysts, sex.

Either our experience is in error or we are doing nothing right: and that is how this is formulated. This is how this ought to be formulated here.

The truth is to be said about sex, and it is because it is impossible - this is in Freud's text - because the position of the analyst is impossible, that is why, it is because it is (5) impossible to say it in its entirety, that there flows from it this sort of suspense, of weakness, of secular incoherence in knowledge, which is properly the one that Descartes denounces and articulates in order to detach from it his certainty about the subject, by which the subject is manifested as being precisely the signal, the test, the remainder of this lack of knowledge, through which he rejoins what bound him, what refuses itself to knowledge, in the sex on which the subject finds himself suspended in the pure form of this lack, namely, as desexualised entity.

A knowledge therefore, takes refuge somewhere, in this place that we could call and why not, for we are only rediscovering here ancient paths, in a place of original shame (*pudeur*), with respect to which all knowledge is established in an unsurpassable horror, with regard to this place where lies the secret of sex.

And this is why it is important to recall what everyone may know, but it is striking that it is forgotten, that we know the many cascading effects of what is involved in sex, even if it is only the multiplicity of existing beings, and that it is to veil the question, it is to dodge it, to make of sex the instrument whose effects would be

justified by their teleology. Sex, in its essence as radical difference, remains untouched and sets its face against knowledge.

(6) The introduction of the unconscious totally changes the status of knowledge and that in a double way, the doubling having to be repeated at every level that we have to take up again in the three poles in which our subjective order is constituted.

The knowledge of the unconscious is unconscious in that, on the side of the subject, it is posited as the indetermination of the subject, we do not know at what point of the signifier there is lodged this subject who is supposed to know.

But from another side, this knowledge, even unconscious, is in a reference of fundamental interdiction with regard to this pole which determines it in its function as knowledge.

There is something that this subject, this knowledge must not know. It is the radical, not accidental, constitution - even though all the chains in which there are linked this subjective concatenation are never anything but singular - founded on this grasp, this first inclusion which constitutes its whole logic, a logic that we must ground, in order to grasp how it circulates, and where we are at when we, as analysts, claim to operate on it.

There is a question which has just been posed at a competitive examination, one of these examinations which in a *milieu* like this one is something which provides some illustration: one could indeed say that one question which was posed there is on the agenda. The question was posed to those who had to surmount this barrier, this (7) steeplechase of what is called *l'agregation*: "Can man represent for himself a world without men?".

I will say here, not at all the way in which I would have advised each candidate to treat this question, but the way I would have treated it myself.

That the world in question has never been graspable except as forming part of a knowledge: it is clear that from all time, it is easy for us to see that representation is only a term which serves as surety for the lure of this knowledge.

Man himself was fabricated, right throughout his traditions, in accordance with these lures. It is quite clear then, that he could not be excluded from this representation, if we continue to make of this representation the surety of this world.

But it is the subject that we are dealing with and for us the subject, precisely in the measure that he may be unconscious, is not a representation, he is the representative (*Representanz*) of the *Vorstellung*. He is there in place of the *Vorstellung* which is lacking: this is the meaning of the Freudian term of *Vorstellungsrepresentanz*.

It is not a matter of objecting to us the fact that from all time this man with which we have covered the world, this *macroanthropos* which the macrocosm was, was of course always made sexed, but precisely it is only too clear that for want of

being able to say what sex he was, he had the two and that indeed is the whole question.

(8) The fact of saying that one finds a little touch of the one and the other, a mixture of characteristics among the higher vertebrates, adds nothing to this.

The subject from which we have to begin is the piece which is lacking to a knowledge that is conditioned by ignorance and what is involved in its regard, if it is through it that we have to find man, is always in a position of a scrap of waste (*déchet*) with respect to his representation.

And in this measure one can say that until psychoanalysis, the world was always represented without the true man, without taking account of the place where he is as subject, the place in which there would be no representation, very precisely because the representation would not have a representative in the world.

This is how I have marked on the board, with their characteristics, the very ones that I have just stated, these three poles of knowledge *qua* unconscious which knows everything, perhaps, except what motivates it, of the subject who is established in his certainty of being a lack of knowledge, and of this third term which is precisely sex in the measure that in this sphere, it is rejected from the beginning, in the measure that it emerges from the fact that one wants to know nothing about it.

(9) This is where I am going to ask you: “Today, do you want us to play?” I say no more about it. I am not saying to you: “Do you want to play with me?” Because after all, from where I am speaking, namely as analyst, to play with me does not say with whom one is playing. I am not saying to you either that something is being played out.

Even though we are analysts, we are in history, and if physics is founded on the terms of: “Nothing is lost, nothing is created”; I would ask whoever here has reflected on history, whether the foundation of this idea of history is not very properly, “nothing is being played out (*rien ne se joue*).”

For all of those who have had the time to experience something of what, in our day, appeared to be played out in what can be written about history, for those who have had the time to see collapsing some pure game in history, is it not obvious that the march of things shows the truth of what I have just stated in this form: “nothing is being played out”.

If there is a truth of history, the Marxist truth for example, it is precisely what from a certain point of view we may be led to reproach it with: it is that everything is played out in advance if the subject of history is indeed there where we are told he is, in his economic foundations.

But this indeed is what is demonstrated at every turn. It is enough simply for us to put in its place what is involved, where it is believed the game is being directed from. It (10) nevertheless remains that this game has its status and that it is somewhere between the three terms that I have just outlined for you. It is into this that we are now going to enter and that I pursue my discourse for analysts, even if it proves to be only some game that I am playing for their sake, it is always

where there is the least risk that they put the biggest amount, and the smallest where there is the greatest risk. But for this it is necessary to know what these terms mean, what the game itself means whatever the level at which we employ this category.

Game is a term with a very large extension, from childrens' games up to the game that one can describe as one of chance, and even as far as what has been called, in a confusing fashion, games' theory. I mean the one that appears to date from the book by Mr Von Neuman and his collaborator.

I will try today to tell you how from the point of view of analysis, which has all the characteristics of a game, we can approach what is involved in this register. The game is something which from its simplest forms up to its most elaborate ones, is presented as the substitution for the dialectic of these three terms, a simplification which, at first, establishes it in a closed system.

What is proper to the game is always, even when it is masked, a rule, a rule which (11) excludes as forbidden this point which is precisely the one that, at the level of sex, I designate for you as the impossible access point, in other words, the point where the real is defined as the impossible.

The game reduces this circle to the relationship of the subject to knowledge, this relationship has a sense and can only have a single one, it is that of waiting. The subject waits for his place in knowledge. The game is always about the relationship of a tension, of a distancing, through which the subject establishes himself at a distance from what already exists somewhere as knowledge.

If, at the time when I still believed that something was being played out, I made, for at least a trimester, the little flock whose crook I was then holding, exercise themselves at the game of odds or evens, it was in order to try to get this truth to pass into their veins. The person holding the marbles knows whether their number is odd or even. Besides, it does not matter whether he knows it or not, he has in his hand knowledge, and the passion for the game arises for the fact that, face to face with him, I establish myself as a subject who is going to know. Under whatever form it may be: of a stake or the marbles themselves, the reality which takes its place, loses what in this triangle, in this tripole, is the impossible to know but which, brought down to the level of a game, because excluded in this impossible, becomes the pure and simple reality of the stake (*l'enjeu*).

(12) The stake is in a way what masks the risk. Nothing, when all is said and done, is more contrary to risk than a game. The game caps the risk. And the proof is that the first steps in games' theory were taken not by Neuman but by Pascal, beginning with the theory of distribution, which means that at every moment of a game an equitable distribution of what is being played for is conceivable, a calculation of hopes is possible which means that to stop a game in the middle does not simply mean that each one of the players takes back his stake, which would be unjust, it is that the stake is distributed in function of what it is extraordinary to state, and which nevertheless gives the very structure of what is involved, in function of the calculation of the hopes of the players.

I will not go into detail about what is involved, contenting myself here with referring you to the fundamental works by Pascal on the matter, which moreover, for very good reasons have been the law ever since.

What does that mean, if not that for us, whose paths are cleared by this games' theory where it is demonstrated that what is called strategy is something which shows us that what is perfectly calculable, what in a large enough number of cases for it to provide a start to the whole elaboration concerning the exercise of games in a large enough (13) number of cases, the connotation of possible attempts for a player with the totality of possible attempts for the other being known, there is a point, named the saddle point, as one talks about the saddle of a horse, where there intersects as being strictly (*tristement*) identical, what the two players should play in order to have together and in every case, the minimum loss, showing that the nature of the game is far from being purely and simply the opposition between the players, but from the beginning, in its very comprehensibility, the possibility, on the contrary, of agreement.

What the player is looking for in every game, the player as a person, is always something which involves this conjunction as such of two subjects, and what is really at stake in the affair, is this player, the divided subject, in so far as he intervenes in it himself as a stake under the title of this little object, of this residue that we know well, we analysts in the shape of this object to which I gave the name of a little letter, the first one.

If there is something which supports every game activity, it is this something which is produced from the encounter of the divided subject in so far as he is subject, with this something through which the player makes of himself the waste scrap of something which is played out elsewhere, the elsewhere which is full of risks, the elsewhere from which he has fallen from the desire of his parents, and there precisely the point from (14) which he turns away by going to seek, on the contrary, this relationship of a subject to a knowledge and to image for you in the most rudimentary form the well founded character of what I am indicating to you as being in the game, radically, the relationship of a subject to a knowledge, I will evoke for you an image that for me is particularly striking, that of a little girl who, around the age of three, had discovered this game, in an exercise in which it was not at all by chance that what was involved was to come and kiss her father, which consisted of going to the other end of the room, and in approaching with slow steps, and then more precipitous ones, punctuating this advance with these three words: "It will happen, it will happen, it will happen (*ça va arriver!*)".

Such is the fundamental image in which there is included everything that is called, in its diversity, ludic activity up to its most complex and the most organised forms, the isolation of a system by means of a rule in which there is determined the entry into and the emergence from the game, within the game itself, the subject in whatever real he possesses and of an impossible to obtain real, materialised, as I might say, in what is at stake. And this is why the game is propitious, exemplary, isolating an isolatable form of the specification of desire; desire being nothing other than the appearance of this stake, of this  $\circ$  which is the being of the player, in the interval of a subject divided between his lack and his knowledge.

(15) Note that in this game, if reality is reduced to its form of waste scrap of sex, to its unsexual form, the other advantage of the game is that the truth relationship is there, because of the very suppression of this pole of reality as impossible, the relationship of truth is suppressed.

One could ask oneself in every sense what is involved in the truth of science before it is affirmed. One could ask oneself what is involved in the unconscious before I interpret it, and what is proper to a game, is that before one plays, no one knows what is going to come out of it.

This is the relationship of the game to phantasy. The game is a phantasy rendered inoffensive and preserved in its structure.

These remarks are essential to introduce what I want to articulate for you today, namely, what is involved in the game of analysis, if it is a fact, since it has all its characteristics, that analysis is a game because it is carried out within a rule, and regarding which it is a matter of knowing how the analyst has to direct this game, in order to know also what are the properties required of his position in order for him to direct it to this operation in a correct fashion.

Let us say first of all what use this schema is for us. To tell us, what we no doubt know but what we are far from articulating in every case, and this schema can even be explained, the fact is that in an analysis, there are apparently two players: these players (16) whose relationship I have tried to articulate for you as a relationship of misunderstanding, since, from the place that one of these players occupies, the other, who is the subject, is the subject who is supposed to know, while if you trust my schematic articulation, the subject, if we can speak about this pole in its pure constitution, the subject is only isolated by withdrawing himself from any suspicion of knowing.

The relationship of one of these poles to the pole of the subject is a fallacious relationship, and it is also in this that it comes close to being a game; the subject who is supposed to know constitutes the conjunction of this pole of the subject to the pole of knowledge, regarding which the subject has first of all to know that at the level of knowledge a subject should not be supposed since it is the unconscious.

What results from that? To keep ourselves to these two poles, it is that from the point of view of the game, that gives perhaps two players, in the sense that in the games' theory of Mr Von Neuman what is meant by players are simple agents, the which agents are distinguished from one another simply by an order of preference.

But the very fact that these agents, in the case that I evoked earlier, may be in agreement without even knowing one another, on the simple sheet of paper that Mr Von Neuman uses to show that each of the two has only one and the same attempt to (17) make, proves that they are perfectly compatible by indicating the same person.

And from a certain point of view and up to a certain limit, if the analyst in his pure, original position has no other one than that of the subject as I define it from a Cartesian point of view, putting the one who, in any case, affirms himself, even

if he knows nothing, he is the one who thinks that he knows nothing and that this perfectly well suffices to assure his position opposite the other player, who no doubt knows but does not know that he knows. It is quite clear that these two poles can very validly constitute, up to a certain point, the same person if we define the person not by this reference but by the common interest and the common interest is what is called the cure. What does the cure mean? Exactly what happens at some possible point where Pascal stops the game and can carry out at that moment the distribution of the bets in a fashion that is satisfactory for the two. The cure has absolutely no other sense than this distribution of the bets at some point or other of the process if we start from the idea that, up to a certain point, the subject and knowledge are perfectly made to agree, is what every analyst from the school of today's psychoanalysis call, in this false language borrowed from psychology, the alliance with the healthy part of the ego.

(18) In other words let us deceive ourselves together.

If there is something that I am trying to reintroduce, which would allow the analyst to end up with something other than an identification of the indeterminate subject with the subject who is supposed to know, namely, with the subject of deception, it is in the measure that I recall what even those who have this theory know in practice, which is that there is a third player. And that the third player is called the reality of sexual difference.

It is because before this reality of sexual difference, the subject who knows, who is not the analyst but the analysand, has been for a long time established within his own game, the one which has lasted, commenced and culminated in analysis, necessary ....., of two subjects, of the divided subject, on one side subject and on the other side knowledge, but not together, and of this something which means he can only apprehend himself as fallen and dropped from the reality which he neither wants nor can know anything about, in what ensures that man always has to flee the impossible of reality into this something which is the ludic supplement of it and at the same time its defence, this something that we know in the shape of what is revealed in phantasy in so far as its cause is the bringing into play of the subject in the form of this object of object relations, brought into play between the two opposed subjective terms of the (19) subject and of unconscious knowledge, this substitution of the  $\circ$ , of the object of waste, of the object of the fall, for what is involved, the reality of the sexual relationship, this is what gives its law to this relationship of the analyst to the analysand in this sense that far from him having to be content with some equitable distribution of the stakes, he has to deal with something where he finds himself indeed in a position of opposition to his partner.

As in all the cases where there is not in the game an agreeable solution, he has to deal with a partner who is on the defensive but whose defensiveness is dangerous and prevalent in the fact that contrary to what many imagine, this defensiveness is not directed against him the analyst, which gives him his strength, the fact is that it is directed against the other pole, that of sexual reality.

It is unbeatable precisely in that having, because of this fact, no solution, the ruse of the leader of the game, if the analyst can deserve his name, can only be the

following, to make there end up from, to separate out from this defensiveness, a form that is always more pure.

And this is what the desire of the analyst is in its operation. To lead the patient to his original phantasy, is not to teach him anything, it is to learn from him how to act. In a particular case, it is the patient who knows how to deal with the *o*-object and its relationship to the division of the subject.

(20) And we are at the place of the result in the measure that we favour him. Analysis is the locus where there is verified in a radical fashion, because it shows it, this strict superimposition that desire is the desire of the other, not because the desire of the analyst is dictated to the patient, but because the analyst makes of himself the desire of the patient.

This is what is expressed for you by the little triangle in red, which shows you in what virtual space on the side of the other, a locus occupied by the analyst, there is situated the point of desire, namely, at strictly opposite poles, at the locus where there lies the impossible of the reality of sex.

Now it is here that there is found the high point of the analytic ruse, and it is there only that it can be rejoined. It is only from this perspective and in the measure that the analyst is absolutely broken to it, that there can happen something of what properly speaking constitutes the only conceivable gain.

It is only at the point where there is taken to the maximum what makes knowledge be constituted as the guard, but understand it in the sense of serving, that this refusal of sexual reality, of this most intimate *aidos*, of this radical shame, it is precisely at this point that this shame may betray itself.

The fact is that this guard is brought to its most perfect point, which can let there (21) happen something of a lack of guard, for this reality of sex, for its part, is not supposed to know.

And it is there that I will leave oscillating the question of the final subjective positions.

Does this supreme shame know or not know? There are those who believe that it knows. But how can it be known what it knows, except at the level of the other, from which there is going to arise the shadow of this omnipotent signifier, of this supreme name, of the omniscient which has always been the trap, the elective locus of capture for those who need to believe, as everyone knows, to believe in it can mean, always means, the very people who believe affirm it and say it, it is the fideist theory, one can only believe what one is not sure about.

Those who are sure, well, precisely, they do not believe in it. They do not believe in the other; they are sure of the thing. These people are the psychotics. And that is why it is perfectly possible, contrary to what someone from this School has written in connection with the history of madness by Michel Foucault, to whom one can reproach only one thing which is not to have given to psychosis this formulation for want of having attended my seminar on President Schreber, there



is a perfectly consistent discourse of madness, it is distinguished by the fact that it is sure that the thing .....

(22) I will leave you at this point - it is two o'clock - to which I led you today.

What ought to be, what can be this desire of the analyst, if it is to hold itself at the same time at this point of supreme complicity, open complicity, open to what? To surprise. The opposite of this waiting in which there is constituted the game in itself, the game as such, is the unexpected. The unexpected is not the risk. One prepares oneself for the unexpected. The unexpected even, if you will allow me for a moment to return to this outline of the para-Eulerian structuring that I tried to give you as necessary at least for certain concepts, namely the inverted eight, a little portion whose external field is this Moebius strip which must necessarily traverse it, you will see that the unexpected finds in the little portion its admirable application. For what is the unexpected if not what reveals itself as being already expected but only when it arrives.

The unexpected, in fact, traverses the field of the expected. Around this game of expectation, and confronting anxiety, as Freud himself in the fundamental texts on this theme formulated it, around this field of expectation we ought to describe the status of what is involved in the desire of the analyst.

This is where I will take things up again in a fortnight's time, since the next time we will have a closed seminar.

**Seminar 20: Wednesday 26 May 1965**

**Dr Lacan:** In the first steps of my closed seminar it is of course to be expected that things will not immediately take on either their shape, or their style, or their method and that certain things remain in suspense.

Our friend Leclaire thought it was a pity that there had not been any response here, I mean a public one, to what Jacques-Alain Miller had written, the text of which had been put at everyone's disposal.

So then, I give the floor to Leclaire who is going to contribute in this connection some remarks which will not have simply the protocol interest of marking the importance of this text of Jacques-Alain Miller but of giving it a properly analytic response.

This intervention by Leclaire will be brief. Jacques-Alain Miller will reply to him if he thinks it is good and opportune to do so. This ought not to cut too much into the totality of our session today which, I remind you, is devoted to the attention that I asked should be given to the text of the *Sophist*, and on which there will intervene in two fleshed-out papers - we have therefore a very heavy program - Audouard first, then Kaufmann.

(2) **Dr Leclaire:** I am going to try to be brief and nevertheless to reply to Miller, namely, to announce my colours right away, to attempt to say how the position of the psychoanalyst is irreducible to any other one and, I will go even further, not only irreducible but perhaps, properly speaking, inconceivable.

I will do it by basing myself on Miller's text of 24th February and more precisely again, on what gives it its fascinating perfection.

In the passionate enterprise of interrogating the foundations of logic, of the logic that he describes as logical, and to gather together in the work of Lacan the elements of a logic of the signifier, Miller manages to present us with a very marvellous discourse and I will not hide from him the satisfaction that I had in reading it, because circumstances had not given me the opportunity to hear it.

Miller's essay has, I believe, the concern to be, like its object, a logical or even archaeological discourse, as he says, and above all a discourse open to comprehending the other discourse, the discourse which has issued from analytic experience.

Now to come to such a discourse, the one that Miller has tried to maintain, it is necessary, as I might say, to hold firmly to the point which, precisely, makes possible the articulation of a logical discourse, namely, this point which is presented to us by (3) himself as the weak point and at the same time the crucial point of every discourse, namely, the suturing point.

It must be understood, Miller reminds us, that the function of suturing is not particular to the philosopher. It is important that you are convinced, he reminds us, he insists even, that the logician, like the linguist, at his level, sutures.

I am quite convinced of it. It is clear that Miller for his part, as a logician, or archaeologist, also sutures. But here precisely is where the difference is. The analyst, for his part, in any case, and even when he tries to talk about psychoanalysis, the analyst does not suture, or at least he ought to force himself, as I might say, to guard against this passion.

I could stop there. It would obviously be the briefest form. Nevertheless, I would like to take my argument a little bit further. It is easy to say suture. What precisely is involved? In what does there consist this suturing point that is being considered?

One of the propositions underlined in Miller's text which constitutes one of its axes, one of its pivots, is the following: it is in the decisive statement that the number assigned to the concept of non-identity to itself is zero that logical discourse is sutured.

(4) Far be it from me to contest the importance of this remark. On the contrary it is as useful to the analyst as to the logician. But I would like to go further and to question Miller's interest in the concept of non-identity to itself. In his text, the introduction of this concept of non-identity to itself follows on the one, which is no less fundamental, of the concept of identity to itself which is advanced in connection with Frege but in evoking the proposition of Leibnitz, namely: "those things are identical of which one can be substituted for the other without the truth being lost", and that it is starting from this that one arrives at these other proposition underlined in Miller's text, namely: "the truth is: everything is identical to itself".

I took good care, in this text, to take up also the question of the thing. What is this thing which is identical to itself? Miller does not pass over this in silence, on the contrary. He specifies for us, tries to specify for us, on pages 6 and 7, the relationships of the concept of the object and of the thing. The object - I am summarising perhaps - is the thing in so far as it is one, and the concept is what subsumes - if I understood correctly - the existence of the object.

Everything is identical to itself, which allows the object, the thing *qua* one, to fall under the concept.

(5) This is a proposition that he says is pivotal. Those things are identical of which one can be substituted for the other without the truth being lost. It is necessary for the thing to be identical to itself for the truth to be saved, and there we will discover, I think, what constitutes the emphasis, the most important concern of this text, namely, to save the truth.

There again this is not necessarily a concern which is radically foreign to the analyst. But I think that it is not an essential concern, and above all not his unique concern. I told you: the analyst, for his part, does not suture. He does not have the same concern. He is not necessarily concerned with saving the truth.

In the proposition “the truth is: everything is identical to itself”, the analyst would be happy to say, at least I would, “the truth is also “. But reality is also. And reality, for the analyst, is to envisage the thing in so far as it is not one, to envisage the possibility of the non-identical to itself.

I am not saying that Miller does not do it. But he does it, in blocking right away the non-identical to itself, the concept of the non-identical to itself, by the signifier, by the number zero. I am going to try to make myself understood in a slightly more lively fashion.

(6) If one renounces, for a moment, the saving of the Truth, of the Truth with a capital T, what appears? What appears is the radical difference, in other words, the sexual difference, the difference between the sexes.

We can find an extremely precise reference to it in Freud’s work. At the moment when he is discussing the reality of the primal scene in connection with the observation on the *Wolfman*, he interests himself in the problematic of castration, in its relationships with anal eroticism, there comes to him this curious expression of an unconscious concept. He apologises for it, he does not know very well where that comes from. That comes to him from the unconscious; he proposes an unconscious concept. And what is involved in this unconscious concept?.

It certainly involves, a unit (*unité*), a unit which is the concept but a unit which overlaps things that are non-identical to themselves, which overlap, in his example, the faeces, the child or the penis; why not moreover the finger, the finger that is cut off and the little pimple on the nose, even the nose. We have the introduction of an unconscious concept, the notion of unconscious concept, and in the first example of Freud that comes to him, a little thing that can be separated from the body, but precisely a little thing, let us say, that is indifferent, which is not singular in itself.

(7) Do we have here the concept, or the reality, of a thing that is non-identical to itself, I would not go so far as to claim it, I would simply like, in returning this time to the experience of analysis, to give another example of one of these cases in which one might be embarrassed by these references of identity to itself, and non-identity to itself, as fundamental.

Thus, still in the experience of the *Wolfman*, there are many moments where his experience pivots, turns upside down, where something changes radically.

In the supplement to the history of an infantile neurosis, that Ruth Mack Brunswick has given us, she signals textually one of these moments where the world pivots on its axis, where the structure of the world, the order of the world seems to vanish. It is the moment when, uneasy about the presence of this pimple on his nose, the *Wolfman* having questioned the dermatologist, hears it being said that nothing can be done, the pimple will remain the same, it will not change, there is nothing to do, there is no need to treat it or to take it off.

You will tell me, this pimple is therefore precisely one of these things, like that, which is found to coincide with itself. Does that mean that it is identical, that it can be located as identical. I do not think so at all. The proof is that he goes to

see another (8) dermatologist, has the pimple removed, experiences moreover an acute ecstasy at the moment that this pimple is removed. He is relieved about it for a while. The veil which separates him from the world is once again torn, and he is once again present to the world.

But, of course, this does not last. And what replaces the pimple is a hole. And of course his delusional preoccupation - in fact the delusion is not one that would frighten us - is going to be what is going to happen to this hole, this little scar, this little scratch, which cannot be seen, but he, at his mirror where he constantly looks at his nose sees this hole.

The decisive moment, another decisive moment, which this time decides him to begin a new slice of analysis, is when he is told that the scars will never disappear.

There again it is the same thing: whether what is involved is the pimple or the scar of the pimple; different things, they are nevertheless the same things. For him also, here the world pivots on its axis, he can no longer live like that, it is completely intolerable.

In the formulation that Miller proposes to us and which, I must say, made me reflect a good deal, I think that there is lacking, perhaps, a passage on the problematic of what we could call the identity of zero's.

(9) What is it that makes a zero resemble another zero when one takes into account, at least, that the concept of zero is precisely what most resembles and that it is here we find the essence of identity when something of the order of zero appears.

Why? Because, precisely, it presents us with this radical difference. When I say that the analyst does not suture, it is because it is necessary, in his experience, that even the zero does not serve to hide from him this truth of a radical difference, that is to say in the final analysis, or in the ultimate reality, of sexual reality.

For what does he see, if he does not suture? What can he see? He can see, precisely, this radical difference, the reality of sex underpinned by the fundamental castration.

He can envisage the riddle of generation. Not simply that of the generation of a sequence of numbers, but of the generation of men. And he can perhaps then glimpse the truth from an angle which is, very exactly, that of death.

In other words, I do not think that the analyst can, in any way, fundamentally situate himself with respect to truth.

(10) It is one of these differences, it is one of these dimensions. Just as important for him is the dimension of lure or of deception without for all that, moreover, him privileging what is called the illogical other, one could say that the domain of the analyst is rather a domain that is necessarily a-truthful, at least in its exercise.

I told you that the analyst refuses to suture. In fact he does not construct a discourse, even when he speaks. Fundamentally, and this is the reason why the

position of the analyst is irreducible, the analyst listens. And everything that one says to the analyst, including the discourses that one hears, can illuminate him. He is listening for what? He is listening to the discourse of his patient, and what in the discourse of his patient interests him, is precisely how there is tied up for him this point of suture, how there is tied up for the patient, for the discourse of his patient, this particular suturing point where necessarily, in effect, a logical discourse is sutured.

In this sense, everything that Miller brings us is extremely precious. If Miller - and he said it to us in his very amusing introduction - situates himself, for his part, in order to speak to us, at a point of a topology of two dimensions, neither opened nor closed, thus neither outside nor inside, I agree, and what is more, that he occupies it, we grant (11) him that, let it be, but the analyst, for his part, even when he speaks or when he tries to speak, always listening to the discourse of the other, well then, he is rather like the subject of the Lacanian discourse, namely, he has no place and cannot have one. Whether he is on the side of the truth of death or on the side of the subject, namely, necessarily evanescent, without a place, without ever occupying, really, any place.

I can imagine that this position or this non-position of the analyst may give vertigo to the logician, to the one whose passion is for the truth. For he is in effect the witness, in his action, of this difference, which for its part is also radical between, let us say, a suturer, between a sutured desirer and one who refuses to suture, a non-suturer, a desirer-not-to-suture, I know well that in a certain way this position is intolerable. But I believe that, whatever we make of it, we are not finished with it, and you have not either Miller, you have not finished attempting, as they say, to put analysis in its place. In fact it is a good thing. For whether it puts itself there by itself - that happens, through weariness - or whether one tried to constrain it there, one single thing is sure. The day that the analyst is in his place, there will no longer be analysis.

**Dr Lacan:** I will not indicate here, I will not recall, that the things that I began in the last two lectures, are obviously of a nature to give certain indications already in advance about the questions that Leclaire poses here, in a very relevant fashion.

I did not have the time to get us all in tune, as I might say, before ..... this being linked to the work of each one of us. Miller has been very busy these last weeks. This means that I was not able to give all the importance it should have had to Leclaire's plan to speak.

Miller is therefore now free, because he had no prior communication, to respond to me now or to postpone his response. So that it will not be too long delayed, I am even on this occasion, ready to give him the floor at the beginning of our next meeting here, of the next lecture, which, quite simply, will take the place of our talk.

In other words, Miller, do you want to reply in a week's time or do you want a reply right away?

**Mr J-A Miller:** In a week's time would suit me much better.

**Dr Lacan:** I imagine so. Well then, there is no reason that you should improvise on the propositions which have been advanced and which deserve a very serious examination. So then you shall speak first.

I give the floor right away to Audouard.

**(13) Mr Audouard:** “Yes  
True  
Certainly  
I agree  
Undoubtedly  
Perfectly true  
Obviously  
You are speaking the truth  
Go on  
What do you say?  
That is exactly my opinion.”

These are the words of Theaetetus, this blessed young man, chosen in your circle, O Socrates, to echo the maieutic discourse of the Stranger. To offer his desire as a reply to the desire of the Stranger. He is a strange blessed young man, whose role I am constrained to adopt today before you caught as I am on the hook of the Master, before being so on that of the questioner. Do you not irresistibly think, in listening in this way to the mouth of Theaetetus opening and closing like a valve, of the sucking of air by the fish which is being asphyxiated at the hand of the fisherman.

A Stranger arrives in the circle with whom Socrates had made an appointment the day before. He comes from Elea, from among the disciples of Parmenides and Zeno. In (14) our day he would surely come to us from the USA. Perhaps he is among us today. Perhaps he is in us today, why not?.

This other might come into our circle to question us about the sophism which had dressed up the truth in beautiful clothes before it made it lose its very foundations by being referred to the truth. The beginning of Plato's dialogue administers the proof to us without telling us. No one can, in effect, know in this dialogue about the angler, who is the fish and who is the fisherman.

Theaetetus mouth opens and closes on the hook dangled by the Stranger, but the Stranger is much rather the fish, because the aim of his discourse is to escape from the net held out by the Sophist. But the Sophist himself, is he not the one who must be grasped and taken in the bow-net, by fishing him along the line of the dichotomies thanks to which one will finally reach his definition. Where has the fisherman gone then? According to the point of view that is adopted, Theaetetus, the fish, will retrospectively fish in the mouth of the Stranger the truth that he wants to grasp. Or the Stranger will fish, in the agreement of Theaetetus, the surrender of the Sophist. Or might it not rather be that the Sophist has caught with his bait the two who are speaking about him, because, when all is said and done, the Stranger and Theaetetus are going to be caught up in the operation of an enormous sophism which will consist (15) in using from the very start, as an essential base of their meeting, the very thing that they are trying to find in their

meeting, that the participation, the community, the *koinonia* give, in this game of what is and of what is different, an acceptable status to the *fantasmata*, to the simulacrum, which the Sophist sustains as being purely and simply non-being.

But just as the fish is the real fisherman, as the fisherman becomes rather the fish of his fish, as the fisherman passes into the fish and the fish into the fisherman, in the same way, you are going to recognise the method thanks to which the Stranger is going to pursue the definition of the Sophist, and which is called dichotomy, makes pass what was first of all a predicate into a subject, posing first of all, by this fact, a subject with whom one no longer knows what to do, since he remains at the origin independent of the subjects and the predicates that he has generated.

This subject who is first of all the angler and who subsequently is going to become the Sophist. I illustrate for you by a reference to the text :

“Stranger: What is there which is well known and not great, and is yet as susceptible of definition as any larger thing? Shall I say an angler? He is familiar to all of us, and (16) not a very interesting or important person.

Theaetetus: He is not

Stranger: Yet I suspect that he will furnish us with the sort of definition and line of enquiry which we want.

Theaetetus (the blessed young man): Very good.

Stranger: Let us begin by asking whether he is a man having art or not having art, but some other power.

Theaetetus: He is clearly a man of art.

Stranger: And of arts there are two kinds?

Theaetetus: What are they?

Stranger: There is agriculture and the tending of mortal creatures, and the art of constructing or moulding vessels, and there is the art of imitation - all these may be appropriately called by a single name?

Theaetetus: What do you mean? And what is the name?

Stranger: He who brings into existence something that did not exist before is said to be a producer, and that which is brought into existence is said to be produced.

Theaetetus: True.

Stranger: And all the arts which were just now mentioned are characterised by this (17) power of producing?

Theaetetus: They are.

Stranger: Then let us sum them up under the name of productive or creative art.

Theaetetus: Very good.

Stranger: Next follows the whole class of learning and cognition; then comes trade, fighting, hunting. And since none of these produces anything, but is only engaged by conquering by word or deed, or in preventing others from conquering, things which exist and have already been produced - in each and all of these branches there appears to be an art which may be called acquisitive.

Theaetetus: Yes, that is the proper name.

Stranger: Seeing, then, that all arts are either acquisitive or creative, in which class shall we place the art of the angler?

Theaetetus: Clearly in the acquisitive class. (218d-219d)



(I am not going to go through the whole dichotomic definition of the angler but to indicate to you the very style through which it is obtained and that the commentator summarises as being art of production or of acquisition, an art of acquisition whether it be by exchange or by capture, an art which is by capture or by fighting or by hunting, an art which by hunting is either of the animated or the inanimate type. This is the (18) dichotomy which has left as I told you, at the origin, the true subject. It is starting from him that one began to dichotomise. In the same way one can refer to the other series of dichotomies which is going to be the hunt for living things, the animated kind therefore, and those that remain in the water; and then it is the sort of fishing that is done using a dam or by striking the prey.

Now, when all is said and done, in this first approximation of the definition of the angler and further on of the Sophist in what light is it going to manifest itself?

*Oyez(?)* rather: the schema will be the art sorting out the similar and the better by purification. The art of sorting the better, which will be done on corporal things, and spiritual things, rather spiritual. Good, or then the art of sorting the spiritual things and which will then belong to correction or teaching. Teaching which will be then the teaching of trades or education. Education which will be either admonishing or refuting.

But what is it, then, that the Stranger wants to reach in this way? He is already there, and as soon as he is there, already lost. Is this Sophist not ungraspable because he is posited as pure origin of the discourse that is going to be conducted about him? Is not every subject of a discourse hidden immediately that the discourse begins, because he is clothed by the discourse itself? Now, let us remark in passing, the Sophist is (19) precisely the one who hides behind his discourse, not being able to initial it and to make it true by recognition, covering the others with it and letting himself be covered by it.

But it is precisely against that that the Stranger protests by showing the character of unveiling, of purification, of catharsis of the one who believes that he is the true educator.

Again I cannot resist reading to you the passage where the Stranger tries to define this truthful and true educator. He speaks of the Sophist :

Stranger: The Sophist cross-examines a man's words when he thinks that he is saying something and is really saying nothing, and easily convicts him of inconsistencies in his opinion; these they then collect by the dialectic process, and placing them side by side, show that they contradict one another about the same things, in relation to the same things, and in the same respect. He, seeing this, is angry with himself, and grows gentle towards others, and thus is entirely delivered from great prejudice and harsh notions in a way which is most amusing to the hearer and produces the most lasting good effect on the person who is the subject of the operation. For as the physician (20) considers that the body will receive no benefit from taking food until the internal obstacles have been removed, so the purifier of the soul is conscious that his patient will receive no benefit from the application of knowledge until he is refuted, and from refutation learns modesty;

he must be purged of his prejudices first and made to think that he knows only what he knows and no more. (230b-d)

“To think that he knows only what he knows and no more” Is this not the most striking expression of a tautology to which we will have to return. Here there is going to begin a logical journey to which I will ask you to give the whole of your attention and of which I do not want to give too heavy an illustration by referring ceaselessly to the text. I summarise it for you therefore :

- 1) To instruct the young about everything one must know everything.
- 2) Now to be omniscient is impossible; in the case of the Sophist therefore it is only make-believe.

“Well, a man who says he knows everything and could teach it to another for a small fee in a short time can hardly be taken in earnest.” (234a)

(21) This game is the imitation which is going to replace the reality by imitations and illusions. Thus I quote:

“Well, we know this about the man who professes to be able, by a single form of skill, to produce all things, that when he creates with his pencil representations bearing the same name as real things he will be able to deceive the innocent minds of children, if he shows them his drawings at a distance, into thinking that he is capable of creating in full reality, anything he chooses to make. Then must we not expect to find a corresponding form of skill in the region of discourse, while we”, continues the Stranger, “we are capable by experience of seeing through *fantasmata*, illusions.

I quote: “And is it not inevitable that after a long enough time, as these young hearers advance in age, and coming into closer touch with realities, are forced by experience to apprehend things clearly as they are, most of them should abandon these former beliefs, so that what seemed important will now appear trifling and what seemed easy difficult and all the illusions created in discourse will be completely overturned by the realities which encounter them in the actual conduct of life?

Theaetetus: Yes, so far as I can judge at my age, but I suppose I am one of those who are still at a distance.

Stranger: That is why all of us here must try, as we are in fact trying, to bring you as close as possible to the realities and spare you the experience” (234d-e).

(22) The simulacrum created in discourse will be completely overturned by the realities of life.

Do you not hear the psychoanalyst designating to his cured patient, the window through which he finally sees reality? And through which, if the patient has really finally understood, he will not fail to throw himself. In short, it is the Stranger straight from the USA, namely, one that we are used to.

Thus, in the light of our experience and of our wisdom and of our love of reality, we have understood that the Sophist, for his part, is a magician, an illusionist. And what does he fabricate? Simulacrums, *fantasmata*. And what then is a simulacrum? Well they are not copies, because over against these, they are

constructions which include the angle of the observer in order that the illusion may be produced from the very point where the observer finds himself. I quote:

Stranger: The first art that I distinguish in imitation is the making of likeness. The perfect example of this consists in creating a copy that conforms to the proportions of the original in all three dimensions and giving moreover the proper colour to every part.

Theaetetus: Why, is not that what all imitators try to do?

(23) Stranger: Not those sculptors or painters whose works are of colossal size. If they were to reproduce the true proportions of a well made figure, as you know, the upper part would look too small and the lower too large because we see the one at a distance and the other close at hand.

Theaetetus: That is true

Stranger: The first kind of image, then, being like the original may fairly be called a likeness (*eikon*).

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: And the corresponding subdivision of the art of imitation may be called by the name we used just now - likeness making.

Theaetetus: It may

Stranger: Now, what are we to call the kind which only appears to be a likeness of a well made figure because it is not seen from a satisfactory point of view, but to a spectator with eyes that could fully take in so large an object, would not be even like the original it professes to resemble? Since it seems to be a likeness, but is not really so, may we not call it a semblance (*fantasma*)?

Theaetetus: By all means" (235d-236b).

(24) The Sophist creates an illusion therefore but from the very point of view where his interlocutor is found. He creates the representatives of the representation, the copies of the simulacrum, the *Vorstellungsrepresentanz*. His art is the art of the phantasy.

It is here that there is going to be introduced the question which one might think to be the essential one of the dialogue: what status is to be given to non-being, to what lacks being in the simulacrum. And nevertheless, our manner of introducing it would tend rather to make us think that it is not in reality on the status of non-being that the emphasis is laid, but indeed on the little separation, the little warping of the real image of the copy which depends on the particular point of view observed, occupied for the observer, and which constitutes the possibility of constructing this simulacrum, the work of the Sophist. Non-being poses thus in truth and for us, the question of the subject, because if the *fantasma* is possible, that comes from the particular place the subject occupies with respect to the universal and all-seeing subject. We would be well founded in thinking that the dialogue about the status of non-being is transposable into a dialogue on the status of the subject.

"Mark now, tell me, we do not hesitate to utter the phrase 'that which has no sort of being'"? (237b)"

(25) And Theaetetus gives the subtle response: "Why not?"

But the Stranger follows his infallible logic, founded on a logic whose real flaw will only appear to us much later: non-being cannot be attributed to any being.

Hence it follows that it is impossible to think it in any form whatsoever. But the “it” is too much since it already makes a unit of it and subsumes being under the concept of unity. The Sophist awaits, for his part, full of irony until “his patient” (the word is from Plato) gets bogged down in this rut.

Stranger: Accordingly, if we are going to say he possesses an art of creating simulacra, he will readily take advantage of our handling our arguments in this way to grapple with us and turn them against ourselves. When we call him a maker of images, he will ask what on earth we mean in speaking of an image at all. So we must consider, Theaetetus, how this truculent person’s question is to be answered.

Theaetetus: Clearly we shall say we mean images in water or in mirrors and again images made by the draftsman or the sculptor and any other things of that sort.

Stranger: It is plain, Theaetetus, that you have never seen a Sophist.

Theaetetus: Why?

(26) Stranger: He will make as though his eyes are shut or he has no eyes at all.

Theaetetus: How so?

Stranger: When you offer him your answer in such terms, if you speak of something to be found in mirrors or in sculpture, he will laugh at your words, as implying that he can see. He will profess to know nothing about mirrors or water or even eyesight, and will confine his question to what can be gathered from discourse.” (239c-240a).

This rut, therefore, is that giving to the Sophist the domain of the simulacrum and deception as his work, we will affirm that his art is an art of illusion, that we will then say that our soul forms false opinions through the effect of his art. Hence it will follow that in our soul there are things which are not and non-beings that are. We transfix ourselves in the contradiction if we say that the Sophist succeeds in his imposture, then we are saying at the same time that non-being can be because he succeeds at it and even manages to define it. If we want to make the non-being disappear, we have to make the Sophist himself and his art disappear. But if we make the Sophist and his art disappear, (well then, believe me, if you wish, this is what Plato introduces us to at this very place) then the essential is lost. Why? Because we return in doing this to the father of our discourse, to Parmenides, whose oracle is always heard: “No, you will never bend non-beings to being by force: distance your thinking from this route of (27) research.”

It is doing this that every path towards parricide will be closed off, that every simulacrum will be forbidden and that, when all is said and done, in order that the father should be, it is necessary that the place of non-being, namely, that of the subject, should be filled by this prohibiting word to which one should not even respond: the father being an unattackable monolith and man a virtual pebble which cannot be detached from it. He is a blessed Sophist who wants to make it possible for us to become rather “gods, tables or pots” thanks to his simulacra. But the Stranger becomes fearful:

“I have another still more pressing request.”

Theaetetus: What is that?

Stranger: That you will not think I am turning into a sort of parricide.” (241d)

But in fact if the Stranger is afraid what is he then but a simulacrum of a parricide.

I want to make the remainder short, and summarise like a good scoliaste, the doctrine that is constituted throughout the dialogue and wants to suppress the Sophist by including him in a sort of *Aufhebung* which did not have to wait for Hegel, an *Aufhebung* which we are going to have to question ourselves about. I quote :

Stranger: On these grounds then it seems that only one course is open to the (28) philosopher who values knowledge and the rest above all else. He must refuse to accept from the champions either of the one or of the many forms the doctrine that all reality is changeless, and he must turn a deaf ear to the other party who represent reality as everywhere changing. Like a child begging for both, he must declare that reality or the sum of things is both at once - all that is unchangeable and all that is in change.

Theaetetus: Perfectly true. (249c-d)

Thus Plato attempts to reconcile Parmenides and Heraclitus, the *on* and the *genesis*, being and becoming, the true being reached by thought, by pure thought, and the becoming reached by sensation. He adopts an intermediary position between being and non-being, the becoming being not nothing. If it is true that being is, it is not strictly true that non-being is not. The *genesis*, the becoming is not being but it is not nothing. What is present is not being and non-being but being and the other which is not the non-being of this being, except by participating in being that it is not yet. There is thus constituted the category of *koinonia*, of participation, of community.

In effect if there is no *koinonia* between the genera, there is only pure identity prohibiting all thought. If, on the contrary, *koinonia* is universal, everything is in everything and movement is only rest.

(29) But if the *koinonia* is limited, nothing is related to anything. Just as certain groups of letters are unpronounceable, others are pronounceable, in virtue of certain letters that allow consonants. For thus appear multiple othernesses that the limitation of being by non-being grounds the possibility of the All.

Here in short we have the triumph of the Stranger.

“So it seems when a part of the nature of the different and a part of the nature of being are set in contrast to one another, the contrast is, if it is permissible to say so, as much a reality as the being itself. It does not mean what is contrary to being but only what is different to being.

Theaetetus: That is quite clear.

Stranger: What name are we to give it then?

Theaetetus: Obviously this is just that “what is not “ which we were seeking for the sake of the Sophist. (258b)

From this there is going to flow rapidly a new definition of the Sophist and one which is no longer an *aporia* but the possibility at last of catching him at the end of the line and precisely of bringing him to the light of judgement. By refusing non-being in (30) favour of the other the Stranger had wanted to, and believed he had shown that non-being was only a creation of the Sophist because the

Sophist refuses to give it an ontological status, conducting his patient by trickery to an inadmissible contradiction. And it is on the very terrain of the Sophist that the battle must now be won in the domain of opinion and of discourse of truth and of falsity. For the Sophist there is no falsity. I quote again:

Theaetetus: I do not understand why we need an agreement about discourse at the present moment.

Stranger: I may be able to suggest a line of thought that will help you to understand.

Theaetetus: What is that ?

Stranger: We say that non-being is a single kind among the rest, dispersed over the whole field of realities.

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: We have next to consider whether it blends with thinking and discourse.

Theaetetus: Why that?

Stranger: If it does not blend with them, everything must be true but if it does, we shall have false thinking, and discourse for thinking or saying what is not comes, I (31) suppose, to the same thing as falsity in thought and speech

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: And, if falsity exists, deception is possible.

Theaetetus: Yes

Stranger: And once deception exists, images and likenesses and appearance will everywhere be rampant.

Theaetetus: Of course

Stranger: And the Sophist, we said, had taken refuge somewhere in that region but then he had denied the very existence of falsity; no one could either think or say what is not, because what is not never had any sort of being

Theaetetus: So he said (260b-d).

It is necessary therefore to establish the being of what is false. Are all the notes in accord? No. Those which are in accord, do they express a meaning? Those which are in accord express a sense, the others no. No pure sequence of nouns, no pure sequence of verbs expresses a sense but only the agreement between nouns and verbs.

I will not quote any more in order not to lengthen my text. Beyond this agreement it is also necessary for there to be accord between the sense which is spoken and the subject of which one speaks. Hence it will follow that the discourse will be true or false. The false discourse, then, says things that are but different in this respect from those that are. Thus an assemblage of verbs and of nouns which, with regard to a subject, states in fact to be other what is the same, is like being what does not exist, (32) here it seems in fact is the kind of assemblage which really and truly constitutes a false discourse. You have recognised the style of the Stranger, I hope. Now, discourse, imagination, opinion found this same qualification, producers of illusion, of images, of simulacrum, but the simulacrum, *fantasma*, will be in turn divided in two: the simulacrum is constructed by way of intrusions and the person who makes the simulacrum claims to be like an instrument; this is the imitation which makes the simulacrum of which you know but it is he who imitates. Others may not know and nevertheless imitate. You see this moreover every day. Here then, continues the

Stranger, are two imitators that we must say are different. From one another I imagine. The one who does not know and the one who knows.

Let us translate: the one who has a sure reference, the other not having one but only a *doxa* [?], an opinion. Now the Sophist is one of those. He is not one of those who know, nor one of those who limit themselves to imitation. It is, following an neologism introduced here by Plato, a *doxomime*. This person in a private reunion cutting his discourse into two brief arguments, constrains his interlocutor to contradict himself. And nevertheless he is not a wise man for he knows nothing. It is time to (33) conclude as soon as possible, when I have told you why it is opportune to conclude.

The Platonic dialogue is cut here in effect but by intersecting itself. In effect the Stranger bases himself, in order to insert the Sophist into his definition, on the fact that the Sophist, as against the wise man, knows nothing. Knows nothing about what? What justice is, for example, having only a *doxa*, an opinion, but he nevertheless makes a discourse about it. This discourse is not based on any serious reference. What would such a reference be? The maieutic path along which the wise man for his part has succeeded in defining justice from dichotomy to dichotomy, going always towards the right if he is writing in Greek, this path gives him a sure reference about the nature of justice and allows him not to create a simulacrum of it. But what is involved? The idea of justice which grounds the research and is immediately dichotomised, or the idea of justice which contain *nachträglich, a posteriori*, all the dichotomies, all the cross-roads of the road by which one came. Who then knows? The one who begins or the one who arrives? The subject of which one speaks or the subject at which one arrives. What is the subject who is supposed to know if not the wise man himself. To know what? That he always knew precisely what was necessary to know. The Sophist, for his part, pretends that to know and not to know comes back to the same thing because there is no truth in the simulacrum, because the gap which creates the simulacrum, the (34) difference as much from the copy of reality as reality itself. That the simulacrum alone establishes the subject by incorporating him as this gap itself, that the subject is not and cannot be a reference, except by bringing to light at each incident of the dichotomic process that he is the new gap taken with respect to any reference, that never will this subject overfly as a subject of knowledge, the totality of the gaps where he has been established, that the subject to be known is a simulacrum, a phantasy, in fact. He cannot be known except from the particular point of view of the subject to whom he reveals himself. It is in the last analysis only the Sophist who prevents the dialogue about Sophistry from being an enormous Sophistry. Suppress him for a moment from your reading. Make of him a sceptic for example who does not dissolve the truth in discourse but suspends it before any discourse. You will see that he might receive exactly the same objections as the Sophist on the part of the Stranger. For the Sophist, as you know, man is the measure of everything, of everything there is and of everything there is not. The Sophist, for his part, establishes himself like the zero, from which numeration is going to begin, and as the zero who is going to sustain it so that it can finally be held by it. This is what permits for example all the enumerations of the Stranger, provided that the zero of the arrival is here considered by the Stranger as the one (*le un*) of knowledge.

The sceptic, for his part, declares himself to be the zero like a one that can be designated at the beginning. It does not matter whether the Stranger shows him that he is wise because he knows what he is even though he simulates not knowing. For the Stranger, this is his Sophistry, has science instead of those who do not have it or who say they do not have it. He puts himself forward as the subject of all knowledge. What we have, for our part, is that he speaks to us and about us every day on our couches. That he speaks in us when we hear speaking those who are speaking. He is the obsessional soul who haunts every locus of analysis, and the Sophist, please God he exists, is nothing less having lost his references, in the gap that is constitutive of the simulacrum, than the analyst himself. His voice being nothing more than that of Theaetetus who replaces him here:

“Yes,  
That is how it is.  
Of course.  
Keep talking.”

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**Dr Lacan:** I think that we ought to thank Audouard for his extremely precise and elegant discourse which seems to me to have first of all this advantage, which is to have, for those who have not yet at my summons opened the *Sophist*, constituted the best introduction to it.

I think that it is legitimate to procede as Audouard has done, namely, in the last analysis to credit Plato with what, nevertheless, is not retrospectively enounced, namely, this fundamental function of the gap (*écart*) in what is incorrectly translated as the simulacrum and which is represented by the Greek term of *fantasma*.

Obviously, the important thing in this discourse, is that it allows there to be shown with what precociousness in philosophical reflection there was introduced, as I might say, the status of the phantasy. Nevertheless, I think it is correct to say that Plato did not establish it, any more than he was able to establish the status of imitation, or what he believed to be imitation, in the foundations of art.

This shows how moving is the subject into which we are advancing if we take a dialogue of Plato, because we ought all the same preserve some references to what it was, as one might say, historically, in function of Plato, however englobing this function always remains and even for us.

(36) I would not be unhappy if someone were to contribute an echo, indeed a reply to what Audouard put forward to day. And perhaps after all, who knows, the matter might tempt Jacques-Alain Miller at the same time as he replies to Leclaire the next time. I would not be unhappy to know what the discourse of Audouard inspired in him or may inspire in him between now and then, in a week's time, as he emerges from his personal work. I do not want to delay any longer giving the floor to Kaufmann who undoubtedly in the twenty minutes that remain to us will only be able to introduce things which are extremely fruitful and of a sort, of an aspect that is quite singular and different, of which he was good enough to give me a glimpse.



Do you feel yourself in the mood, Kaufmann, to introduce it in twenty or twenty-five minutes?

**Mr Kaufmann:** Oh yes, especially as it can be interrupted. It concerns a few trifles principally by way of reference. It is probable that I will not have the time to develop it but since the texts are within everybody's reach, I will limit myself to giving a few references that emerged from an association of ideas which came to me in connection with the *Sophist*. At the end of the *Sophist*, you know that there is a question of number. As I was reading this passage I found myself thinking about the sheep of Polyphemus. This made me curious to look up Polyphemus and this reference seemed (38) to me to be useful enough for me to tell you in particular what was brought up by Polyphemus, which shows that this story of the angler is a very ancient story and it is moreover very difficult to disentangle all its knots. One sees that the problem of the relationships between the question of phantasy on the one hand, and on the other hand the question of the relationship between the elements, namely, between fire, air, etc., all of that certainly circulated in Greek thought and I think that the dialogue of the *Sophist* is to be set in this context.

So then I will limit myself to giving you a few references which I consulted.

On Polyphemus we have a number of texts at our disposal. There is first of all of course the archetypal text in what concerns Sophistry, namely, *Outis*. The serious question - you know the passage: Who is there? No one. This in short proposes to us at the beginning the very problem that will be discussed in the *Sophist* but from a different point of view, namely, what are the consequences of the use of the *bouc*. Plato, precisely, will answer that correctly to interpret the misadventure of Polyphemus in the *Odyssey*, it is important to distinguish between *ouc*, namely the negation of ....., let us say, the negation grounded on the principle of identity and on the other hand, the *mais*, namely, a differential negation which places us, as you know, on the (39) path of signifying differentiation, namely, that in short the fatal error of Polyphemus was not, properly speaking, to remain at the principle of identity but, things being a little bit more complicated, to confuse simultaneously two planes, on the one hand the phonetic plane, and on the other hand the plane in which there ought to intervene this distinction between the *mais* and the *ouc*.

But this might not seem to have any great relationship with phantasy if, precisely, we did not see throughout the history of mythology, a progressive revelation of the myth. The texts at our disposal are, therefore, first of all the *Odyssey*, on the other hand the *Cyclops* of Euripides, thirdly an *Idylle* by Theocritus, and finally the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. The text of Plato then has to be situated between the interpretation of the myth by Euripides in the *Cyclops* on the one hand, and on the other hand the evolution that the myth underwent after him namely in Theocritus.

Now then, what is very interesting in this adventure, what is amusing, is that progressively there is revealed what was masked at the beginning in the adventure of Polyphemus, namely, that there appeared progressively the phantasy under the species of Galatea. You know that Galatea, in Theocritus, is the nymph whom Polyphemus (40) loves and the lovers who frequent the Luxembourg Gardens

know that they can find at the Medici fountain a plastic representation of the discovery made by Polyphemus of the loves of Galatea, his nymph adored like a phantasy, and of Acis.

You know, on the other hand, that this did not bring much luck to Acis. Acis was crushed by a rock. This did not bring him luck if not for the fact that Acis has something to see from it, under the species of a river, namely that Acis was absorbed into a current which makes us think that his fate was not definitively so disastrous as it might first have seemed.

So then in the *Odyssey*, Polyphemus and Ulysses, in the *Cyclops* Polyphemus and Satyr but not yet Galatea. Polyphemus holds the satyrs prisoner. The satyrs long for their Galatea but there is no question of it. It is because we know that subsequently Galatea comes to establish a connection between the different phases of the myth.

On the contrary, in Theocritus and then in Ovid we see Galatea appearing in flesh and blood.

The final text to which we we have to refer is the poem by Gongora which belongs to the same cycle as regards the evolution of the myth and which gives us, as regards what concerns the birth of the Cyclops, an indication that we can, in a way, if not by (41) knowing here how things are constituted, in fact be a segment which gives us an interpretation of the *Cyclops*, namely, that things close in on themselves.

In the poem by Gongora we hear the song of Polyphemus, only it is a little late to read the verses: "Daughter of the sea whose ears to my wailing are like a rock in the wind, thou who in my sleep takes away from my complaints the purple trees of coral by the hundred or who to the dissonant rhythm of marine plants if not the agreeable instrument interlacing hearts with incense, listen today to my voice for its sweetness if not because of mine."

And then, a little bit further on we see the birth of the Cyclops. This is what he says to us : "A maritime kingfisher crowned in his flight above his eggs an eminent rock, the day when as a mirror of sapphire there was shining from my person the blue bank, I looked and I saw shining a sun in front while in the heavens an eye appeared. Neuter ..... asked himself who should be believed, the human heavens or the terrestrial Cyclops."

This obviously ought to be given a long commentary but initially poses us the problem (42) of what relationship there is between the eye of the Cyclops, Sophistry, phonetics and the development of the myth of Galatea.

In what concerns the eye of the Cyclops you know that it is no doubt the orifice of the crater surrounded by fire and, in short, one could say that the question which is posed for us in the *Odyssey* means that knowledge, what relationship is there between the belly rumbling with the sounds of the Cyclops, rumbling let us say with the verbal fury of the Cyclops inside the crater, and the relationship of this sound to the eye of the Cyclops, namely, to the orifice of the crater, the fact that

this eye is unique and finally the fact that the unfortunate Polyphemos was deceived, as you know, by Ulysses.

In other words, why is it that this Cyclops was destined precisely not to understand that *Outis* was not a proper name or rather what could be at the same time a proper name and something else according to the point of view that one places oneself. *Outis*, no one, is a proper name in the measure that one interprets it phonetically. I can be called Outis, I can be called no one.

On the other hand one cannot say that Outis is not a proper name. It seems, even though Homer does not say so very certainly, his listeners understood that Outis meant not one among others, in other words, Outis is precisely a proper name in the measure (43) that one cannot order what is designated here by Outis in a series of general terms that can be assimilated to one another. Outis signifies that Ulysses is designated as not being one among others, in the sense that one could say for example that a chair, when one says a certain chair, well then, it is a chair among other chairs, ..... that perhaps we might rejoin the relationship to arithmetic, that is latent in the *Odyssey* here, Outis designates himself as being not one among others. Only he is something other than that, and if he is something other than that, we have to introduce the category of otherness, namely, that we must in place of the *ouc* introduce the *mais* and it is on this precisely that the cleverness of Plato will be brought to bear.

Why, moreover, is the Cyclops destined precisely not to make this distinction. Well then, Plato will teach us, precisely, that someone who has only one eye cannot distinguish between a reflection and a representation, in other words, he is not capable of introducing within the general category of the imaginary the differentiations that we all, in so far as we have two eyes, can make. The commentary here might obviously be late, but we are only busying ourselves with the connection of ideas, the commentary ought to be looked for in the *Timaeus*, by Plato, where as you know, Plato links the (44) problem of inversion, the problem of right and left, to the problem of the mirror and the problem of the simulacrum.

This then being sufficient as regards the *Odyssey*, we can pass to the theme of the Cyclops in Euripides. One of the principle transformations that we see in Euripides, is that the Cyclops of Euripides is no longer simply the boiling of the roaring, Polyphemos, as his name indicates is precisely that. It is no longer simply the boiling, it is no longer simply fire, but we see there being introduced here a differentiation between the solid element and the liquid element, a differentiation which, precisely, will be at the heart of the version that Theocritus will give of the same myth. I will limit myself here to quoting some fragments from the *Cyclops* of Theocritus: "White Galatea, why do you reject the one who loves you?", and a little further on, which gives us then a reference point as regards the angler, the situation of the angler: "what misfortune that my mother did not bring me into the world with gills! I would dive to rejoin you, I would kiss your hands, if I do not want your lips, I would bring you white lilies, tender poppies, etc." And a little further on, moreover, the poet takes it up again, saying: "Cyclops, Cyclops where has your reason gone? If you were to weave (45) baskets and gather the young branches that you carry, you would have more sense. Take the ones that present themselves, why are you pursuing what flees from you."

You see here that in Theocritus the problem of the phantasy, namely, Galatea and the position of Galatea in the liquid element is very precisely linked to the problem of space and, as Plato does, precisely, to the question of the dimensions and the number of space. This gives us the phantasy as situating itself in a one-dimensional space which is divided between approaching and fleeing. And this again precisely would have to be put into relationship with the angler.

That the angler represents effectively a given underlying all these discussions of Sophistry, and of philosophy in its relations to Sophistry, is what indicates to us in a manner which cannot, it seems to me, be by chance, another register involving another one of Ulysses' enemies namely Palamedes.

I will not talk a lot here about Palamedes. It would all the same be rather easy because we possess few texts on Palamedes. You know who Palamedes is. Already to interest you in the story I will say that a text of Pausanias tells us, separating itself moreover from other versions, that Palamedes was massacred when he went fishing.

(46) Here, it is a simple passage where Pausanias reports on his visit to pictures representing precisely the enemies of Ulysses. Well then, this little feature invites us to become interested in Palamedes, and when one becomes interested in Palamedes one sees that Ulysses is found in a very significant way to be flanked on the one hand by Polyphemus, the roarer, on the one hand and by Palamedes who is none other, as you know, it is perhaps no harm to recall it, none other than the man of writing. Palamedes was the Dreyfus of the Greek army. A letter was circulated in the army in which he proposed to betray the Greeks. On the other hand, his pocket was stuffed with pieces of gold. Here, moreover, there is an undisguised reference to the relationships between linguistics and arithmetic. The unfortunate Palamedes was found thus to be convicted of treason and properly speaking stoned by the Greeks as a punishment for this crime.

It is Ulysses who is at the origin of this sad story because the trouble between Palamedes and Ulysses comes from the fact that Ulysses was not all that keen to go to war, and he had simulated madness, in circumstances upon which I will not insist and he had his plough drawn by a donkey, if I remember correctly, or another animal and he amused himself by scattering salt. In short, he said, you see that I am unfit for (47) armed service, as you see, I am completely nuts. Only Palamedes, in order to convict him, did something very simple, something analogous to a judgement of Solomon. He put the little Telemachus in front of the plough. So Ulysses stopped his plough and that was how Ulysses was unmasked, people saw in short that Ulysses was not delusional. Palamedes got the better then of the pretended delusion of Ulysses, precisely because Palamedes is the man of writing. What allows us to say that Palamedes was a man of writing? Not simply what I have just told you about the circumstances in which he was falsely accused, but also extremely diverse and confused traditions. There exists a tragedy *Palamedes*, by Sophocles, which unfortunately is lost but Palamedes is thought to be the inventor according to certain people of certain letters, but, in a much more interesting manner, of the alphabet, namely, the order of letters, which allows, in short, the word to be established in writing.

What allows us here to understand Palamedes, is that a writing confiscates the enunciating subject, in other words what is dissimulated behind all of that is a

certain number of tricks which Plato's *Sophist* implicitly notes about the relationship of the enunciating subject to the subject of the enunciation, that is to say, in the *Sophist* the relationship between the noun and the verb and of what happens in this sliding of sense through which the potential noun is actualised in the verb.

Palamedes joins the themes which are dear to us here because, among all the services that he rendered for the good cause, we find one of having reassured the Greeks in the presence of an eclipse. Here, it is not for nothing that the eclipse intervenes.

Besides, he is also the inventor of the game of draughts. I did not have the time to research how exactly the Greeks played draughts nor how pawns were taken as we do today, if the Greeks took the pawns.

In what concerns, then, the relationship with arithmetic, I equally remind you that according to a certain tradition, Ulysses is not at all the son of the person you believe, namely Laertes but of Sisyphus who began over and over. You see that here we are on the path which will lead to the Platonic problem of the dyad and consequently this will allow us anew, within Sophistry, to articulate the problems of arithmetic with the problems of linguistics.

In short, it is a matter of understanding what becomes of the numbering unit within the number, and also, if we link this to the theme of Palamedes and of the order that is established.

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**Seminar 21: Wednesday 2 June 1965**

In places where I scarcely ever set foot, people are talking about nothing else - it happens periodically - but the word dialogue. You make dialogue together people that one can quite properly say, in the strictest sense of the word, are from different extremes and you expect something or other from it.

As long as there is not a more reliable dialogue between men and women, I mean on the terrain where they are respectively man and woman, on the terrain of their sexual relationships, you will allow me to be sceptical about the virtues of dialogue.

This position is the analytic position. This is why psychoanalysis is not a dialogue. In the field that psychoanalysis is applied, people realised, because there it stuck out, that dialogue produces nothing.

This first truth, this open door that I am pushing, has always been known and it is not at all unrelated to the fact that what are called Plato's dialogues, I do not know if you have noticed it, but they are never dialogues, I mean that it is never the exchange of remarks between two characters one of whom would really be holding one of the (2) theses in question and the other the other. There is always one who represents one of the two theses, who, for some reason or other refuses to give an opinion, slips away, declares himself inadequate, and then you take a third person, who is going to consent to do something which at first sight appears to be to play the role of the idiot but who is no doubt a useful intermediary because it is in that way that an attempt is going to be made to get across something which is not always a dialogue but much more often a presentation.

The *Sophist* begins like that. It unfolds like that. It takes place between the stranger from Elea and the one in question, who began things, namely Socrates. But with great astuteness, it always ends up with another Socrates, a little wandering Socrates, Socrates the younger.

There is perhaps something of that also in the fact that this year I experienced the need at a moment to make the gesture of closing the seminar in order perhaps to be able speak a little bit more with people and also for them to be able speak to me. There is here a tertiary function but the proper of tertiary functions is that, all the same, they ought to come back into the circuit and that is the reason why today, even though it is one of the days reserved for my lectures, I think that it is not inopportune that something should come here that arises from a reply to something that had been produced at my closed seminar at which moreover it is a very large part of this (3) gathering that functions.

So then, at my last closed seminar something was stated which came from the lips of Serge Leclaire addressing himself to the work that Jacques-Alain Miller had done on the theory of number in Frege.

Serge Leclaire had insisted a good deal that this should not remain, in a way, a dead letter or in suspense and he proposed a few observations to him. Jacques-Alain Miller is going to give today the reply to what Serge Leclaire said and, you will see, I think, that it is a reply which will have its place in what I will subsequently link up to it either today or the next time.

On the other hand you can see that our programme for this year led us, in short, aimed essentially at a grasp of the function of the psychoanalyst starting from what grounds his own logic. What are the means by which we are going to try to accede, along this path, to what it is our goal to define, the position of the analyst.

This is not, this cannot be only this ..... sort of misunderstanding by being simply defined, to define what is for the analyst his relationship to two terms, for example, like those of the truth and of knowledge. It is impossible even though here we have, as I might say, what is most tangible in the experience of the psychoanalyst.

(4) He can immediately, on that, specify, question himself, give replies which can be corrected if he gives them incorrectly. It is impossible to situate correctly the relationship of the effective analyst to these two terms, so essential to specify the position of the scholar, without referring him in a more radical fashion to what we can hold on to from a whole experience which is what preceded it: analysis.

The relationships between truth and knowledge, this is where we are carried onto the terrain of logic, and that this logic should be grasped where it is articulated at the final term in this author who is so important, more important perhaps than is generally accepted, namely Frege, but just as much at the origin, at the moment where there begins, there is articulated what it is perhaps too general to call dialectic, in one or other of Plato's articulations and precisely in what is called the Plato of the last period. Well then, from the first steps of this logic, before it is crystallised in the form which has been transported through the centuries wrapped up under the name of formal logic which is only moreover one of the more external characteristics in the *Sophist*. I pointed this out and at my seminar someone was willing to open up the first passages of the *Sophist* where the most burning questions are articulated around the two terms (5) of truth and knowledge.

That is why one of those who on this point best follow what I was able to begin to articulate this year will take the floor immediately after Jacques-Alain Miller to bring you some observations on the *Sophist* which I considered as indispensable to make this relay before giving on the two following Wednesdays the two lectures with which I hope this year to sufficiently round off what I began to tackle this year, if you remember, already at the opening of my first seminar around the question of sense and of nonsense, centring myself properly speaking on these signifying chains which are supposed to be without any kind of sense, but which I indicated to you, all the same, are bearers of sense, however opaque they might have been, for the simple reason that they were grammatical. Let those who were at this first lecture refer to it before I take up the rest of my course, namely, at the end of our meeting today and the next times.

I give the floor to Miller.

**PRESENTATION BY JACQUES-ALAIN MILLER**

I apologise first of all for giving this elliptical discourse which is scarcely in shape. I apologise for it to you and especially to Serge Leclaire.

Some of you here, perhaps, may remember something like a letter inserted by me in the course of a speech dedicated to the fifth season of a logic of the signifier, specifically addressing an exceptionally praised lady analyst, something certainly like a letter demanding a response.

But this letter, I have to believe, got lost *en route*, and if it was lost it is because letters do not go where we want them to go but where they wish. Perhaps it was purloined; it is still the letter which wishes to be stolen in order to go where it wishes, and if it is into the hands of Serge Leclaire that it has come, it is because this was its final term.

Since the letter wished that it should be so, since also he wished to be it and I thank him for justifying in this way the unjustifiable fact that I speak before you here, then we have an opportunity for dating a correspondence of which I hope Dr Lacan does not mind being the relay, an exchange no doubt but certainly not a dialogue.

(7) Neither Serge Leclaire nor I want a dialogue. We are only speaking in order to reject that we are in reciprocal positions. We only listen in order to hear in the discourse the part that is secret to itself.

For Serge Leclaire's taste, what I am pronouncing as my discourse is necessarily in order that sexual reality should not appear sutured to us, while the analyst, for his part, by being an analyst in his word, for, says Leclaire "the analyst does not construct a discourse in speaking, the analyst does not suture."

The analyst refuses to suture, he told you. In fact he does not construct a discourse even when he speaks, fundamentally, and this is why the position is irreducible and everything that is said to the analyst on this point, including by me, the discourses that one hears can clarify it.

What is he listening for? The discourse of his patient, and in the discourse of his patient what interests him is precisely how there is entwined for him this suturing point "in this sense, everything that Miller brings us is extremely precious".

I hope that you appreciate, as I do, the delicacy with which Serge Leclaire introduces his remarks. My discourse is precious for him? Thank you very much. But precious like the word of an analysand on his couch? No thanks!

(8) And the right to say here this "No thanks!", is what I am going to defend and as I said too briefly and in an incomplete fashion, the misunderstanding produced by Serge Leclaire in the reading that he carried out of my text, a reading which he directed so exactly towards the pivotal concept of what I articulated, namely the concept of suture.



In any case, I hope that my reply will not make vanish ..... whose unpublished character undoubtedly does not leave me indifferent, that he was able to make use of my discourse as an analyst.

I hope that it is open to another use, in my sense, than that of the word of an analysand ..... that he was not careful to distinguish the discourse which I dismantled from the logic of the logician, from Frege, and the discourse that I articulated starting from Jacques Lacan about the logic of the signifier.

He overlooked that it was starting from this logic of the signifier, assumed as my discourse, that the sequence of numbers engendered in the discourse of Frege could be said to be sutured, that this logic was general enough to be described correctly as that of the signifier.

I mean by that to show Serge Leclaire that the discourse that he sustains in the name of the analyst and which he opposes to mine which was already anticipated and even (9) accounted for beforehand, in fact we are not in a situation of reciprocity, but not in the way he thinks.

I am now going to read some quite quick notes and I hope you will excuse me for it.

It is obvious that the interest in my text only takes its origin from the opportunity of highlighting the difference between two positions. I summarise his analysis:

“While the logician sutures, the analyst does not suture because the latter defers the suturing that truth demands, while the logical concept takes into it ambit objects identical to themselves; the unconscious concept gathers things that are not identical to themselves.”

Let us take the first point. What is the suture in Jacques Lacan? It is a non-thematic concept which emerges for him in the field of analysis.

What is supposed by the importation that I make of it? Importing its usage presupposes that the functioning of categories whose value is assured in the field of free speech remain adequate in the field of this constrained speech that we call a discourse. But importing the suture what do we import? I say that we are importing the following: a structure which puts in place a scene, a chain where the subject is produced in the first person which is the chain or the scene of his speech in its relationship to the other scene, to the other chain where there is not, for the subject, any conceivable reflection in that he is only an element in it.

(10) I would say then that a sutured discourse is distributed between an apparent chain and a dissimulated chain which manifests itself at a point, a point whose crucial occultation, which is at once apathetic and thematic, is the condition for the opening of discourse.

But this implies that no suture is a suturing of sexual reality, namely, that the other scene must not be, and in any case this is the usage that I make of it, is not the only one.

In this, which is formal for what is involved in the structure of the suture, what I wanted to articulate about a theory of discourse opens the possibility of a generalisation of the cause that is unconscious or absent outside the field of analysis.

What is involved for the analyst with respect to the suture? Consider the formulation of Leclaire.

“The analyst does not suture or, at least, he ought to try, how can we say, to guard himself from this passion”. Take the field of analysis as field of free speech. The analysed subject sutures his lack of being, the metonymical effect of desire, the metaphorical cause.

The analyst for his part does not suture. It is true because he is the subject who is supposed to know and because he holds himself in this position and because he speaks from this position and if he becomes, and Leclaire is of course here, completely in agreement on this point, let us say a subject who supposes himself to know, namely, if (11) he stamps his position with the point of certainty in order to give a content to his knowledge, he makes himself, in that way, supposedly adequate to the real, the model for the identification of the analysand and by that he sutures, namely, he sutures the lack through which he is a desiring subject.

It is therefore the desire of the analyst which makes his word non-sutured.

And with this desire he covers the dimension of the ethics of the psychoanalyst which is stamped by the duty that Leclaire imposes on him of not suturing, but it seems certain to me that when he attempts to speak about analysis, the analyst is not in the position of the subject who is supposed to know.

For myself, suturing my desire, in order to speak about theory, is my theoretical discourse sutured? Suture here, necessitates then that my discourse, perhaps, related to the law of my desire in a way that it appears to be the rule according to an order which does not overlap the order that I give to it. I would say to Leclaire that this remains to be proved but is it not obvious, on the contrary, that Leclaire in a certain way wants, desires my discourse to be sutured. Perhaps he only desires to have before him the words of his patients?

And that is why he blinds himself to what I am articulating about the logic of the signifier or if necessary, he might recognise that it marks itself as being altogether necessary, namely, the logic of the non-identical to itself.

(12) I come then to the second point, in all of this I apologise for going so rapidly.

I quote Leclaire: “Reality for the analyst is to envisage the thing in so far as it is not one. I am not saying that Miller does not do it but he does so by blocking immediately the non-identical to itself with the number zero.”

I wonder whether, now that I highlight this text before him, Serge Leclaire will not himself realise this striking lapse through which he imputes to me what I myself announced from Frege.

Why is it necessary that at the place where the name of Frege is required it is mine which comes into position itself while my concern precisely was to manifest in Frege, the apparition of the non-identical to itself in which I said there consisted the suturing point of Frege's discourse.

Why this confusion and why does Serge Leclaire want the archeologist to be a logician, that my concern was to save the truth and not, in a certain fashion which is that of the analyst to undo also in a certain fashion, for my part, a suture.

Thus Leclaire explains to us what is involved in the unconscious concept which, very correctly, he opposes to the logical concept.

(13) "In the *Wolfman* Freud proposes to us an unconscious concept. It is certainly a matter of a unit which is the concept but which rejects things that are non-identical to themselves ... why not moreover the cut finger or the little pimple on the nose. We have the introduction of an unconscious concept. In the first example of Freud which comes to him, precisely a little indifferent thing which is not singular in itself."

What I find singular in this text is that I do not believe for a single moment that these little things are qualified as signifiers. Now they are signifiers in good Lacanian orthodoxy, as such they are the representatives of the subject and, as such, these signifiers are the signifier is identical to itself in so far as it is constituted at its root by the non-identical to itself which is the lack.

Thus we see in the rest of Leclaire's text, the Wolfman with this pimple on his nose, first of all preoccupied by this pimple on the nose and afterwards, once this pimple is removed, equally occupied by the hole which he alone sees in its place.

What does that mean if not that the signifier is constituted as a lack ..... is never anything but the representative of the barred phallus as such, the representative of the barred subject.

The signifier is identical to itself.

(14) It is that of the non-identical to itself which is named subject or lack.

Again once the signifier is identical to itself being uncuttable and irreducible; it is not identical to itself in so far as it is undefinable and one only has to refer to the Saussurian definition of the signifier which always defines it by what it is not, to manifest it.

It seems to me that Dr Lacan did it in a seminar on identification. Thus for the moment, I see dimly, or even not at all, what this logic of the signifier had in terms of a concern for saving the truth. I am still waiting to see on what it sutures in so far as it is not the word of an analysand.

It seem to me that the conclusion - it is not altogether one - would be to accept the reciprocal sovereignty and the paranomias between four fields: the field of the enounced, the logical field, the field of the message and the linguistic field.

The field of free speech which is the psychoanalytic field, in fact the field of the word for which a theory of discourse is still to come.

I can even say that perhaps the most radical element still of a logic of the signifier would perhaps be a doctrine of the point.

(15) I am going to end, since this text is incomplete, in order to leave you something well finished, on a quotation which I think makes one think ..... in *Point, line, surface*: “ the geometrical point is an invisible being. The point resembles a zero. In this zero, nevertheless, there are hidden many qualities which are human. As one separates out the point from the narrow circle of its habitual role, it becomes between silence and the word the ultimate and unique union and that is why it found its first material form in writing. It belongs to language and signifies silence.”

**Dr Jacques Lacan:** I would ask that this text should be put, as it is or revised, as he wishes, but fairly rapidly at the disposition of listeners before I have finished my course this year.

I believe that very important things are said there on the function of the suture, a non- thematic function as Miller quite correctly said, in my teaching, in this sense that if it is always in question, it has not been designated expressly by me as such.

On the other hand, I indicate to Miller who, perhaps, was not there that day that as regards the point, I, as I might say, punctuated the point of passage in one of my seminars, in one of my lectures at the beginning of this year, very precisely under this name which I am not happy with because I am trying to highlight the functions of a different point which is not the reduction of a circle but of this little interior eight.

I do not want to go any further to day. Those who have well understood will put the question marks at the places which they think deserve them. And I hope that I will not leave, in what follows, any of these question marks in suspense.

I give the floor to Milner

### PRESENTATION BY MONSIEUR MILNER

[A modified version of Milner's paper was published in *Cahiers pour l'analyse*, no 3]

That there is between being and computation an inherited link, anecdote alone manifests. In his edition where he quotes Isocrates: "for one of the ancient sophists, there is an infinity of beings; for Empedocles four; for Ion, only three; for Parmenides, one; for Gorgias, absolutely none".

Inscribing himself in this register, Plato, moreover wanting to know what is involved in non-being, is led to enumerate, to make it emerge by a computation from which he begins. And for community see 254b:

"Among the genera some lend themselves to mutual community and others pervading everything find nothing which prevents them from entering into community with all"

This opposition between blending and non-blending, and what cannot do it, will serve as a distinctive trait allowing Plato to introduce a hierarchy among the genera. Subsequently Plato tells us that he takes from the number of genera the greatest ones, namely three: being, rest and motion.

(18) Rest and motion cannot blend with each other. Now here Plato's text ought to be rectified. It must be seen that what Plato reveals as a choice is in fact a necessity of the logical order. What is thus constituted is a minimal group that is proper to support the binary opposition between blending and non-blending.

One term is enough to support blending but one term is not enough to represent non-blending. Suppose that we only have movement. Consequently being is blended with movement ..... in its order would be abolished, it is necessary therefore to make non-blending appear to have two terms, rest and movement. The minimal couple obtained is thus there by right and Plato underlines the number in 254d: "Each one is different from the two others and thus we obtain five terms as a minimal chain."

This is what Plato says in 256d: "In order to articulate the binary positions of blending or non-blending there must be constituted a series of five terms corresponding to the binary of origin. The functions in effect reduplicate one another, being which is blended ..... ;it is the very element of its development since all the terms are of being but by this very expansion being makes manifest itself this trait which makes it the term of a binary opposition. In short, through the modality of its expansion, being becomes (19) a singular element of the series."

Now if being is posited by that very fact, it falls into the register of the other occupier by positing itself as an element in the series, it posits itself like the others, all the elements that it is not.

257a: "By the vacillation of being as expansion and of being as term, by the operation of being and of the other, non-being is generated and ought to be inscribed on the table of numbers."

258c : “We have shown that the nature of the other has being and is parceled out over the whole field of existent things with reference to one another, and of every part of it that is set in contrast to that which is we have dared to say, that precisely that is really that which is not.

It is nevertheless remarked that Plato does not add things up and does not tell us that it is necessary to raise from five to six the minimal number ..... to support the binary opposition. Is not a new register posed here? In effect non-being does not appear in the sequence of genera like the others in the chain that must be paraded past. Non- being arises at the weakening.

It is thus necessary at the same time to say that the genera are the points where being is bound, namely, in fact where the discourse on the being of things is required to make its own computation pass, but they are also at the same time the points of its (20) disappearance. It is in this operation of passage that the other names, circumscribing being as a computable term. Non-being is therefore nothing other than being itself as a radical dimension in so far as without it nothing would be computable.

And the other simply names. This knot of being and non-being, how can we not read being here as a dimension of the signifier, a radical register of all computation, an element of computation, is it not the case therefore that non-being reappears every time that the discourse perpetuates itself, overcomes a downward turn from the arrival of non-being. It is the locus of the zero.

In this numerical generation where, nevertheless, no addition of a sum is operated, the dimension of the signifier thus disappears to the level of logic itself. This does not escape his reading. Through the excessive haste that one can employ in trying to grasp what is most central, it is in this way that the excellent reference which is made in Mr Audouard’s text loses its cutting edge.

No doubt the phantasy takes the place of representation but above all it is a so-called representation. In effect let us read the text where Plato speaks to us about it (236b): (21) It is necessary thus at the point where the copy is a sign, namely, not the thing and not the being of the thing, gives rise to another register where the look reveals itself as essential.

If the *fantasma* is a pretentious discourse, a so-called discourse, a discourse that is so called in the warping, the deforming, it is indeed a signifier, it is the signifier, namely, that for the other, the one who seeing the proportion is capable of correcting them. It is therefore here its distortion, the signifier for the other, this signifier of a subject.

It is therefore permissible, without having recourse to what Mr Audouard ..... to read a same place, the subject, non-being. How does it happen that the locus of non- being is precisely the point of a weakening of the look if ..... it is precisely the name of a weakening in the computation of being; the relevance of the signifier we can find at different levels.

The figure of the Sophist was perfectly linked to discourse but the reference ought here to be detailed. In effect if the Sophist is the one who is spoken about in the structure of the dialogue and opposite the “I” and the “you” namely the pronouns which reveal from the dialogue whether the tongue establishes the other dimension.

(22) It must be underlined the degree to which the Indo-European languages ought to be, in a way, analysed closely over against the “I” and the “you”; a unique reference, the one of whom one speaks being able to enter as a partner into the dialogue or being unable. Irrelevant at the linguistic level, the insertion into the game of the partners, the “he” of the partner is not another, it is that of the non-partner. Now this distinction Plato says that he has made it in 246e.

When he directs himself towards a refutation of two opposing philosophical schools he tells us, he asks Theaetetus: .....

This game of hermeneutics and this affirmed position of herald, of the one who lends his mouth to another voice, this is what signals for us .....

Now the Sophist for his part is excluded from this hermeneutic. No one lends his voice to him,<sup>31</sup> for him. His only place is on the validated horizon of a chain.

He is nevertheless present at every articulation of the dialogue. The Stranger establishes him as a judge of the definition and at the end of the *Sophist* ..... the (23) Sophist is the one who is the source of discourse.

It appears then that in order to understand a figure of the Sophist our only mooring point is discourse and its forms.

What is in question in the whole dialogue is the *onoma* of the Sophist. Now when the *onoma* proper to the Sophist is inscribed, that the Sophist will be able to stop constructing sophisms, namely, escaping, this is possible for the Sophist is a technician of discourse.

The Sophist he is, and in so far as he is, subject of and through his *onoma*, outlines the very figure a/ space of discourse and its law in 260b: .....

It is necessary to define the discourse, namely, here .....

To be clear, it is a matter of constructing the space of a vacillation in which the Sophist will take his place. This presupposes the establishment of non-being at the level of the statement; play the Sophist.

But more radically it is necessary to introduce non-being into discourse itself. Now here we find ourselves on the inverse itinerary and we have, through that very fact, a (24) confirmation. A weakening has to be developed. There must be posed in the heart of discourse, in its being, an otherness of being; thus non-being requires that it should be defined and that discourse should be defined as an assemblage in which there is manifested the dimension of the other.

Plato is attached to the minimum. Otherness, because it is necessary, must support a blending.

One sees then that it would be absurd to look here for the teaching of Plato on the parts of discourse but he is very careful to deduct them.

In effect, if it is exemplary for linguistics, it is precisely in so far as it is computation, in so far as in this closed list a computation of the elements of discourse is possible which becomes the term, that is, in this case, a pronoun.

In Plato, we find ourselves at the origin of computation, but the discourse remains moored to a being of which he speaks.

One can say what it is not, but a statement must be made about what it is.

For if non-being arises discourse disappears. It is necessary then to drop non-being into the underground.

263c: The Stranger tells us .....

(25) Now, there is here revealed perhaps the true dimension of what could be, it seems, Plato's choice. What is curious is that all the discourses of Plato ..... but the name here is the proper name.

Thus there is outlined a situation of the proper name which is the very locus where non-being disappears; the series of the parts of discourse, as soon as they are posed, are revealed then as impossible. The noun is immediately absorbed into the proper name and precedes it as a logical function.

The subject has disappeared. Being reigns as a numerable series, as signifier.

The fact is that, perhaps, a discourse that could be called analytic, an analysis of discourse is possible..... One is sure of one's anchoring point here.

If Plato ignored the structure of the subject and even that of zero, Mr Audouard has perfectly grasped what is at stake in this wager.

It remains impossible nevertheless to welcome the concept of ..... for us in an analytic discourse.

It is first necessary to make it undergo a dissolution where it will show its theoretical (26) cutting edge. I chose as an element of dissolution ..... cannot fail to demonstrate its dissimulated phase in the reference perceptible to those who have an ear.

It is necessary to grasp here a radical difference. In effect it is impossible to unfold Plato's discourse and one can in a way cut across the folds.

Thus there arises a circle of the analysis of discourse whose hermeneutic circle is only an obscure illusion. If we must, in effect, construct the fictitious structure, it becomes then something that holds.



It is no longer a matter of reading a suture but of inventing the suture to establish the discourse as a legitimate discourse.

To situate the point which renders the object living, it is necessary, Plato tells us, to place the candle in the right place.

I found that Plato himself articulated the laws of the locus of discourse ..... make it appear, call for a reading ..... whose order would depend on a unique point whose validity only revealed itself to be foreign to Plato on the hither side of a miscognition.

**Dr Lacan:** Does anyone here want to pose a question, and at the same time try to bear witness to the fact that something of this got through?

I hope all the same that this challenge will be accepted.

**Dr Kaufmann:** As regards Platonism where do you situate the good? There is the problem of the Sophist on the one hand and on the other hand the problem of Platonism.

**Mr Milner:** I foreclosed it from my discourse.

**Dr Kaufmann:** In connection with the *logos* how do you understand the relationship of the noun to the verb? When I took up this *Sophist* I was pre-occupied by the question of the relationship between the *onoma* and .....?

On the other hand, what you said as regards the common noun and the proper name, do you not think that that involves the relationship of the noun to the verb?

**Mr Milner:** It is necessary to note that the problem of the relationship of the noun to the verb does not involve a theory of the parts of discourse. You have to look for it elsewhere. In the *Letters*.

**Dr Kaufmann:** I have got a little idea in connection with the problem of the noun/ verb and the problem of phantasy. I attach great importance to a term which is found, I do not know where, in the text it is *parafein*. In connection with phantasy, the way to link up to what Audouard said, is a ..... That can be presented in a very simple manner in connection with the phantasy for the Stoics.

(28) You know how this happens among the Stoics? I advance, I stumble, it is Bergson's elevator. There is one in place and then, from the fact that I go too far there is a hollow that is formed. It is the hollow of the wave. Among the Stoics the phantasy emerges within this. One has only to replace ..... by *Trieb*. One is on a certain line.

At that point one would have the equivalent of the problem that Audouard posed. The difference to Plato is that among the Stoics it happens like that and the phantasy comes here. One goes too far and in the hollow there is the demon of the elevator which arises there in the fact .....

Instead of it being linear, in Plato, it is *parafein*. It goes to one side namely that there is a sheaf of non-beings around this axis.

Do you agree?

Mr Milner: .....

**Dr Kaufmann:** Here I rejoin a remark of Dr Lacan. The *passage à l'acte* within the verb when I lack predication ..... and I obtain here the phantasy. That is why I believe that the Sophist contains more unity.

**Dr Lacan:** I believe that he said a lot about the *Sophist*. What Milner told us was all the same very marked by his specification as a grammarian. It is in a completely different register that there is posed the difference *onoma*, ..... in Plato. You are ... ..

(29) I do not know if it is appropriate that I should, after this, do something which in any case can only mesh with it in a very superficial fashion, because it cannot be pushed far enough.

In order to prepare what follows of my discourse, shall I recall what I am at present centring it around

The three edges, the three terms of subject, knowledge and sex which are, of course, the tripolarity which is essentially extracted from our experience as analysts and as such can be questioned.

Of course, all of this is a stage, and a major stage, in something which, inaugurally, is based on my terminology opposing as primary categories the symbolic, the imaginary and the real.

Since the time I introduced them, I would say, a little like the terms of a really hammer-blow philosophy, I mean what it seemed to me we could be satisfied with at least within our position as analysts, in terms of a sort of irreducible residue concerning the horizons of our experience.

One might happily construct, therefore, a correspondence, a superimposition of three terms: knowledge, subject, and sex.

I do not need to point to these three terms, I think, in a bi-univocal fashion unless I am expressly asked to.

(30) It is certain that there is here, nevertheless, a path that has been travelled and even a very long path. And that one cannot in any way take up the posture of being the contents of the other, that the three edges of the second triad cannot in any way be the filling out of the three edges of the first.

In this connection, I would like to mark, because, moreover, it is in the very measure of the progress of the elaboration that this content establishes, which is not identifiable to either one or the other, that the real, for example, of which people said that for a long time I only made almost an excluded term. Why did I

apparently make of it an excluded term, if not through this mirage effect which is properly speaking the fact that the psychoanalyst, by his position, and it is here that you see it rejoining what Milner so well outlined for us today in connection with the *Sophist*, the psychoanalyst, in a very singular fashion, is excluded from the real by his position.

He forbids himself by his very technique any means of approaching it. To be excluded is a relation and it is indeed this exclusion which gives him all his difficulty in holding his place, holding it just as much as a theoretician as holding it in practice.

The real, up to a certain point, can even, can even be considered for him as a danger, the fascination offered to his thinking and to which all too easily, in a too easy fashion he succumbs when he goes into this field of the real which is his major reference, (31) namely the real of sex, when he advances towards this place where he has this something which he refuses himself and from which he is excluded: he is going to construct a real which will necessarily be the real of the psychologist or of some others which have their validity in the not only ambiguous but bastard register which is called human science, and which is what, properly, he has to if he wants to remain an psychoanalyst, he has to preserve himself.

What then is this place of the real for the analyst, and what is meant by the fashion in which precisely we attempt, we indicate, the possibilities of the construction of his place along this paradoxical path which is to take the path of logic.

It is very striking to see that in the measure that, historically, logic progresses and to the point where it culminates in the theory which is called what distinguishes the sign from the *Bedeutung*, from meaning, in Frege, we arrive at this sort of extenuation of the reference which means that Frege formulates that if we must find for this something which is called a judgement, some reference or other, this can only be, in the final analysis, the double value of the false or the true, the value is properly speaking the referent, you should understand, that there is no other object of judgement at the highpoint of logical thinking, which is for us exemplary of what a certain path that is pursued generates as a paradox that there is not, in the final (32) analysis, any reference except it is the value where it is true, where it is false.

It is clear that this extenuation, for us, is literally to be taken like a sort of symptom and that what we are in the process of searching for, by following things along this path, on this track, is what indeed was able to condition the evolution of logical thinking, it is what was indeed lacking for the designation of the place of the real.

In this sense, it is tangible for us that what is thus circumscribed in the form of a lack is something which has some relationship with the fashion in which the real presents itself for us analysts.

It is very striking that it culminates for us, and in a tangible fashion, at the same distinction as the one Frege gets to. Along his path, the distinction between sign and sense, it is through this that I tried this year to make you sensitive to its distinction from meaning. Sense exists at the level of non-sense and with a weight

that is just as manifest as in any other locus where there can develop what is called meaning, an apparent real.

The relationship between sense and, as one might say, this blind spot of the real, this stumbling point, this end point, this point of impact and of aporia in sexual reality, it is (33) this point which necessitates for us the organisation of a logic where the three distinct edges of knowledge, the subject, and sex allow us to situate in their relationship, at their place, this something which is going to make appear to us a certain paradox and principally the place of the sign of sense as such, in a relationship of knowledge to sex from which the subject is in a certain way extracted, to which, properly speaking, this double alienation of terms between which there is established the dimension of sense, is what itself opens out into this very singular division (*divinité*) which is placed here, in analytic experience, between the subject and sex, the dimension of *Bedeutung*, the dimension also of what is for us the question mark, the sensitive point of truth.

What is situated on the side of knowledge is properly speaking the most opaque, what I introduced at the beginning of my discourse this year, this something which is properly speaking gaping wide which we can incarnate in the notion of *Zwang*. It is on the side of knowledge that the subject is found to receive this mark of division which is inscribed in the symptom and that I symbolise in the term that I announce here, taken from Freud under the term of *Zwang*. We are rather late. I have given you a scaffolding for what will be the end of my discourse this year. I wanted to announce it to you so that you would be less surprised when I will have to articulate them more deeply.

**Seminar 22: Wednesday 9 June 1965.**

We are pursuing our remarks about the high-point that I am bringing you, to close my discourse this year on “Crucial problems for psychoanalysis”, this high-point which the triad that I introduced three or four lectures ago structures.

I hope that what I indicated the last time, by way of closing the contributions of elements of a certain dialogue where this term, supported by all the reserves with which precisely I introduced the session the last time, that what I contributed by way of conclusion, introducing in a certain fashion the pole of the real in so far as it is constitutive of a certain difficulty which is, properly speaking, that of the psychoanalyst.

I hope that you remember it, this is the introduction of a theme, of a theme which without any doubt I will not exhaust this year, but which, if fate decrees, will be pursued next year.

In this introduction, which was perhaps too rapid and perhaps even up to a certain (2) point catapulted, I signalled the place where we ought to conceive that with respect to these three terms, whose function I am going to re-articulate today, gathering together, in a way, the meaning of the whole of our discourse of this year, I placed the three terms that I inscribed there, in German, for reasons which are linked to the historical lucubrations of these three terms, in so far as two of them refer to the thinking, to the work of authors who wrote in German.

*Sinn*, is properly speaking a Fregean reference, it is in so far as Frege opposes *Sinn* to *Bedeutung* in his conceptual elaboration of what the being of number is for him; *Zwang*, that it is in so far as it is here that it is appropriate to situate this function which is properly speaking the Freudian discovery, which gives a new sense, a renewed sense to what is presented in phenomenology, to what had been elaborated right through the nineteenth century as clinic of the mind and which gives it a status, a status which I intend today to make you locate as being what justifies, properly speaking, the accent that we have put with our commentary on Descartes on the fundamental relationships of the subject - in the modern sense of the term - and knowledge.

If there is a *Zwang*, if there is something which manifests itself in an opaque fashion in the symptom, which literally constrains, at the same time as it divides the subject, it is there that it is important to use the word *Zwang*, because *Zwang* refers to *zwei* and that as you see on the little figure to one side whose enigma I still have not revealed to you, it is indeed an *Entzweiung*, it is this that Freud pursued, discovered, traced to the extent that his final writing culminates at it, in the idea of *Spaltung* of the subject, which is essentially an *Entzweiung*.

Here then is the justification for what you see written there on the board; the term *Wahrheit*, truth is also written in German quite simply to remain homogeneous with the two other terms.

It is this, this third term, *Wahrheit*, the fashion in which *Wahrheit*, truth, presents itself in psychoanalytic experience or, more exactly, in the fundamental structure which permits this experience, it is from this that I intend to start again with you today.

Not without having drawn, from our common discourse the last time, a thread, a thread that we are going to rediscover later, which is that of the question posed by Kaufmann to Milner.

Milner gave us an extraordinarily well-structured account, an undoubtedly very rich, working text, commentary, in short at the same time summarised from the *Sophist*, to which, from today, I think I will be able, without abusing it, refer myself.

(3) On the whole, as far as I have been able to gather, this discourse did not fall on deaf ears and was recognised, at least for the dimension that it offers, this dimension not being moreover necessarily the one which, for every listener, is either the most familiar or the one which interests them most, a dimension which can cause someone who is used to medical thinking, certain moments of vagueness. I even believe that not enough has been done to allow us today the reference that I am going to speak to you about now.

Kaufmann, questioning Milner, said to him, posed him this question: “ Well then, what do you make in all of that of the good, of the good in Plato, of the pure idea of the good?” I remind you that Milner had put the emphasis on this dialectic with which the *Sophist* culminates which essentially wants to demonstrate - this is the *culmen* of Platonic thought - Plato had right through his discourses through which he addresses himself to us, discourses which are always, when all is said and done, essentially enigmatic, enigmatic to the point of being on occasion upsetting, humorous; it is quite clear, you really have to be deaf not to see that at one or other detour he really goes so far as to mock us; Plato, after having distinguished the world of ideals, in so far as they are unchangeable, that they are not subject to the field of ..... like that which, in the tangible world, in a way, receives them but cannot be affected by them, cannot (5) reflect them except in an approximate way, Plato, in the *Sophist*, is led and leads us to the demonstration that, if the action of ideas, I might say, can only be conceived of in the mode of participation, this participation is not to be conceived of as an effect which is produced in thought, in that through which we raise ourselves by dialectic to the conception of the most original ideas, by our dialectic we make operate this weaving, this ..... through which we recognise what in the world, movement of change, is sustained by a participation in the idea. The fundamental ideas themselves are only sustained in so far as amongst them there takes place this movement of participation and Milner reminded you how we find participating in being both movement and rest, how nevertheless movement and rest differ and can only differ in so far also as they participate one with the other, how then there is necessitated this something which for three terms, chosen by Plato to show us this something that we have to admit, that we must conceive of as being exercised in a movement, in an action, in a passion, at the very level of ideas, how beyond these three terms, two others are necessary which are the same and the other and the term of a fiveness, a (6) primitive *fünfheit* which is here

rather advanced. I do not remember what Milner replied to Kaufmann's question. I hope he replied that as regards the good, the good in Plato's sense, he had spoken about nothing other than that.

For what the good is for Plato, is, properly speaking, the interplay of number. This is not a commentary as I might say invented by me. I put it forward today with all the more ease, in that a certain good fortune in a research inspired, like that, by reflection on the *Sophist*, led me to come upon something that perhaps is far from being unknown, but whose historical confirmation I was happy to find, namely, that there is a lecture of Plato on the good conceived as the idea of the idea. It is Simplicius, a commentator of Aristotle, therefore not simply the third but the fourth generation, it is Simplicius who bears witness to it in what remains of what he has attested, who bears witness to us that Aristotle bequeathed to the generations the fact of having attended this lecture, and that Aristotle attended it, that Aristotle had taken a summary of it, notes, a roneotyped copy, and that what was surprising for those who attended this lecture was very precisely that Plato only spoke about number at it. Everyone was expecting a discussion about what was involved in the good, whether it was riches, or good health, or good mood, or good knowledge. A part of the audience even left in (7) the middle, very disappointed.

That in truth, it is in this way that we must situate what was for Plato this reference to what we can call, to play for him the role of absolute idea, of unshakeable foundation for all his reflection about the world, this is something which is precious for us, because, as you are going to see, this is what is going to allow us to monitor the sense of what, in the history of our thinking, is contributed by Freud and what, having been contributed by Freud, opens to us a view which co-ordinates in a way superior to everything that was able to be apprehended up to then, the reefs, the aporias, the difficulties encountered in fact by what I would call the definition of truth.

This for us psychoanalysts is something which is to be taken at the most crucial level of our experience.

In a work to which I have been devoting myself for several years, and whose title I will not tell you, I begin, in a first draft, that you will not see, in the following terms:

“The title chosen here - the one that I am not telling you - implies another which might be *Voies de la vraie psychanalyse* (Paths of true psychoanalysis). This indeed is what is involved. Along what paths does psychoanalysis proceed? The examination of these procedures will be our method to determine what psychoanalysis truly is. We will (8) grasp here that its being depends on the effects of the truth. To remain there would be to paint it as an island floating on its own. The mean of the golden mean would become the subtitle whose extreme-oriental stamp would parody, not without virtue the very success of such a proposal. But this Cythera is firmly nailed to the world and that is why the map that we will describe will be rather in the style of marine charts, the commented contour of the banks leaving the interior surface grey.

Along what paths does one accede to psychoanalysis? Here is the anchor around which we intend to make profoundly revolve the interest of the reader, which means also the reader that we here hold to be interested.

The guide of the true psychoanalyst, such is the title of its aim. It is obviously addressed to doctors, and as a partner in dialogue who reduplicates him, as a witness in a public which expects him: the true psychoanalyst.

One will discern here the echo of a *cliché* illustrated by the literature of our cousins: *The compleat angler*, the true angler. This is a celebrated work of English literature which is evoked here for the same reason which made Plato begin his definition of the *Sophist* by the same reference. *The compleat angler* would only have led a small number of its readers to become accomplished fishermen. Only the will to select the (9) reader is declared in it. Besides, if this book were opened by someone who might want to find in it the paths of the perfect psychoanalysand, you can rest assured: he would find himself much less solicited by it than by other works, not only is there nothing here which will lull him with these implicit promises that a familiarly presented observation conveys, but he will be no less refused the opportunity of displacing his anxiety onto the new burden of a psychological norm. He will find neither the *carte du tendre* of psychoanalysis, nor material to track himself down in it. This will not even embarrass his first steps in psychoanalysis and this guide does not aim at guiding him, but his own eventual guides. In reading it he will only feel himself to be interested objectively or, at most, as the one whose interests are being defended, a participant no doubt but not judge, if he only wants to retain of it, nevertheless, that guarantees are necessary and that this book calls for them.

Or much more, rather, that this book calls those for whom it is written, away from existing guarantees to other surer ones. Such is in effect the third theme that we have emphasised in it.

Along what paths does psychoanalysis .....; here is what the author, in a teaching which has lasted almost a decade ( I give here some references which give the date and they are already well past) will try to articulate. Is there any need in order to clarify (10) this distinction to enumerate all the sciences with which modern medicine supports its procedures, or to remark that by basing itself on their results, it credits each one with its own principles, stamping them, as one might say, as ready made products. Now this is what is in no way possible for the psychoanalytic method. And psychoanalysts, on this point, will certainly sing with one voice, and as you will see we will make a great deal of this accord, which goes further than being a certain fashion of making oneself heard, if it is not always a certain mode of harmony. But it is not in vain that we have played first of all on the metaphor of the island, the fact is that we must recognise moreover, that it is the deadly object that this insularity has generated in what one might call its reflected, external form, namely, the situation of scientific segregation in which the analytic community sustains itself.

The fact is that the path of psychoanalysis, for its part, is not maintained there. A fact that we will corroborate with a no less serene chorus of psychoanalysts that admits it, in order to explore its antinomy. The paradox that we highlight here, in effect, uncovers more of its basis than it hides, for if we do indeed intend to say



that only a technical formalism still preserves among psychoanalysts the community of the experience, let it not be thought that the straying that we denounce in the discipline (11) takes place in an empyrean ideal. It touches on the very way in which the treatment ought to be sought if it is to be true.

True has first of all here the simple sense of an effective treatment but in so far as its effects correspond to its means, means which in their terms go beyond the most ordinary reference for the doctor, the one which makes him qualify as suggestion the effects which he has at his disposal on a common margin of psychic displacement offered to almost all his interventions, even if they are only a simulacrum.

And true takes on here a reduplicated sense from the fact that the means of psychoanalysis are the means of truth through which we return to our debate. Now the use of such means is always diluted, as history proves, by not being open, open to criticism, open to questioning, open to an ambiguity which takes on here a particular form. For no one who offers himself to the test of a psychoanalysis will hesitate on the point that the truth evoked in this way has the sense of the truth proper to this person.

But how establish the relationship between this truth of the subject and what the construction of science has taught us to recognise under this name? Let us not refer here our confraternal partner to the disappointing *Periplus* that at best his secondary schooling, since it was French, made him go through under the name of philosophy, or (12) even to the already dusty epistemology that he may have retained from it. And this simply because Freud introduced to our experience, under the name of unconscious, the order of facts which opens up an experimental path to the question thus posed.

This is where our case (*audience*) and our remarks take on substance, and we are going to say by whom we want to make it understood: by those very people with respect to whom the bearers of analytic experience were only able, up to now, to state its incommunicable character for those who had not shared it, except, most recently, to spread this mystery, on this mystery, the badly digested cream-tart of the function of communication, by joining to it some simpering about the doctor-patient relationship.

For our purpose is that psychoanalysis should be submitted to a research which is brought to bear on its procedures and even its errors, finds a way to articulate its limits, in other words, disengages from it what could be called its structure.

For the monitoring of such work we call on all those for whom the notion of structure has its use in their respective sciences. We expect, moreover, that with us they will deduce from this work the conditions of formation thanks to which an analyst will be fit to conduct an analysis. It is in this moment that our exemplary dialogue with the doctor finds its touching side.

(13) “Beware, if you have opened this book because you dream of becoming a psychoanalyst! Because the psychoanalysis will be worth only what you are worth when you become an analyst, it will go no further than what it can lead you to.” It is from this reference of psychoanalysis as science to what, effectively, can be

realised from this certain relationship, linked to a certain place of the resurgence of the truth in the modern dialectic of knowledge, it is from this that there depends, contrary to Plato's idea, that there depends what is involved, effectively, what we can talk about under the name of psychoanalysis.

And it is very precisely in so far as psychoanalysis, as it is lived, is present and is exercised in our historical moment, has a certain resistance to a certain way of directing this enquiry about the basis of its truth, a resistance moreover ..... highlighted, designated in advance by Freud, it is indeed in so far as this is how things stand, that as regards my teaching, properly, not alone do I believe I have the right, but I am obliged, in the very measure of this resistance, to bend, to curve its sequel and not go beyond a certain limit of what is the exploration of a truth, which can only be defined by following the effectiveness of what it brings into play, *hic et nunc*, as it is practised, of what the totality of its procedures brings into play.

(14) That in this regard the truth enters into a sort of drama which is the one sufficiently indicated by the limit, by specifying that the very person who can at a certain point reveal this truth has a right to suspend it, even to refuse it, this is something which not only has nothing original about it, but which in psychoanalysis itself finds its greatest justification.

I am telling you the way in which, the fact, that in the course of the ages this position was effectively adopted by many thinkers, adopted as a bias, an admitted bias - written in black and white - when Descartes tells us that he will not give the solution to a certain problem, he gives as a pretext that no doubt he does not want to give the opportunity to one or other of his rivals who will pretend to have discovered it by themselves, that he wants simply to show that they have not, effectively, been able to reach it, this is only a pretext, just as it is a pretext when Gauss, having glimpsed before Riemann the modern mathematical formulation of space, permitting a trans-euclidian entry, that Gauss refuses, refuses to communicate it, having his reasons to articulate that no truth is able, in a way, to anticipate on what it is tolerable to know.

This dialectic, as I said, is justified, takes its form in so far as psychoanalysis is for the (15) first time what allows us to bring to light, to pose in their radicality, the relationships which exist between truth and knowledge.

One can pose the question in a sort of abstract fashion - it is easy to point out, I did it in passing - in the paradoxical and, of course, not serious, comic form, what would be involved in the truth of the knowledge that the Newtonian formula established if it had been put out by someone two hundred years before?

Would this formula, whose introduction into knowledge represents a structural moment - we are going to come back to it again - in the relationships of the truth and of knowledge, would this formula have anticipated? Has it or not some value as truth?

This is only a mind game, an artificial aporia, but much more radically there is posed this question of the truth and it is around this question that there is played out the Freudian experience.

That is why it is not thinkable, it only takes on its sense starting from a status of the subject which is the status of the Cartesian subject. If I took so much care at the beginning of this year to take up again the dialectic of the *cogito* as being the fundamental one which ought to allow us to situate what is involved in the sense of Freudianism, it is because it is proper to the Cartesian *cogito* to mark the importance (16) of a certain defining moment as such in the relationships between the subject and knowledge.

This is perhaps something that is not totally clarified by all the commentaries which were made of this essential moment represented by the *cogito*. What Descartes was looking for and what he found in this perspective, in terms of an unshakeable foundation, of a *fundamentum in* ..... can we say that he obtains it with the *cogito*?

That this being, impossible to snatch from the apprehension of “I think” should be a being, grounded in being; it is in any case quite clear that the fashion in which, before you, in contempt if necessary of previous commentaries, but certainly not in contempt of Cartesian texts, I articulated it in a fashion which goes beyond that at which, at the moment when in the commentary one is forced to remain at the moment of the “*ergo sum*”, the commentary must recognise only there, what Descartes at least when he is his own commentator bases himself on, the obviousness of the clear and simple idea.

But for us, at the point that we are at in the effectiveness of science, what is this obviousness of the clear and simple idea worth? This *simplex intuitus* which Descartes himself notes?

Undoubtedly it is subjected for us to the consequences of the whole development of science, of the one which has been produced since the Cartesian step forward, which is (17) designed to make us revise this prevalence of the simple idea of intuition.

And the fashion I had of articulating before you the “I think: therefore I am” (with two points to work on the inverted commas) from which it results that the complete formula is properly speaking “I am the one who thinks: ‘therefore I am’”; and that what I call this division between the “I am” of sense and the “I am” of being is the introduction to this *Entzweiung* where there is going to be put for us, differently, the problem of truth.

And it is here that we see the value of the fact that the *ergo* of Descartes, which clearly indicates something which is of the order of necessity and that, nevertheless, Descartes emphasises, repudiates as not to be interpreted in any way by a necessity which might fall under the incidence of the logical process of necessity, the one which could be expressed: “everything that thinks is, but I think, therefore I am”; it is precisely what Descartes himself takes care to reject in one of his texts. The “therefore” is here an articulation which certainly marks the place of a causal reference, but of a causal reference which is that of the activation of something which is present and culminates at this disjunction, at this *Entzweiung*, of the operation of sense that Descartes, at another point, is going to articulate frankly, not even *cogito* but *dubito*, the sense vacillates, the doubt goes to the most

radical point: *ergo sum*; the being that is (18) involved is separated even from the *dubito*.

What then would Descartes be if we remained with what is imposed in this analysis of his fundamental articulation? Nothing other than a consistent scepticism, a scepticism that would protect itself from what he always opposed, that at least the truth of scepticism is true.

Now this precisely is what is involved. The approach of Descartes is not a truth approach and what signals that and what has not either, it seems to me, been fully articulated as such, is what gives it its fecundity, it is precisely that he proposed a goal to himself, an end which is that of certainty but for what regards truth, he discharges it on the other, on the big Other, on God in a word. There is no necessity internal to the truth; even the truth of two and two make four is the truth because it has pleased God that it should be so.

It is the rejection of the truth outside the dialectic of the subject and of knowledge which is properly speaking the core of the fruitfulness of the Cartesian approach. For Descartes, the thinker, was still able to preserve for a time the carcass of the traditional guarantee of the eternal verities. They are that way because God wants it that way; but in that fashion, in fact, he gets rid of them. And along the path that is opened up there enters and progresses the science which establishes a knowledge which no longer (19) has to embarrass itself with its foundations in truth.

I repeat: no essential establishment of being is given in Descartes. A step, an act reaches certainty with a reference to what? That there is already a knowledge. Descartes' approach could not be not sustained for an instant if there were not already this enormous accumulation of the debates that followed knowledge, a knowledge always linked, still caught up until then, like a string on its paw, on the critical fact that the beginning of this knowledge is linked to the possibility of constituting the truth.

I would call this knowledge before Descartes a pre-accumulative state of knowledge. From Descartes on, knowledge, that of science, is constituted on the mode of the production of knowledge. Just as an essential stage of our structure which is called social, but which is in reality metaphysical and which is called capitalism, is the accumulation of capital, the relationship of the Cartesian subject to that being which is affirmed in it, is founded on the accumulation of knowledge. Knowledge from Descartes on, is what can serve to increase knowledge. And this is a completely different question to that of the truth.

The subject is what is lacking to knowledge. Knowledge in its presence, in its mass, in (20) its own growth regulated by the laws which are different to those of intuition, which are those of the symbolic operation and of a close copulation of number with a real which is above all the real of a knowledge, this is what it is a matter of analysing in order to give the status, the true status of what is meant by a subject at the historical moment of science.

Just as all modern psychology is constructed to explain how a human being can behave in the capitalist structure, in the same way the true core of the research

about the identity of the subject is to know how a subject sustains himself before the accumulation of knowledge. It is precisely this state, this extreme state, that the discovery of Freud offers to you, a discovery which means and which says that there is an “I think” which is knowledge without knowing it. That the link is quartered (*écartelé*) but at the same time tips over from this relationship of “I think” to “I am”. The one is *entzweiet* from the other, there where I think, I do not know everything that I know, and it is not where I am discoursing, where I am articulating, that there is produced this announcement which is that of my being as being, from which I am being. It is in the stumblings, in the intervals of this discourse that I find my status as subject. The truth is announced to me where I do not protect myself from what comes in my word.

The problem of the truth re-emerges. The truth returns in experience and along a (21) different path to that of my confrontation with knowledge, of the certainty that I may attempt to win in this very confrontation, precisely because I learn that this confrontation is ineffective, and that where I have a presentiment, where I avoid, where I divine one or other rock that I avoid, thanks to the extraordinarily rich and complex construction of a symptom, what I show as a symptom proves that I know what obstacle I am dealing with, alongside that, my thoughts, my phantasies construct, not alone as if I knew nothing about it, but as if I wished to know nothing about it. This is the *Entzweiung*. The value of this image, the one that I put on the right, which is easy for you to reproduce because it is one of these constructions that one can make very simply by manipulating a strip of paper. It is still the Moebius strip but a Moebius strip that is in a way crushed and flattened.

I think that you will rediscover there the profile that I made familiar to you of the interval where in the interior eight there is knotted together the Moebius strip, namely, this strip which is stuck together again to itself after a simple half-turn and which has as a property, as I told you, this surface, of having neither a front nor a back, it is exactly the same. Here you see it in the shape in which it is most habitually reproduced when you make it with a simple strip, with a belt, namely, when it does not take on the flattened aspect it has here which is moreover very useful for us to show (22) certain things, in short, this Moebius strip is realised just as well by a strip of paper folded three times in a certain way.

What does the fashion of presenting it in this way show us? The fact is that, if you wish, on the upper right-hand side of this triangular structure, there is a symmetry. The two foldings of the paper are carried out in a way that is symmetrical with respect to the one which appears at the surface. In the same way here, in the following folding, it is in a symmetrical fashion that you will first of all see there being folded the first strip like this, then in the following loop; but from the way they are knotted, you see that here, on the third side of the upper side it is in a non-symmetrical fashion that the folding is produced.

In other words, if we imagine what is involved in the relationship to sense, in so far as at this level of unconscious knowledge what is established is the communication of a certain structure between signifying articulation and this enigmatic something which represents, which is the sexed individual (*être*); if we symbolise the following phase as being that of meanings through which there come, at the level of the subject this opaque kernel of the sexed individual, we have here two fields here that are, in a way, not alone autonomous but which can

be situated, one with respect to the other, as they are effectively in this image, as the front and the back.

(23) But there is a point where what is the front comes to rejoin the back, where the junction cannot be produced, except in the shape in this *Entzweiung* where it is something different that appears from one edge to the other of the third edge, which is the one which links the subject to knowledge. And here, far from it being a relation to certainty, the one which is grounded only on the relationship of the vanishing of the subject with respect to knowledge, it is the reality called symptom, that of the conflict which results from what is announced from the side of the unconscious, in opposition, in a fashion heterogeneous to what is involved in, to what is constituted as the identity of the subject.

The division between the subject and the symptom is the incarnation of this level where truth regains its rights and in the shape of this unknown real, of this real that is impossible to exhaust, which is this real of sex, to which up to now we only accede through disguises, through deputies, through the transposition of the masculine/feminine opposition into the active-passive opposition, for example, or the seen/not seen, etc.

Namely, properly speaking, in this function which caused so much embarrassment to the founder of dialectic, namely, the function of the dyad.

It is very striking that they perfectly well realised this function of the dyad. They perceived it as what constitutes the obstacle and stumbling block to the establishment of being and the one by whatever path this problematic is tackled, whether it is in (24) *Parmenides*, in the *Sophist* itself - I sufficiently indicated it earlier - in the commentary of Aristotle which is given in Simplicius and which carries the reflection of what Aristotle had integrated about this famous Platonic lecture with which I began earlier, we find that the status of number, finally, at this summit of Aristotelian thinking which certainly carries the reflection of Plato's lecture, the number is the number two. It is a number for us; it is a number in so far as the Fregian dialectic allows us to make it emerge from the zero along the path of what we called earlier the subjective suture, but before there was constituted in any fashion this relationship of the subject to knowledge, there was no other means for such a deduction except to establish the beginning of number at the level of two, of the *zwei*.

Now this *zwei* is precisely the one that we rejoin in the distinction of sex, a distinction which was completely outside the range of the Platonic dialectic. It is along the path of this something which is all the same aimed at by this dialectic and which betrays itself, as one might say, or expresses itself, or is reflected in the forms that this dialectic gives to the deduction of the dyad, for of course, consult the text and you will see they (25) do not take the *zwei*, the sexual dyad as a given, precisely because they do not have the sexual reference, and that to take it as a given is not a solution.

But Aristotle attempts to make this dyad emerge from a dyadic relationship which is that of the one, of the big and the small. It is from a correct measure that the birth of the two will be conceivable, namely, when the exact difference between the big and the small comes to equal one.

It is clear that this deduction is fragile because it presupposes proportion and measure. It is clear that it requires the same, the same proportion, let us vary it, to give rise to all the other numbers; it is clear that it betrays a fundamental asymmetry in the two units of the duality and that it is precisely this asymmetry that is involved in what is always involved in any true apprehension of the individual (*l'être*) *qua* sexed.

This same asymmetry, which is the one where there comes to be tied in the disparity of knowledge and the subject, in the fact that the subject is lacking, that the subject forces us, solicits us to construct a more radical imaginary than the one again which is given to us in analytic experience, as the one where there arises the image of the ego, that this imaginary, this absolute singularity of the subject as lack, is the reflection of the expression of what cannot be matched from the dual opposition of one sex to the other sex.

(26) The 2 relationship that there is in sex is an asymmetrical relationship; and everything that our experience gives rise to at the place where it is a matter of grasping this sexual difference, this something with a different structure which is the one by which I tackle and around which there is going to turn our whole critique of analytic experience at the point that it is at, *hic et nunc*, in real psychoanalysis, namely the **o**-object.

Everywhere the subject finds his truth - this is what our experience has come to. What he finds, he changes into the **o**-object like King Midas, who turned everything he touched into gold. What we encounter at the place from where there begins this incidence of being and of the sexed being, refused by knowledge and with respect to which the subject is this singular who only signals this asymmetry of difference. Every time the subject finds his truth, he changes what he finds into the **o**-object. This indeed is the drama which is absolutely without precedent into which the analytic experience pushes us. For there we perceive that it was not a slight or accessory question when Plato asked himself whether there also was an idea of mud, an idea of dirt. What analytic experience reveals is that it is into things quite different to gold that man, in analytic experience, finds changed what he reaches at his point of truth. The introduction of the scrap of waste as an essential term of one of the possibilities of support of the **o**-object is something which is what I call an unprecedented indication.

(27) This status of the **o**-object which is there at the place, at the place of the third term which is veiled and in part cannot be unveiled, is the fact of experience which brings us to the radical question of what there is beyond knowledge, what is involved with respect to the subject, in terms of a truth.

I will pursue and close what I have to say about it the next time which will also be my last lecture.

**Seminar 23: Wednesday 16 June 1965**

Today, in principle, I am giving the last lecture of this year.

Nevertheless, it will not be quite our last meeting. On the contrary, the closed seminar which will take place in a week's time will give an opportunity to each and every one of you to put some questions to me about what may have remained in obscurity for him either in his text, or in his drawings, about what I presented to you this year.

I stopped the last time the reading of a text, preliminary to a writing in progress, at the following terms: "For psychoanalysis will only be worth," I said, "to the one who demands to be an analyst, what you are worth when you become a psychoanalyst, it will go no further than it is able to lead you. This is not to delude ourselves together with a high-flown summons about your responsibility in practice," I continued, addressing myself to the same. You know well that every exercise of power is not simply subject to error but to this high-point of misunderstanding of being well-meaning in its error.

How could we accept to be doctors if we did not accept this unbelievable effect of the human labyrinth. What I must tell you, is the risk for you of this marriage to the fate (2) of psychoanalysis. For what you bring into play here has nothing in common with what is involved in the outcome of an ordinary psychoanalysis. And the term of 'perfectly analysed' that people ask you to admire at the outcome of your analysis when it is described as a training one, is as deceitful as it is inadequate to define the ends of this analysis.

For it is not enough that you should be, according to the classical formula, perfectly clear about your relationships with your patients, it is also necessary for you to be able to tolerate your relations with psychoanalysis itself. For, if psychoanalysis teaches it, truth responds to a venial lack in its regard, in other words to a repression, by taking its ransom on the very body where your being dwells.

Do not believe that it is more merciful to the mortal sins that are always imminent in the action which claims to follow its trace without knowing its tracks. An action whose means is that the word stumbles in the lie and the truth picks up the bill, always with usury. Your position is indeed linked then to the fate of all of those who are called psychoanalysts for psychoanalysis is nowhere else. If you can expect nothing more of psychoanalysis than what you put into it, what I require is, namely, to penetrate what there is behind a certain resistance established in the very body of (3) psychoanalysts. This indeed is the essential question, ever since the time that my teaching posed itself, purely and simply as being opposed to a certain sordidness in the theorisation of the practice whose common denominator is given by psychologising, this psychologising which is strikingly denounced there, since it is admitted to be the goal of some of its promoters.



To look for the real that psychoanalysis deals with in the psychological, is the principle of a radical deviation. Every reduction, every attempt to return, as they say, or of the exhaustion of psychoanalysis in some psychologism in whatever constituted fashion it may be forged, is the negation of psychoanalysis.

Ever since the time when I showed that psychologism is woven from false beliefs, let us call things by their name, of which the first is that of these intuitive identities that is called the ego, it seems to me that I have gone over the path sufficiently to show you where the path can be traced quite differently.

No one has ever, except in a certain form of ignorance that, as a humorous theme, I attribute quite gratuitously, even though no doubt not without reason, to dentists, no one has ever yet dared to impute to Descartes the origin of this intuitive error.

(4) What I reminded you about the last time concerning the established status of the *sum* in the *cogito*, I will not recall today. It is from there that I begin again. Let those who were not here the last time, I want all the same to mark what I put the accent on, it is that this foundation of the *sum* in the *cogito* is not a primary foundation. It must be remembered that this emergence of the *cogito* in this division where my analysis marks it between the “I am” of being to the “I am” of sense, of the “I am of the one who thinks: ‘therefore I am’”, that this approach cannot be conceived of without the mapping out of that with respect to which it is situated, it is situated no doubt as a methodical doubt and what is more a radical one, this something which is an already constituted knowledge and that this relationship of the subject to knowledge is so essential that, starting from there, at the beginning, we rediscover in the result this something that I repeat here in order to see in it the initiation of a reflection which can be taken up again and pursued, the fact is that the result of Descartes’ approach is to render possible this something that I characterised after him as the accumulation of a knowledge. The foundation, the end, the brand, the style of knowledge of science, is above all to be a knowledge which can be accumulated, and everything that philosophy since then, I am speaking about the one that we can retain as the best, was nothing other than to define the conditions of the possibility of a subject in the face of this (5) knowledge in so far as it can be accumulated.

Now it is this which is the false position of philosophy which puts the philosopher in the same position of a valet, which means that the psychologist is there to give us the conditions of possibility of a subject in a society dominated by the accumulation of capital.

The subject, in so far as he must constitute himself in order to render possible this accumulation of knowledge, this is something in which we can highlight what the Kantian approach itself is, the healthiest one in this matter, but the origin of this something with respect to which we have to pose ourselves as seeing it as wrong. It is not the condition of the possibility of knowledge that interests us. It is precisely of that which Descartes, of that which with Descartes, the consummation is accomplished of what I would call the alienation of knowledge in the fact that he abandons the eternal truths to divine arbitrariness. Here is the mainspring which allowed this new departure, this new approach but where something is

fundamentally unrecognised, whose return constitutes the essence of the Freudian discovery.

If Descartes liberates the chariot of these eternal truths, which he off-loads onto divine (6) arbitrariness, they might be different.

I am, undoubtedly, highlighting the importance of the decisive character of this moment but it is appropriate to give it its consequence, that therefore nothing, even two and two make four is not necessary of itself, everything is possible. If everything is possible, nothing is. And from then on, this is the important thing in what is omitted in our perception, the philosophical perception of Descartes' starting point, henceforth, the real is the impossible. Everything is possible except that which, henceforth, is only founded on its impossibility.

It is impossible that two and two make four, simply because God wills it. And nevertheless that is the only reason. Take it or leave it; one must pass by way of the impossible. Newton has the path opened up with his impossible action at a distance, with the knot that has never yet been untied of the field of gravity, and Descartes can allow himself to be a backslider, a backslider on the side of the possible, with his theory of vortices.

Henceforth it is clear that for the philosophers, and those I would say those of the best Kantian descendance, the analysis of the conditions of the possibility of knowledge is a deviation. As if we had to wait for them for that. For it is precisely during everything which had gone before, when people were looking for the path along which knowledge (7) would be rendered possible, it had proved impossible to find that path.

All of a sudden, knowledge came, which was impossible to discover when people were searching at first in it what was true, I am speaking about science.

And now, behold, when people were no longer looking for it because it had been off-loaded onto God, well then, what people were looking so much to discover, imposed itself all by itself, but in a quite different fashion, which did not settle anything about truth.

This is why now philosophers are reduced to fishing out some trifles for hermeneutical commentaries, along a path which goes completely elsewhere. For what I am trying to constitute for you, is not the conditions of possibility of psychoanalysis, but the way in which its path is traced, from the foundation of what Freud himself from all time articulated as being its impossibility.

I articulate this term of impossible today, no doubt, in a fashion which may appear hasty to you, even biased, it would no doubt deserve our saying more about it, may I provisionally indicate to you, that in order for us to grasp the two angles as regards the real, which will allow us to apprehend this relationship to the possible which is so essential to mark clearly for our whole analytic approach, to recall to you that the contingent is part of the real, which can only be the necessary if we make the mistake (8) of grounding it in the real and not where it is grounded, namely in a symbolic relationship, the real is that which cannot not be, I beg your pardon, the necessary is that which cannot not be, if we see in it the foundation of

the real, you have only, as I might say, to operate on these two formulae what cannot be and what can and carry out the subtraction, it is in the transformation of can into cannot, in the establishment of the impossible that there effectively arises the dimension of the real.

I had, I had announced to you last year that I would speak to you this year about the subjective positions of being and then, in a moment of prudence, besides I allowed myself to be advised, I contented myself with speaking in my title about crucial problems for psychoanalysis.

I was right, not at all of course that my first plan was abandoned for all that. The subjective positions of being are there on the blackboard for the past four of my lectures, five perhaps, under the three terms of subject, of knowledge and of sex. It is indeed the subjective positions of the being of the subject of the "I am" of Descartes, of the being of knowledge and of the sexed being that are involved in the psychoanalytic dialectic and nothing is conceivable without the conjugation of these three terms.

The relationship of these three terms is marked by a relationship which is the one that, (9) under the term written here in red, and which is in a way the title, on the board of *Entzweiung*, that I am trying to make you comprehend as establishing itself, rooting itself in the mode of relationship of what constitutes the status of the subject, the status of the subject in so far as we have for the whole year turned around the kind of particular trait which is the one that constitutes it, this "one" whose formula we went looking for in Frege, in so far as it is this "one" which established the mapping out of the lack, we must seek somewhere this something which puts this singular one in this relationship of *Zwang* or *Entzweiung* with respect to the body of knowledge and it is from the *Zwei* of the sexed being, in so far as it is forever insoluble for this "one" of the imaginary subject, it is this relationship of the "one" to the *Zwei* of sex whose agency we find at every level of the relationships between the three poles of this triad. For this *Zwang*, this *Entzweiung*, this something that the last time, I will not go back to it, or I will go back to it if necessary, I thought I ought to inscribe in the topological schema whose importance or timeliness I will have to come back to later, as being marked by the fact that the structure of this topology being that of a surface such that its front comes in a way, as one might say, to conjoin itself to what is after all its opposite, namely its back.

Of course, in our experience as analysts, it is in this very particular relationship of a (10) subject to his knowledge about himself that is called symptom, the subject apprehends himself in a certain experience which is not an experience where he is alone, but an experience, up to a certain point, educated and directed by a knowledge.

The symptom, even if it is apparently the one that is most characterised for our habits as clinicians, that of the obsessional for example, we have only too much experience that it is only completed, that it only takes on its full constitution in a certain relationship to the other which Freud clearly underlined can be qualified as a first phase of psychoanalysis.

This division, this *Zwang*, this opposition between the subject and what comes to him from the side of a knowledge, is the relationship of the subject to his symptom, it is the first step of psychoanalysis.

I am only recalling this to justify the fact that it is there that I marked the division, the *Zwang*. But if it is there, and if this drawing is justified by the fact that the symbolic sheet of the topological relationship involved which is a relationship of a triad has its sense, its importance, and I will return to it later, it is clear that this Moebius strip which is thus, you have not perhaps sufficiently reflected on the reason why, is it by chance or is it not what is imaged in this way in this strip that is folded three times onto itself, this Moebius ribbon I mean its fundamental half-twist, constitutes its topological (11) property, what it conceals in terms of *Entzweiung*, precisely in the fact that there are not two surfaces, that the same surface coming to encounter itself as being its back, this is the principle of the *Entzweiung*, of course it is at all the points of the Moebius strip that it can manifest itself.

And this indeed is what we touch in experience when we see that the sign, namely what gives its power to the analytic experience, what it introduced into the world in terms of this essentially ambiguous something, in which we recognise that at the most opaque level of signifying chain, something, this something which makes sense, it is always more or less caught up in this still unresolved bipolarity that emanates from sex and what, in any case, makes sense there, but did I not also begin the year by showing you that this kind of sense is exactly that of the *pas-de-sens*, that further, what we can try to articulate, to form, to conjoin in terms of signifiers on the sole condition of respecting in it a minimum of grammatical structure, will give this *pas-de-sens* and will manifest all the more its relief and originality.

*Sinn* is fundamentally marked by the fissure of *Unsinn* and this is where it arises in its greatest purity. So then, where would we find what corresponds there to this magical, fleeting and ideal line which is everywhere and nowhere, this line of the *Entzweiung* in (12) the locus of the liaison of the subject to sex that we have called *Wahrheit*.

For this is what is involved in psychoanalysis. If *Sinn*, if what is sense is interpretable, belongs to the subject from the side of knowledge, in the difficulties of discourse, in the stumbling of the signifier, the signified which thus comes, comes from elsewhere; it comes here from underneath, not at all through a detour of knowledge, but through this direct relationship of the subject with the sexed being. Where then is the division here? Do I need speaking to psychoanalysts to call it by its name? What is the experience to which psychoanalysis leads us and which defines the relationship of the subject with sex, if not that whatever the sex of this subject may be, this relationship is expressed in this singular fashion which is the one that we call castration.

It is in the measure that there is negated, precisely, the copula, the instrument of conjunction, that the subject, whatever he may be, is integrated into the truth of sex and is necessitated from the foundation of castration, this is what shows us here again the principle of this singular *Entzweiung*, playing on the impossible to

resolve ambiguity of this “one” that is always vanished, always constrained to confront itself with two.

Now, as I told you, the idea of the idea, the root of every institution, the establishment of the symbolic in the real, Plato’s good, to call it by its name, is nothing other than (13) number. And I indicated to you the last time my references in Simplicius and his testimony about a certain lecture by Plato. I would like if one of my listeners would take it as a matter, an opportunity and a pretext for a more developed research.

Observe that it is not because I felt like drawing this strip that I described as folded three times in a certain fashion which harmonises with my drawings, the ones that I underlined the last time, in returning, that here there was a symmetry in the fashion in which, for example, this roll inserted into the strip is opposed to this other one, placed at this level of the figure. There is a symmetry, I mean that they are both, for us who are here hidden by the strip, and can easily rejoin one another.

The same here at the level of the other side of the junction ..... but not in the third. A funny thing, a curiosity but as regards which I would ask you to observe, to notice, as you habituate yourself to it, to this sort of experiment, *experimentum mentis*, that it could not be otherwise, that there is no other means of arranging this strip in this triangular flattening out, without there appearing somewhere the structure that I have just underlined, which means, which is not distinguished from the fact, that it is necessarily a Moebius strip.

(14) There is only one other possibility, which is that the thing is produced in the same fashion at the level of the three sides, which is what happens in the case that one makes use of what is called the shape of a knot. Namely, that it is in the same way, inverting the three points, that the strip would be folded but that it will, nonetheless be a Moebius strip.

There is then no escape from this topology; the triad, and it is curious that people did not see this until a certain epoch, the triad implies this topology of the Moebius strip.

It may seem to you to be a distant detour, capriciousness, a taste for the singular, that I delay, that I should wish to delay so long on a structure as regards which, at the very least, you can sense that as a structure that is not familiar, since I am sure that for some, if not for the majority of those who are here, the remark that I have made that the fact of using a surface as being the most propitious support to represent a certain triad is posed here for us as properly speaking establishing the subjective position - I specify and I insist, I do indeed mean that I know what I am saying when I say the subjective positions of being as such - that this support carries in itself the necessity of a certain relationship imaged by the Moebius strip but of which I already pointed out to you the strip is only the image.

(15) May I recall that it is not because this surface is a surface, that it exists, in a word, which makes it a Moebius surface. You can take as many pieces out of it as you like, if the continuity remains it is still a Moebius surface, and, at the limit, it is nothing more than this median cut which, changing the surface into a surface

that is well and truly unique, remember, a median cut does not cut the Moebius strip in two but transforms it into a strip which only gives what is called a loop.

But what is proper to this strip is that it can, I showed it to you once but I regret not being able to do it again today, I forgot my scissors and my glue and I was not able to find here something to supply for it at the secretariat, but remember that this strip can overlap itself in such a fashion that it takes on again the exact shape of a Moebius strip and that then, what will be the the double edge of this strip folded once again in a Moebius strip, would be an interval that you have here drawn on the board, which you can show also involves this half-twist which is a Moebius strip.

What does that mean? The fact is that if in accordance with topology we consider the surface as having always to be defined by an edge, there is no other topological definition of the surface, an edge vectorialised like this, here is the symbol of the (16) surface that we call spherical, a sphere, it is there that one can make a hole which is cancelled out, as they say edge to edge, namely the two edges of the hole stitching themselves together, let us say, in the same sense.

If you wish, in order not to confuse, in order not to lose you in these imaginings about volume which is in no way involved in the matter, call what I called for you this first surface a globe, and the topology of the globe is not defined otherwise than by the duplicity of this edge.

What is inside it and at the two edges of the edge, even if it is an infinite globe, even if because of that it is a globe, strictly equivalent.

I already told you, that what is outside the circle of Popilius is a circle, just like what is inside it. And the proper of a surface which is called globe is that it is from a closed cut that one separates a fragment.

This is not true of every surface as is easy to see on a torus or a ring if certain closed cuts can have the same effect, there are those which only simply open the bicycle tube of the torus and leave it well and truly in a single fragment.

It is also true that a double cut, provided they cross over one another, do not fragment a torus into two pieces, I said provided they cross one another. A little imagination (17) with the bicycle tube that I evoked is enough for you to grasp this.

I introduced this year the Klein bottle whose property is that there can be two cuts on it which do not cross one another and which are not for all that divided.

I indicate it here by a little schema: one cut here, the other opposite, also a closed cut. I give you the responsibility of seeing for yourselves what the result is. The result is a single strip which forms a double loop on itself, namely, something which resembles without being confused with it what happens when one cuts a Moebius strip in the middle.

This is not at all astonishing since the Klein bottle is made of two Moebius strips and that there is therefore a trait, a trait with a particular shape, the one which. as I

might say, goes around twice in this way, a very bad way of expressing it, the central void, the one of which we do not even have to speak when we speculate on surfaces, I am saying this to go quickly, it appears immediately and easily to you that this surface is thus divided into two Moebius strips.

You are going to see why I am re-evoking here the Klein bottle.

(18) There is a fourth shape of surface that can be defined by its edge. The one that I called, also in order to go quickly, before you, the cross-cap because it is in this shape that there is marked and that one calls in strict rigour, theoretically, the projective plane.

I think that I do not have to re-evolve, at least for the majority of you ..... For the others, let them for a moment imagine that here, this line shows the crossing which is produced here of a globe whose edges we would previously have opened in the way that we did it earlier, and if, once the edges are open, we make them rejoin themselves by intersecting themselves, namely, in such a fashion that not every point is going to be sutured with the symmetrical point, let us say, with respect to a line which faces it, but symmetrical with respect to a point.

We then obtain, I repeat, figured in a fashion which gives an image, what constitutes what I called provisionally the cross-cap or the projective plane.

What is here the property of the closed cut, of a certain type of closed cut? There exists a closed cut which has the same effect as on the sphere, with this difference, there is a difference of kind between the one and the other piece. One, and this is (18) pictured, is represented in the form that is described as that of the interior eight, and again the little portion that I will call differently today, and which is of great importance.

The other is a Moebius strip, I apologise for this long development, this long development is made to pose and introduce the following: the fact is that this central element, let us take it as such with respect to what you see here pictured in the shape of a Moebius strip, this central element which completes it and which closes it, and which is, what I called just now the little portion, this completes topologically what we have to say about the subjective positions of being.

What of the Moebius strip in the Klein bottle is completed with a symmetrical Moebius strip which closes it in the form of this something which resembles a torus, has as equivalent here something else of a nature that is different to the Moebius strip. This other thing, is what corresponds topologically to the  $\mathfrak{o}$ -object.

This  $\mathfrak{o}$ -object is essential for the analytic dialectic. I have heard it said, it has come back to me, that someone among my listeners had expressed himself on the  $\mathfrak{o}$ -object in Thomistic terms. The  $\mathfrak{o}$ -object is supposed to be the *esse* by essence, the something in which being would find its completion. Of course, such a misunderstanding is possible.

Up to the time that this topological image is there to make you sense that what is involved is the closing of *Entzweiung*, the occultation of the impossibility, the consummation of indetermination, this indetermination of which I spoke to you

earlier which is that of the place of the *Entzweiung* and of this false assurance of certainty which is established in the masking of division.

Such is the function of this object, I would say, which conforms so little to a good shape, for you can only imagine it as this little disc, whose badly connected, hanging and circular shape comes to overlap itself, as the figure on the bottom right shows. It is nevertheless not something different to an ordinary surface but this side, I repeat, that is antipathetic to the good shape, this side that I would call the rag, this rag is the shape, the shape in which there is presented in the four registers where there is mapped out in the agency the subjective positions of being, namely, what is called in analysis, the object, the breast, the faecal object or excrement, the look and the voice, it is in this shape, in this topological shape that the function of the **o**-object is conceived. And this is why the equivalence, the possible substitution of the **o**-object for the conjunction to the other characteristic to a certain world, a micromacrocosmic world which (21) prevailed up to a certain date of the world where man bends himself and joins himself to the reality of a preformed other, of the one that he made in his image, in the image that is similar and at the same time inverted.

The cut, the cut in the history and also in the status of the subject as such, is, at the moment when for this partner there is substituted the function of the **o**-object, it is in so far as I am **o** that my desire is the desire of the Other and it is for that reason that it is through this that there passes the whole dialectic of my relationship to the Other, the big O, the one which last year I defined for you by the relationship of alienation.

The **o** by substituting itself for it, allows us the other mode of the relationship, that of separation, something in which I establish myself as fallen, where I establish myself as reduced to the role of rag in what was this structure of the desire of the Other by which mine was determined.

It is through the fact that the suturing, that the soldering of my subjective relationship, of my subjective position as being can be found in the **o**-object that there passes the true nature of the dependence on the Other and especially on his desire. For phantasy is nothing other than this conjunction of the *Entzweiung* of the subject with the **o** thanks to which a fallacious completeness comes to overlap the impossible aspect of the real. The character of covering that the phantasy has with respect to the real cannot be, ought not to be articulated otherwise.

The analyst passes through the desire for this repositioning of the ego as subject in this **o** that I was for the desire of the Other and no disentangling is possible of the enigma of my desire without this re-passing through the **o**-object.

I heard, not too long ago, in one of my analyses, there being employed the term in connection with someone for whom analysis did not seem to have been a great success from the point of view of personal qualities. "There are then" said my analysand, making himself an objector for the occasion, "analytic miscarriages."

I rather like that formula. I would never have invented it ..... In effect there is a turning point of analysis where the subject remains dangerously



suspended on this fact of encountering his truth in the *o*-object. He may remain there, and one sees that.

My course for next year I will give then on what is lacking to the *x* subjective positions of being, I will give it on the nature of the *o*-object. If I were speaking to you in English I would have said *the significance of the object small a*, and if I had done so in German I would have said *die Bedeutung des Objektes kleines a*. But since I speak to (23) you in a tongue closer to that tongue fresher than all the tongues, which is called Latin, I will inspire myself from the *De natura* something, *rerum* and I would say to you *De natura objecti a* and I would add perhaps *et de consequenti*.

I can only deplore on this occasion that mother church is abandoning this tongue which has the great privilege of rendering precisely absolutely hermetic the explanations about the ceremonies that must be given while they are happening. When they are given in Latin there is a chance that one will comprehend that it is the incomprehensible that is important.

Reassure yourself, I will not give next year's course in Latin. Although you never know. I will perhaps give one just to teach you.

I would not like to leave you without all the same having illustrated a little bit what all of this means because there are perhaps some who believe that I am far from the clinic in telling you this story.

There are a certain number of subjective positions which are well and truly concrete with which we have to deal even if we do not see that in the symptom, it is always necessary to search out where the knowledge is, where the subject is but not to go too quickly as regards knowing what sex we are dealing with. But in analysis there is the Other and we perceive the fashion in which, with respect to the Other, to the big *O* there are posed the problems of desire.

(24) Today I will not return to the major repartition of the demand, of the *jouissance* of the Other and of the anxiety of the Other as corresponding to the three perspectives determining the respective aspects of neurosis, perversion and psychosis.

In neurosis, from which our experience began and which is just as fundamentally our daily experience, it is with respect to the demand of the Other that there is constituted the desire of the subject.

To say that it is with respect to the demand to the Other is not going against what I am saying: the desire of the subject, is the desire of the Other but his aim, because it is also the principle of his maintenance in the neurotic position, is the demand of the Other, what the Other demands, of course, is not what he desires. I insisted enough, I think, on this radical *Entzweiung* for me not to have to illustrate it in you here, besides, take up everything that I may have left as a commentary on one or other point of the *Traumdeutung* in order to pursue it even into the structure of feminine homosexuality, you will put your finger on this *Entzweiung* and the hysteric charges a third person to respond to the demand of the Other. For her part, she sustains herself in her desire as unsatisfied. And that is why it is to the

symptomatology, to the evolution of the hysteric that we have the most rapid access but, at the same time, which veils it in part to the fact of castration.

(25) Castration is too instrumental, too much of a consideration in the hysteric and also too easy to reach because most of the time the hysteric is already the castrated object, for it not to hide it from us.

The obsessional like the neurotic is in the same situation. He operates differently with the demand of the Other. He put himself in his place and he offers him the spectacle, the spectacle of a challenge by showing him that the desire that this demand provokes in him is impossible.

In fruitful cases, because they exist, of obsessional neurosis he demonstrates to him that in its place that everything its possible. He multiplies his exploits,. All of this has also a considerable relationship with castration and if he snubs, if he degrades, if he mocks in this way the desire of the Other, well then, it is, as we know, to protect his penis.

From the place of the Other, through all the calculated risks that he runs, he experiences himself as a safeguarded phallus. This is where oblativity is at work. He offers everything instead. There are no greater oblates than the true, than the major obsessionals. He offers all the more willingly in that everything that he offers is, as you know, shit.

So then, forcing his hand by interpreting the phantasy of fellatio, which may come up, (26) in effect, and which ordinarily comes up in the analysis of the obsessional, imagining that it is the avidity for the penis that directs him, by making it the object of communion, well then, it is in reality a miscognition in the analyst, the effect in him of the confusion between the lost phallus and the faecal object and which, by involving the subject in analysis in a dialectic of touching, of not touching, of contact or of no contact, testifies properly speaking to the truth of what I am saying because this dialectic for the treatment of the obsessional is properly, as I might say, not that of property but that of cleanliness.

The subject, in analysis, along such a path, with such a method, is invited to what I defined as being the function of the *o*-object, to find his truth in the *o*-object, under its faecal species, which is properly, of course, what in fact delights the obsessional, who asks for nothing but that.

You see that this theory has practical consequences, that it allows there to be articulated objections, structures objections against something which is presented as not being without clinical effect and even up to a certain point beneficial. Since the whole danger comes precisely from satisfying the demand that we see being manifested in the neurotic.

When I take up again this dialectic of the possible and the impossible I will show you (27) that after all it is nothing other than what Freud uncovers for us as being the opposition of the pleasure principle and the reality principle.

But I do not ask how it is possible for neurotic suffering to be a pleasure, even though it is very obviously demonstrated.

I cannot demonstrate how it is possible except by doing him a bad turn but I can manifest it by putting myself at the place where I render impossible the satisfaction of the demand which is hidden under this suffering.

I will not go any further today about the clinical details because I must conclude.

I will not tell you how the phobic patient comes under the same rubric which is always the relationship to the demand of the Other. I spoke to you enough about the signifier that is lacking to close and terminate what I have to say to you today on this point where there really culminates the whole discernment that Freud has of the unconscious phenomenon when he speaks about the final desire that dwells in the dream, which is the true desire of the Other; the desire that we should sleep. That it is at the moment when a dream comes to this high point of fixing itself in this immobile figure where really for us there is incarnated in the deepest way the nature of phantasy and of its function as a covering of reality. Think of the dream of the Wolf man. If the phantasy wakens us, and in anxiety, it is so that reality will not appear.

(28) May you simply be sufficiently awake for the sense of the word future in my drawing to touch you from now on.

I will not strip the Other either of his knowledge nor of his truth. The end of analysis if it is what I inscribed in the symbol S, signifier of  $\emptyset$ , are these terms: the Other knows that he is nothing.

**Seminar 24: Wednesday 23 June 1965**

Our last meeting for this year. I wanted it to be one of the seminars described as closed, namely, this moment or this place where I manifested, this year, the desire to hear, in short, a certain number of eventual responses to what I was led to put forward to you in my lectures.

It is an enterprise which has not revealed itself, this year, to be too risky. Nevertheless, we have almost, for this last meeting, not perhaps all that I was expecting from certain people who had expressly manifested the desire to be present by speaking at one of my seminars of this year, but found themselves, as happens to psychoanalysts, always very busy, and caught for time.

Good. With that, point I had a pleasant surprise. There was brought to me, at the last minute, a text on a book which, as you are going to see, seems to me to be very very important. You will see why it seems to me to be very important. It is not only because I could talk to you about it very relevantly as relating to certain reference (2) points that I think I very clearly elucidated before you, this year, concerning what is called desire.

And then, subsequently, you will have an intervention from someone you have already heard who forms part of this new stratum always ready to go into battle when perhaps older people take things more slowly.

So then, I am going to give the floor, without delaying any longer, to the person who is going to give you her commentary on this work whose name I will not take the freshness off before she speaks about it. It is Madame Montrelay who was kind enough to give me this pleasant surprise.

**Madame Montrelay:** On this eve of vacation, perhaps it is not too frivolous to suggest to those of you who have not already done so, to read Marguerite Duras' last novel, *The ravishing of Lol V Stein*. This book appeared last year, and was not always favourably welcomed by the critics. They reproached her for an excessively enigmatic subtlety. One finds there, in fact, the usual style of Marguerite Duras: a slow rhythm, an ambiguity of texture, a passionate understanding of words and also of the heart. *The ravishing of Lol V Stein* goes in the same direction as the preceding narratives by (3) Marguerite Duras, in its search for a lost moment. This instant, which occurs completely by chance, fascinates the principal character of the narrative - remember the scenario of *Hiroshima mon amour* - it fascinates him because it is there that his certainty is inscribed.

This certainty is extremely tangible, moreover, in the style of Marguerite Duras which irritates a lot of people, which is quite comprehensible because it insists the more it slips away. It seems to coincide with memory or rather what Jacques Lacan calls a memory (*une mémoire*).

If I evoke this last term it is not in order to note, purely and simply, that it constitutes the mainspring of the novel. This affirmation is just as true of the works of Proust, Butor, Simon and so many others. It is perhaps truer than about the works of Marguerite Duras where memory does not constitute so much the mainspring as the object of the narrative, which is curiously spoken by another. I mean that it appears here with a particular clarity that it is the desiring discourse of the other that we are living, with the subject Lol V Stein, the event which holds her prisoner.

It goes without saying that this novel is the nth narrative which has been made in the third person. What is surprising is that the unaccustomed relief of the first person who speaks about the third, this relief is in a third dimension in which the subject Lol emerges infinitely more present, more disturbing, than one can account for, by the unique use of the first person. These dimensions which Jacques Lacan has designated for us this year, to which I just alluded, particularly what was named by him last week, the dialectic of the relationship with the other *qua* relationship of alienation, these dimensions even structure Marguerite Duras' novel which it is time for me to summarise for you.

Lola Valerie Stein, nineteen years old, American, on the point of marrying, is suddenly separated at the end of a ball, not from her fiancé, Michael Richardson, but from the couple formed by her fiancé and Anne Marie Stretter, these two having, in the course of the ball, having recognised one another in a passion that is as sudden as it is definitive.

This, I think, is how things ought to be said. Lol, who has seen the couple beginning to fall in love by the simple - I borrow this term from Serge Leclair - circuit of the look, looks on, for her part also she does not intend to stop looking.

We must underline right away the strangeness of Lol's character, indifferent, absent, here is the first presentation that is given of her by her friend. At college, she says, I was not the only one to think it, there was already something missing in Lol for her to (5) be "there", she says. "She gave the impression of of being in a state of passive boredom, putting up with a person she knew she was supposed to be butwhom she forgot at the slightest occasion. A miracle of sweetness but also of indifference." (3)

If Lol V Stein is so indifferent it is naturally because she does not clearly distinguish between herself and her surroundings. Anne-Marie Stretter, who appears on the contrary to be perfectly well defined, sure of herself, allows Lol, I imagine, to make the distinction, thanks to her, the distinction between a woman, this woman who is Lol V Stein and the desire of Michael Richardson.

This desire takes on for Lol, a significant value that was unsuspected up to then, even though she no longer loves her fiancé. Lol V Stein suffers the mark of this signifier in the shape of her forgetting. Lol's forgetting, its negation, are going to constitute her delight at being finally in the presence of the couple and her own presence or the present of presence, if I can invert in that way a formula that Heidegger gives for anxiety, in order to illustrate the opposite, namely,

satisfaction, where the present of presence takes an absolute value which represents the dead time of the ball, walled in, it is written, in its nocturnal light.

But more again than what we are told about the multiple aspects of the ball, what holds Lol is its ending, more precisely again the moment when she has just perceived the dawn while they do not know it yet.

(6) At that moment, Lol senses in terror that something is going to happen, that “it is going to happen”. And if I take up the terms recently quoted by Jacques Lacan, it is because they seem perfectly to express in their ambiguity the event that is sensed by Lol of her body as a waste scrap, or rather the becoming of her body as a waste scrap, a remainder, rejected more by the dawn than by the couple.

I take up this passage with more detail: “she knows,” writes Marguerite Duras, and she adds a little bit further on “they do not yet”, “at this precise moment, something ought to have been attempted which was not” (37). This was Lol’s temptation: strengthened by the knowledge of which she possesses the privilege for a brief moment, she senses herself on the point of using it, first to circumscribe, to perpetuate, this common fascination, which would be still possible if we were to suppose that Lol discovers for herself a sudden incantatory power.

But this is not the essential. What Lol desires, in the possession of her brief and fragile knowledge, is to be able to say why, really, the couple flees. And this is absolutely impossible.

If the words existed, to circumscribe what is being manifested, played out, before her about the reality of sex, the couple would remain. Lol is sure of it and we also participate in this certainty. We are totally suspended on it for a brief instant. We are (7) nostalgic for it.

I cannot read here the two splendid pages which lead us to this moment. I will content myself with quoting this expression of regret, this mourning of Lol:

“I like to believe - since I love her - that if Lol is silent in her daily life, it is because she believed for a fleeting moment, that this word might exist. It would have been an absence-word, a hole-word whose centre would have been hollowed out into a hole, the kind of hole in which all the other words would have been buried.” (38) Lol is very well aware that she is not able to articulate this word.

So Marguerite Duras continues in the same vein:

“It would have been impossible to utter it, but it would have been made to reverberate. Enormous, endless, an empty gong, it would have held back anyone who wanted to leave, it would have convinced them of the impossible, it would have made them deaf to any other word save that one, in one fell swoop it would have defined the future and the moment themselves.” “What can convince us of the impossible, who can say the truth about reality, beginning with that of sex”, Jacques Lacan asked a little while ago, “if not God. But God is absent.”

“Lol”, continues Marguerite Duras, “is not yet God, nor anyone” (39) Issuing from the absence of a word, from the absence of God, there remains nothing more than the body of Lol, horrible, terrible to sustain, the **o**-object which it is going to be henceforth (8) necessary to abolish. How can one tackle that? By ensuring that the throw of the dice which was Lol’s first forgetting is renewed but makes, as one might say, two blows from one stone. The forgetting of Lol by a real couple, must coincide with the abolition of her body experienced as **o**-object.

Then alone will this event be the arrival of the ravishing of Lol V Stein. And this in both senses of the term. The way in which Lol V Stein imposes on the reality of the beings who surround her the grid of her phantasy which is none other than the reconstitution on the rebound of the first chance, I will tell you later.

We will now make a few remarks, first of all in connection with this **o**-object as it appears in the course of the narrative. The first is that it constitutes in Marguerite Duras, as in Flaubert, Maupassant and also in the new novel, this tangible, palpable, material of the narrative which only properly speaking becomes an event through the intervention of the desire of the other.

In *The ravishing of Lol V Stein*, the object is the body, the look, but it is above all the missing word which, because it is lacking, does not exist any the less and in the most horrible fashion from the moment that its existence is raised, put in question. This word as hole, this hole of flesh, this “bloody incompleteness”, I quote, “this dead dog on the beach”(38), how many times already has it resonated in your ears, this word is, Lol.

(9) Lola, such a feminine first name with its final little “a”, and its sexed character. It harmonises in a curious fashion with the little bit of Valerie that remains, a “V”, and the brief density of the surname.

**Dr Lacan:** Madame Montrelay, do you think you would have the courage to take the plunge. What you have so well picked out in this work and in this text, try to get it across with your notes of course to sustain you, which are not notes, but a text, but without reading this text, because I think all the same that, not that it is not getting across, but that it has less impact than if you were to say, improvise, tell us the same thing as you are absolutely capable of doing, because I believe that it is important .....

**Madame Montrelay:** I have not prepared an improvisation.

**Dr Lacan:** Do not improvise but say what you have to say. In short, it is a question of something which might be a hisstory, a psychological history, namely, that one could in effect go back to the childhood of Lol V Stein. The originality of this is diminished by the fact that you know the American usage of giving in the form of an initial, to represent the presence of a second fore name in the form of an initial.

(10) The first name is a shortened name, its Lola. This Lol V Stein is absolutely not psychology, I mean people speak about her in terms of what was already strange about her, but the important thing is what happens to her at a moment given as unique, upon which she remains, one could say from outside if we were

doing psychology, she remains hooked. She remains hooked up to the fact that one fine evening, with her then fiancé, it happens that a third person, a charming woman enters, the fiancé looks at her, and the affair is settled, they will leave together at the end of the evening, and everything happens really in full sight not just of Lol, but of everyone.

Everything that happens in the rest of Lol V Stein's life and specifically what is reported to us, what is reported to us by a narrator whom we do not know. There is a moment when in the middle of the book, the distance is covered and the narrator unveils himself, the distance is covered, it is I. He is the one who is speaking and who rejoins his own entry into the life of Lol V Stein.

What is going to happen with this character, how this character is encountered, is something which manifests the state in which Lol V Stein has remained in connection with this traumatic scene. What she is, essentially, after that, is what Madame Montrelay is going to try to explain to you. What I was able to say this year about the (11) subject and his supports is here truly illustrated, illustrated in a fashion which does not for a single instant have structuralist or analytic pretensions, simply by stating things with the words that best illuminate it. It emerges that the very structure is written there. Earlier, Madame Montrelay read a text to you where there is this word hole for example. That is in the text. There are many other things in the text which is a text which seems, without our having done anything, Marguerite Duras and I, to meet, they are texts that are congruent with the very theme of what I put forward to you this year.

Take it up again, as you are able, and speak a little bit louder, with a little bit more rhythm. And if you can, leave your text. I would be very happy with that. Because you have certainly more than one thing to say. Or indeed read the pieces from Marguerite Duras when necessary: it is absolutely necessary that this should get across.

**Madame Montrelay:** The best way is perhaps is if I read first what I have here and afterwards we will see....

I was saying then that this object was a word, it was Lol. I was also saying that Lola had lost the a of Lola, that it had lost its sexed character and made her anonymous. But that, on the contrary, I believe that I have not yet said that with Lol V Stein, you have a mouthful.

(12) In fact we find in this verbal sequence, the characteristics, it seem to me, which were underlined by Serge Leclair in connection with this secret formula of poord'jeli. These characteristics seem to me to be the following:

- 1) The brevity with which there arises the formula which renders well the apparition of a nothing-at-all-something that we have previously encountered,
- 2) The acme, figured in an inverted form in the V in the centre, a fork, an incomplete triangle,
- 3) The natural reversion as regards the word Lol where the front is the same as the back but precisely, then, can we speak about reversion? It is something different.



4) The magical character of this formula, magical at least in the way it appears in the novel because it represents the master word that Lol should have said in order to close for ever the circuit of sense.

These are only suppositions. Nevertheless if, as Marguerite Duras underlines, Lol, when she pronounces a proper name, is incapable of naming - I can find the quotation later - it is quite possible that this present-absent word, far from sustaining here the symbolic order, only serves to want to justify the inexplicable, namely, the mystery of birth.

We will note, secondly, and very briefly, the ambiguity, the incoherence, with which (13) there is manifested in the narrative the femininity of Lol. It is tempting to think that Lol, counting for nothing, forgotten by the couple, apparently not desired by her parents, ceaselessly repeats this experience because this would allow her to articulate for someone else, but especially for herself, her enigmatic femininity.

One is struck in this novel by the absence of reference points, the rarity of phallic signifiers, it seems that Lol's sexuality is situated well on this hither side of an oedipal structure, in this relationship to the void that was evoked by Perrier and one of his collaborators in volume VII of *La psychanalyse*.

But before ending this presentation, it is perhaps necessary for us to give a glimpse of the rest of the novel. Lol V Stein, after the ball, after the crisis, the time of madness which follows it, gets married, has three children and lives in conformity to norms, in a small American town.

After ten years of marriage she returns to her native town and in the course of these afternoons where tirelessly she walks her body as one would walk a child, she encounters a couple, another one, made up of her old friend and a man whom she lays claim to, whom she decides to love in the most bizarre fashion.

(14) In fact, this man was to forget her as often, as absolutely as possible with a woman who is and who must above all be considered by him as possessing the fullness of femininity. That this woman had also attended the ball which is also her ball, is of course, for her, an essential condition for the charm of things.

The lover of Tatiana now tries to decipher, bit by bit, this immense phantasy conceived by Lol V Stein, for reasons that are now easy to locate. "I desperately want", he declares, "to be part of the word which emerges from the lips of Lol V Stein, I want to be part of this lie that she has forged. Let her bear me with her, let our affair take from this point forth, a different course, let her consume and crush me with the rest, I shall bend to her will, let my hope be crushed with the rest, to be bent to her will" (97).

This is what Jack Hold, the narrator, accepts to do. To meet Tatiana in a hotel near the town while Lol V Stein lying in a field of rye looks, looks. Looks at what? The lovers who at first pass sometimes near the window, and afterwards, naturally, nothing. At the window the forgetting of Lol V Stein that Jack Hold tries to bring about for the greater satisfaction of the trio. What secret plan has

taken hold of Marguerite Duras which led her to construct a story that is so frightening, so mad, so logically illogical in its smallest details?

(15) It is here that we must make a third series of remarks in connection with the use of persons in the narrative, particularly the unaccustomed, unusual breadth which was given to the first person, that of Jack Hold.

There follows first of all:

First remark: In the measure that our unique knowledge is established in a desire, a desire itself caught up in the net of a phantasy, that this knowledge is never fixed, always relative, possibility, one story among others. This is the way I believe certain contemporary musical works present themselves, those of Stockhausen for example.

Second remark: The desire of the other conditions the space of the novel, in other words its structure, a space open to all the winds where the desire of the one, let us say outside, can intersect at every point that of the other, supposed to be inside. How can the desire of the one be sutured to the desire of the other. It is in function of the  $\mathbf{o}$ -object but we are going to find that later.

Third remark: It would have been absolutely impossible to account for the subject Lol, to make her emerge in this quality of being, of truth, which sometimes leave you breathless, in other words it would have been impossible to grasp Lol at the zero point of her desire if it were not in the discourse of the desire of the other.

Fourth remark: This subject we grasp, well on the hither side of the *cogito*. Nothing (16) of it is ever formulated in the form of the one, of the unique. Here is what her lover says about it: "That was my initial discovery about her: to know nothing about Lol V Stein was already to know her. One could, it seemed to me, know even less about her, less and less about Lol V Stein" (72).

Let it be said in passing that this definition of love is not so bad, it seems to me. But what interests us here is that this cloudy, insipid subject, who has no ideas, who has not a single one, is the only subject of the novel who thinks she can manoeuvre her world, tracking, manipulating the couple of lovers into what kind of situations I will later say.

The fact is that the subject is to be grasped in a perpetual division between the desire of the other and the  $\mathbf{o}$ -object. Here she is anew this object, more present than ever in the second part of the novel. These eyes fixed wide open, which devour, absorb, decide about everything, this immense look lost in the bristling of the straw in a field of rye, is this  $\mathbf{o}$ -object which fascinates Jack Hold, which draws him into the phantasy, into her phantasy, or into the phantasy of the novel.

What Lacan told us, I believe, last week. I quote him textually: "It is in so far as I am the  $\mathbf{o}$ -object that my desire is the desire of the other".

So then, in this narrative, the third person is made the first, the first is to be taken as (17) the third. An operation of syntax, of desire, that certain novels of the eighteenth century depicted, I am thinking in particular of *Aux égarements du coeur*

*et de l'esprit* by Crébillon the younger "For a while, the marquise was ejected, leaving at five o'clock".

The new novel, to be located since Flaubert operates between the one who speaks and the luxuriance, the proliferation of the object, an interval, a lack, a pause, a silence which is the subject. Let us make no mistake about it, Marguerite Duras, who knows how to make silence heard, also speaks in the third person.

**Dr Lacan:** You have just heard a very important and very interesting text. We will try to arrange for you to have it. Is there here, I know that already, among people close to me, there are several people who have not allowed this text of Marguerite Duras to escape them. If they want to give an opinion now on what they have heard, I would be satisfied.

Does someone have something to say about it now? To give you the tone of the novel, I am going to read for you a little piece of the central chapter that I have chosen. I think it will be clear enough, in so far as the voice of the person who has spoken here has reached you, to be clear enough as regards the texture, the texture of (18) the novel for this chapter to take on its value.

The young girl, the young woman in question married rather quickly a very altruistic type of chap, who had, in a way, taken her under his protection as a sort of waif.

After ten years this waif has survived rather well and has come back to her native place, to her hometown which is called South Tahla, of which one could have warned her as regards the dangers that it presented for her, specifically as regards what are called memories that it is necessary to avoid for people for who are suffering from a bereavement, lives again in this town and it is there that, wandering around one day, she is going to meet someone who had already announced himself at the horizon of her vision, one could not say in a meeting, he entered into the field of her window, it is the narrator, at the same time he is the entity, the typical lover, but he is also someone she follows, who is there, the one who is going to take the place of the hole, of this gap, around which, in short, her whole being as subject is organised.

Following him, having met him on the street, she waits for what he is waiting, namely, the woman with whom she has a presentiment, she presumes he has an appointment.

"She did in fact arrive, she descended from a bus crowded with people on their way home from work.

The moment she heads towards him, with that very slow, very gentle, circular movement of her hips which makes her at every step, the object of some secret, ceaseless, caressing self-flattery, as soon as Lol sees the black mass of dry, mist-like (19) with the tiny, white, triangular face beneath, that face dominated completely by those very large, very bright eyes, gravely disturbed by their ineffable remorse at belonging to this adulterous body. Lol admits that she recognised Tatiana Karl", namely the woman who was the witness of the initial scene. Then and then only she believes the name that had been hovering on the edge of her consciousness for weeks was there: Tatiana Karl.

She was discreetly dressed in a casual black suit. But her hair was done with great care, there was a gray flower in it, she had pinned it up with gold combs. She had taken great care to fix the fragile hair-do with a long, wide, black hair band which, where it passed close to her face, framed her bright eyes, made them look even larger, even more sorrowful, and this hair-do, which would have been destroyed by the lightest exposure to the wind, which in fact a mere look would undo, she must have - Lol is speculating now - she must have had to imprison in a dark hair net so that, at the proper moment, he would be the only one who could breach and destroy its admirable artificiality, one single movement of his hand would bathe her in its fallen tresses, that marvellous head of hair which, suddenly, Lol remembers and sees again, luminously juxtaposed to this one."

Then she sees them meeting one another: "They were walking a step apart and (20) scarcely spoke.

I think I can see what Lol V Stein must have seen:

There is between them an incredible contact which does not stem from any intimate knowledge but on the contrary from a disdain for such knowledge. They have the same expression of silent consternation, of fright, of profound indifference. They go more quickly as they approach their destination. Lol V Stein spies, watches, invents these lovers. Their way they look does not deceive her. They do not love one another. What is there for her to say? Others will say it, she would say it differently. But she does not speak. Other bonds hold them in a grip which is not that of feeling nor of happiness, it is something else which gives neither pain nor joy. They are neither sad nor happy. Their union is constructed upon indifference, in a way which is general and which they apprehend moment by moment. All preference is banished from it. They are together, two trains which meet and pass. Around them the landscape, sensuous and lushly green is the same. They see it. They are not alone. One could deal with them. By opposite paths, they have arrived at the same result as Lol V Stein. They by doing, saying, trying, deceiving themselves, going away and coming back, lying, losing, winning, advancing, by coming back again, and Lol for her part by doing nothing" (49-52).

(21) This is where she follows them to this place which is the hotel, the hotel in the town where everyone is secure to conceal their clandestine loves. Lol knows this hotel because she went there in her youth with her lover who has abandoned her, Michael Richardson. She has no doubt come there sometimes during her walks. It is there that Michael Richardson had sworn his oath of love to her.

"The memory of the winter afternoon has become bogged down also in forgetfulness, in the slow daily glaciation of South Tahla" - this is the name of the town - "beneath her feet." It is she then, it is she who from there has gone on to the famous scene at the casino which tore from her the one who remained subsequently for her entire life this hole, this hole in the place of which there is no longer anything more than the trace of a lie. This is where they come to.

“I see how she gets there: Very quickly she reaches the field of rye, lets herself slip into it, finds herself sitting, stretches out on it. Before her there is this lighted window but Lol is far from the light.

The idea of what she is doing does not cross her mind. I believe again that it is the first time, that she is there without the faintest idea of being there, if she were questioned, she would say that she was resting there from the fatigue of getting there. From the fatigue that will follow, returning from there. Living, dying she breaths deeply; that evening the air is like honey, cloyingly sweet. She does not ask herself the source of this marvellous weakness which made her lie down in this field; she lets it act on her, fill her up to suffocation, lull her gently until Lol V Stein is fast asleep.

The rye rustles beneath her loins. The young rye of early summer. With her eyes riveted to the lighted window a woman sees the void, knotting, devouring this existing, invisible spectacle, the light of a room where others are.

In the distance with fairy-like fingers the memory of a certain recollection flits past. It grazes Lol a little while after she has lain down in the field, and it shows her at this late hour of the evening a field of rye, this woman who looks at a little rectangular window, a narrow stage, circumscribed as a stone where no actor has yet appeared. And perhaps Lol is afraid - but ever so little - of the eventuality of a still greater separation from the others. She knows all the same that some would fight, they would go running home once a residue of reason made them surprise themselves in this field. But it is the last fear that Lol has learned, the one that others will have in her place that evening. They would bravely destroy it in their breasts, but she quite the contrary, cherishes it, tames it, caresses it, with her hands on the rye.

The horizon on the other side of the hotel had lost all its colour. Night is falling. The shadow of a man crosses the rectangle of light, once and then a second time, in the opposite direction.” (53-55)

(23) And it is there that she follows in the form of this shadow theatre all the goings on of the lovers.

The end, her return to her own house, her husband is in the street. He is waiting for her, alarmed.

“She lies, she is believed. The love that Lol had experienced for Michael Richardson was for her husband the surest guarantee of his wife’s fidelity. She could not find a second time a man who had the measure of the one from Town Beach. Or she would have had to invent him. But she invented nothing, her husband believed.” (57)

You see that the dimensions and the register around which Marguerite Duras operates do not lack some side-long humour.

As regards what here is demonstrated and what can be shown, it is precisely in so far as this being, Lol V Stein, around whom one could recall many of the themes of this year up to and including, as was done earlier, the function of the usage of

the proper name which is articulated on several occasions and at several special points of this book with, apparently, God knows, a pertinence which might after all be the object of interrogation if we did not know, through our work this year, the profound consistency of this function of the proper name with everything that is involved in the (24) seat, in this central seat of the subject in so far as she is represented here in the most articulated way by the word hole, by the missing word, the hole-word: either the hole-word - and that it is in the measure that this being, this being designated by this proper name which is the title of the novel by Marguerite Duras, this being is only really specified, incarnated, personified in her novel in the measure that she exists in the form of this core object, this o-object of this something which exists as a look but which is a look, a look that has been set aside, an object-look, a look that we see on several occasions, of course, being renewed on this stage, punctuated, repeated on several occasions up to the end of the novel. Even when she has got to know this man, that she has approached, that she has literally hooked herself onto, as if she were rejoining here this subject divided from herself, the one who alone can support her, who is also in the novel the one who supports her, it is the narrative of this subject that makes her present, the only subject here is this object, this isolated object, this object by itself, in a way, exiled, proscribed, fallen at the horizon of the fundamental scene, which is this pure look that Lola Valerie Stein is, and it is nevertheless, in the novel, the only subject, the one around which there is sustained and turns and exists all the others and that is why the remark that was addressed to you earlier about this sort of sharp turn of the novel, from the old traditional novel, the one that was very prettily (25) illustrated for you by the theme extracted from Crébillon the younger, and also of the novel for the concierge, "the marquise went out at five o'clock," that from which a certain novel, at a certain moment excluded the rule and style in showing us that things should never be introduced, vivified except in the form of some monologue with which the ferret was passed from one to the other of the protagonists of the novel, it is here that one finds, in the form no doubt of a character who speaks in the third person, but who is the omnipresent character, the one who slips, who passes, who sees things in a way from the outside, contrary to the principle of Politzer, speaks and recounts the narrative in the third person. It is precisely in the measure that this is done that it allows there to be presentified somewhere the object in the form of an object, of a fallen object, of a detached object, of a waste scrap, to be that which is the essential being that we see that we see being incarnated with a degree of presence in a novel that to my eyes, to the eyes I think of those who have already read it, and to the eyes of those who have yet to read it, in the most intense form, what deserves to be called a subjectivity.

This is what, in short, you have been introduced to by what Madame Montrelay was good enough to prepare for you. If someone has a word to say on it, let him say it right away.

(26) **Dr Green:** Can you remind me of the name Jack Hold? How is it written?

**Dr Lacan:** H.O.L.D.

**Dr Green:** Good then, we have Lol V (alerie) Stein.

and then we have Michael Richardson and

then we have Tatiana Karl

Jack Hold.

It is simply some remarks which came to me precisely on the function of the proper name and of the incidence here, all the same, of certain signifiers which are repeated here. The missing “a” here cannot all the same escape the exceptional reduplication of this “a” three times in the first name of Tatiana and precisely also in her family name, constituting the central vowel of that name.

This then is already a first element which it is worth while pinpointing. On the other hand, between Richardson and the Karl we have also something which creates a correspondence; these two fragments of two phonemes in the bonds that unite the two protagonists.

What is lacking here already can be located at the level of the first name, at the level of the “a” which is precisely the syllable amputated from the first name Lola. The “a” is found again here, on the one hand at the level of this “a” we see that it corresponds in Karl with the name of Richardson, and one could obviously ask oneself the measure in (27) which this ending on a sound which obviously implies the birth of a link of filiation.

Finally, obviously, this central vowel of the name Hold being precisely what remains preserved of what is amputated at the level of Lola ought also to attract our attention.

These are some remarks which perhaps it seemed to me could be an object of an investigation for what was presented to us in the course precisely about subjectivity, in the course .....

**Madame Montrelay:** There is one thing that I did not say also in connection with Lol, which is that written in lower case letters that gives l 0 l.

**Dr Lacan:** Good, so then Jacques-Alain, over to you old chap. You are entering the arena with a little delay. So off you go. In fact I think you are all going to read this little novel during the vacation. You can read it in two and a half hours but then you have to re-read it twenty times. Announce your subject because I did not announce it earlier.

**Mr Miller:** My only task is to present to you a text which appeared in *Diogenes*, under the title of *Psychoanalysis in America*, by Norman Zinberg, a text that Jacques Lacan wanted to be drawn to your attention. I was only made aware of it a few days ago. No one, it appears, among those whom he asked, wanted to do this work which is a little unrewarding.

(28) It is then a not very greatly esteemed text that I am going to simply summarise for you.

But it must not be thought that in these words, I am saying that I lack interest for what I am going to try to make you understand. By informing you about what is involved in psychoanalysis in America according to Mr Norman Zinberg I see this interest at least of giving the opportunity to me who is speaking to you and also to certain of you who are listening to remind you that on all sorts of fronts battles are to be waged, battles which are just as much political as theoretical, it is in the United States of America first of all that we are confronted.

In denouncing the plague that the United States of America has brought to psychoanalysis I am only following the vigilance of which Jacques Lacan as far as I know has never ceased to affirm the imperative as regards what is elaborated starting from Freud in the United States, before whose ideological imperialism the university itself in this country all too often bends the knee.

Norman Zinberg's text takes its value from the fact that its author participates, obviously, in what he is denouncing about psychoanalysis in America. It is not some Lacanian excited by the words of the master who might come to sustain these (29) pretensions by a complicitous description geared to his own ends. This text in question testifies from two angles of the state of psychoanalysis in America:

- 1) By what it announces without prevarication about the plague that reigns there,
- 2) by the fact that it shows that the author himself, who knows that the plague is raging, is nevertheless affected by it.

By way of proof I only need this definition that he gives of the Freudian discipline as being the most comprehensive theory of general psychology because it considers the relationships of the individual with himself and with his milieu in terms of adaptation.

What is more that Mr Zinberg is not a brilliant intellectual, that in a word he is a little bit inadequate on the plane of the intellect, none of you will doubt when I read you this farcical epistemology of psychoanalysis:

“The two most important systems of thought in the first part of the twentieth century were the social Darwinism of Herbert Spencer and the economic determinism of Karl Marx. In broad lines and simplified to the extreme, Spencer's philosophy sees human essence in terms of battle and of competition, every man for himself, natural selection excluding mutual assistance.

(30) The Marxist theory of society where each person ought to help the others and renounce his individual aspirations for the benefit of more important goals of society is incorporated in the idea that the identity of each one is diffused in the state or even in the factory.

Psychoanalysis as a philosophy finds itself half ways between these two concepts. The first of these social theories appears to be rather close to the unbridled aggressivity of primitive humanity while the second one, the Marxist, even though shining with optimism with regard to man, seems to fear a little bit too much personal aspirations.

Psychoanalysis which takes into account the conflict between the fundamental nature of man in his milieu and which, despite its pessimism with regard to the basis of nature, does not abandon hope of a solution, offers a compromise between the two.”

This is sufficient to paint Mr Zinberg. But this gives all the more value to what he himself thinks of psychoanalysis in America. To say it in a few words, it is a



catastrophe. Psychoanalysis is going to die, psychoanalysis is almost dead and the analysts also.

How can it be cured? There is little, very little chance of a second chance.

(30) What Mr Zinberg himself says ending his article by the announcement of a treatment which everything that precedes it makes evident will not succeed of course, except by a radical subversion of American society.

This sentence of Mr Zinberg is: "we ought to resist the promotion of our discipline. We have perhaps a second chance."

Of what then is psychoanalysis dying in America? Why was the first chance of psychoanalysis in America lost?

Mr Zinberg replies, borrowing from Erik Erikson one of his expressions: "It is dying from an ethical illness" What is an ethical illness? What is this illness, this ethical illness, of which psychoanalysis in America is dying.

One could simply say that it is dying of its success. But this we all know, that no sector of American life, that there is no sector of American life which is not touched by psychoanalysis.

But I will take up simply a passage of this article which bears witness to it: "The newspapers furnish a proof of the way in which the mass media have absorbed and spread psychoanalytic ideas. The great news agencies go so far as to give in the news (32) simple slips of the tongue, it being understood thus that the person that has spoken revealed a feeling the opposite of what he wished to express and, generally speaking, opposed to this. The best examples come from the political campaign of 1960, from the fact that Mr Nixon was subject to slips of the tongue. Speaking about his running mate Henry Cabot Lodge he calls him my distinguished adversary. The news analysts would no doubt be incapable of speaking about the world if they were deprived of this use constant use of ideas ..... of ideas which come originally from psychoanalysis and which it is no longer necessary to signal as of being properly psychoanalytic, there having been completely accepted and forming part of the language."

**Dr Lacan:** I would like to pinpoint just now, as you have spoken about it, the fact that Erik Erikson in *Young man Luther* did not speak about an ethical illness affecting psychoanalysis but said the following. : "At the very moment when we were trying" - it is an imperfect - "to invent with a completely scientific determinism, a therapy for a small number, we were led to propagate an ethical illness among the masses." Namely, that Erik Erikson, let us leave to one side where we have to situate Erik Erikson, is all the same much closer to the essential Freudian milieu than Sullivan who is rather a culturist, is that not so?

(33) Erik Erikson writes then that he considers the conclusion of analysis in American society as representing an ethical illness. This means of the body social.

**Mr. Miller:** As it happens, you are taking me up then on a very precise point which is that this quotation therefore is simply displaced by understanding that

psychoanalysis itself was not an ethical illness. But it seems to me that it is precisely about that that I was talking, this ethical illness, one cannot say that it strikes the social body, if it strikes the social body it also strikes the psychoanalyst who effectively forms part of it and this ethical illness has struck him also. Thus effectively what Erik Erikson in this quotation means is: "psychoanalysis has spread an ethical illness". Now he finds that in expanding, it cannot expand it, because it is itself affected and that, in return, this extension of the plague affects it.

Psychoanalysis does not simply serve as a daily language, it also serves as a unifying language for practices which remained in a way fragmentary. For example for the social sciences. With the appearance of the book by Laswell around 1930 the sociologists, like the psychologists, the psycho-sociologists and the anthropologists begin to interest themselves in the individual and his personality in his relationships with the milieu. They utilise psychoanalysis more and more. When the social anthropologists join up with the foregoing there begins the straddling of functions and (34) of interests on a massive scale. What is more an attempt was made to separate out the polarities of thinking, a dichotomy between theory and empiricism, to go towards what Merton called a theory of the golden mean. In other words psychoanalysis here, or the social sciences, served as a necessary agent of liaison; this is what Zinberg says.

And now for a quite different domain, for cinema for example, Mr Zinberg recognises in it the same function: "the writers and the psychoanalysts found in a simplified accepted psychoanalysis the large human themes that they were searching for."

Therefore just as much for social sciences as for the cinema, one sees psychoanalysis deformed in this way, serving as a unitary language to gather together fragmentary practices. But the success, the diffusion of psychoanalysis is still not the ethical illness.

What ethical illness of psychoanalysis was spread? What illness did it become? Psychoanalysis, but this we also know, has come to sustain the function of overlooking the class struggle in America. This failure to recognise the class struggle is today implied by American capitalist society. We know it, we have read the articles in *Les Temps Modernes*, the numerous ones who have denounced it. Here I am (35) simply going to quote the passage because it takes its whole value of still being by Mr Norman Zinberg who has the appearance, who is infested by this plague.

"People appeal to psychoanalysts and to psychoanalytic psychiatrists on the occasion of any organised effort to remedy," what Mr Zinberg calls, "social insufficiencies". He is asked to work in collaboration with children's courts, criminal courts, prisons, houses of correction. He is called in for consultation by the agents of ..... and educational institutions from the kindergarten up to the university. His assistance is more and more demanded by industry for the settling of questions of personnel, for the orientation of workers according to their strengths and their capacity. Sometimes people look for his help in connection with larger problems of national or international importance and he forms part today of numerous federal organisations."

But this is still not the ethical illness of psychoanalysis. Perhaps to know what it is one has to be able to highlight this sentence: "Once it is admitted that it is appropriate to have oneself analysed, the fact of being able to offer oneself such a treatment was in itself a triumph." What does this mean if not what Mr Zinberg himself calls what (36) regulates the relationships of money in the United States. The attachment to money and to material goods and the desire to display them and to use them with ostentation was noted by all the indigenous and foreign observers ever since Tocqueville. Only if the analysand by going to have himself analysed wants to show ostentatiously that he has the money for it, the analyst himself, Mr Zinberg tells us, what he is trying to do is to sustain his scientific standing. In other words in this relationship in this analytic relationship is it not necessary to mark that it is psychoanalysis itself which has the status of an *o*-object.

And this might be collected perhaps in this sentence: "Analysis in the United States is analysis for display". Now one understands that the evil of psychoanalysis is in fact effectively its promotion, as Mr Zinberg says at the end of his article. "Stop promoting psychoanalysis, stop being ostentatious, forget about standing."

And what, for American society as a whole, is the function of this *o*-object which psychoanalysis has become? Here again we have to look for an apparently banal sentence, that of Mr Zinberg or one that is banal for him: "for the dynamic *nouveau riche* of the United States everything can be fixed". In effect to overlook the class struggle is only in fact the specification of this general suture which American society (37) gave itself as a goal to realise and which carries this name inscribed in the constitution, the pursuit of happiness. To pursue happiness, to pursue the adequation of man to his milieu, to pursue adaptation, this is perhaps utopia, it is in any case what is essentially demanded by the lure, this lure which is the function of the *o*-object, this lure which permits the fixing which permits fullness. It seems that it is psychoanalysis which has come to support it in America and this is what is admitted in this article.

So then you understand that the death of psychoanalysis only comes from its inversion. There is in America an inversion of psychoanalysis. If it is true that psychoanalysis is only possible when it is subject to the irreparable, if psychoanalysis is possible only if its term, if this word has a sense, that its term is the assumption of the irreparable which bears the name in Lacanian algebra of the lack of being.

How can one be surprised then at the disarray of the psychoanalyst as regards what? As regards his desire. This again is what can be read in Mr Norman Zinberg : "psychoanalysts have a sort of identity problem with respect to their work. Their principle goal is to try to ameliorate the state of health of humanity, however its conceptual signification may be worked out, should they on the contrary use a technique, a tool of research which allows there to be studied the mechanism of the (38) spirit, or should they construct, on the basis of their daily experience a broad psychological theory destined to explain at once health and illness? The question is: what does the psychoanalyst want, with this singular will which is that of desire? What is the desire of the analyst and we know for a long while that it is one and the same question as the following: what kind of science is psychoanalysis?"

After a picture of psychoanalysis in America, another one is lacking, but it would not be very well furnished, the one of psychoanalysis in the socialist world. So then I will not draw this picture for you because I know nothing about it. I will limit myself to quoting a sentence of Jacques Lacan extracted from a seminar of the year 1955/56 - I do not have a more precise reference - where Jacques Lacan said: "I find the prejudice that psychoanalysis encounters in the East, justified."

Yes, no doubt, Lacan was right, better no psychoanalysis than that psychoanalysis, this plague-ridden psychoanalysis. But you, the Lacanians, the Lacanian analysts you ought to know and no doubt you know that you are the guardians of the restored truth of Freud, guardians all the more precious because you are not numerous.

Mr Norman Zinberg promises all of you that the best years of psychoanalysis are still to come. He says at the beginning of his article: "certain signs indicate that the (39) influence of psychoanalysis in America has reached its apogee and perhaps even begun to decline while in Europe and in Japan its popularity is no doubt only beginning." He explains himself in saying: "a prosperous middle class in western Europe and in Japan, a prosperous middle class that will be inevitably materialistic, breaking with traditional society begins to interest itself in psychoanalysis."

Himself at the end of his article puts you on guard. "It is difficult to be patient" - he is addressing himself to Americans - "but perhaps by our example we will perhaps be able one day to help the growing psychoanalytic institutes of Europe and of Japan to avoid our errors and to spare their countries so many bad jokes."

This task, you know that it is yours, and that Jacques Lacan has destined you for this task. You see, with the announcement by Norman Zinberg that what could be called a civilisation of officials is being prepared in imperialist countries. In other words you ought to preserve the consciousness that you are a bastion, namely, that you are under siege. But if this can reassure you, do we not all know that the theories of Americans, like their bombs, are only after all paper tigers.

**Dr Lacan:** The things one hears! Good, that's fine. I cannot of course put myself forward even for an instant to temper these appeals, God knows, to those precisely whom I cannot foresee what they will make of what I brought them in the course of the years which are now already long and which begin seriously to stretch back into the past.

I would like you to get to know this article, as well as the little novel I was talking about earlier, this article in *Diogenes*. It really has a great documentary value simply because, whatever may be the limits, in effect, that one can discern in certain of the author's remarks, it is very well informed, and manifestly he is someone who is very very very close to the most consistent analytic milieu and specifically for example very close to the executive whose last representative, Mr Maxwell Kitleson, who is now dead, is quoted in this article and precisely for the fashion in which he held the rudder of this singularly committed ship in a certain adventure.

I believe that the interest it has for you who have been willing, for different times, long or short, to follow my teaching and to trust my word, the interest is in an account (41) which is really very objective, enabling you to see how there is posed, for someone who sincerely tries to situate it, to draw up an account of it, how there is posed the question of what analysis really is. And I think that this has its interest even quite independently of one or other excesses which are denounced and which are always so much more tangible when one knows the area, a certain style.

I remember the way in which I came, more or less truly exasperated, not horrified, from people who had nothing else than the information that I had given them for their first visit over there, of what was being made of it, naturally in a current fashion, in an average, common fashion, as they say, to see all the same the following, I think that for my average listener I will limit myself to expecting from the reading of this article the fact that I am not asking that this should be granted to me as a point, a homage but to know that a certain way of posing the problems must for everyone, and specifically and specially for those here who are analysts, make the handling of their function or the fashion in which they think about it, literally, more breathable

Already if I only had this role and this function which I believe would not be negligible and that the fact of rendering possible a certain mental life which does not engage itself in a certain number of impasses or of false antinomies for example this biologism (42) opposed to a so-called culturalism, which you know precisely is one of the most debatable things in these developments - I am speaking about culturalism - in the developments of psychoanalysis in the United States, is something which is rendered completely tangible, very tangible by this article.

In what I have taught you, or that I continue to teach you, let us say that it is very necessary that I always push it a little bit further on, I mean that if, for example, I had given you something which might correspond to the work that I will end up giving you one day, if I had given it to you at the time of the Rome report, and I did not do so, very intentionally, you will see in it now many things, God knows, which, of which I cannot even say that I have to attribute them to what I have been able to propagate, even admitting that from the little circle to which I have always very specially devoted myself, waves came from elsewhere, that it is too easy to see in echoes, an echo is not always the echo of a noise that one makes, echoes come from elsewhere and in a word, if now even the offices of cultural painting with which the complexes of the bourgeoisie are seasoned since the end of the last war, these offices reverberate for some years in using in a more or less relevant fashion the term of signifier, I would not (44) go so far as to make it a merit of mine, simply that I allowed people, a milieu, which is the medical milieu which in scientific matters one cannot always say to be distinguished by the fact of being especially to the forefront, let us say that I warned it in time that there existed things elsewhere, around linguistics that they should at least take into account if they wanted to be up to date. All of this is the out of date side, as one might say, of what gives me, nevertheless, of course, no less trouble for all that.

If I maintained a milieu, let us say, in an adequate atmosphere from the point of view of what I called earlier and very intentionally the dimension of the

breathable, it is of course because this is the most contingent aspect, the one which, God knows, with time will only interest people who are writing the minor history of the époque. It is sure that what is important is the skeleton, the nerve of a certain construction which for its part has slowly come to light in the measure that I believed I was able to sustain it, with qualified examples, from a determined orientation of experience, from something which is not easy to make pass into the forefront of your preoccupations, the forefront of certain forums where things are discussed quite consciously and that what I was able to detach from this usage has obviously more difficult aspects and that (45) it is not easy either to diffuse precisely one or other thing that I can only designate by the letters of an algebra. This is the point, this is the efficacy of the work to which I convoke those who have ears to hear what I am saying, not as a pleasant music, designed to receive from near or far or elsewhere some echoes, which is something that demands a practical effort and the exercise of this practice of theory which is involved in my discourse.

Let no one be alarmed moreover about what may have been said here about elsewhere, uniquely supporting me from an American text itself, about what may have been said here about the chances, which are always so difficult to measure, the detours also that we may expect, as regards the future of what is happening in America.

For myself, who have not had up to now, God knows, the time or the leisure to go there and see on the spot how the operation is carried out even though one or other person I would say represents me there in a certain fashion and that I have had, God knows, also the surprise that one or other person that I did not expect is interested in what I write, I think for my part, that in truth everything can make itself heard in America and that from the moment that they give themselves the trouble, even the doctrine that you have the goodness, the kindness to call Lacanian may also one day (46) have some tiny effects there and that it is not condemned for all that to be subject there to the effects of a mysterious plague to which one not must not either fall into the mistake of according a too essential consistency.

It is the years to come that will give us an account of all this. You have, this year, been willing to sustain me with your zeal, with your presence and with your friendship; allow me, before wishing you a good vacation, to thank you for that.