

## 11/25/75, Yale University, Law School Auditorium

*Conferences and Conversations at North American Universities. Published in Scilicet n° 6/7, 1975, pp. 38-41.*

*Translated by Jack W. Stone.*

<sup>(38)</sup>The hysteric produces knowledge.

The hysteric is an effect; as every subject is an effect. The hysteric forces the "signifying material" to confess (*avouer*), and on this basis constitutes a discourse.

Socrates it the one who began it.

He was not a hysteric, but much worse: a subtle master. That did not prevent him from having hysteric symptoms: he would sometimes stand on one foot without budging, without any way of pulling himself out of what we call catatonia. And that did not prevent him from having a lot of effects: like the hysteric, he delivered (*accouchait*<sup>1</sup>) the knowledge of anyone who came along, a knowledge that in sum he did not know himself.

This resembles what Freud, belatedly, called the unconscious; Socrates, in a certain fashion, was not too bad an analyst.

The slave is defined by someone having power over his body. Geometry is the same thing; it has a lot to do with the body.

The body has as a property that one sees it and badly. One believes it is a balloon (*soufflure*), a sack of skin. It is a question of a support, a figure, which is to say, an imaginary, with a material I pose as real (opposite, first figure).

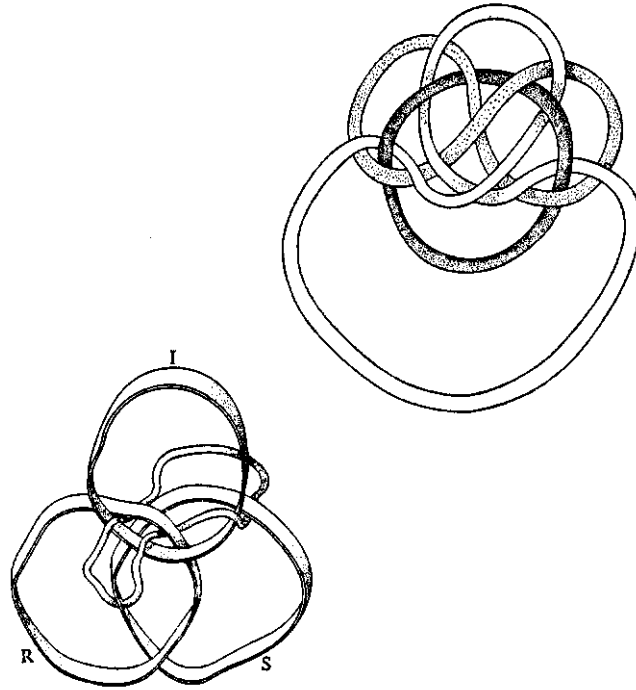
How did the slave react?

He knew the master attached a price to his body; he was property and that by itself protected him. He knew the master was not going to cut up his body: little chance that his body would be fragmented. At the same time, he knew himself to be sheltered from many things.

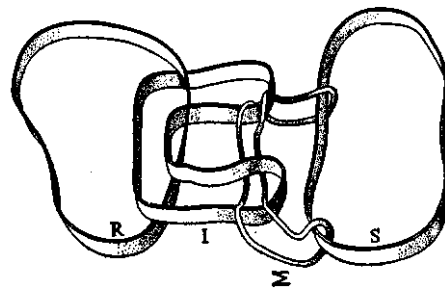
<sup>(39)</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Delivered in the sense of delivering a baby [tr.].



R, I, and S are strictly independent. If one pulls S to the bottom, completely to the back, the knot is then found to be pulled over the R at four points (which could, no doubt, be brought together), but that necessitates that the I pull over S; then, we have this:



<sup>(40)</sup> What one says lies: condiment (*Ce qu'on dit ment : condiment*).<sup>2</sup> The fourth ring is the symptom.

Between the body inasmuch as it is imagined and what links it (that is, the fact of speaking), man imagines he thinks. He thinks inasmuch as he speaks. This speech has effects on his body. Thanks to this speech, he is almost as clever as an animal. An animal gets by (*se débrouille*) quite well without speaking.

The real: as soon as this term is introduced, one asks oneself what one is saying. The real is not the outside world; it is also anatomy, it has to do with the body.

It is a question of knowing how all this is knotted.

The required minimum was that each of these three terms, imaginary, symbolic (the

<sup>2</sup> *Qu'on dit ment* and *condiment* are homonyms in French [tr.].

chitchat, that is) and real, would be strictly equal to the two others, knotted in a way that the part would be equal.

I am seeking to produce another geometry that would take on what there is of the chain.

This has never been done.

This geometry is not imaginary, like that of triangles; it is of the real, of rings of thread.

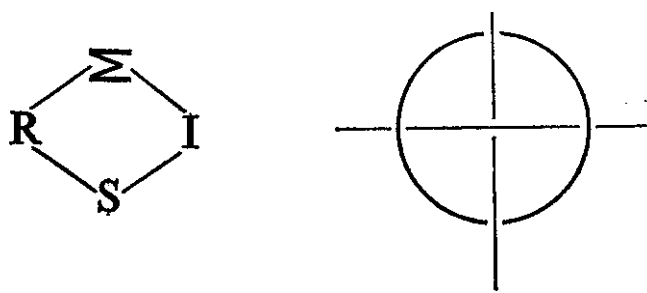
Let us suppose that the body, the chitchat, and the real each drift down the river on their own . . .

Freud's *Id* is the real.

The symbolic, from which the superego arises, has to do with the hole.

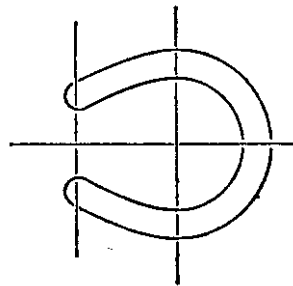
If there has to be a fourth element, this is what the symptom realizes, inasmuch as it makes a circle with the unconscious.

If we wish to put the real and the imaginary at two ends, we will have:



<sup>(41)</sup>If one raises (*monte*) a horizontal bar or if one pulls the vertical line to the right or the left, you, you will find yourself wedged in (*coincé*): this makes a knot.

(The straight line is equivalent to the ring of thread if one supposes there a point at infinity.)



The symptom is the most real thing a lot of people have; for certain persons one could say: the symbolic, the imaginary, and the symptom.

Phallic *jouissance* is at the joint of the symbolic and the real, outside the imaginary, the body, as something that parasites the sexual organs.