

**THE FACT OF SAYING NOTALL
WITH REFERENCE TO LE GAUFEY'S WORK:
LACAN'S NOTALL, LOGICAL CONSISTENCY,
CLINICAL CONSEQUENCES**

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Christian Fierens pays Guy Le Gaufey the tribute of critically reading Notall in a positive way. As author of Lecture de L'Étourdit, he proposes that this later work of Lacan throws new light on Le Gaufey's theoretical and clinical conclusions.

Some texts of Lacanian psychoanalysis, notall (*pastous*), leave us with too strong an impression of mixing an inconsequential clinical practice without consequences with an uncritical reading of Lacan and an author's libido that is apparently illogical. There remains then to the reader three possible tracks; either he will capitulate unconditionally and join the good cause presented by the author (which can be called an introjection), or indeed he will rebel without considering the reasons adduced and will heap on the work the facile abuse of being incomprehensible and detestable (which one can call a projection), or indeed finally he will set to work without delay to make good as well as he can for the flagrant lack that the work gives proof of (which one could call an interjection).

Far from being inscribed in this category of works, the books of Guy Le Gaufey¹ do not fail to challenge and to make one work not as a way of trying to make good what may appear to be inconsequential, pre-critical or illogical, but on the contrary in the logical continuation of the obvious desire of the author to read Lacan with a critical eye and to draw out its clinical consequences. The three parts of Le Gaufey's last work are called: *The logic of the sexual fault, towards a critical reading of the formulae of sexuation, some clinical consequences of the logical difference between the sexes.*

¹ *The incompleteness of the symbolic*, 1991; *The eviction of the origin*, 1994; *The specular lasso*, 1997; *Anatomy of the third person*, 1999; *Lacan's notall*, 2006. The five works were published by EPEL, Paris.

1. The question of the desire of man and of his libido can be summarily expressed: is there one and only one libido (the masculine of course!) or indeed are there two kinds, the feminine and the masculine? Le Gaufey very logically situates the question in the perspective of the medieval quarrel about universals and clarifies in a very convincing way the relationship – for here there is indeed a relationship – between the age-old logical question and the eternal question of the difference between the sexes. It is logic which allows him to say ‘neither one nor two’ in order to hasten towards the lack, the absence of a substantial being, the sexual fault that gives rise to the whole problematic of enjoyment.

2. The sexual fault – there is no sexual relationship – is indeed the starting point for the critical reading for the formulae of sexuation. No doubt post-Freudian psychoanalysis has focussed on the notion of object in order to characterise libido at its different stages as well as the avatars of transference. From this literature, Lacan, in his sublime fashion, rescues the part-object in order to confer on it all its Freudian dignity and, starting from there, to invent his *o*-object. The latter can all the same not acquire a consistency of its own except by a reflection that Le Gaufey situates in ‘a kind of brawl with Kant’ (p. 27),² more precisely in the confrontation with Kant’s table of nothings.³ There is no Lacanian *o*-object without an architectural study of the question of what nothing ‘means’ (later we will return to this explicitly). The whole question is to know how this question of the nothing is going to allow Lacan ‘his promotion of an unprecedented part’, namely an *o*-object inasmuch as it is radically different from the classical conceptualisation of the part-object. Whatever may be the importance of this confrontation with the table of nothings, Lacan did not delay excessively – it’s the least that can be said – on Kant and, Le Gaufey very faithfully follows Lacan with respect to the phallic function which is supposedly able to put into relationship the elements of two sets (men and women), with this particular circumstance that the supposition in question is impossible since the set of all the women does not exist. The point of attack now operates in the framework of the logic of sets and on the basis of the Aristotelian logical square, which Lacan is going to recast from top to

² Unless otherwise stated, references are to Cormac Gallagher’s translation of Le Gaufey’s article which appears in this issue of *The Letter*.

³ At the very end of the *transcendental analytics* in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The three pages form part of the appendix consecrated to the *Amphibologie* of the concepts of reflection. We ought to clearly note that, from Lacan’s side, the brawl stops rather suddenly for want of a sufficiently combative confrontation.

bottom not without implicating a revision of logical belonging, of negation (Damourette's and Pichon's discordance and foreclosure), of existence, of the universal and of the particular. This staggering revision is tackled principally in terms of two possible interpretations of the particular: 'in following the natural tongue, the word **some** can in effect be understood in two different senses' (pp. 45-46), one that Le Gaufey (following Jacques Brunshwig) calls maximal and the other minimal. When I say 'some A belong to B', I leave in suspense the possibility that 'all the As belong to B' (the minimal sense of the particular) or on the contrary I can mean in addition that there are 'only some As that belong to B', in other words 'not all the As belong' (the maximal sense). Lacan's notall will thus be equal according to Le Gaufey to the particular maximal which ought to be made explicit in two propositions: 'There are elements A that belong to set B' and 'there are elements A which do not belong to set B'. In other words the negative particular maximal is worth the same as the affirmative particular maximal: in the two cases we have simultaneously 'there are those that are....' and 'there those that are not....'. One could conclude too quickly from this that the difference between the maximal particular and the minimal particular is only conventional: it would be enough to agree on what one means by 'some'. But the maximal particular, in the sense of notall, pushes further when it refers to a certain use of concepts for a given practice; this is what happens when we admit that, for all the fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis, we are plunged into this structure of the maximal particular without any possibility of definitively getting out of it. In other words whatever the question posed, there will always be the answer, for one part yes, for one part no. We can speak at this level of a general hypothesis of the maximal particular. Phallic? 'There are those who...' and 'there are those who do not'. Hysterical? 'There are those who...' and 'there are those who do not...'. Repression? 'There are those who...' and 'there are those who do not...'. The consequences are much more serious than the weather forecasts of the Norman 'perhaps yes, perhaps no', which the rain will soon decide. In the case of the maximal hypothesis of psychoanalysis, no shower will come to liberate us from the notall, from the maximal particular, and we will always remain in indetermination. What are the consequences of the general impact of the notall or of the maximal particular for clinical practice?

3. Let us first of all remark that this general hypothesis of the maximal particular or again of the indecision with respect to the organising of concepts is equivalent to the Freudian approach of each case as radically

new or again to the Lacanian ‘being able to ignore what one knows’. One could wait for more information before making a decision on organising and consider the hypothesis of the maximal particular as a prudent rule. Psychoanalytic ethics goes further. In deciding never to organise individuals or observations under a concept, namely, by deciding that everything we say remains particular, is a maximal particular, and implies also its counterpart in the expression (‘some x are phi of x’ and ‘some x are not phi of x’), we will confer on existence the power of escaping any concept by which we might have believed we could corner it. ‘In affirming existences which do not fall under the concept I give precedence to existence, and in so doing, without in any way attacking the conceptual order itself, I offer it on the contrary a possibility of consisting otherwise than as the map of a country that is already there...’ (*Le pastout de Lacan*, p. 121). Alongside a spiritual family which thinks it can use the conceptual architecture in order to express the world order and which depends on the minimal conception of the particular, there exists another family for which the conceptual architecture misses the world order and depends on the maximal conception of the particular. A whole current of psychoanalysis functions according to the principle of the clinical vignette and of its order. Nevertheless does not the apparent promotion of the clinical point of view through the vignette aim at a practice of the particular coupled with a noticeable distrust of theory? This kind of conceptualisation, if it is indeed a conceptualisation, rapidly leads to the absence of logic, to the absence of criticism and to the inconsequentiality of psychoanalysis. ‘In fact, the first lines of a well-written vignette are rather agreeable to read, and give the feeling of a window that has been opened in a musty room. But invariably this impression turns sour and the Paulines, the Bernards, the Cs and the Ps quickly become strange ectoplasms; once their use has been divined, we find them completely destitute, blank like circus buffoons (*Gilles*) rolled in flour with their big clowns’ nose. The singularity that they had, it seems, as mission to defend against the steam roller of a theory without a human face has been reduced to the little finger on the seam of the pants that is supposed to accompany the vibrant and sonorous ‘Present!’ which responds to a name count in a barracks. The living flesh that one expected pales by showing itself so subdued, and it is still worse when the abundance of details grows thicker without any one of them ever casting a speculative unease on the interpretation which is finally going to imprison them’ (*ibid.*, p. 125).

Cases are decidedly under the yoke of a rudimentary theory that masters them without taking any risk. The underlying theory, extremely poor as

regards its logic and its critique, has only a single consequence: that of making the case conform. 'It is ruled out that one should witness on the causal plane the crucial combats that might allow one theory to be invalidated in favour of another' (ibid., pp. 139-140).

So then how conceive of a clinical practice that might function essentially under the paradigm of the maximal particular? It is certainly a matter of opening up the concept, of grasping the status of what exceeds the concept, in other words to grasp the status of the exception without any example, any particular object being able to take its place. The function of the *o*-object supervenes at this place; to do this, it has the particularity of not falling under any concept (ibid., p. 133). Escaping the dominance of a concept, it is not for all that unscathed. It is not a pure unsayable, unconceptualisable, unthinkable, etc., which would derive from a theology that is in principle negative. On the contrary 'between the concept and the individuals which might fall into its orbit (something which obviously is not denied, the minimal particular continues to work just as well), there will remain active this *o*-object which, for its part derives entirely from the maximal particular, does not fall under any concept and is maintained as existence without essence, an existence decisive in the subjective process' (ibid., p. 144).

The clinical practice of the maximal is thus outlined in its logical, critical and consequential dimension. Starting from the ethical principle of psychoanalysis, for which the theory does not prevent it from existing, it accords its proper place to existence, to the exception, to the maximal particular, an alias for the notall according to Le Gaufey, on which the *o*-object entirely depends.

Nevertheless the outline remains full of snares ready to reabsorb us into the classificatory logic that is proper to the minimal particular. We have already seen the trap of clinical vignettes. More seriously, because supported by a logic, a certain conception of the exception as limit (J. C. Milner), it would allow us to side-step the attack against the universal which is all-encompassing in its conceptualisation. It is a matter then of re-questioning the very concept itself *qua* universal.

Reading Le Gaufey's book, I was already forewarned by my own *Lecture de L'Étourdit*⁴ and it was not without certain questions and some unease, undoubtedly minimal, that I read the presentation of *Lacan's notall*. This perceptible discordance was possible precisely because Le Gaufey's book is, let me repeat, composed with logic, criticism and consequentiality. Let us go straight to the difference. It seems to me that Le Gaufey remains at a certain level of the notall, in other words principally at the seminar *...ou pire*, of 1971-1972. The text of *L'Étourdit* which is not called on for the question of notall properly so-called⁵ was written very soon after the aforesaid seminar. Might it not explain both a certain discordance between the conception of the notall according to Le Gaufey and what is said about it in *L'Étourdit*, thus explaining the incompleteness of Le Gaufey's work on Lacan's notall and especially indicating to us at the same time the track of a thinking in movement? Le Gaufey is very sensitive to the 'wavering' of Lacanian writings. Why did he say it like that rather than otherwise? How did he get there? (p. 38).

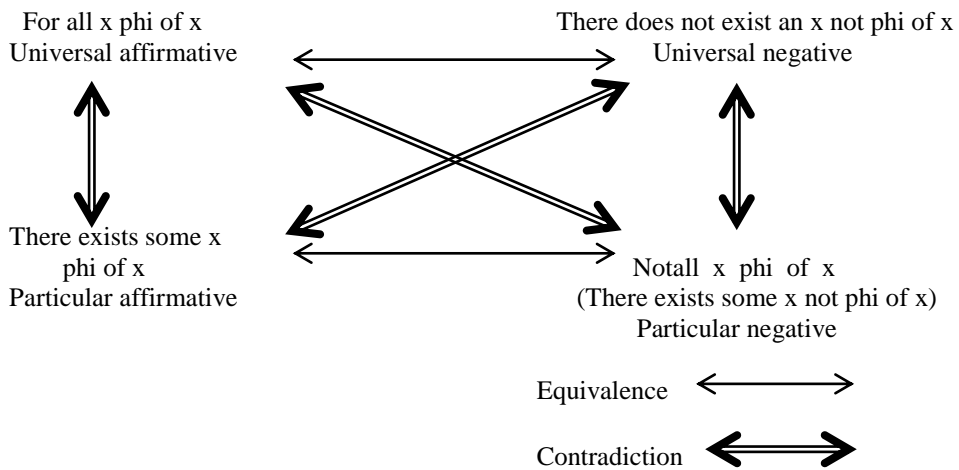
It is this wavering that we would like to attempt to highlight at the level of Lacan's conceptualisation which wavers between *...ou pire* and *L'Étourdit* (1972), not without taking up again in the same movement the monumental wavering of Lacan when it is a matter of reading Kant's table of nothings (1962).

Le Gaufey very properly highlights the existentialist side of Lacan in *...ou pire* (along the line of descent that goes from Pascal to Kierkegaard) [p. 56]; it is a matter of highlighting an existence without essence, we would say the particular case as it exists independently of a conceptual essence. This has a very precise consequence at the level of the formulae of sexuation: the formula of notall continually brushes closely the confusion with the formula of existence, to the point of being strictly equivalent to it in the logical square of the formulae of sexuation presented in the bookmark accompanying *Lacan's notall*. In a similar fashion, the signifier of the barred big Other appears as the initial stage of the exception that we are going to rediscover in the form of exception, of 'there exists an x not ϕ of x '. This emphasis on the existence correlative to the reading of notall as

⁴ Published by Harmattan in 2002.

⁵ Certainly Le Gaufey also quotes *L'Étourdit*. He very properly corrects, as I had done (p. 114 of my *Reading L'Étourdit* already quoted), the passage on the exception conceived as limit. This passage intervenes before the arrival of the problematic of the notall in *L'Étourdit*, which is not solicited by Le Gaufey in his book.

particular has of course a double advantage, on the one hand a properly clinical advantage of determining more precisely what the particular means,⁶ on the other hand a properly critical advantage of limiting the conceptual pretensions of a speculative theory leaning dangerously towards the illusory and in that way of bringing to light its deep-seated indetermination. We would draw from it a position of prudence, of modesty and of reserve. ‘The theory does not prevent it from existing’. We do not have a fundamentally assured universal. It is the particular that reigns.



Are we for all that any more assured by basing ourselves on existence properly so called, which ineluctably pushes towards the clinical perspective of case studies, which Le Gaufey quite correctly puts on trial? The latter clearly recognises the point of Lacan’s invention which aims at ‘the locus where no element is encountered’ (p. 53); the apparent contradiction between universal and particular affirmatives, which leads straight to Le Gaufey’s notall, is only an introduction to it.

To be sure, ‘the locus where no element is encountered’ is finally taken into account by the topology of sets and the doctrine of their elements. But does not the point of Lacan’s invention aim at going beyond the set theory at stake not alone in the classical Aristotelian logical square but also in the

⁶ While Aristotle must have ‘made use of the indetermination of the particular without explicitly saying so’ (Brunschwig, quoted by Le Gaufey), with the maximal particular we have an explicit determination.

logical square of the formulae of sexuation as Le Gaufey explains it in his presentation of notall?

It is precisely a new stage which reverses the conceptualisation of sets in favour of the topology of the cross-cap that is going to operate in the passage from ...*ou pire* (presentation of the notall by Le Gaufey) to *L'Étourdit*. I will first of all indicate its reference points in the text of *L'Étourdit*⁷ before showing the fundamental implication for psychoanalytic clinical practice along the very lines of the criticism of case vignettes.

The Notall in *L'Étourdit*

The presentation of the notall begins with the enunciation of the two feminine formulae. While the formula of 'all' preceded the existential formula for the masculine formulae, here the existential formula precedes the formula implying the all.

But this existence is denied. The negation of existence is the indispensable step for entering into the notall as it is explained in *L'Étourdit* (and which radically differs from the notall of ...*ou pire*). The first stage which consists in denying existence will be completed by a second not (*pas*), a second negation, but also, as we shall see, by the *passe*⁸ or passage at stake in the notall. The two negations (there does not exist..., and notall) are not derived from mathematics.⁹ Of the three negations implied in the two feminine formulae, only one creates almost no problem; it is the negation of the phallic function, already present in the masculine formulae, which can be reduced to a logic of sets; there is the set of the phallic (ϕ) and there is the set of the non-phallic (not ϕ), the latter is empty, in other words 'there does not exist an x not ϕ of x ', the two other negations that bear on the quantifier ('there exists one' and 'all') are not used in mathematics: 'To deny that there *exists one* is not done, and still less that forall there is a fornottall (*pourpastoute*)'.¹⁰ In other words the negation of

⁷ I will allow myself to refer to my *Lecture de L'Étourdit* for a more detailed explanation of the whole of the text centred precisely on this question of the notall.

⁸ The process by which an *analysand* becomes an analyst.

⁹ We are reminded here of the reference to Kant's "Essay on Negative Magnitudes" in Seminar XI, p. 252 and p. 253.

¹⁰ *L'Étourdit*, AE, p. 465

each of these masculine formulae beginning with the formula of existence necessarily takes us away from mathematical usage. 'It is there nevertheless that there is delivered to us the meaning of the fact of saying', Lacan continues; the meaning of the fact of saying is to go from mathematical usage to something else. Let us follow the path that is indicated: the first stage is constituted from the '*nyania* that we hear from the sexes in company', the second stage is the substitute 'for the fact that among them, *there was no relationship (de rapport nyait pas)*'.

The first stage – *nyania* – had been explained in *L'Étourdit* ten pages earlier. It is a matter of starting from 'there is no sexual relationship', which indeed constitutes the opening theme of Le Gaufey's study (first part, *Logic of the sexual fault*, and the paragraph *Towards non-relationship*, p. 31). But how does Lacan approach this *nyania*? To say it in a very summarised and simplified way¹¹ this *nyania* can be decomposed into two negations, into *n'y a* ([there] is not) and *nia* ([he] denied). *N'y a* is the absence that characterises the feminine sex and which implies the absence of sexual relationship, it is a negation of existence that brings us out of the mathematical domain of the logic of sets. *Nia* is on the contrary the position of the exception on the masculine side, the exception posed in the past (simple past tense *nia*) to better assure phallic universality: it denied God's belonging to the phallic in order to make of him the founder of the phallic reign (the same *nia* is of course valid for any other representation whatsoever of God or of the Father etc.): the exception comes from a set, but it remains situated in the logic of sets. In the *nyania*, there is furthermore an articulation of two negations: there is no *nia*. This *nia* is a hoax.

From the Aristotelian point of view, this *n'y a* or again 'there does not exist an x not phi of x ', makes us return to the starting point, in other words 'for all x phi of x ' or again 'no one is outside the phallic'. And with this we have relapsed into the universal! It is indeed effectively a possible presentation of the formula 'there does not exist an x not phi of x ' (especially in the logical square of the formulae of sexuation according to Le Gaufey). Joined to this formula, the notall – still from an Aristotelian point of view, would bear witness 'to the existence of a subject who says no to the phallic function', namely, a subject who would reunite in himself the

¹¹ For a more detailed commentary cf. my *Lecture de L'Étourdit*, p. 86ff. and p. 141ff.

two sub-contrary particulars¹²: one part phallic, another part non-phallic. It is exactly the interpretation of the notall as maximal particular.

Lacan very firmly contests this interpretation in *L'Étourdit* dated 14 July 1972, published in 1973, and subjects the notall to a complete turnabout: 'This is not the meaning of the fact of saying, which is inscribed by these quantifiers'. Not alone is it not the meaning that one is trying to say in speaking about the notall and therefore we must take up again the analysis begun in *...ou pire* (and explained by Le Gaufey) and go further, but above all this explanation does not give us the meaning of the fact of saying in general, as it ought to be highlighted in psychoanalytic clinical practice starting from the notall. What is the meaning of the fact of saying? One could no doubt bring together the fact of saying and enunciating in order to oppose them to what is said and to the enunciated. But this bringing together is of no use to us, if it is a matter of putting things in place in the theoretical dimension of the enounced or of what is said. We must therefore specify the meaning, namely, the operational modalities necessarily at work for there to be a fact of saying. This fact of saying is derived from the feminine side and is explained by non-existence. It is a matter then of well and truly quitting the existentialist position Lacan displayed the previous year: 'there does not exist any suspension of the phallic function'. And this has a consequence: 'we can now say *everything* in terms of the phallic function'.¹³ But have we not come back by this interpretation to the first formula? It seems that we cannot get out of it and therefore that we turn towards the duality of only two positions: 'for all x phi of x' which would be equal to 'there does not exist an x that is not phi of x' on the one hand, and 'there exists an x not phi of x' which would be equivalent to 'not all x phi of x' on the other hand, as the logical square of the formulae of sexuation shows by its arrows of equivalence. We would, to be sure, come back quite simply to the first position 'we can now say everything in terms of the phallic function', if Lacan did not specify '...even if it originates from unreason'. Namely, without the reason of the exception which was limited to giving limits to the universal affirmative. If this reason fails, if as the first feminine formula says 'there is no x that is not phi of x', the all is nevertheless not suppressed from it, on the contrary it flows from everywhere, it overflows what made it 'one', what rendered it the universe and universal. 'It is a whole outside the

¹² *L'Étourdit*, AE, p. 465.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 466 (my underlining).

universe, which is read right away from the quantifier as notall'.¹⁴ For this all outside the universe, which is therefore not a universal without nevertheless being a particular, is read without preparation, namely, without the preparation of an exception which would limit it.

Neither universal nor particular, it is found in the singular, the 'singular of a confine (*confin*)', the singular of a feminine sex that is certainly subtle (*fin*), but above all the singular of a noun that is always said in the plural (*les confins*), a singular that easily carries the universal and the exception that limits it, the all with the limit (*cum fine*) and which disqualifies the conception of the notall in terms of the particular. There is a complete subversion of the logic of the universal and of the particular in favour of the singular. This singular cannot be understood as the affirmation 'there exists one and only one...'. Such a reduction, make no mistake, brings it back to a particular case (it must be said, *c'est le cas de le dire*) of classical Aristotelian logic. The singular is not reduced to the only one awaited by the others which do not come, but the process which is done by itself (without reference to others). What is at stake is a new way of thinking, which no longer classifies in boxes or logical places, but whose logic, since it is a journey, is constituted from changes of logic. The singular of a confine is specified as what carries with itself and in itself the whole movement that the universal goes through ('for all x phi of x'), the exception that unifies and limits ('there exists an x not phi of x') and the negation of the exception ('there does not exist an x that is not phi of x'). This confine where the notall appears participates well and truly in all the formulae of sexuality. As the feminine sex is supported by the notall, 'it cannot be slaked by the universe'.¹⁵ But how can the notall as singular appear as a multiple particular? Singularity is the passing of the limit, the step (*pas*) which goes from one to two, the step which makes the signifier go from an S₁ to an S₂. It presupposes the radical Other. By taking its support from the Other, from the *Heteros*, one can go beyond all the limits and begin to construct the series of transfinites. The notall, in its singular negation, in its not two (*pas de deux*), offers us a support to make *d'eux* (of them) starting from *deux* (two).¹⁶ In this *pas* which sweeps away the limits one after another, the notall thus runs through all the formulae of sexuation. All the formulae of sexuation are indeed comprehended in the notall that is larger than the

¹⁴ *L'Étourdit*, AE, p. 466.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 467.

¹⁶ *L'Étourdit*, AE, p. 467.

universal all. And if we were to compare the greatness of the all and the notall, we should assuredly conclude that the notall is much greater than the all. Therefore it quite naturally participates also in the masculine figures and ‘it is interesting that women do not disdain taking their place from it’. Without for all that stopping there: even if women take their place in the masculine formulae, the notall as such does not recognise itself in these last figures.¹⁷ This is where the fact of saying of the notall is engaged, the fact of saying that is central in *L’Étourdit*: ‘You have satisfied me, little man. You have understood, that is what was required. On I go, there is not too much of the *étourdit* for it to return to you after being half-said (*après midi*, afternoon). Thanks to the hand that will soon reply to the fact that you call her Antigone, the one that can tear you apart from the fact that I make sphinx of my notall (*pastoute*), you will be even able towards evening to become the equal of Tiresias and like him, because of having played the Other, divine what I have told you’.¹⁸

I can do no better here than to refer to my *Lecture de L’Étourdit* since *L’Étourdit* is the explanation of the fact of saying notall and that this explanation is, we must clearly say, implicit in it. The notall implies passing from the logic of sets to ‘a little bit of topography’,¹⁹ which is reduced to the transformation of the torus into a Moebius strip. The development of this track would take us too far in the framework of this note. I will interrupt it here to examine the clinical consequences of the new version of notall explained in *L’Étourdit*.

But before that, I would like to take up again Lacan’s brawl with the Kantian table of nothings. Beyond the conditions of possibilities of experience and of its object, namely, of some thing, it is a matter for Kant of being able to think impossibility, namely, the nothing.²⁰ I would say *The Thing (La Chose)*. Impossible! The question is of some importance for psychoanalysis, which is the science of the real inasmuch as it encounters it

¹⁷ Let us note that the version of *Autres écrits* transforms the original version and proposes that the notall ‘does not recognise itself in that’, namely, in the phallic signifier. The phallic signifier nevertheless constitutes precisely the very movement of the notall at stake in the singular of the ‘confine’. ‘People ascribe it to it being emotive....Ah! could it not have been better trained, I mean educated. You will be waiting some time for that’ (Ibid., AE, p. 461).

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 468. I have kept *vas* with the *s*. I have explained why in *Lecture*....

¹⁹ *L’Étourdit*, AE, p. 469.

²⁰ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Tome 2.

as impossible,²¹ namely, as radically unconscious. The encounter with this nothing and with this impossible will necessarily follow the order and the indication of the categories.

1. At the level of quantity, the nothing appears as that of which the count has never begun and will never begin, the nothing remains a breast which has never existed and which never will exist, it is an *ens rationis*, a pure essence or an empty concept without object. It is situated precisely at the purely conceptual level that is at stake in the logics founded on the universal. In Peirce's quadrants it corresponds to the common box of the universal affirmative and the universal negative, when there is no object either in the one nor in the other. The proposition 'for all x phi of x' is first of all of this order; it is a function without argument.

2. At the level of quality, the nothing is obtained by the negation of a quality, the negation of brightness gives shadow, the negation of hot gives cold. This negation is not of course a negation of formal logic, but an opposition which deprives us of the first quality. The valorised gift is secondarily deprived of its value and only remains as the waste product. The privileged example of this is the anal gift, which is deprived of all value, it is a *nihil privativum*, a pure existence of negation. It is situated at the level of a particular that says no. The affirmation 'there exists an x not phi of x' is of this order; it is pure oppositional ex-sistence.

3. At the level of relation, it is the absence of all substance which nonetheless leaves place for 'the simple form of intuition', namely, pure space and time, which condition us without us being able to see them, since it is a matter of the condition of possibility of all representation and of all vision. The privileged field is that of the look and of its topology, which only appears in its essence where every object has disappeared. It is no longer situated at the level of a universal or of a particular, but at the level of a singular intuition that is empty and without object. It is an *ens imaginarium*. The liquidation 'there does not exist an x not phi of x' is of this order; it is a pure evacuation of existence.

4. At the level of modality, it is the possibility which is only found in the beyond of the concept, namely, as what renders impossible the concept itself (the concept which contradicts itself). But what could be this empty object

²¹ *L'Étourdit*, AE, p. 449.

without a concept? We cannot tackle it either by a logic of the universal, nor by a logic of the (maximal) particular, nor even by a topology. All that remains to us is the approach of speech inasmuch as it is always insufficient, missing the target since it lacks the concept and the remainder. The empty object thus privileged is the voice, of which one can say nothing, except by keeping silent. It is an empty object without a concept, a *nihil negativum*. The opening up of ‘notall x phi of x’ of this order; it leaves open the point, the example, the field. It says the very movement inscribed at the same level as the question of the nothing and of the impossible.

That we have recognised in these four forms of nothing the classical Lacanian quadrature of the oral, anal, scopic and vocal, is not the question. It is much more a matter of reading in it the construction of the *o*-object in the very movement of encountering the impossible. And it is precisely this movement which necessitates the apparition of the notall in Lacan and of its development implying considerable modifications of clinical practice.

It is this very movement of encountering the impossible which escapes Lacan in very great part in the teaching of 28 March 1962 and it is precisely what leads him to skid off track on numerous occasions in the reading that he gives of the Kantian table of nothings and that Le Gaufey follows without, to my taste, a sufficiently rigorous critique. The second form of the nothing – the *nihil privativum* – is named *ens privativum* by Lacan, therefore an essence – *ens* – that Le Gaufey interprets as ‘the mark of the lack of the mythical object of the first satisfaction’ (p. 30); in calling it *ens*, this nothing relapses necessarily into the essence of a pure *ens rationis*, a being of reason, the reason being here to articulate desire to the mythical satisfaction. The comprehension of *ens imaginarium* by Le Gaufey remains pretty faithful to Kant (p. 28), but curiously he erases the mention of the example that Lacan gives of it, namely, ‘the famous Centaur which stops the logicians, all the logicians even the metaphysicians’, in his long quotation from Lacan (p. 29); Lacan’s example clearly proves that he goes completely off the rails and Le Gaufey avoids speaking about it. Finally the Kantian *nihil negativum* announced in the paragraph which bears its name is in my opinion too quickly linked to the putting in question of Kantian aesthetics and of topology (pp. 27-28) which in my opinion points rather to the third form of nothing.²²

²² Kantian aesthetics and Lacanian topology obviously go together: ‘is not topology this no-space (*n’espace*) to which mathematical discourse leads us and which requires a revision of

Why all of these details which have rather the air of ‘read and corrected?’ Each time it is a question of the tendency to go back to the preceding moment, a tendency by which the second form is brought back to the first (*ens privativum*), the third to the second (the Centaur is indeed a non-human human, more dependant on the *nihil privativum* than the transcendental aesthetics), the fourth to the third (the Kantian aesthetics and its topology, even if it has been read and corrected). Each form of the object tends to be reduced to the preceding one, as if there persisted a viscosity which prevented us from freely running through all the forms of the *o*-object and all the formulae of sexuation. Now this journey is precisely the fact of speaking on which *L’Étourdit* pronounces and that the notall guarantees: ‘One’s fact of saying [the fact of saying the notall] remains forgotten behind what is said in what is understood’.²³ More generally it is the whole development of thinking which has a tendency to stagnate and to refuse the advance made in the fact of saying notall. We now understand, the Lacan of 1961-62 (*Identification*) had undergone the obvious tendency of bringing the *o*-object back to the *ens rationis* (hence the slip *ens privativum*) and even if he perceived in an admirable way the importance of Kant’s four nothings, he did not manage at that moment to take full advantage especially of the fourth nothing, of the *nihil negativum*. And the Lacan of 1971-72 (...*ou pire*), from which Le Gaufey has magisterially drawn for us the outline of a notall, still did not manage to highlight the fact of saying notall which ought to take us a little further still. We can now sketch out the clinical consequences of this fact of saying notall which animates the movement of the passage from one formula of sexuation to the other.

Schematically – it is a matter here of schemas for thinking out the styles of psychoanalytic clinical practice and not of catalogues enclosing one or other practice in a specificity denying the genus – we will distinguish four predominant types of clinical practice.

The first clinical practice corresponds to the first formula of sexuation ‘for all x phi of x ’; Le Gaufey vigorously criticises it in the third part of his work. The ideal of this form of clinical practice, indeed of this clinical form

the Kantian aesthetic’ (*L’Étourdit*, AE, p. 472). I will limit myself here again to referring to my *Lecture de L’Étourdit* for the commentary.

²³ *L’Étourdit*, AE, p. 449.

would be to formulate correctly a diagnosis in the coherent framework of psychoanalysis. The general diagnosis would be that of phallic structure; it could subsequently be specified into different ‘diagnoses of structure’, psychotic, neurotic or perverse structure, each of these structures being capable of being still more refined, thus the neurosis might be an obsession, an hysteria or a phobia, etc. and the operation of specification could be pursued down to the individual. We would thus possess the guiding concept in which it would be enough to rank particulars like vignettes in a stamp collection. Stamped and engraved in this way, the ‘users’ of psychoanalysis could be made the object of an adequate treatment: no couch for the psychotic, the interplay of signifier for the neurotics, a heightened vigilance for the acting out of the perverse; all the examples given unfailingly go in the direction of caricature which here is only the mask of the determining conceptualisation in the register of universality.

The second clinical practice corresponds to the second formula of sexuation (‘there exists an x not ϕ of x ’). It is no longer a matter of analysing the universality or the generality of humans which would form something like a quasi-inexhaustible reservation for the consummation of psychoanalysis; it is a matter of here of analysing God himself. Lacan’s witticism is well known: ‘Does God leaf through modern mathematical treatises to keep himself up to date?’²⁴ Besides God, as subject supposed to know candidate for analysis, subjects press forward. Freud himself, Schreber, Leonardo da Vinci, and all the other illustrious figures that function as an illustration of the fundamental exception (all these illustrations still belong eventually to the clinical vignette). At this level any person whatsoever can do the business provided he lends himself to it. It is a way into psychoanalysis as didactic where the subject is supposed to pass from the supposed to knowledge. From this point of view psychoanalysis is manifestly reserved for the elite of all those who could serve, from here and there (not only in the field of psychoanalysis), as subject supposed to know. After all is not the *analysand* the possessor, unconsciously of course, of his unconscious? The value of the singularised exception!

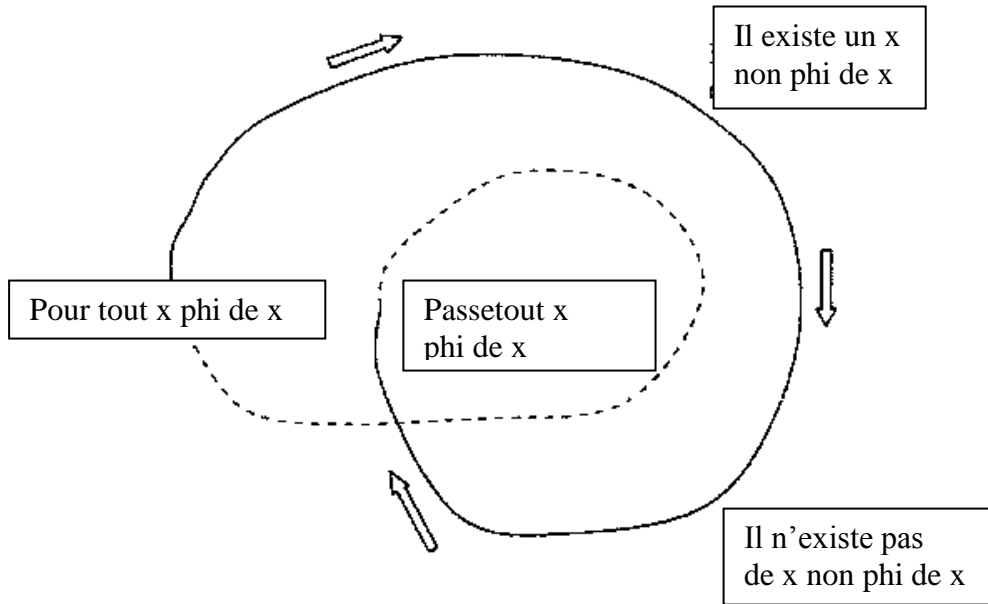
The third clinical practice corresponds to the third formula of sexuation ‘there does not exist an x that is not ϕ of x ’. All the figurations and illustrations of the second clinical practice are only a way of making positive this oh so derisory exception. For this exception value (p. 47) *par*

²⁴ Seminar XI, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*,

excellence is on the side of the nothing, of the impossible, which should not be minimised. There is no (*il n'ya*) exception which belongs to the side of a realisation envisaged as possible: *nya*. From this it is deduced that the one who thought himself to be an illustrious exception (the darling child of his mother or of his psychoanalyst), was only able to do it because he denied the first clinical practice: *nia*. But *nyania* fundamentally contests any clinical practice of the vignette, the first (all) as well as the second (*nia*). Without being able to be determined by the concept and without being able to be illustrated in the exception that holds up, what remains for this third clinical practice if not abstention? Is the clinical practice of the maximal particular doomed to sink into nothingness? Le Gaufey's logical square of the formulae of sexuation might make us think so, since he shows the equivalence of the third formula of sexuation 'there does not exist an x not phi of x' with the first 'for all x phi of x'. Would not the third clinical practice then be only the re-introduction of the first with a warning against vignettes added on? This is surely not Lacan's aim in ...*ou pire* and still less Le Gaufey's horizon. It is here that the reading of *L'Étourdit* offers a fruitful extension, it seems to me, by allowing a fourth type of clinical practice.

The fourth clinical practice corresponds to the fourth formula of sexuation 'notall x phi of x' such as it is introduced in *L'Étourdit*. Here it is a matter of a clinical practice of the *passe* that must be understood not simply as the procedure introduced in the *Proposal of 9 October 1967*, but as the procedure which passes from one formula to another at the same time as from one clinical practice to another. The not/step (*pas*) of notall is a *passe*; the notall is a master key (*passetout?*). It is here that it is of first importance to follow the wavering (p. 38) of Lacan's elaboration; we read there clinically how Lacan goes not only from one writing to another, but at the same time the stopping points that he goes beyond even as he stumbles. This properly scandalous progress of Lacan is not played out of course on the public stage, but indeed on the Other stage. On a stage where the *heteros* is quite other than *allos*; for the Other does not support itself either on a universal or on a particular, but on 'the singular of a *confine*' which passes from one position to another. We provisionally need the possible concept, we provisionally need the necessary exceptional illustration, we provisionally need the impossible nothing; for these provisos allow the *passe* that is always local and contingent from one clinical practice to the other. Whatever may be the clinical point under consideration, it is a matter of passing to the new formula which re-launches it. And we could thus say that the notall, as a fact of saying, is the movement that repeats a first loop

that is already always lacking. This all which is already always lacking we will denote by a continuous line on the presentation of the notall which for its part always remains to be done in dots:



The clinical practice of the notall always starts from something defined, which is presented in the light of the universal (for all x phi of x), whatever may be the critique of the concept that has already been carried out. From here there is posed the exception which has allowed this definite to take place, by defining it, the subject supposed to know how this definite functions (there exists an x not phi of x). Subsequently this defining no longer holds up, is evanescent and only leaves in its place the nothing (there does not exist an x that is not phi of x); it is the un-defining that arrives. There only remains to us then the indefinite from which there can be re-launched a new reflection, a new discovery.²⁵ 'The theory does not prevent it from existing', such is the *passee* which always brings us a further figure; it is valid for the universal concept which does not prevent the exception; it is

²⁵ I will allow myself here to refer to the second part, 'La', of my *Comment penser la folie?*, pp. 77-107.

valid also for the existence theorised as exception, which does not prevent the nothing from existing; it is valid also for the non-existence of the nothing which does not prevent the indefinite from re-launching us into a new adventure.

Le Gaufey's merit is to have illuminated the notall which puts order 'on this extreme confusion between logic and the sexes', it is to have shown then how the formulae of sexuation are only readable with the invention of the \circ -object, it is finally to have indicated its consequences at the clinical level. I hope that he will find in my note not the inert copy of his own text which does not claim to say everything, but a possible extension of his questioning.

Would Lacan find in it the thread of his teaching? An undecideable question which it would moreover be better to leave in that state.

For the true question still remains always that of the *analysand* that we always remain.

Namely. The notall is a journey, a *passe* to be ceaselessly recommenced.