SECOND TURN:
THE DISCOURSE OF THE ANALYST
AND INTERPRETATION
The second turn, a re-presentation of the first, is going to show how the notall was already implied from the beginning of the journey, from the first pages of *L’étourdit*, from the philosophical search for sense. The riddle of the Sphynx (or the notall) determines the course of phallic logic from its first steps; it confers on it a dimension which, left in the shadows in the first turn, will appear only during this second turn.

**The notall touched on by the philosopher** (25d; 469).

Aristotle himself seems to have respected the logic of the notall: ‘the only universal formula that he does not seem to have allowed himself to pronounce is *all women*’ (*Of a discourse which might not be a semblance*, 9 June 1971). This said, Lacan has followed a different path to Aristotle: instead of proceeding by philosophical deduction, he was inspired by a ‘different amusement’, namely by the entertainment of sex (in old French, *déduire* means to amuse, to entertain, but also to make love). Starting from the absence of sexual relationship, he initiated his phallic logic, deduced sexuation from it and discovered a feminine enjoyment – notall – beyond masculine enjoyment.

But let us return to Aristotle who was tutor to his own master Alexander the Great. The epic of Alexander, founder of a universal empire, remains subordinate to the philosopher who held the locus of the truth in his conquering discourse. From this position of truth which was his, Aristotle could have warned his master and educated him not from the outset according to the first universalising formula (∀x.φx), but according to the fourth, according to the notall; Aristotle would have led him to take into consideration the beyond of the boundaries of empire however great it was. He would thus have steered Alexander the Great and his World onto a path which leads further.

(172) How is that? Alexander remains an individual; how understand the sentence? For Aristotle, a sentence is inscribed in a universal: Alexander was educated by his tutor as existing inside the universe. Such an existence is ‘etiolated’,¹ because it is inscribed only as a

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¹ Should we see in this ‘etiology’? Aristotle’s world is treated, according to Kojève, in terms of a biological model, ‘by operating exclusively with causal categories’ (*Essai d’une histoire raisonnée de la philosophie paternelle*, T.II, p.325), namely in terms of a universal that is repeated identical to the past according to the mechanism of causality or etiology.
sentence within the universal. If Aristotle had taken better account of the
notall, Alexander would have understood that the all (\( \forall x. \phi x \)) is limited by
the ex-sistence that is excepted from the universal (\( \neg \neg \phi x \)); but above all, he
would have known that his position of exception was denied (\( \neg \neg \neg \phi x \)) and he
would have been open, beyond the boundaries of his empire, to the notall
(\( \neg \neg \neg \phi x \)). In promulgating the ex-sistence of his master as the exception who
bounds the universe, he would have replaced the existence of ‘Aristotelian’
logic by masculine ex-sistence (second formula: ‘\( nia' \)’) reversing itself into
‘ab-sense as-not-one’ or into feminine existence (third formula: ‘\( nya' \’), to
finally open up onto the notall (fourth formula). Or again the universe was
denied by an exception; but this exception (represented by Alexander) is
only an alleged exception and the universe can only be denied from an ‘ab-
sense as-not-one’ (‘\( il nya' \’not-an x not phi of x\)’. The notall of course ex-
sists, it is at work in the second formula which denies the universal: or again
Alexander clearly had a presentiment that his universe was not all, since he
Alexander was there, outside the universe to limit it. Already at work in
(\( \neg \neg \neg \phi x \)), the notall ‘shies away’ if it does not overcome the obstacle that leads
it to (\( \neg \neg \neg \phi x \)). By failing to make the leap which goes from the second to the
third formula (\( nia to nya \)), logic is reduced to the first two formulae: like a
horse before an obstacle, the (173) phallic function jibs and refuses to go
through the logical chicane which ought to lead it to the feminine sexual
formulae. If Alexander had been warned that his position as exception
depended on the notall, he would have relativised his particular position and
would have laughed at it: he would have opened himself up to the complete
development of the phallic function. Alexander ‘he would have been the
very first to laugh, there is a case for saying, at his plan to ‘empire’ over the
universe’ at his plan to found an empire, which is the worst (\( pire \)) as
compared to the notall; Alexander, in this laughter, would have been ‘the
very first’ to displace himself as first signifier, master-signifier, \( S_1 \) in the
master discourse; it is from this place of semblance that he would have
placed himself towards the place of truth (of the academic discourse)
before ending up in the place of the product (of the discourse of the analyst):
turning away from his master-plan, he would have gone on to the truth of
‘the universe’ (of the academic), then to the product of analysis, to the
phallic function; correlative to this phallic function, Alexander’s object,
his empire, would have played the role of \( o \)-object, ‘…ou pire’ of the
discourse of the analyst: ‘he would have laughed…at his plan to empire the
universe’.

He is entertained to say the truth: like the fool he knows that it is
quite doable,

‘It is precisely there’, in the discourse of mastery into which
Alexander the Great had thrown himself without being able to get out of it,
‘that notsofoolish the philosopher plays all the better the air of the half-said
in that he can do so with a good conscience.’ (26a; 469). For if the
philosopher holds the role of fool by being the truth of the master discourse
(9 note), he always remains at the half-said (the truth is never more than
half-said); a fool therefore, but notsofoolish (c.f. Althusser), the philosopher
knows well that he does not say the whole truth. Not so foolish and not all, he can with a good conscience content himself with this half-said and manage a way out for himself ‘on condition that he does not suture (Sutor…) beyond his solene.’ ‘Sutor ne supra crepidam’, ‘the cobbler should stick to his last’. The Latin proverb already quoted in The seminar on ‘the purloined letter’ (E 38) is addressed to the police looking for the purloined letter: by assembling meaning-relationships, the police miss out on the question ‘of what there remains of the signifier when there is no longer a meaning’ (E 39). Likewise, clouded by the conquest of countries significant for his (174) universe, Alexander misses the question of the ab-sense that opens up the feminine formulae. If the philosopher generalises the meaning-relationships to pose universality (of God, of the world, of the ego; of the Oedipus complex, of the unconscious, of the subject), he has not yet got to the ab-sense which is the resource of the analyst. Let him ‘not suture beyond his solenes’: the logic that assembles the all in a universal (forall) limited by ex-sistence can be sewn all at once (Latin semel), provided the philosopher (the police or Alexander) does not claim to include in his discourse what escapes him: the asemantic signifier, the phallic function, femininity or the analytic discourse.

Hence, Lacan’s warning to the philosopher (‘that he should not suture…’) is again addressed to any ‘suturing’ psychoanalytic theory which might think it is able to complete the structure in a single turn (to be repeated eventually in identity to itself). In the between-the-two of presentation and re-presentation, there is inscribed the question of the appearing-disappearing subject. The danger is of course that of suturing this subject always already barred, $, and to forget it as Althusser wanted to do (see his correspondence with Lacan: Ecrits sur la psychanalyse, p.165).2

Why all these warnings about the suture?

Firstly, the first turn cannot suture itself; before broaching the second turn, it was imperative that there should not have been a suture so as

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2 Lacan no doubt was addressing his warning to Althusser’s pupils, especially to the Cercle d’Epistémologie de l’Ecole Normale Supérieure, in particular to J.A. Miller the editor of the Cahiers pour l’Analyse and the author of an article called precisely La suture, which appeared in the first Cahier alongside Lacan’s Science and truth (1966).
to re-start from the beginning, in a re-presentation different to the first presentation.

(175) Secondly, the philosopher ought to suture inasmuch as he sticks to his soleness, to his terrain, namely to his master discourse. If he goes beyond this established discourse, he at the same time loses his specificity as philosopher, truth of the master.

Thirdly, there must and there must not be a suture; how explain this paradox? It is in the attempt to suture that there appears the fault line or the powerlessness to suture.

In a first phase, it seems that the master discourse could be sutured thanks to the philosopher whose reason wants to encompass all meaning without going on to another discourse. Thus the balloon of meaning is going to swell and produce universals where all beings will be classified: the ego, the world and God (the subject, the unconscious, the Oedipus complex). The suture is thus plunged, in the master’s discourse, into a spherical topology ‘where it is the word that decides’ (8b).

How are we going to make the powerlessness to suture appear? In the Transcendental dialectic of the Critique of pure reason, Kant demonstrated that, even though necessary, transcendental ideas are illusory. The first turn of L’étourdit, reversing philosophical discourse, radically cuts the meaning-relationship to make there appear ab-sense, then saying and the absence of sexual relationship. In the second turn, a similar cut will make us go from spherical topology (which is the terrain of the philosopher in the master discourse) to aspherical topology (proper to the psychoanalytic discourse).

How are this ab-sense (first turn) and this cut (second turn) justified? In the first turn, the psychoanalytic discourse affirms without justification: our resource is to listen to non-sense and ab-sense. In the second turn, we are already aware of the notall; no doubt the meaning-relationship is not all, but the logic set on route by the notall was not able to spring to life with the philosophical discourse, even if the notall was foreshadowed in Plato’s Parmenides. How can the discourse of the analyst go beyond the discourse of the philosopher?
First attempt at a response: it ought to be possible to divine what is said by the notall or the Sphynx beyond the response in masculine terms, beyond a spherical topology of a circumscribed universe, beyond the philosophical response. Thus it would be a matter of playing the Other like Tiresias and of divining not the answer to the riddle, but the very structure of the question presented in the riddle (25a).

But would this not be a metaphorical and poetic response, a Spanish inn where interpretation would only find what it would itself have brought, subjectively?

A new attempt at responding at the logical level: the discourse of the analyst only operates in saying which hugs the wall of the impossible, in the reversal of the discourses and the formulae of sexuation: the discourse of the analyst does not correspond to any ‘soleness’, to any simultaneity, to any synchrony (the response of the first turn).

How articulate these two fraternal logics which are those of the philosopher and the psychoanalyst?

Response: ‘Now for a little topology’ (26a; 469). The ‘topology’ of the philosopher (who assembles meanings all at once) is spherical and its operator is the suture. The ‘topology’ of the analyst, which concerns not alone the topos (semel all at once) but also the chronos of reversals, is aspherical and its operator is the cut. These two ‘topologies’ correspond to the dit-mension of the said and to the existence of saying in as much as they are articulated to one another (which the first chapter of the second turn will show).

Thanks to this topology, each of the chapters of the first turn will take on a new sense.

In the first turn, starting from philosophy and from the meaning-relationship (chapter 1), we passed by way of ab-sense and saying (chapter 2), then through the absence of sexual relationship (chapter 3) to arrive at the phallic function (chapter 4).

In the second turn, a first chapter presents the aspherical topology of the cut which will serve as ‘reference’ for the psychoanalytic discourse. The first reference could only start, in the first turn, from meaning (and from the philosophical discourse) and was only able to lead us
in a second phase to the phallic function (the ‘Bedeutung’). In the second turn, the reference already starts from ab-sense and from the psychoanalytic discourse; it is ex-plained in aspherical topology (Lacan’s ‘reference’ ‘contributing to the analytic discourse’ 28b). Thus the signifier will no longer be seen from the angle of its meaning, but as a grammatical and logical element (in as much as it already opens onto saying, the absence of sexual relationship and the phallic function); it is plunged into the topology of surfaces (chapter 1).

Starting from this topology, a second chapter will take up again the second chapter of the first part. Will it be enough to say that the functioning proper to this notall (pastoute) presupposes saying and that aspherical topology would imply a saying rather than a said (‘That one might be saying remains forgotten behind what is said in what is understood’)? Saying will appear as the saying of the analyst which takes on a sense from the phallic function and its topological structure. This saying is the discourse of the analyst (chapter 2).

Starting from this saying, the absence of sexual relationship will be analysed as structure. The structure is not of the order of the said; it is not of the dit-mension; it is not of the order of saying either: it is not equivalent to the modal. Reduced neither to said nor to saying, the structure articulates said and saying; and the topology will explicate this articulation. In this way, topology will confer a new sense on the absence of sexual relationship (chapter 3).

Finally, in the fourth chapter, analytic interpretation will put to work the formulae of sexuation; neither deciphering of the said, nor commentary on saying, neither is it the highlighting of a desire that might support the chains of demands and their torsion, like an axis directing the whorls of an (177) electric coil or like the core of a torus carrying its windings. Interpretation is not to be encoiled in the modalities of demand even if the latter is entwined around the desire of an Other; interpretation is not a commentary on the neurosis. It presupposes on the contrary the topology which articulates the cut beyond the suture (chapter 4).
CHAPTER 1: THE TEACHING OF TOPOLOGY

(179) The reference that situates the signifier will be set out in three stages: a first section of this chapter describes the topology of spherical and aspherical surfaces or the milieu in which the signifier is plunged; in a second section, we will see that topology teaches, it is a matheme; in a third section we will show how the heterogeneous and the phallic function can be deployed in the fundamental topological operations.

1. The topology of surfaces (26a-28b; 469-471)

In this first section topology is presented in a metaphorical fashion so that Lacan can make himself ‘understood’ (28c).

‘Let us take a torus’ – a tube or a tire - ; we can distinguish in it two types of irreducible circuits (ronds), one goes round the core of the torus (1), the other turns round its axis (2).

Figure 1

(180) The topology of the torus illustrates imaginarily how the neurotic articulates his demands to desire; since demand (1) turns around the core of the torus but does not strictly return to its point of departure, the arrival point of a first demand can serve as a point of departure for a second demand out of synch with the first:
The demands repeated in this way are coiled around the core of the torus like the whorls of an electric dynamo realizing a complete turn of the axis of the torus (2): the repetition of demands (1) carries out a turn around desire (2). This journey of the demands is not the interpretation at stake in analysis: interpretation does not consist in remarking that the demands turn around an axis (oral, anal, for example), that would only be a neurotic commentary on the functioning of the neurosis, which we have already said constituted a delusional interpretation (c.f. p.33).

To go beyond the neurosis, the (neurotic) torus must be ‘emptied’ (évider) and made lose its inflation. This operation of ‘emptying’ or of deflation, made possible by the supple and elastic structure of the torus, does not involve any break in continuity: the topological structure of the torus remains unchanged. This manipulation prepares a succession of operations – of cuts and of sutures – which will not respect the continuity of the torus. Contrary to the emptying out which respects the structure of the torus, these operations will progress by leaps, by reversals of structure and they will tear the torus from the grasp of spherical topology, namely from the topology of surfaces that have two faces (the front and the back) or again from the topology of ‘bi-lateral’ surfaces. Emptying or single deflation reduces the volume of the torus; there remains a flat tire, a ‘bilateral’ surface: Figure 3
Pictured in this way, the deflation or the flattening of the torus produces two folds represented by the two circumferences limiting the torus. For our purposes, the deflation ought to operate in terms of a different folding: it must produce a single fold which goes through two turns of the core of the torus before coming back to its starting point: in this way we obtain something like a Moebius strip:

![Figure 4](image)

The Moebius strip, that the emptying out makes ‘evident’ by this folding, is nevertheless only an appearance, only a rough presentation of the Moebius strip: a tire remains a tire, even if it is deflated, just as a torus (182) remains a torus, even if it is emptied. Behind the appearance of a Moebius strip, the torus still has two faces (inner and outer) even if the inner face is collapsed onto itself.

From the emptying folded in this way, it appears that torus and Moebius strip are contiguous. This evident fact (évidence) ‘is worth demonstrating in a less crude fashion’ (26bc). ‘Let us start from a cut following the edge of the strip that has been obtained’: this cut separates the ‘two’ laminas, the two thicknesses of the toric surface which by sticking together formed something like a Moebius strip:
(183) The ‘two’ laminas of figure 5 remain in continuity; just as ‘one’ face of the Moebius strip is continued onto the ‘other’ face and with it constitutes a single lamina (with two turns and two edges): if you follow the left edge of a first turn of the lamina, you arrive at the right edge of the other turn and reciprocally. Each of the two edges is travelled along by a double turn of the bilateral strip.

This strip has two faces and two edges (a and b); it has only a single lamina; it will henceforth be called a ‘bipartite strip’, it is the paradoxically unique result of a ‘bipartition’ of the Moebius strip.

Starting from this strip which makes two turns, let us go on to the ‘conjuring trick’, namely to a new operation that changes the structure of the strip: a suture re-stitches a single one of these edges, not to the other, but to itself (in figure 5, the double arrows indicate that the b edge is re-stitched to itself. This second operation, of suturing, does not reproduce the feigned Moebius strip (the flattened torus), but a ‘true Moebius strip’ (figure 6). Naturally the sliding of two laminas over one another can be done in ‘both directions’: whether one re-stitches the a edge or the b edge, the result is
always the constitution of a true Moebius strip (in both cases: path 1 of the Table of transformations p.184).

Figure 6

(184) These transformations are possible in the opposite direction (path 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of transformation 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PATH 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflated torus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unchanged structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- emptying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flattened torus or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feigned Moebius strip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changed structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- cut 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bipartite strip (figure 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changed structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- suture 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True Moebius strip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(figure 6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bipartite strip created by cut 1 of the torus can be produced by cut 2 carried out starting from the true Moebius strip (c.f. figure 6): ‘the strip obtained from the torus is revealed to be the bipartite Moebius strip – not from a double-turned cut, but closed by a single one (let us make it median in order to grasp it…imaginarily)’ (26e).
‘But with that what appears, is that the Moebius strip is nothing other than this very cut, the one by which its surface disappears’ (26e-27a): if from a Moebius strip, one trims a little strip that follows its single edge (therefore by following its double turn), we will get two strips: the small strip which follows the edge (and which is a bi-faced and bi-edged bipartite strip) and, stuck in the middle, the Moebius strip trimmed or (doubly) (185) narrowed. If we now increases the width of the trimming up to half the width of the Moebius strip, the Moebius strip will be reduced to the cut and the double turn of the edge of the Moebius strip will then only form a single one: the Moebius strip is narrowed to a single cut (cut 2).

The passage from the bipartite strip to the true Moebius strip is carried out by suture 1: the front and the back are stitched right along the strip in accordance with the double arrows of figure 5.

This fabrication of the Moebius strip starting from the torus or from a tire does not correspond to the procedure most often imagined. Usually, you take a ribbon of paper, you twist it by a half-turn and you stick the two ends, the two widths or ‘cross-sections’ of the half-turned ribbon (c.f. E 553-554):

Figure 7

‘It is not from the ideal cross-section by which a strip is twisted by a half-turn that the Moebius strip is to be imagined’ (27a): this cross-section is ideal because it is unique and privileged in this construction. Lacan proposes here a construction that is more ‘real’, the one that ‘all along its length’ follows ‘the wall of the impossible’ (8e), namely the one that is present at all points of the Moebius strip: ‘There is not one of these points’ where the front and the back ‘are not united’. No point is privileged. We have seen above that the quintessence of the Moebius strip is the ‘median’ cut (‘cut’ 2) equivalent to suture 1 (figure 6). Nevertheless this cut is ‘any one whatever’: for every Moebius strip, an infinity of lines can be buckled.
longitudinally in a single turn, provided they keep the property of stitching front and back and, by that very fact, transform a bilateral surface into a (186) unilateral surface. These lines are called ‘lines without points’. This ‘series of lines without points’ constitutes in a way the essence of the Moebius strip (the remainder being only a lateral trimming). Such a line is said to be ‘without points’: it is not composed of a set of points; it is the act of suturing and/or of cutting the front and the back. The points situated on either side of the line are ‘out-of-line points’ (27e) of which we will speak later.

The equivalence of the Moebius strip and of cut 2 ‘is confirmed by imagining this cut being redoubled’: between the two turns there appears ‘a truly median Moebius strip’, namely contained between the lateral trimmings that form a bilateral strip. This bilateral strip comprises ‘two rolls in the same direction and one in the contrary direction’ or by the single turning of the roll in a contrary direction ‘three rolls with the same direction’ (27c):

Figure 8 (equivalent to figure 5)

The Moebius strip ‘will still remain linked to the bipartite Moebius’, namely to this bilateral strip. This latter, however it is presented, ‘would be applicable onto a torus’ by the two (or three) rolls in the same direction that form a tube or cylinder. If the cut is median, the Moebius strip, which was linked to the bilateral strip, disappears: ‘the ab-sense…results from the single cut’; the ab-sense which goes beyond the meaning-relationship (8ab) (187) is this topological operation, this single cut (line without points) which makes disappear (appear) the Moebius strip in order to make appear (disappear) the bipartite strip ‘applicable onto a torus’. The ab-sense ‘brings about the absence of the Moebius strip’. ‘Hence this cut = the Moebius
strip’: it is, at the innermost part of the Moebius strip, what separates the bipartite strip.

‘The Moebius strip is therefore that which by operating on the Moebius strip, reduces it to the toric surface’ (27d), the Moebius strip (reduced to cut 2) operates on the Moebius strip (not reduced to the cut) to make the bipartite strip and the latter can re-form a torus (by a suture 2). This operation is therefore the inverse of the evident/emptying which consisted in cutting followed by suturing (see the Table of transformations, p.184, path 1).

‘The hole’ bounded by the Moebius strip ‘can nevertheless be supplemented differently’: instead of transforming the Moebius strip into a torus through the agency of the bipartite strip, you can re-stitch the edge of another Moebius strip onto the edge of the Moebius strip and form a Klein bottle. The Klein bottle has the peculiarity of having a neck that turns back and opens from the inside onto the bottom of the bottle:

![Figure 9](image)

(188) If we leave out the illustrative aspect of the ‘bottle’, the drawing is revealed to be identical to that of a Moebius strip

![Figure 9bis](image)
Such a drawing of the Klein bottle thus represents each of the two Moebius strips that are stitched together to form the Klein bottle. Or again each of the two strips can be projected onto our sheet of paper in one and the same representation.

‘There is yet another solution’: the edge (as an inner eight) of the cut of the Moebius strip is at the same time the edge of a bilateral surface, called ‘spherical disc’, which can be represented as follows:

![Figure 10](image)

(189) The straight line of the drawing is the line of intersection of the surface with itself.

In other words, coming from the small earflap b, which is in front of the big ear a, you go – by traversing the line of intersection – into the big ear d, which is behind the little earflap c (arrow 1 of figure 10bis). Similarly, you will go from the little earflap c into the big ear a by traversing the line of intersection (arrow 2 in figure 10bis); to go from the little earflap c to the ear, one can also avoid the line of intersection and go ‘above’ (arrow 3 of figure 10bis):
Figure 10bis

The suturing of the edge of a Moebius strip to the edge of a ‘spherical disc’ will produce a ‘cross-cap’ or ‘asphere’. This cross-cap is represented in figure 11.

It will be remarked 1° that the Moebius strip hides the two big ears and 2° that the arrow 3 of figure 10bis must now cross the Moebius strip sutured to the spherical disc.

Figure 11

‘The asphere’ is identical to ‘Desargues’ projective plane’. This projective plane is formed by ‘reducing its horizon to a point’ (27e). This horizon-point is represented not by the periphery, but by the out-of-line point (or the central disc of the cross-cap reduced to a point).

Figure 12
(191) This point (the horizon reduced to a point) this point is ‘such that every line drawn to converge at it only passes through it by going from the front face of the plane to its back face.’ (27e – 28a): a line starting out towards the northeast on the front of the surface of the earth will return to the southwest at the back of the surface of the earth after having passed through ‘the horizon’; or again the straight line starting from the front of the surface of the cross-cap at a, crosses the horizon point (or the spherical disc) and returns at b on the back of the surface (figure 12).

The disc can diminish to the benefit of the Moebius strip and vice versa, as far as the two extreme positions, the one where the disc is nothing but a point (out-of-line point) and the one where the Moebius strip is no longer anything but a cut (line without points). In the latter case, the out-of-line point ‘is spread’ (28a; 471) and the Moebius strip is reduced to a single cut, to ‘the ungraspable line’. Since this Moebius strip is defined by this cut, the supplementary disc ‘does not cease to be inscribed’ once the cut is there; it is ‘necessary’:
Table of transformations 2

(192) ‘What is remarkable in this sequence’ which goes from the torus to the Moebius strip then to the cross-cap or to the Klein bottle, is the peculiarity of the Moebius strip, which disappears by the cut which is none other than itself and which only appears ‘by being supplemented by a spherical cut’ (28b). The Moebius strip, left to itself, is subject to disappearing; as aspherical surface it is stabilized by a spherical surface, ‘the disc’ (here called ‘spherical cut’).

How does this long paragraph respond to the logic of the text? The Moebius strip is such that it suppresses itself: the Moebius strip is a single cut which ‘brings about the absence of the Moebius strip’. This ‘absence’, is, through equivocation, ‘the ab-sense’ that gave its the rhythm to the first turn of L’étourdit. ‘Ab-sense designates sex’ (8b), the ungraspable, feminine sex: the Moebius strip and its ab-sense is the single cut, ‘the ungraspable line’.

Is the Moebius strip supposed then to be only the metaphor of ab-sense? Is it supposed to represent the notall? No!

The first turn of L’étourdit had brought us to the notall which animated the four phallic formulae and the four discourses. The second turn will be charged with showing the evidence of the notall at each point and at
each instant of the structure of saying and of discourse. The evidence at stake is that of asphericity, which only becomes evident through the structure of the transformations which lead to the Moebius strip and proceed from it (Table of transformations 2). It is in effect remarkable that the asphericity should only appear evident starting from what it is not, from this supplementary disc, which is spherical. Before the evidence, asphericity was only possible (like the first formula); with the supplement of the spherical cut, the Moebius strip acquires a necessary character (like the second formula). But the evidence will only be really acquired when the Moebius strip is reduced to a pure cut, to the impossible surface (like the third formula), to bring into play the system of transformations always (193) already present (like the fourth formula which is in potency in the three others).

Topology presented in an imaged form is accessible to anyone manipulating paper or a tube with a scissors and glue. Is it this manipulation that is to introduce us to the notall by a metaphor-effect?

No. Topology is not metaphor.

What then is the import of an aspherical topology for the analyst inasmuch as he is concerned in his practice with the fourth formula?

2. The matheme and the questioning of being (28c-29c)

In the first turn, we have seen that the reference of the analytic discourse (the Bedeutung) was the phallic function. The stages of topological development ought to show the functioning of this reference starting from the notall. Thus we will see how topology develops the phallic function; it is the unpacked or ex-plained reference of the analytic discourse (28; 471).

In metaphor, in the substitution of one signifier for another, ‘there is produced a meaning-effect which belongs to poetry or creation, in other words the advent of the meaning in question’ (E515)\(^3\). Whether it is ‘phallic’ or ‘topological’ the reference ‘is in no way metaphorical’ (28bc). The ‘reference’ presupposes that a meaning is cut out: there is no sexual

\(^3\) In opposition to the metaphorical structure which produces meaning, the metonymical structure adjourns, indeed ‘elides’ (E 515) meaning.
relationship, the meaning-relationship is not produced. The movement of the phallic function is therefore the inverse of metaphor: instead of an addition of meaning, there is a subtraction of meaning. If the roundabout of the discourses was still supported by meanings, topology only develops in the putting in parenthesis of meanings; it is ab-sense which goes right away beyond the meaning-relationship. Why be on one’s guard against (194) metaphor? The analytic discourse is characterised precisely by the absence of meaning (this is its specific powerlessness): there is no path that leads from $S_1$ (product) to $S_2$ (truth) in the discourse of the analyst. If the $S_1$ of the analyst (or the phallic function) does not produce a meaning-relationship and cannot produce metaphor, the phallic function is the asemantic signifier par excellence, to which there remains only grammar and logic.

Nevertheless *L’Étourdit* presents many metaphors for example in the use of the term stuff ‘repudiated just now’ (28c; 472), but above all by topological images. This metaphorical treatment of topology has as its only goal to make it understood by psychoanalysts. The topological presentation ‘was doable by a purely literal algebra’ – without the imaginary of topological depictions – by the sole recourse to ‘vectors’ indicating the displacements of the phallic function and its metonymical value: any meaning is displaced towards another meaning. Thus the topological images are only valid by the continual displacement in which meaning is elided.

But what do these vectors isolated from any meaning teach us? What does the asemantic signifier teach us? What is the matheme of the phallic function?

Topology, a mathematics of space, teaches us the questioning of being: ‘is it not this non-space to which mathematical discourse leads us’? The pure matheme is presented as homophonic equivocation (*n’est-ce pas ce* - ?/*n’espace*); it is developed by grammar which opposes an interrogative, negative, asemantic protasis (*n’est-ce pas ce* - ?, is it not this..?) to a verb conjugating topological space (*n’space*); it converges on a logic that questions being.
This questioning of being with the goal of making a saying appear was already present in chapter 2 of the first turn. It necessitates a revision of the starting point of all knowledge, notably of the starting point of the *Critique of pure reason*, of Kant’s aesthetics (28d); according to Kant, all (195) knowing would presuppose receptivity, thanks to which objects are given to us in the senses by sensation; mathematics itself would imply the imaginary support of a figure: one would have to be helped ‘with the fingers of the hand as intuition’ (*Critique of pure reason*, p.770). Revising Kant’s aesthetics aims at resituating it in logical dependence on saying.

Being (qua essence of all ontology) is put in question by saying or by phallic functioning, in other words by topology. Being, defined by its boundaries, is inscribed in a universe; by that, it presupposes an inside and an outside; it is plunged into a spherical topology (into a world of bilateral surfaces). Topology has shown us the way in which, starting from this spherical milieu, there can be constructed, with evidence/emptying out, the underlying aspherical topology. Being (first formula/spherical topology) is thus plunged into a wider topology (the four formulae/aspherical topology). From then on, teaching, the question of the matheme, will not consist in learning what one or other being, one or other *étant* (individual) would be in its extension and its comprehension; teaching is the aspherical topological practice, where the individuals can be secondarily inscribed.

‘No other stuff to give it than this language of pure matheme’. Just as the phoneme is a distinctive atom of the sounds in a tongue, the matheme is a distinctive atom of mathematical language. This latter ‘is the science without consciousness’ (9b): it is a barred subject as semblance supported by the truth of the o-object. At a topological level, the aspherical Moebius strip (barred subject) only maintains its stability thanks to the supplementary spherical disc (the o-object). That the matheme gathers together $ and o might lead us to define the matheme by the phantasy. Nevertheless the matheme is specified by the fact of being a distinctive atom: one matheme is not an other. The phantasy ($<>o) can only be grasped with respect to several phantasies and the matheme is diffracted into several mathemes characterised by their differences (just as a phoneme is (196) defined by its difference to an other). We can grasp the phantasy
($<>o$) in terms of four modalities which correspond to the four discourses and to the four formulae of sexuation. By that, a new theory of teaching or of transmission is announced. Teaching by the language of pure matheme (which presupposes the exclusion of the meaning-relationship) will be played out in difference, in the logical passage from one discourse to another, from one formula to another, from one form of phantasy to another. The teaching proper to the matheme will do without any recourse to ‘some experience’, which being always founded on one discourse, only establishes, stabilises and confirms this discourse. The experience founded on a single discourse (radically opposed to the experience of the discourse of the analyst) encloses its discourse and stabilises it; it withdraws it from a switch to another discourse. These isolated and stabilised discourses are not suitable for teaching or for the matheme.

To the always lacking teaching arrangements of the master, of the academic or even of the hysteric, Lacan substitutes the teaching of the matheme inasmuch as it presupposes the roundabout of discourse implied in and by the discourse of the analyst: the configuration of the psychoanalytic discourse is founded in effect on the one hand on the powerlessness of the signifier to make a meaning-relationship ($S_2$ inaccessible starting from $S_1$) and on the other hand on the putting face to face the $o$-object and the $S$:

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‘What authorizes me in my case to refer myself to this pure matheme?’ (28de; 472). The authorization of the analyst – ‘he is authorized by himself’ – is to be plunged into the reference, into the Bedeutung, into the phallic function that articulate the four discourses, into (197) the topology which articulates the matheme as the passage from a spherical topology to an aspherical topology (or reciprocally). The purity of the matheme and of the discourse of the analyst is not constituted by the exclusion of other discourses, but by their roundabout.
How can this matheme ‘be enriched’? No hope of enriching in the order of metaphor or in the order of sense. The only possible enriching is situated in the ab-sense particularly privileged in mathematical discourse (8e). The ‘recreation’ of the pure matheme diverts us from meaning to open up the field of ab-sense, proper at once to the language of mathematics and to the language of the unconscious (8e-9a). What ab-sense teaches us is at the heart of the experience of analysis: the unconscious is nothing other than the dynamic of ab-sense present inside a discourse in order to make it switch. Such is the ‘reference’ of the ‘present discourse’, of the discourse of the analyst, which cuts the meaning-relationship $S_1//S_2$. Every meaning refers back to another meaning.

Lacan responds therefore to the question (29a; 472) of what authorises him ‘to refer himself to this pure matheme’ ($<>o$). ‘We must first of all have the idea’: if we authorize ourselves starting from a clinical opinion, we necessarily engage ourselves in the world of doxa and in a well established discourse, a ‘racist’ discourse which draws strength from its own results. In opposition to this point of view, the Idea – as it appears to us and interrogates us in the Parmenides – presupposes a whole logical journey. (If the One is, what is the result for itself? And for the others? If the One is not, what is the result for itself? And for the others?) which shows ‘the incompatibility of the One and Being’ (23e). This logical process is none other than that of the experience of analysis: it is that of the discourse of the analyst. The experience proper to each of the three non-analytic discourses aims at shoring up one or other discourse. The experience of the analytic discourse aims on the other hand at making labile, at destabilising each discourse in order to develop the roundabout of discourses. The experience of analysis is ‘that not just anything can be said: if the fundamental rule is to (198) say whatever, it is not aimed at the said (the ‘putting into words’), but the reversal of the said into another said, the diachronic difference proper to the signifier which goes beyond the dit-mension of the said and leads to saying.

‘Which amounts to saying that we must say it from the outset’: one must first ‘say it’ before driving into an experience which is supposed to be looking for meaning, one must say it before the datum of the clinic or of
sensibility. That is why Kant’s aesthetic necessitates a revision: sensibility no longer takes its starting point in relation to a said which would constitute the inventory of the ‘datum’, but in the primordial dynamic of a saying, in ab-sense.

What does this ‘saying’ signify? The ‘signified’ of saying (29a) is not a meaning (hence the quotation marks), the ‘opening sentences’ already made this felt: ‘That one might be saying remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood…’ Saying is the ex-sistence which disputes the validity of universality: ‘One cannot say everything’, since a saying necessarily excepts itself: far from being a single statement (‘this expression (dit) that one cannot say everything’), this saying is the movement ex-sisting this affirmation. Saying ‘is not the subject’; it is neither the phenomenological ‘subject’ of stating, as supposed author of speech, nor the subject in the Lacanian sense of the term, the subject of the signifier (such a subject is an ‘effect of the said’: what a signifier represents for another signifier).

Before developing saying by topology, let us examine how the subject is ‘an effect of the said’ in topology.

‘In our aspheres, the cut, the closed cut, is the said’ (29b). The said, a closed cut, is founded on a meaning-relationship $S_1 - S_2$ which comes back to its starting point, of which the two opening sentences are a notorious example. In the asphere (or in the cross-cap), two species of closed cut are distinguished: those which divide the asphere into two parts (figure 13: a and a’) and those ‘which do not make two parts of this asphere’ (figure 13: b)
(199) The closed cut ‘makes subject: whatever it circles’: 1) in a’, the barred subject as a Moebius strip between the two turns of the cut; 2) in b, the subject, like the Moebius strip, is reduced to the ‘median’ cut (the two turns are condensed in a single one) and disappears; 3) in a, the closed cut can be manipulated topologically to slip into the position a’. The unilateral surface (the Moebius strip) is ‘subject’, clearly visible in the position a’.

To introduce saying, let us now examine another effect of the said. The closed cut circumscribes a concept ‘notably’(29b; 472): besides the subject-effect (the Moebius strip), the closed cut circles again a portion of the bilateral sphere: the remainder of the cross-cap. Let us examine this remainder, presented here as concept. Every concept possesses a comprehension that defines it and an extension which delimits its field of application. Every concept allows us to say if one or other element is included in the concept or not: ‘as is depicted by Popilius’ injunction’

(200) Each element must respond ‘by yes or by no’ (29b) to the question ‘does it come under the extension of the concept’? These elements have no reality in themselves; the concept does not define any real thing, but simply ‘the being’ as essence of the possible thing. ‘The being’ of which Lacan speaks here is the one that defines specifically such and such a ‘being’, namely such and such an étant (ens) whether it exists or not; it is the essence of the ontology of Suarez or of Wolff (and of those who follow this path like Descartes and Spinoza). The being of metaphysics (of Suarez, of Wolff, of Descartes, of Spinoza, etc.), ‘being’ in general is shared out in multiple essences (the world, man, God, but also the philosopher’s stone, the monkey, the unicorn, etc.) and cuts the universe into multiple regions (cosmology, psychology, theology) which are always situated with respect to being in general, to the ‘with-respect-to-all’ of the essence (of ontology).

‘The trouble is that being does not have of itself any kind of sense’ (29c; 472). Even though it has an unlimited extension (applicable to all the essences) this general being has a null comprehension: ‘it does not have of

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1 In 168BC, the Seleucide King Antiochos IV Epiphan marched on Alexandria with his troops. The Roman senator Gaius Popilius Laenas goes to meet him and enjoins him to leave Egypt. With his stick, he traces around Antiochos a circle in the sand, ‘a closed cut’: ‘You will not get out of this circle, as long as you have not responded by yes or no to my injunction to leave Egypt’. The episode ends with the retreat of Antiochos.
itself any kind of sense’. In order to give it sense, there must be the intervention of an elsewhere, which will insert it into a saying, into a discourse, for example the philosophical discourse. This is not simply the discourse of the master: ‘the philosopher is inscribed…in the discourse of the master’ (9 note). If the philosopher holds the specific place of truth in the discourse of the master, this truth is given by the discourse of which $ is the semblance: in order to be the truth of the discourse of the master, the philosopher is inscribed at first as semblance in the hysterical discourse. To hold this role of the truth of the master, the philosopher at the outset played the ‘role of the fool’ or the hysteric. Thus Socrates addressed himself to being, ‘to the m’être-signifier’ to put it to work as Other of the hysterical discourse: Socrates’ hysteria takes any ‘m’être’ whatever in order to demonstrate its inconsistency. In a second phase, the philosopher is at the service of the master-signifier, in other words, he plays the role of the truth (201) in the master discourse; there the master-signifier ‘can be brilliant, or be beautiful’ (29c; 473). The psychoanalyst knows that the brilliant like the beautiful hides the horror of castration¹ and already announces something quite different. The philosopher is therefore at the service of the signifier, as a pure subject-point (sum) that the signifier (cogito) represents for another signifier (Cogito ergo sum): he is ‘m’être subject’ that can be ‘redoubled to infinity’: ‘I think therefore I am’ and think that I think, etc. Ever since pre-Socratic interrogation, the philosophical discourse already constituted a series and a passage through several discourses.

‘I shall evoke here the magisterial survival… of this [philosophical] discourse’ (29d). The philosophical discourse interrogating ‘being qua being’ is already a putting in question of being (n’est-ce pas ce - ?/n’espace) where being itself is equivocal: it can signify the essence circled by the concept (‘the being’ Lacan speaks about) or the fact of the real and actual existence of an individual and of his saying. Already in Aristotle’s discourse, a ‘being’ goes radically beyond essence (defined by the concept): the individual cannot be predicated, it is a real (ousia) which radically

¹ The ‘brilliant/shine (German: Glanz) on the nose’ is the exemplary fetish of the glance (French: regard) masking the castration of the mother (Freud, Fetishism, 1927). Beauty is ‘the final dam against access to the last thing, the mortal thing,…’ (Seminar VIII, Transference, 6.11.1960)
escapes the concept. St Thomas’s discourse also, will highlight a being irreducible to essence and to the concept: l’actus essendi, existence, the actuality proper to an esse; just as saying remains forgotten behind the said, the actus essendi, the act of being is hidden behind the description of the individual, behind the essence. The dialectic of essence and existence, magisterially presented in L’être et l’essence (1948) by Etienne Gilson, ‘embraces modern facts’ (29cd), being in or penetrating the philosophy described as ‘modern’, notably that of Descartes. Gilson’s Index scolastico-cartésien had reduced Cartesian being (sum) to the scholastic essence, which Lacan had vigorously criticised in his seminar of 6 December 1961: ‘professors put out very learned volumes, such as a scolastico-Cartesian (202) index’ to tell us that Descartes is only ‘an inheritance of scholasticism’ (L’identification). Some sessions later, Lacan ‘seriously’ analyses the Cogito: I think that I think that I am, and so on in a series (I think that I think that I think…) and in that way himself criticises static being, Descartes’ sum compared to scholastic essence. In 1972, Lacan is more inclined to recognise the correctness of the remarks of Gilson who distinguishes very subtly existence (or the actus essendi of St Thomas or being according to Gilson) and essence (or étant or being according to Lacan); so long as the sum does not participate in an endless metonymical movement alongside Lacan’s series (I think that I think that I think…) it remains an essence (as in scholasticism or in Descartes). With Gilson and over against Descartes ideas, which are only ‘clear and distinct’ because they are static, the sum has to follow the metonymical drift of ‘I think’. Does not such a ‘sum’ always different to itself, have ‘sens’ as present participle in Latin? One must accept semi-obscurity and equivocation in order to make sense then ab-sense as we have seen from the first pages of L’étourdit (S 8b). The course taken by L’être et l’essence (1948), that Lacan had no doubt read after 1961, took advantage already of existence in this sens, as Lacan would do later in his own way. For Lacan in 1972, Etienne Gilson’s thesis ‘is now nothing but pleasure’: by making the

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1 According Ernout and Meillet, Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine, 1939, p.302, ‘the present participle of sum would be sens, which is moreover preserved in composites such as ab-sens, prae-sens, con-sentes, etc.’ (Etienne Gilson, L’être et l’essence, p.335).
question of essence and existence problematic, the Thomist philosopher makes the philosophical discourse function starting from \( (\text{from the cut, from the Moebius strip}) \) in such a way that he produces the \( \text{o-object} \) for the pleasure of the master, for ‘surplus enjoying’.

This product cannot return to the truth of the philosopher: such is the powerlessness of the discourse of the master which invites us to switch to ‘other discourses’. That is why this \( \text{o-object} \) takes on a sense from other (203) discourses. Etienne Gilson, for his part, also gives a sense to the magisterial survival of the philosophical discourse from other discourses, of which the theological discourse of St Thomas and the religious discourse of Kierkegaard are not the least. Lacan will explain later (36c) how ‘sense’ consists in the roundabout of discourse and is produced at the same time as the \( \text{o-object} \).

3. **The matheme, topological and heterogeneous subversion** (29d-31a)

‘Being is produced notably’ (29de; 473): being as essence or as concept is noted or is circled by a closed cut. The philosopher assures the truth of such a master discourse turning around \( m\text{\'etre} \). In producing being (essence or concept), the closed cut separates the extension of the concept from what falls outside it: A and not A. This type of cut can be made on any surface (spherical or aspherical). ‘But our asphere’, defined above, allows closed cuts of type \( \text{b} \) (figure 13, p.199) which ‘do not make two parts of this asphere’.

These type-b cuts ‘have an effect of topological subversion’. ‘What can we say about the change that has come about through them’, if not that they transform a unilateral surface into a bilateral surface? Or that they make us go from an aspherical topology to a spherical topology?

The change brought about by these cuts can be ‘denominated topologically’ (30a) by the result of these cuts: torus, cylinder, bipartite strip, Moebius strip (see the *Table of transformations* 2, p.191). In what way is the analytic discourse implicated in these topological manipulations and figures? We can only respond to this question by interrogating ‘the relationship of saying to said’. The first turn worked on resurrecting the saying forgotten behind the said: saying ex-sists every discourse.
Nevertheless ‘it is not in every discourse that a saying comes to exist’ (23d), (204) since saying presupposes a change of discourse. It is a matter of specifying with the help of topology the saying proper to the discourse that implies the change of discourse.

Saying in analysis is specified from the saying ‘of demand’. The ‘logical status’ of demand ‘is of a modal order, and…grammar certifies it’, which the beginning of L’étourdit (‘That one might be saying…’) shows. This modal demand, largely present outside analysis, cannot by itself specify saying in analysis.

‘An other saying’ is ‘privileged’ in analysis: ‘it is interpretation’. Demand is modal, interpretation is not modal: ‘it is apophantic’ the term (logos apophantikos, an assertive or declarative discourse, corresponding to the Latin judicium) is used by Aristotle to characterize statements which can be said to be true or false (On interpretation). But the apophantic which characterizes interpretation is not Aristotle’s apophantic (the true vs. the false or the yes vs. the no). The saying specific to analysis is neither verifunctional, nor simply modal. Let us note that these two sayings function in terms of the notation of the concept: ‘it is yes or it is no’, ‘it is true or it is false’, ‘your demand is oral or it is not.’ In this way, the two sayings correspond to a universalizing spherical logic. On the contrary interpretation ‘is particular’ (30b), it can never be brought under the universality of the concept or the demand, it always presupposes the exception (15b). Interpretation from then on will only interest ‘particular saids’: determining each time a subject different to that of another said, even if it is pronounced by the ‘same’ individual.

Free association implies that ‘saids’ are ‘not all’ reducible to demand. Far from being the monopoly of women, the notall is first of all a logical function where psychoanalytic interpretation will be put into operation, without being reduced to an explanation of ‘saids’ or of some analysis or other of demand. How is that possible? Topology in its function as matheme or of teaching shows that on the hither side of the torus (where we inscribe demand) and on the hither side of the sphere (where we inscribe (205) the concept and the essence), there is the asphere that conditions them.
‘Interpretation, as I formulated it once, is brought to bear on the cause of desire’. The differentiation between demand and desire at stake in interpretation goes back to Seminar VI, *Desire and its interpretation* (1958-59). Desire can only appear as ‘metonymy of the lack of being’ (E 640): as metonymy, it functions without production of meaning (in the ‘resistance of meaning’ E 515); as ‘lack of being’, it presupposes the putting in question of being (‘is it not this -?’). The ‘cause of desire’ implies here what is missing or elided in being, as we have seen in the preceding paragraph: the o-object cause of desire in as much as it radically escapes desire and thus justifies its impossible chase. ‘This’ – namely the revelation of the cause of desire by interpretation – can nevertheless only be done by starting ‘from demand which by its modal envelopes the totality of saids’. But the (modal) envelope of demand must be cut so that interpretation can reveal the o-object.

Interpretation does indeed concern the modal demand, but it is only interpretation if it is a cut that isolates o-object, ‘the supplementary disc with which the Moebius strip is closed’ (30c). For interpretation to happen, it is therefore necessary firstly that the Moebius strip should be formed starting from the neurotic torus (26), namely that the modal order of the demand should appear, secondly that the Moebius strip should be closed in a cross-cap (27c), namely that the modal of the demand should close on itself, and thirdly that the cross-cap should be cut by a cut that transforms it (‘topological subversion’, 29e), namely that from the demand the cause of desire, the o-object, should be revealed. Every closed cut on the cross-cap, whatever it may be, makes a sphere-fragment, a bilateral surface, appear. ‘The important’ thing is this ‘effect of topological subversion’.

(206) Let us consider therefore the two fragments of the cross-cap cut in this way.

The o-object (or the cause of desire) corresponds to a ‘spherical topology’ (30c; 474) and ‘is projected onto the other of the, heterogeneous, composite’, onto the Moebius strip (or the modal of the demand). The o-object only appears as o-object by its projection onto the heterogeneous, namely only if the modal of demand (represented by the Moebius strip) and the apophantic of the cause of desire (the being put in question, represented
by the ‘supplementary disc’) are heterogeneous to one another (‘the logic of the Heteros…is to be constructed…starting from the incompatibility of the One to Being’ 23e).

‘Let us imagine… this other part’, namely the Moebius strip; ‘to imagine’ the Moebius strip, is to forget its heterogeneous character, it is to fabricate it ‘from the ideal cross-section by which a strip is twisted by a half-turn’ (27ab). It has then all the characteristics of a bilateral strip, except for a strictly local peculiarity where the back is stitched onto the front. By ‘imagining’ in this way the Moebius strip, or the (modal) demand, we reduce it almost entirely to a spherical topology. ‘What do we see of it? Its swelling’.

‘Nothing is more of a nature to take itself to be spherical (30d). Nevertheless, ‘however thinly one reduces its torso part by a half-turn’, the Moebius strip, defined as ‘single-turn cut’ or as ‘line without points’ introduces the heterogeneous: not everything is spherical, the cut of the cross-cap maintains the aspherical. The (totalized) universe includes the impossible, since it is necessarily supported by the modal of demand. The analytic discourse ‘touches on the real by encountering it as impossible’: analytic interpretation presupposes that the real of the o-object should be articulated from the impossible and as heterogeneous to the demand; the notall of the demand opens up the place of the o-object. The notall present in demand is not reducible to demand: it is the Heteros of the two parts of the cross-cap, of the saying of demand and of the object of desire.

(207) ‘The universe is nowhere other than in the cause of desire’: the universe and the universal can only appear starting from the closed cut of the Moebius strip, which in any case isolates a sphere-fragment. This sphere-fragment can be defined by the ‘concept’ and it shows itself as the universe(al) of this concept; thus the World of Alexander the Great but also any ‘being’ of ontology (the ego, the world and God). But if this sphere-fragment preserves its articulation with the cut which the Moebius strip is (see p.199, figure 13, a’), then, in addition, it shows itself as ‘the supplementary disc’, the o-object. It is from this articulation of the barred subject with the o-object (of the Moebius strip with the supplementary disc) that good logic, the logic of the cut proceeds. It transforms the spherical into the aspherical, it reverses one discourse for another, it jumps from one formula to another. The Moebian cut is the limit of the universe; it reveals
it as impossible and the real of the passage from the spherical to the aspherical follows.

Nevertheless this real is generally excluded: ‘that one might be saying’ remains forgotten, the absence of sexual relationship is veiled, the a-sphere is conjured away. ‘The exclusion of the real’ (30e) – namely the rejection of the absence of the sexual relationship – also proceeds from aspherical topology and from its transformations. The ‘fact that an animal has the *stabilitat* which is language’ means that language turns around a stable axis, already prefigured in ‘being’. But ‘*d’labiter*’, to inhabit this language, ‘is moreover what makes an organ for its body’; to inhabit this language, is to turn around an eccentric axis, which topology has demonstrated to be the spherical portion produced by the cut: the body of the speaker becomes organ determined by the phallic function or o-object specified by phallic functioning. It is because the speaker is determined by the phallic function even before he finds it, that he is ‘reduced to finding that his body is not without other organs’: the other organs, in which his desire is engaged, appear fragmented to him and their function ‘poses a problem for him’ because it depends on the always problematic phallic function. ‘The schizophrenic said is specified as being caught without the help of any established discourse’ (31a; 475): the statement proper to schizophrenia is taken up into the functioning of organs other than the phallus, at the moment when the phallic function, even though already present, is not found; his body is fragmented in this sense that this functioning of the organ is neither taken up again by phallic functioning that the discourse of the analyst highlights, nor articulated in an established discourse that stabilizes it.

How generate the heterogeneous if not by the phallic function in act, namely by the functioning of topology?

It is the psychoanalytic discourse that produces the phallic function.
CHAPTER 2: THE DISCOURSE OF THE ANALYST

(209) Analysis operates from ab-sense and has only one reference: the phallic function developed in the topology of the cross-cap. It is the psychoanalytic discourse that produces this reference which operates only on the structure of the asemantic signifier. But what is the social bond brought into play in the psychoanalytic discourse? In a first section, we will see that ‘the psychoanalytic group is impossible’; this impossibility implies that psychoanalytic discourse follows a thread that runs through the ideologies of our time (second section); essentially movable, the psychoanalytic discourse does not admit of any normalisation (third section); it will have to be constructed from the impossible of other discourses, therefore from the real and from the o-object (fourth section).

1. The psychoanalytic group is impossible (31a-32e; 464-476)

As for every discourse, there is no sexual relationship in the psychoanalytic discourse: the relationship between the semblance (the o-object, in other words the analyst) and the Other (the barred subject, in other words, the analyser) is impossible. Analyst and analyser are fundamentally disparate. How ground the 'status' (31a; 474) of the psychoanalytic discourse? To say ‘status’ is to say 'stability' or 'stabitas'. In the other discourses, the status of the discourse can be given by the meaning: thus the stability of the hysterical discourse is given by the Other, S₁, who works at producing a knowledge; thus the stability of the master discourse is provided by the slave put to work by the master; thus the stability of the academic discourse is assured by knowledge as semblance. For its part, the discourse of the analyst is founded on the powerlessness which is proper to it, the absence of the meaning-relationship (S₁//S₂); now the bodies (\$ and o) (210) can only be stabilised by meaning: they ‘labitent’ this discourse; their place is labile, without any stability. The stable status of the psychoanalytic discourse is impossible.

From this constitutive lability, Lacan concludes that it is ‘impossible that psychoanalysts should form a group’ (31a). Nevertheless, groupings of psychoanalysts are attested. What then is meant by group? The group is a
fundamental mathematical structure associating to a set a law of internal associative composition, possessing a neutral element, and such that every element admits of a symmetrical one for this law. One can associate the protagonists of the three non-analytic discourses to form groups, namely pairs (master-slave, academic-student, hysteric-signifier) or races (the race of masters, of slaves, of pedants, of fags, of bores, of shits); each of these individuals remains stable (there is therefore a neutral element that stabilises each of the protagonists); and every element is presented as symmetrical to another.

For analytic discourse, it is nothing of the sort: fundamentally disparate, the analyser and the analyst are not paired and the analysts do not form a group amongst themselves, because they are called by the constant dynamic of the roundabout of discourses, to become in turn hysterics, masters then academics; there is therefore no stabilising, neutral element; finally, the analyst and the analyser are not symmetrical. There is no law for the formation of analysts; the analyst is always and ever an analyser; thus he is constantly being formed and never ceases to be formed. The group of psychoanalysts being impossible, it 'appears hopeless' to clear a way for the status of this discourse by very reason of the impossibility of the group of analysts.

From this hopelessness, the psychoanalytic discourse founds ‘a social bond cleansed of any group-necessity’ (31b); it founds it on the impossibility of the psychoanalytic group. A new type of social bond, which is not the group, is founded on the hopelessness of ever forming a group, on the hopelessness of any stability of members; the social bond of (211) the psychoanalytic discourse depends on the lability of its protagonists. It is because the group is impossible for analysts that they precipitate themselves towards another solution to make a social bond. Think of the prisoners of Temps logique: it is because they cannot make a group to respond to the governor’s question that each one finds for himself the logical solution for himself and rushes towards freedom, every man for himself in his labile bond with the others.

The group-effect adds 'imaginary obscenity to the discourse-effect': sexual representations overlap the social bond woven from the ‘lability’
proper to the absence of the sexual relationship. It is a matter there of a simple imaginary addition to the discourse-effect. Any attempt to depict this sexual relationship on the stage would only be obscenity. Obscenity of racist groups, but also of self-styled ‘psychoanalytic groups’ whose regrouping has as its only principle exclusion, with all that this involves in terms of hatreds and excommunications, a true caricature of any social group whatever.

Lacan minces his words all the less in criticising the (imaginary) group-effect that supplants the (symbolic and real) discourse-effect in that ‘so-called group-work’ depends ‘historically’ on ‘the coming into operation of the analytic discourse’ (31c). It is an effect of this discourse, but at the same it has ‘purified’ itself of this discourse, of the roundabout of discourses that had determined it.

‘No objection to the said group-work’: the criticism does not have as a goal the prevention of these practices provided one does not forget that they do not take us very far: ‘it falls short’.

The impossible of the psychoanalytic group (31d) founds the ‘real of the group’ for analysts: they borrow from the other discourses the imaginary obscenity of the group all the more easily in that psychoanalytic discourse in its lability is directly open to these discourses. The analytic discourse lives from the roundabout of discourses. But if it only takes from them the imaginary obscenity of the group, then its ‘life’ is reduced to what is deadest in one or other discourse, to the group-effect.

(212) ‘This group-life’ based on other discourses keeps ‘alive’ the I.P.A., which acts as a parasite on the psychoanalytic discourse and sucks the sap of analysis to the benefit of a master or academic discourse. Lacan’s School (E.F.P.) has attempted to proscribe this group life. (Its dissolution by Lacan in the evening of his days makes us think that this attempt was a failure.)

Beyond this temptation of the group, beyond the fact that those who install themselves in the same discourse can with difficulty ‘live otherwise than in a group’ (31dc; 475), there remains the question of the social expression of the psychoanalytic discourse; it is impossible to make a group in it or to install oneself in it. One ’inhabits it’ (‘labite’) in a labile way, for
it is supported by the heterogeneity that animates the roundabout of discourses: the analytic discourse implies its own reversal; it calls on other discourses and 'their group-rampart' (31e).

This group-rampart is necessary, for the o-object, which is the cause of desire, can only gives rise to aversion when it occupies the position of semblance, when the cause of desire is only a semblance. How support this questioning of the cause of desire, if not by seeking comfort and strength in the group?

Lacan has already 'lost quite a few people' by exposing the obscenity of the group in order to rediscover the psychoanalytic discourse properly so-called (32a).

Despite the obstacles that this discourse encounters and over against the pretensions of groups, the psychoanalytic discourse will overcome. ‘I am now going to say why’.

'We live under the reign of scientific discourse' which has the same matrix as the hysterical discourse (see ‘Science and truth’ and Télévision p.36; AE 523). That 'man is mortal' indicates that the universal is only possible since it is the product of the hysterico-scientific discourse. This discourse produces a knowledge (S2) by means of the Other (S1), man. Its product, ‘all men are mortal’, can be expressed by its contradictory ‘life-insurance’. The semblance of this discourse is the barred hysterical subject (213) or the foreclosed scientific subject. The truth of this discourse is the 'calculation of probabilities' (32b):

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<th>Barred or foreclosed subject</th>
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'There are nevertheless, in our day', people who do not situate themselves in the scientific discourse: ‘they want from death a different truth that other discourses assure’. Death is a place of truth for different
discourses: death as probability for the hysteric and the scientist, ‘death taken as a risk’ for the master, death as 'eternal memory’ of the master S1 in academic knowledge.

The truth of death (32c) in these three discourses is ‘contested, because it is contestable’ in as much as each discourse demonstrates its impasse or its powerlessness to reach the truth from its own product. This contestation of death as probability, as risk, as memory comes to light by means of the truth of death in the psychoanalytic discourse: ‘death is love’ (la mort, c’est l’amour).

From the point of view of the first three discourses: to be dying of love (risk), love forever (eternal memory), but also probable love. Love is necessarily reversed: each time 'a new love appears'. Thus the truth of death of the three discourses is illuminated in the psychoanalytic discourse by love as reversal. But l’amor - death love (la mort amour) - only reveals itself after the event: the truth of the psychoanalytic discourse depends also on the 'calculation of probabilities', it is illuminated by the hysterical discourse. What will this calculation of probabilities tell us if not that love reverses (214) into hate? ‘There is no love–insurance, because this would also be hate–insurance’: at the level of the discourse of the analyst, love is necessarily reversed into hate. For the lover there is only a tiny chance of escaping this hate, which is to leave this discourse and rediscover its origins. Dante’s poem, the Vita nuova (1283-1293) was able to realise this chance. From Beatrice’s simple look, perceived when he was eight years old, Dante develops a love beyond the death of Beatrice; the o-object – Beatrice’s look – determines the discourse and follows the journey, for the o-object does not establish a stable relationship but opens a roundabout: to satisfy the exigency of love, is not to be promised a relationship that does not exist, but simply to ‘re-surrect’ (23c) the feminine enjoyment which comes from 'God' (Télévision, p.40) and which leaves the woman alone (23b).

The love–hate (32d), produced by the hysterical discourse, demonstrates that all love is ambivalent, since love and hate necessarily extend into one another and thus compose 'the single face of a Moebius strip'. The comic proper to the analyst – the Comédie – is the reversal of his own discourse: if the analyst’s discourse goes beyond the others, it
nevertheless remains that it is in its turn dislodged by the discourse of the hysteric who puts it in question again. Wanting to talk about love, 'in his group-life', the analyst is drawn into the roundabout of discourses; his truth is reversed and 'he never denominates anything of it but hate'. This resurgence of hate clearly indicates that his knowledge of love is above all ignorance.

Analysis therefore does not provide love-insurance for the analyser. 'One can only lose in it' (32d) the reversal of discourses that the psychoanalytic discourse implies; with this love-insurance, this discourse is firmly planted in one of the three other discourses and necessarily makes hate appear. The "conjungo without end" (32de), everlasting marriage, love–insurance or eternal love has no place in the roundabout of discourses, (215) nor in the movement proper to Dante’s Comedy, not even as a mortal sin in the circles of hell.

2. The thread of the psychoanalytic discourse (32de-34c)

The 'psychoanalytic group' is only a commentary (commentaire), a 'how to silence (commentaire) the psychoanalytic discourse’ which congeals it into the obscenity of the group. Psychoanalytic discourse is saying, is topology (32de: 476). Lacanian topology is the reference of analytic discourse which aims at 'ab-sense', 'the absence of sexual relationship'. If topology is taken from the metaphorical point of view, sense comes then to efface ab-sense; the topology which enters into the imagery of the saying at stake in the discourse of the analyst is lost in meanings. Necessarily and illusorily, the discourse of the analyst enters into this metaphor and into this imagery. Already too much 'commentary': this imagery of the analytic discourse, and especially the ideals of the analytic group in general, is at once a ‘mis-commentary’ (‘mécommentaire’), a 'buthow' (‘mécomment’), that they will strive to explain; the 'analytic group' is not a good way of tackling the analytic discourse.

The psychoanalytic group can nevertheless have a quite different function than those of misconising and of 'how to silence'. It is in so far as the psychoanalytic group wants to be the specific saying of the discourse of the analyst that it is 'impossible' (31ab) and it is as such that it is the real of
this very discourse. A psychoanalytic group demonstrates the impossibility of the analyst’s saying: at best, the impossible transferential bond, structured as a phantasy ($◊o$) operates there.

Most discourses hug the real as what escapes from their saids, as 'the impossible of what they have said' (32e): the real of the Kantian Thing in itself is what is impossible to know by human reason; and the real of the scientist is the falsifiability of his formulae. In the analytic discourse the impossible is not of the order of the said, but of saying; saying produces saids which make this saying impossible and it is not the said that is (216) undecidable, but saying.

'This dit-mension of an impossible' (33a) which, in all the discourses, always starts from the said has nevertheless a particular incidence: in 'the properly logical impasse' illustrated by the paradox of the liar, it is brought to bear in effect on saying. 'What is called structure' is the development of this 'dit-mension of an impossible' which includes 'the properly logical impasse' of saying: saying is no longer the exercise which produces saids, but the movement which runs along the wall of the impossibles (inconsistent, incomplete, undemonstrable, undecideable) and runs through the different discourses.

'The structure is the real which comes to light in language': the real is defined by language which, formally, comes up against the impossible. Such a real, defined by the impossible, has no relationship with to the ‘good form’ of Gestalttheorie centred on the state of equilibrium in the order of the said. Let us say rather that structure is the impasse or the impossibility of good form, which provokes the incessant reversal of the discourses.

Impossibility is first of all the 'absence of sexual relationship', for which an organ-relationship is going to supply. 'The organ-relationship of language to the speaking being, is metaphor' (33a). The phallic function is essentially non-metaphorical; nevertheless, it is necessarily plugged by the relationships to the different organs at stake in the pre-genital drives. In a first phase (1958) Lacan introduced the phallus imaginarily by the (paternal) metaphor: ‘The meaning of the phallus…should be evoked in the imaginary of the subject by the paternal metaphor’ (E 557). This metaphor, recalled in L’Etourdit (14bd), was to be overtaken by the formulae of sexuation which,
as mathemes, do not depend on metaphor (28bd). The metaphorical relationship constituting the phallus is ‘stabitat’, it stabilises the speaking being. But to inhabit it, is to engage with the phallic function and go through a series of reversals. By thus going on to the phallic function, the speaking being is 'labitant', always labile. By this fact, the phallic function (217) 'carries the impact of a real' for the speaking being (33ab): it is not a well established ‘being’, but it goes through the different positions explicitated in the four phallic formulae.

By 'expressing himself thus' (33b), Lacan is slipping into ‘a world-view’. As an ‘intellectual construction, capable of resolving in terms of a single principle all the problems that our existence poses’ (Freud, New introductory lectures on psychoanalysis, SE XXII 158; G.W XV, 170), the phallic function is a world-view. As a product of the psychoanalytic discourse, the phallic function is also its ‘waste product’. Nevertheless, one cannot say that Lacan ‘expresses’ the phallic function: it seems to be rather the phallic function that allows Lacan to become, what at a certain moment expresses what we know as ‘Lacan’. What is more, the phallic function (or topology) is a world-view different to other world-views. Each of these world-views serves to stabilise the discourse from which it emerges; thus the knowledge produced reinforces the hysterical discourse, the object produced consolidates the master discourse, the barred subject protects the academic discourse. In effect, according to Freud, these different products enclose in principle 'all the problems posed by our existence'. For Freud, psychoanalysis rejects all the world-views from philosophy as well as from religion and simply rallies to the scientific world-view (id. pp.181-2; G.W. XV, 197). Lacan, for his part, proposes an altogether paradoxical 'world-view': the phallic function, far from resolving all the problems or of being stabilised in a discourse, re-launches the questioning movement at the same time as it 'labite’s or destabilises every discourse. It is a de-conception or a de-construction of everything that could be called ‘world’

'The analyst might be saved' (33b; 476) from the world-view proper to analysis because he is himself rejected from the analytic discourse, in so far as he is the 'reject' pushed aside from the goal of language in (218) general by his very ab-sense, inasmuch as he is the o-object in the position
of semblance. This position of the 'reject of language' results from the continual displacement of the discourses: the rejection is opposed to the correction of the discourse (9c) and implies the mechanism for passing to another discourse.

The analyst must therefore follow a thread. This thread is necessarily 'ideological' (33b). Do we not thus fall again into a world-view that would respond to all possible questions and would allow everything that interests us to be ranked at a determinate place? This ideological thread is the thread which follows the logic of 'the idea', as it is present in Plato’s *Parmenides* no doubt (23), but above all the idea present in the Freudian experience: outside of the said, 'we must say it' (29a). This ideological thread, in which the four formulae of sexuation are articulated, is 'the stuff of the analytic discourse' (28b). It 'holds together' the ideologies of the twentieth century: the ideology proper to the hysteric (science), the ideology proper to the master, the ideology proper to the academic. One cannot reject this thread in the name of an ‘enjoyment’ that is supposed to go beyond all these ideologies, since enjoyment is only obtained by following the thread of the phallic function. 'It is even the principle of the psychoanalytic discourse' which articulates enjoyment by following the thread of the four formulae of sexuation.

The discourse of the analyst shares therefore with the three other discourses 'the experience of our time' (33c; 477). This 'experience' of the present time is nevertheless diffracted into two types of radically different experience: an experience founded on one of the first three discourses (hysterical, master, academic) and 'the experience instituted by Freud' which, founded on the impossible, implies 'saying'. Might the 'ideological thread' or the sense of this discourse of the analyst be found then outside our times, outside the three other discourses? Lacan ‘attempts it – always in vain’: the articulation of the three other discourses is indefectibly inherent to the discourse of the analyst.

(219) But in what way can the experience of analysis share the other experiences of our day if not by knowledge? Knowledge, in the position of truth in the discourse of the analyst, remains beyond reach: knowledge is put in question by analysis. In order to question his own knowledge, the
knowledge of the unconscious, it would be better that the analyst 'should know something' about the knowledge proper to other experiences, to other discourses. The knowledge of the discourse of analysis is thus 'supposed' by means of through the knowledge of the other discourses. The supposed knowledge, in which transference consists, is nothing other than the setting in motion of this knowledge drawn along in a cycle of questioning responses by the work of the roundabout of the discourses or of the primary processes. In other words, the questioning of knowledge by analysis presupposes the opinion produced by the hysteric, the faith that the master puts in the Other, the knowledge in the semblance position of the academic.

‘I admire on this the supercilious airs’ of those who confuse the different forms of knowledge in order to reduce all of them to a simple ‘natural’ knowledge, to ‘saying directly what is there’.

‘It remains that science took off, cleanly, from the fact of letting go of natural supposition’ (33d). Natural supposition 'implies that the body’s connections with nature' is natural, namely that the relationship uniting the word to the outside object designated by this word is direct, in as much as it is supposed to be simply natural. By the signifier, where S₁ is used for something other than natural supposition, psychoanalysis upsets this naive relationship of the word to the thing, renders it impossible. Science takes off precisely at the moment when Galileo lets go of the natural supposition that a heavy body would fall more quickly than a light body; by his experimentation on top of the Tower of Pisa, he 'falsifies' (c.f. K. Popper) this erroneous supposition that was supposed to be natural. The supposition (S₁), no longer being natural, can be put to work and produce a knowledge (S₂) responding to natural supposition. The work of the signifier is set en route not because of the fall of a body, but thanks to the fall of the natural supposition. The supposition 'is invented', is revealed to be false, which 'involves an idea of the real (33e), built on the work of the signifier in as much as it produces a new knowledge: all bodies (heavy or light) fall with an acceleration of 9.81m/s². This idea of the real, found by the 'falsification' of S₁, may 'well be true'; but this word 'true' is not appropriate to the real, since the latter is formed by the logic of the impossible, which makes the hypothesis or the natural supposition collapse: it is a matter of
'proving' that 'the idea' is false, that it involves a reversal, a collapse that goes from $S_1$ towards $S_2$, in the case of scientific discourse. But this $S_2$ ‘slips from the arms of the discourse that embraces it’. 'The idea of the real', in science, is again going to be demonstrated as 'fallen', as 'falsa' (feminine past participle of the Latin fallere to make slip; or feminine of the supposed, simulated, invented, false, falsus).' The idea of the real' drawn from the experience of analysis goes a step further: it presupposes not alone the reversal of an $S_1$ into an $S_2$, but again the reversal of one discourse in favour of another discourse.

The saying of the analyst compels recognition, not as a 'model' which would supplant the other discourses but as ‘a project to articulate topologically discourse itself’ in general (34a; 477). For discourse is articulated by the saying highlighted in aspherical topology (29-30). This topology (of the signifier) reverses the spherical topology (of the word 'natural'), it empties out being and highlights non-being. ‘The universe is a defect in the purity of non-being’ (Valéry, Ebauche d’un serpent, quoted in E 819). The universe ($\forall x.\Phi x$, first formula) is put in question by the defect in the universe (34a), by the exception ($\exists x.\bar{\Phi} x$, second formula); the saying of the analyst can nevertheless not supply for this defect in the universe and install the discourse of the analyst as the exception that would gather together the other discourses: there is no meta-language ($\exists x.\bar{\Phi} x$, third formula). The defect in the universe is thus the place reserved for the notall ($\forall x.\Phi x$, fourth formula), it remains the motor of a movement that we (221) cannot articulate, because it determines us already according to a topology which goes beyond us.

‘Realising the topology’ (34a) of saying, consists in giving to saying the place of real (in aspherical topology); saying demonstrates itself as real from the impossible of the universe (of spherical topology). By this real of topology, we do not get out of phantasy, since phantasy is this topology; it is the cut on the cross-cap which has an 'effect of topological subversion' (29e-30c), it articulates a Moebius strip ($) with the supplementary disc (o): ($) ◊ o). But this ‘realisation’ (in quotes in the text) is aimed not simply at the real (the diamond) but also the realisation of this real, in other words the
The apparition of this real in reality (made up of the imaginary and the symbolic): it is precisely phantasy as such that 'supports our reality' (16c). We do not get out of phantasy 'even by becoming aware of it', since any realisation occurs starting from the aspherical structure of phantasy. Lacan has picked the 'flower' of 'this topology' in mathematical discourse, 'the most emptied of sense that there is'; this discourse, which does not start 'from any reality', but from figures or letters which signify nothing in themselves, 'is renewed' only by saying; since it does not produce meaning – it 'does without any metaphor' - , it is in the journey of saying which is renewed by every confrontation with the impossible; it is in retreat from sense, it is 'metonymically of ab-sense'. The 'reality of phantasy', the realised phantasy 'is founded' on the analytic discourse whose semblance and Other correspond precisely to the two terms of the phantasy ($ and ø). This reality of the two terms only inscribes the 'real of the phantasy' (written as a diamond: ◊), namely the process of the structure.

Why would the real of the phantasy underlying its realisation 'not be number' (34b) at stake notably in repetition? And even number 'quite crudely', independent of the perceived object as well as of the thinking (222) subject, number qua pure arithmetical entity? Number is a mathematical object apparently 'simpler' than topology; it is comprehended by every language and is central to the vernacular. The 'simplicity' of number 'is not so simple': it is not 'formed from a single element' (simplex), the One. The One is incompatible with Being (c.f. Plato’s Parmenides) and this 'incompatibility' triggers the logic of the Heteros (23e) and of saying: ‘there is a case for saying’: the ‘case’, the ‘collapse’, is precisely what engages with saying. Number is a ‘case’, namely a ‘collapse’ in mathematical discourse: number and the enumerable are only a reduction with respect to the notall which remains inaccessible from numeration. [Lacan ‘is always quick to conjure up the case’ by saying that ‘it is the case’, for example, for Alexander the Great (25e). By saying (that it is the case), he already highlights the notall that underlies it and in this way removes the danger of reducing everything to the case of the first two formulae of sexuation.]
‘Cantor’s saying’ (34c), introducing the power of the continuous beyond the enumerable infinite, situates ‘the transfinite’ (24a; c.f. my note p.154-155): the infinity of ‘the sequence of numbers’ is only a schematised and reductive ‘representation’ of the power of the continuous which is much more complex: number is only a cut in the power of the continuous, just as the Moebius strip is reduced to a cut on the cross-cap. The cut is the birth of the two; it is simplification by ‘deux’; it is prior to the enumeration ‘d’eux’ (of ‘the enumerable to infinity’ or of the demand).

‘From then on a topology is necessitated from the fact that the real’ is only attributed to Cantor ‘from the discourse of analysis’, from mathematical analysis, which deals with notions of continuous and cut (34c): the impossible which touches the transfinite (impossibility of ordering all the points of the power of the continuous) only appears from the saying of the continuous and of the cut. This discourse of mathematical (223) analysis is identical to the discourse of Freudian analysis. From the infinite number of demands, which remain enumerable, we go on to desire, to the impossible to enumerate; the cut throws light on aspherical topology. This passage from demand to desire was already present in the Lacanian theory of 1960: the infinite space of infinitely repeatable and enumerable demands for love must open up onto desire, which is at once what is on this hither side and beyond these demands (E 634 and E 813). This passage from demand to desire, which is at the same time the passage from schema R to the graph, is now explicitated by the passage from the enumerable to the transfinite, or from the sphere to the asphere of topology. By closing itself ‘beyond the other discourses’, the psychoanalytic discourse takes up again mathematical analysis; by opening up ‘the gap’ of the impossible of the sexual relationship, of the impossible of the enumerable, it is aspherical topology which orders every discourse.

3. Standardisation or actualisation of the unconscious? (34cd-35b)

‘My topology’ (34cd; 478) is not a thinking substance which would pose beyond the practice a theory that would justify this practice. The topology of saying (or the cross-cap) is on the contrary the practice of the
reversals of discourse; psychoanalytic discourse opens up in each discourse a gap that pushes it towards its own reversal.

Psychoanalytic practice, which is at the same time topology, ought to account for the cuts of discourse which modify the structure. Each discourse is inscribed in the structure of discourses in general, it welcomes this structure. Certain cuts modify this structure. These cuts are the evident–emptying operation (26–27) and topological subversion (29e). The first operation makes us go from a spherical topology to an aspherical topology, from a discourse centred on the said to a discourse centred on saying, from the discourse of the academic to the discourse of the analyst. The second cut (topological subversion) has a much greater import: it demonstrates the asphericity (of the Moebius strip) by the extraction of a spherical flap (the supplementary disc); it is not simply a matter of going (224) from one discourse to another, from the sphere to the asphere; demonstrating asphericity consists in showing that the asphericity is always in operation. By this (double-turn) cut the modality of saying can neither be set aside nor forgotten; in this sense, the (aspherical) psychoanalytic discourse is present in each of the other discourses.

‘To exteriorise’ (34de) the real of the modification of structure by norms and standards is ‘pure avoidance’. The modification of the structure is a steeple-chase in the course of which a series of obstacles must be cleared: emptying of the torus, cut to transform it into a bipartite strip, suture in order to obtain a Moebius strip, suture of the Moebius strip with a supplementary disc to produce a cross-cap, a double-turn cut to articulate in it the barred subject and the o-object. Like a horse shying to avoid an obstacle, standardisation is pure avoidance aimed at withdrawing itself from the logic of the unconscious. Thus, reducing the phallic function to a vital drive, to ‘so-called standards of living’ would allow some subjects to excel, to raise their level of living and to valorise themselves. But this would be to stop at masculine existence, at the second phallic formula (∃x. Φx) and to remain at a spherical topology. To add to it secondarily ‘the pedantry of the word affect’ would change nothing in it, but would congeal this
normalisation into pedantic, academic knowledge which deviates still more from the modification-structure proper to psychoanalytic discourse.

How would this pedantry of the word ‘affect’ ‘get its teeth into’ (34e) or connect to the logic of the unconscious, since it does no more than strengthen the standards of living, the sense of excelling for those who have substituted themselves for the unconscious in act and for the ‘primary processes’. How correct this false track?

‘Might it be a piece of wisdom that will intervene in it?: one might hope that the love of wisdom (philosophy) would intervene in the sense of (225) the roundabout of the discourses. But ‘standards’ contradict precisely any switching.

By ‘argufying’ within the banality of standards of living and of academic pedantry, ‘we are already moving to the theology of being’ which supports the psychologist’s sector in its attempt to reduce the psychical to life (11-12). Theology is ‘the psychical reality’ (35a), which structures all ontology by God’s saying, the ‘di-eu-re’ (Télévision, p.53). God’s saying is already the ‘realisation of topology’ or the ‘reality of phantasy’ (34ab); ‘it endorses analytically only something of the phantasy’

‘No doubt analysis itself takes account of this snare and slippage’ (35a) which consists in ‘argufying’ in terms of ‘standards’. Analysis accounts for it by the universalising super-ego ∃x.Φx. It presupposes nevertheless another ‘super-ego’ which depends on the notall (25ab). That Freud should have abstained from standardising psychoanalytic treatment sufficiently shows that there is no ‘typical treatment’, but only atypical unclassifiable variations (c.f. Lacan, Variantes te la cure-type, E 323). The ‘snare’ of standards is ‘crude enough to be denounced everywhere as a discourse on what there is’ (c.f. 10a), ‘discharges itself of the responsibility’ of engaging with saying, in the roundabout of discourses.

‘For we must say it’ (35ab, my italics). The unconscious is the motor of saying which goes from one discourse to the other. ‘The unconscious is a fact insofar as it is supported by the very discourse that establishes it’, by the psychoanalytic discourse. Analysts may ‘reject the burden’ of supporting the unconscious, namely of making it function; the
unconscious only functions in the psychoanalytic discourse in so far as the place of semblance is occupied by the o-object; and the o-object in the semblance-position is unstable, it is a ‘promise of rejection’. In this uncomfortable position, the analyst destined for rejection, does not reduce himself to waste, to the anal object; he is rather the ‘voice’ which ‘will have had an effect on it’, this silent ‘voice’ by which the discourse of the analyst (226) is effective. It is only later that we will know that ‘it will have had an effect’ (in the future perfect), provided it keeps silent instead of responding or that its response only re-launches the question.

Those analysts refusing their proper function ‘distance from themselves the said transference’ (35b): they treat transference as pure repetition (of love, for example), artificially created and therefore misplaced. The discourse of the analyst opens up a completely different perspective on transference: it is knowledge supposed or underlying the silent voice, the o-object in the position of semblance supported by a knowledge-ignorance. It offers a surprising access onto love which is no longer limited to a discourse: the surprise of a new love is produced at every switch of discourse. Thus love is neither confined to the psychoanalytic discourse, nor restricted to the contrivances of the treatment.

4. The real and the o-object (35c-36c; 478-479)

Science took off by dropping natural supposition. In accordance with this line, analysis does without ‘any know-how about bodies’ (35c): the relationship uniting the word to the body is neither direct nor natural; it is not a matter of ‘saying what is there’. If the psychoanalytic discourse abstains from all know-how about bodies, if it is open to ab-sense starting from the absence of sexual relationship, it is ‘for a discourse other’ than its own. Analysis evokes ‘a sexuality of metaphor’ based on the signifier. But the structure of the signifier is on this hither side of metaphorical meaning. By evoking a metaphorical sexuality, the absence of sexual relationship provokes the phallic function: sex, ‘as metonymical as you could wish’, is never in the stable ‘anatomical’ sexuality, it is ‘ab-sense’, deduced from the labile sense that makes it go through a series of formulae, of figures or o-objects according to the ‘dialectic of desire’: ‘as you could wish’.
Anatomical sexuality is raised up by logical sexuation (an Aufhebung).

‘The most common approaches’ to sexuation respond to a drift of the phallic formulae according to the so-called ‘pre-genital’ (oral, anal), in fact ‘extra-genital’ (oral, anal, scopic, vocal) stages, since it is not a matter of (227) psychogenesis but of structure: sexuality is not determined as metaphor of the genital, but in the metonymical sequence of o-objects: oral, anal, scopic, vocal. Interpretation will accompany this metonymical sequence, will link the oral to the voice by the ‘oracular’ sexual displacement in the order of the o-objects, (oral, ass, ocular, oracular) (37b).

By this displacement of genital metaphor towards extra-genital metonymy, the analyst ‘plays the role of revealing the torsion in knowing’: knowing (co-naisance) presupposed the co-naturality of the thing and of the said; the fall of the ‘natural’ supposition had inaugurated science; going beyond the latter, analysis reveals the metonymical structure of desire and the reversals of saying which, like a Moebius strip, twist discourse. ‘The no/step of the real (le pas du réel), the step by which one gets to the real is the absence of sexual relationship; ‘an absence perfectly locatable’ in each of the discourses, it is the absence of relationship between the semblance and the Other, proved when the product of this very discourse is revealed as powerless to touch its truth. No mathematisation, none of the four formulae, none of the four mathemes allows us to find a sexual relationship in any of the four discourses. Hence their roundabout.

Thus ‘the mathematisable’ is formulated in impasses by means of the four mathemes which do not manage to resolve this absence of sexual relationship (between the semblance and the Other of each discourse). In this way, the mathemes are ‘of a nature to be coordinated’ to the absence of sexual relationship, this absence which is ‘caught in the real’, namely starting from the impossible.

The first matheme (∃x.φx), ‘Worldliness’, was placed under the sign of possibility (‘no universal which is not reducible to the possible’, 7c). How can we get out of this first matheme, this first Worldliness? By having recourse to the ‘impasses of logic’, notably to the notall (fourth formula) and to the hommoinsun, atleastoneman (at least one:  ___ , second
formula). These impasses ‘show the issue outside the fictions of (228) Worldliness’ (35d): the signifier in as much as it aims by the symbolic to give images of the real (language aiming at depicting reality, at putting words on things) is fiction: it feigns a world and hopes thereby to be able to fix the real. Mathematics and psychoanalysis do not aim at the real by a fiction of meaning and of Worldliness; they fix it on the contrary by hugging ‘the wall of the impossible’ (8e), by the ‘impasses of logic’. Each discourse is coiled around the real, each discourse is a stage in the roundabout of discourses which turn around the real. To rediscover the real in each discourse allows us ‘to dispense with the myths by which each discourse is ordinarily supplied’ since each myth depends on a very limited logic, where the epic form sets aside the question of logical structure1. The fixion around which each discourse is coiled is the o-object, ‘disc’ (30c) with which the Moebius strip is supplemented to fix the structure of the cross-cap.

It should not be ‘declared’ that the real, defined by the impossible, is the difference between all and nothing or that it is a purely sceptical ‘notall’. With respect to the truth, this thesis of a sceptical notall real leads straight to ‘a more risky aphorism’ (35e): ‘the truth is nothing’. Is the truth of the real then without a phenomenal object? Is it the thing in itself beyond the phenomenal object (c.f. Kant, Critique of pure reason)? These hypotheses, (the truth is nothing or the truth is the thing in itself), re-launch the ‘foolishness’ of the ‘noumenon’. The Kantian notion of noumenon appears at the outset as a negative: the noumenon is the negative of the phenomenon, and as such, falls outside the limits of the human experience of reason, which must remain connected to the phenomenon. The noumenon means that being in its truth ‘flees thought’ (36a), that it is fundamentally unthinkable; it is ‘foolish’ not to see that being is on the contrary a consequence of the phallic function, which notably goes through the universal proper to spherical logic. The notion of ‘noumenon’ can be (229) understood differently: inside the movement of aspherical topology.

The unthinkable noumenon, an enigmatic and equivocal being, ‘leads us’

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1 See Seminar XVIII, 9 June 1971 and Télévision, p.51
(‘nous mène’) into the logical trajectory whose responses will always re-launch the questions in an infinite race. In this sense, the o-object, as noumenon, leads us in desire’s quest. ‘Now nothing gets to the bottom of this being’, it ceaselessly reappears as thoughts go by: ‘I think therefore I am’, of course, even if I am there where I do not think. For a ‘masculine’ thought, being ceaselessly steals away. By demonstrating the structural place of being in the ‘supplementary disc’ of topology, Lacan enhances being: ‘I daphnise this being a little more’. How is that? As Leucipius, who, in love with the evanescent Daphne, disguised himself as a woman and ‘played the Other’ (like Tiresias, 25a) to join Daphne’s companions while she was bathing, to surprise her and by that to unveil the enigmatic being of desire, the o-object. This moment of surprise illustrates the structure of phantasy where the guile of the subject is articulated with the object: the subject (Leucipius) nevertheless escapes the anger of Daphne (the o-object), for the gods make him disappear (as barred subject): he remains ungraspable. Daphne is the o-object who bewitches men after having bewitched Apollo: the gods transformed her into a laurel so that she also could escape from Apollo’s attentions. By introducing the o-object instead of being, Lacan ‘Daphnises indeed laurifies’ being; Daphne, the o-object, captivates the man (Leucippius), but still more this o-object is transformed into a laurel to escape Apollo’s grasp, a laurel (laurier) reduced to the empty ‘orifice’ (‘l’orifice’), to the missing object, to nothing: Lacan ‘laurifies’ it. The o-object, ‘our being without essence’ (De la psychanalyse dans ses rapports avec la réalite, p.58), is indeed this ‘noumenon’ that ‘leads us’ (36b). Nevertheless, ‘to be supported’, this noumenon cannot be simply posed as pure possible foreign to our experience (Kant), ‘there must be several layers of it’, the o-object must be articulated in oral, anal, scopic and vocal layers.

Lacan’s ‘worry’ is precisely to present this o-object in several layers. It is being, circled by the real, which is the o-object. The aphorisms – ‘being is nothing’ or ‘being is unsayable’ – were not explained by Lacan: (230) they are simply presented ‘in the bud’, not for the pleasure of an unwarranted obscurantism, but in order that they ‘may make the burial pits of metaphysics re-flower’: the ‘layers’ which support the noumenon are thus
bud, flower, fruit and seed, the oral then anal object before being scopic and finally vocal. The noumenon is a ‘trifle’: starting from the ‘foolishness’ that presented being as unsayable, it is possible for us to speak sweet nothings, and this trifling allows the o-object to subsist in the futility of the different layers by which it is articulated. These different layers are fitted together in the ‘marvelous efflorescence’ (8de) of the impossible: they are layers of the impossible. The ‘burial pits of metaphysics’ (the superimpositions of the noumenon) ‘will prove to be surplus-nonsense, funnier, to say the word, than what thus leads us…’ (36b). The o-object, as surplus-enjoying, is defined from the layers of the impossible, from the ‘surplus-nonsense’, from the non-sense proper to the witticism: the technique of the witticism by nonsense uses a stupidity, to make obvious, to highlight, another stupidity, another absurdity, c.f. Freud, *Jokes and their relationship to the unconscious*, SE VIII 58]. This foolishness or non-sense of the ‘noumenon’ or of the ‘second sex’ (23c) may well serve us to indicate the path of absense, of non-sense, of topology without meaning.

The noumenon leads us ‘…to what?’ (36b). Here Lacan feigns surprise at the homophony that he has produced and that leads him, by way of the noumenon that leads us and which he seems not to have seen immediately. The homophonic equivocation (nous mène/noumène) only (231) appears in effect after the event in the loop that develops it into a grammatical equivocation and a logical equivocation (see 48-49): the noumenon (as noun) nous mène (as verb) for whoever understands it ‘in proper logic’; the ‘first truths’, the ‘re-flowerings of the burial pits of metaphysics’ are only ever ‘half-said, well cut…conjugated by going back: you meditate, I speak badly of (tu médites, je médis)’ (10e). These truths must also follow the logical path of the impossible: ‘are indeed the very text from which there are formulated the symptoms of the major neuroses, the two’ (36b): ‘Desire must be taken to the letter’ (title of the 5th section of

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4 It is not the first time, in Lacan, that there is a play on…the ‘noumenon, by only being able…to make a sign to the nous (Greek,[and French])’ and the ‘… nous mène’: ‘How far does Sade ‘lead us’ in the experience of this enjoyment, or simply of his truth’ (*Kant avec Sade*, E 786).
The direction of the treatment, E 620). From the letter that leads us, the hysterical neurosis appears as ‘desire to have an unsatisfied desire’ (E 621) and obsessional neurosis as the maintenance of ‘desire in the impossible’ (E 632). These neurotic forms of the impossible are taken up again in the two masculine formulae of sexuation: the unsatisfied desire of the hysterical is taken up again in $\forall x.\varphi x$, the impossible desire installs the obsessional in the exception $\_$. Just by themselves, these two thus constitute the male norm, norme mâle (the canonical formulae of masculinity). To respond to the norm, by articulating oneself around the ‘Oedipus complex’ (14e), is ‘nor-mal’ (36b).

‘And this brings us down to earth’. From the noumenon, ‘futile subsistence’ (36ab), we have come back to the earth of psychoanalysis, to the two neuroses; but this earth is ‘perhaps not the same’ now that it is illuminated by the o-object. ‘On it analytic discourse looks less leaden-footed’: stripped of meaning, it can in effect perform its acrobatics in the roundabout of discourses and the sequence of the four formulae of sexuation. It has gone from meaning to sense.
CHAPTER 3: SENSE AND STRUCTURE

(233) Psychoanalytic discourse puts meaning in parenthesis and puts movement into sense. How does sense teach us? The first section will respond: by translation. What does it teach us? The second section will respond: structure. Far from being congealed, this structure is modification (third section). The last section will show how structure allows for the end of analysis.

1. Sense and teaching (36c-40a)

‘Let us get moving here on the business of sense, promised earlier because of its difference to meaning.’ (36c; 479)

The noumenon has led us in the preceding paragraph to the o-object; again it is philosophy that traces out a path for us towards sense. What is ‘sense’? To tackle it with Heidegger’s ‘leaden-footed’ method means giving its weight to each word: What is called thinking? gives weight to some words of Parmenides: ‘It is necessary to say and to think that the individual being (l’étant) is’; this sentence condenses, for Heidegger, the whole history of philosophy. We already glimpse that Lacan’s sense with its winged feet will take flight far from Heidegger’s leaden-footed sense. With the latter, we are ‘brought down to earth’, to the matter-of-fact-ness of l’étant, which translates at once two Latin forms: ens, present participle of esse, and sens, present participle of sum. The leaden-footed sense is therefore quite simply étant, being (as essence). This first condensation is reduplicated by another which, for its part, is attributed to Kant (36cd; 480). Let us examine first of all the composition of The critique of pure reason (1781-1787), and more precisely of its first section (the transcendental theory of elements): 1\textsuperscript{0} the transcendental aesthetic poses the (234) spatio-temporal frame of every phenomenon (sensibility), 2\textsuperscript{0} the transcendental analytic articulates the categories of every object conceived (understanding), 3\textsuperscript{0} the transcendental dialectic analyses the reasonings that extend judgments beyond their competence, towards the transcendent (and illusory) ideas of a soul, a world and a transcendent God (reason). For Kant, The critique of pure reason is purely ‘transcendental’; logically first, it is the
condition of possible experience: for an object of knowledge to exist, it must appear in the aesthetic of space-time, in the analytic of judgment and in the deceptive dialectic or reasoning. According to Lacan, this ‘topology’ of pure reason is reckoned to be ‘inept’ because it only ‘re-enforced’ the ‘bourgeois’ Kant’s own ‘argumentation’. The bourgeois claims to be treated as a Master while refusing to risk his life (this is the definition of the bourgeois according to Lacan’s ‘master’, Kojève; c.f. his Kant, p.97); thus, Kant finds himself out of his depth in dealing with sense from an outside, transcendent point of view. Hence there results his inaptitude to grasp his ‘ineptness’. Lacan’s judgment is due only to an error of Lacan: he imputes transcendence to Kant where the latter specifies clearly that it is a matter of the transcendental. Kant very clearly distinguishes ‘transcendental’ and ‘transcendent’: the transcendental is the condition of experience (preliminary and inherent in every experience, this condition is for all), the transcendent is on the contrary what is situated outside all experience (the ‘unsayable’, the bourgeois takes advantage of). Lacan is wrong here about Kant’s transcendental approach and understands it as transcendence (Kant had already responded in his life-time to a similar lack of comprehension formulated by Schulze); Kantian aesthetics and dialectic are supposed to remain transcendent, namely outside Kant. In opposition to this transcendence erroneously attributed to Kant, Lacan situates the aesthetic and the dialectic in the immanence of the discourse of the analyst, namely in a transcendental approach (in the Kantian sense): the topological aesthetic operates in the articulation of saying and the dialectic presupposes the structure, endorsed in the phantasy. After the Heideggerian condensation of the whole history of thought into a few words of Parmenides, after the so-called Kantian condensation of thought into transcendence, there comes a third ‘enormous’ condensation: the one by which Heidegger condenses his own project with that of Kant (Kant and the problem of metaphysics): ‘Heidegger’s thesis, which he is going to try to justify by the texts, is that the imbrication of sensibility and understanding, of intuition and of thought, of time and the categories is so perfect that their unity (namely that of knowing) is not posterior to their existence as elements, but anterior and original; to the point that it is only starting from
this very unification that the elements are susceptible to being distinguished and defined separately’ (*Introduction* by A. de Waehns and W. Biemel, p.24). These condensations are supposed to go to the ultimate meaning of thought insofar as it is supposed to unite in itself all the elements of the latter. Riveted to the earth by such considerations, Heidegger and Kant could only think with ‘leaden feet’ and have congealed the movement of thought and the reversals of discourse.

We have to ‘say’ this enormous condensation, return it to the movement of saying. This saying is ‘to be understood in the analytic sense’ (36d; 480). Not only in the sense of the categories of the Kantian ‘transcendental analytic’; this ‘saying, to be understood’ does not imply only ‘transcenden-tal logic’ but again ‘good logic’, that of the psychoanalytic discourse, which ‘touches on the real by encountering it as impossible’. Starting from ‘grammar’, one can measure the weakness or the strength of the elements which can be either condensed in the all of a completed meaning, or again and again come up against the impossible and follow the sense of the roundabout of discourses. In the first case the real is imagined as transcendent and the elements ‘are univocally qualified by a similar imbecility; they are ‘imbecilic’ [from the Latin *Imbecillus*, from *im* – and *bacillum*, a diminutive of *baculum*: without a stick, without a crutch] because they are deprived of the stanchion of (236) proper logic. In the second case, these same elements serve as material for saying the roundabout of discourses, which, forgotten behind the said, receives its strength from ‘proper logic’ to be understood: the real then is transcendental, it does not consist of experiential material, but in a condition present in every experience of saying, in every discourse.

What is the sense of the ‘enormous condensation’ of philosophy? Where is sense if, for Heidegger, the elements that composed the history of philosophy are imbecilic with respect to Parmenides? And where is sense, if the Kant of *The critique of practical reason* sets his face unflinchingly against any subjective particularity that might upset the universality of the moral law? What sense would there be in remaining insensitive to the ‘pathetic’ element, proper to sensibility, which might trouble the purity of
the moral law\(^1\)? Has this transcendence unjustly attributed to Kant, this imbecility, has it a sense, has it the sense of structure? Kant perceived this sense in his study of Swedenborg (\textit{Dreams of a visionary explained by metaphysical dreams}, 1766); in effect, the sense of the life of Swedenborg (1688-1772) – who, from being the brilliant empirical scientist that he was, went beyond the limits of reason in order to become a theosophist and the founder of a sect –, prefigures the composition of \textit{The critique of pure reason} (1781-1787); the first (aesthetic and analytic) part of the \textit{Critique}: how is knowledge possible? (first scientific part of Swedenborg’s life). The second (dialectical) part of the \textit{Critique}: toward what illusions is reason necessarily drawn? (second theosophical part of the same life).

‘Sense is never produced except by the translation of one discourse into another’ (36e), which the two condensations already indicated to us: thought is the translation of Parmenides (for Heidegger), the topology (of thought) translates the life of Swedenborg (for Kant). This fact can be touched in the movement of translation which, by changing discourse, leads to sense.

Here we are then ‘equipped with this little light’ which consists in the translation of one discourse into another. A much more modest start than the great Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. By this change of lighting, the multiple Kantian antinomies (the multiple contradictions theoretical and practical reasons come up against by taking phenomenal objects as things in themselves) are replaced by the unique antimony ‘which is produced between sense to meaning’ (36e; 470): sense disappears where a meaning is established and sense arises again where meaning vacillates. This is clearly apparent in \textit{The critique of pure reason} (1781-87) and in \textit{The critique of judgment} (1790): not alone is the system of cosmological ideas formed from four antinomical conflicts (which correspond to the four categories), but again every meaning from whatever part of \textit{The critique of pure reason} only takes on its sense in its articulation with the other parts by allowing its own meaning to be lost. The same dialectic applies to the

\(^1\) The insult is the prime example of the ‘pathetic’ element that may subjectively justify an action (vengeance, for example); it is a matter here of a purely subjective maxim and not of a universal moral law (\textit{Critique of practical reason}, p.628)
Critique of judgment. Kant insists on many occasions on the systematic and complete character of his critique. ‘That some faint sense may have emerged by a tangential illumination’ from these Critiques, their meanings are effaced and transformed into punctuations in the journey of sense. It is like the way analytic discourse illuminates the other discourses by a tangential light (9c). The very term ‘Critique’ is put in question by Lacan: not having known either the phenomena of the unconscious and its reversals, nor the developments of mathematical logic (which introduced the ‘marvelous efflorescence’ of the impossible and subvert classical logic), Kant seems to have failed in his critical project: ‘despite the well-known title of his works, (...) he only bears witness to being the plaything of his unconscious, which because of not thinking could neither judge nor calculate in the work that it blindly produces’ (Television, p.59, c.f. Freud The interpretation of dreams, p. XXX).

(238) Kant avec Sade, which Lacan wrote in 1963 (E 765), had ‘shown theplayfulness’ of the Critique of natural reason (1788): the universality of the Kantian moral law (implying the sacrifice of sensibility or the Kantian ‘pathetic’) is translated into the universality of a Sadian right to enjoyment (implying another’s sacrifice): the subject of (‘pathetic’) pleasure barred by the moral law in the Kantian discourse becomes victim, subject barred ($) by the tormentor’s right to enjoyment (o-object) in Sadian discourse. Illuminated in this way by Sade, the Critique of practical reason seems to reveal itself as ‘playful’ in accordance with the structure of the phantasy ($ ◊ o). Unveiling the logic of the phantasy, Sade is indeed ‘logical’ (37a), but ‘not any funnier’ than Kant for all that: in effect he lacks the operation of the phallic function which would go beyond this masculine logic of universality.

‘Kant’s maxims’ only have meaning ‘as long as they have no sense, not even common sense’; thus the three great Kantian questions: What can I know? What should I do? What can I hope for? only develops meanings from their mutual separation and their distance from ‘common sense’.

5 Kant ‘for a nothing, would make us lose our seriousness, except that he has not the slightest sense of the comic...But someone who, for his part, absolutely lacks it...is Sade’ (E 783). Let us not forget that Kant, for his part, has the sense of the particular judgement, not reducible to the universal (Critique of pure reason, p.881-882).
By advancing into sense, we are therefore reduced to losing meaning. The only thing that enlightens us is the ‘little light’ of sense. ‘There is no lack of sense in the so-called pre-Socratic vaticinations’ (37a; 480): Heidegger’s return to Parmenides is valid as a way of getting sense to move on; for us it opens out onto Plato’s Parmenides and the logic of the Heteros or of the notall (23ce). As ‘vaticinations’, the pre-Socratics maxims foretell the future and open up sense; ‘impossible to say which’, since sense is developed precisely from the impossible which alone can encircle saying. Let us therefore write ‘çasyens’ as a (239) holophrase not yet articulating the logic of sense, since this sense does not have the recourse of meaning. Freud ‘licks his chops’ at these vaticinations not only when he equals ‘the pre-Socratics’ (E 585) in the sentence Wo Es war, soll Ich werden, but again when he borrows the true originating drives (Eros and Thanatos) from Empedocles’ two fundamental principles: love and hate (Analysis terminable and interminable, 1937). This reference is ‘not the best of them’ since love and hate are ‘ambivalence, in other words the single face of the Moebius strip’ (32d). It does not matter moreover since Freud knows how to keep ‘his sense of direction’ (S 37b), to make use of the death drive to orientate himself towards sense. That is enough to ‘see that interpretation is of sense and goes against meaning’: interpretation, as ‘oracle’, as will of the Other, is not the pinning down of a meaning; it neither hides nor reveals but opens up the sense which disqualifies meanings in favour of ‘sexual displacement’. The sexual in effect is not riveted to the genitality of a sexual relationship, but to the ‘extra-genital’ journey of what supplies for the absence of the sexual relationship, to the o-object which again takes up into itself the imperative sense of the ‘four’ o-objects inscribed in ‘oraculaire’: oral, ass, ocular and oracular (oral, cul, oculaire et oraculaire). Here it is not a matter here of taking up again the common meaning-trait of objects, but of outlining the required passage of sense from the one to the other.

‘It is the misery of historians’ to have to rely ‘on meaning-documents’; the historian does not go beyond the meaning of his sources, a meaning that he actively seeks without ever hoping to arrive at the indubitable truth which only serves him as an illusory motive. In translating
these meanings, the historian does indeed read a sense: the past is read in perspective. But anyone who wants ‘to hang the enormity of the condensation’ on a theory and on an added sense, utilizes history and goes beyond his competence; for example, the ‘historical materialism’ of Marxists reduces the sense of history to the a-temporal meaning of (240) the class-struggle and to the materiality of production. ‘Alas!’ The sense of history disappears in the meaning of materialism. Marx’s doctrine is ‘historical’: as a theory of history it is inscribed in history to the point of becoming ‘irremediably’ (37c) historical, dated.

‘Luckily analysis is there to breathe life into the little stories’ (37c): psychoanalysis taking up again the question of sense mistreated by the theories of history, can only do so in the framework of analytic treatment, where its discourse is effective and ‘it leaves us with our tongues hanging out as regards what is not of our own time’. It changes nothing in the embarrassment of the honest historian who refuses to have recourse to ‘transcendence’ to explain history by some all-encompassing meaning. From his meaning-documents, the historian can only have the presentiment of an un-articulatable, even though already articulated sense: ‘çasysent’. But how recognize this sense, this ‘çasysent’? By translating the meaning-documents. The scenting of ‘çasysent’ is developed then into a search for sense through translation, into ‘sacysent’. The homophonic equivocation ‘çasysent/sacysent’ illuminates the way of writing by the grammatical equivocation which displaces a word-sentence (çasysent) towards translation, notably that of the Jansenist of Port-Royal, Lemaistre de Sacy. His translation of the Bible from the vulgate of St Jerome is a translation of a translation and is thus inscribed within the drift of a sense (Sacy-sens) escaping from any transcendent sense. Here indeed is the ‘embarrassment’: being caught up in a sense that escapes, without being able to get out of it by some transcendent meaning (as historical materialism had tried to do). The historian is ‘charged with the science of embarrassment’ (36cd). This science of embarrassment which history is, contributes something to science; if the expert knows what he is doing in his own particular domain, he ‘does not know what, in the effects of science interests everybody’ (E 794). If history enumerates the meanings of different scientific discoveries,
it poses at the same time the question of the sense of science (for ‘humanity’). This question has no definitive response and ‘this just by itself would merit us speaking about (241) a subject of science’ (E 794). This subject of science is defined by his embarrassment.

‘Therefore it is important’ (37d; 481) for all those who have to deal with sense (historians, analysts and ‘many others’) for this presentiment, this ‘sacysent’ to be articulated otherwise than by the simple holophrase. This sense is the ‘impossibility to speak truly about the real’, it ‘is justified’, it is moved by the very ‘stuff’ of language which articulates a saying and the said in a logic (‘That one might be saying …’), by the ‘matheme from which the relationship of saying to the said is situated’.

The matheme which situates the relationship of saying to said ‘is uttered’ from ‘the only real recognized from the outset in language: namely, number’. Number (one, two, three…) in effect only exists starting from the contradictory concept which determines the primordial zero (Frege): it presupposes a first ‘impossible’ (the contradictory concept) which begins to circle the real; all numeration flows from this first impossible.

‘Nevertheless’ beyond or on this hither side of number (and of the numerable of demand), the real at stake in saying (saying cannot be expressed, 10e, it is demonstrated, 9b) ‘can be extended to intuition’ (to the power of the continuity of desire, which is no longer articulateable because already articulated). Which presupposes that ‘this term [of intuition] is as castrated as can be of its metaphorical use’ (37e): castration no longer has the Freudian meaning, but the sense which aims at the cut and its topology.

‘Here therefore is a field’ which is not developed from meanings which can be added up, condensed and generalized (in a numeration obeying the first two formulae). The ‘field of speech and of language in psychoanalysis’ is developed by a ‘topological reshaping’, explicitated in the evident–emptying operation and in the cut ‘of topological subversion’. These operations retroact on their own foundation: the numerable (of demand) is now situated with respect to the continuous of desire, the spherical is situated with respect to the a-spherical. Thus every closed cut can be made equal, by a topological transformation, to the (242) supplementary disc. Mathematical discourse functions following a similar
retroaction: 1° at the level of a particular reasoning, it effaces a first saying which has led to a said being absurd, but also 2° a new mathematical theory encompasses and effaces those which historically preceded it: the matheme wipes history clean of the meanings which had carried it in favour of sense and saying.

‘No surer experience’ for resolving the embarrassment of history (38a; 481): its search for an ungraspable sense starting from meanings can find no way out except by saying, by the reversals, by the reshapings that bring about a passage from one discourse to another. Hence the attraction of history ‘for thought’ which resolves its embarrassment by transforming it into ‘nonsense proper to being’, into ‘surplus-nonsense’, into the o-object proper to ‘desire’, into ‘speech with no beyond’, without transcendence.

Being, in its ‘nonsense’ dimension, does not allow us to make a ‘state’ of it (38a). This ‘state’, this static establishment, stabilizing the movement of being in a ‘stitabitat’, in an essence (where saying is lost along with the act of being or existence) does not have ‘our goodwill’. Even if ‘speakers…by being des, believe themselves to be beings’, saying and being appear in the nonsense which discourse comes up against and turn into another discourse. It is important that being ‘leads us’ (36b) in the reversals of discourse, rather than being a static point escaping speech.

‘The achievement of the undecidable’ (38a) is something quite different than ‘making being a state’ congealed in essence. The matheme is formulated through the impasses of the impossible which circle the real (35d), in other words, starting from ‘the marvellous efflorescence’ of the impossible. Starting ‘from the only real recognized from the outset in language: namely number’, we are confronted from the outset with number depending on the zero, on the contradictory concept (first form of the impossible: the contradiction which concerns the said by number); but this said of number depends on ‘the real of saying number’ (38ab) which is not constructed from objects to be counted (like fingers or the balls of an (243) abacus), but from saying which poses the contradictory concept. This saying ‘is not verifiable’: it is not based on a reality. Saying number is not demonstrated (second form of the impossible the undemonstrable). But the impossible of saying goes still further: its own undemonstrability is itself
undemonstrable (third form of the impossible: the undecidable), notably from the premises that number presupposes (the contradictory concept, the ‘zero’ and the ‘ordinal’): there is ‘an inherent contradiction’ in presupposing that saying is demonstrable (38d). Saying escapes from the logic of the demonstrable and the contradictory: one can scarcely follow it on its own journey described above (9bc). Which is not without a teaching effect.

How question ‘what constitutes the teachable’ (38b; 481)? Lacan’s answer is clear: the teachable or the matheme (‘that which alone can be taught’, 28d), is the journey of the different forms of the impossible (the roundabout of discourses). This presupposes that one can teach not simply starting from number (as in science and physics in particular), but starting from the saying of number and even from the always particular undecidable saying. Plato’s _Meno_ gives a first trace of this ‘teachable’ starting from the particular: ‘virtue’ is not transmitted like universal science, but like true opinion (_orthè doxa_), always particular. The great statesmen, the divines, prophets and others inspired by the gods only tell the truth (as opinion and not as science) through a particular divine favour. In this way true opinion opens in this way a teachable which goes beyond the universal. The _Meno_ prefigures the question of the matheme constructed not on the universal alone (first formula of sexuation) but on the impasses of what can be mathematized or teachable, in other words on the four formulae of sexuation (35cd). Nevertheless ‘it cannot be denied that there is progress’ from _Meno_ to Lacan. In what way is the Lacanian matheme a ‘progress’ as compared to _Meno_? ‘It is to be (244) sure the last thing to say that between the two there is a world’ (38bc): far from circling a world, an imaginary, these two discourses come up against the impossible and thus share in the same symbolic logic which circles the real. For Lacan as Plato, ‘to teach’ is to come up against a real, of which the world ‘is only the derisory fall’(38c); inscribed in meaning (an illusory condition of everything that is conditioned for the Kant of the _Critique of pure reason_), the world is an (imaginary) product of (symbolic) fiction (c.f. the world of Alexander, 25e); it is only the imaginary-symbolic myth that supplies for and supplants the matheme (35ce).
‘The progress’ accomplished between the discourse of the *Meno* and Lacan’s (matheme) discourse is limited to indicating the ‘derisory fall’, namely the ο-object, at stake in the teachable. In the *Meno*, Plato ‘makes sense’ of true opinion (it traces the transmission of virtue); for Lacan, true opinion no longer makes sense, it is ‘ab-sense of meaning’ (38c). This loss of meaning in favour of sense can engender a ‘regret’ which responds to the ‘progress’ accomplished by the Lacanian matheme. This regret ‘is confirmed’ if one refers the ‘ab-sense of meaning’ (and non-metaphorical topology) to the opinion of ‘our right-thinking lot’ (38c), of our psychoanalysts clinging to meaning to the detriment of sense and the reversals of discourse.

Is it possible that the opinion of ‘right-thinking’ psychoanalysts might have carried, despite themselves, a ‘matheme’ in the sense of topology (38cd; 482)? Let us try to show how to arrive at such a matheme starting from ‘true opinion’.

Such a matheme is not an addition to true opinion; the Moebius strip ought not to be constructed by ‘the ideal cross-section around which a strip is twisted by a half-turn’. This is why Lacan carefully avoids ‘supporting our Moebius strip by the image’ (38d). On the contrary, the matheme is there in the journey of true opinion and ‘it is along its whole length that the Moebius strip manages to make only one of its front and its back’ (27b). To imagine the matheme as a simple supplement to opinion or to imagine the Moebius strip by its ideal (245) cross-section does not articulate the said with the *Heteros*; the said does not become other and the notall is reduced to a purely local particularity. The reader of *L’étourdit* is not questioned by such a presentation. By the two turns of *L’étourdit*, corresponding to the double-turned cut of the cross-cap, the reader becomes other: in the representation, he is an effect of the double-turned cut as a putting into question of the subject in phantasy. For masculine logic which stops at the second formula, saying is to be taken ‘as ex-sisting the said’ and the real exists as what is outside saying; by the said, the real is verifiable (true or false). Such a real plunged in meanings does not lead to the matheme, since it forgets the notall, phallic functioning, a-spherical topology. Is the true opinion of ‘our right-thinking people’ who wish to remain in meaning the
truth, from which saying will remain barred by a verifiable real? Do they simply lack the saying forgotten behind the said and hidden in what could be understood? Or, on the contrary, can it be shown how the matheme carries true opinion right along its length, without it knowing so?

‘I would test it by the correction that I am going to make in it’ (38e).

This reprise topology is at the same time the eternal reprise of desire which does not cease to stitch the front and the back at every point. Such is the proof or the test of the structure.

‘Line without points’ or ‘median’ cut, the Moebius strip, right along its length, ‘makes it be that its front and its back are only one’ (27b). This median cut is redoubled ‘by the fact that one of its edges, after the turn by which it is closed, is pursued in the other edge’ and makes the Moebius strip appear as surface contained between the two edges.

The ‘line without points’, namely the Moebius strip (which is not ‘imagined’, but constructed, 26-28) ‘can only be produced from a surface already pricked by a point’ (39a; 482), by the out-of-line point (27e) specified by a double loop (the double loop of the edge of the Moebius strip). This point ‘is spreadable on a sphere’, it has two faces. By ‘its double (246) looping’, this point as spherical surface gives the stuff necessary for the constitution of an a-spherical surface (the cross-cap). If the Moebius strip is a cut, it needs this material to begin a (surface) asphere.

This out-of-line point (27e-39a), this ‘supplementary disc’ (30c) is not a spherical addition to an aspherical surface, but the structure is made by a transformation: the asphere is a surface which makes possible the Moebian cut and which is restored to the spherical mode when this cut is realized (see fig.13, p.199). This cut is at the same time edge of a Moebius strip and edge of the supplementary disc. The supplement of the Moebius strip which transforms it into a cross-cap ‘is projected’ (39b) in that way to the heart of the cut.

‘But since…one can say’ that this Moebian surface ‘is made up of lines without points’ all along which the front is stitched to the back, in the same way ‘the supplementary point (the out-of-line point)…can be fixed everywhere in a cross-cap’ (39b). In other words, every fragment of the sphere can be seen as o-object inasmuch as its cut is redoubled to make the
Edge of the Moebius strip appear. Thus, for example, the ‘noumenon’ is developed into an o-object, into ‘surplus-nonsense’ which ‘leads us’ further than spherical topology (36ab).

Every point of the surface of the cross-cap can be chosen as out-of-line point, for example the opinion of ‘our right-thinking people’, the analysts of meaning. But it must be fixed: ‘this fixion must be chosen as the unique out-of-line point so that a cut, by making one and one only turn of it’ (39c) transforms this unique point representing the whole cross-cap into a spherical surface (a and b of fig.13, p.199, except the a’) – the Moebius strip is then reduced to the simple cut.

This ‘spherically spreadable point’ is ‘the opinion that can be said to be true’ (39c). What are we to make of this ‘true opinion’? The saying which makes the double turn around (247) it fixes the opinion; this cut modifies the opinion, namely articulates it with the modes of saying, the opinion has become an out-of-line point. This modification is a ‘verification’ of the opinion not in the sense of fixing it in a univocal truth value, but of modifying it topologically. The real is therefore the movement of modification, proper to topology.

‘So a saying like mine’ (39cd; 482) permits the matheme of saying, by the fact that it ex-sists the said. A saying remains ‘unteachable’ so long as it does not become a matheme, so long as it is not ‘mathematized’, so long as it does not go through the impasses of logic. This journey of the impossible corresponds to Menonian criteria: impossibility for those who have ‘virtue’ (Pericles) to teach it, impossibility for those who claim to teach virtue (the Sophists) to be virtuous. Or again the impossibility of learning a truth, when one knows it already or when one does not have any notion of it.

‘The unteachable’ becomes a matheme ‘by the fixion of true opinion’ (39d; 463): teaching fixes the o-object around which there can be played out the movement of the modifying saying, which circles the real and fixes it by the impossible (35d). This ‘fixion’ of the o-object is ‘not without the resources of equivocation’: it opens up the world of ‘fiction’. The equivocation fixion/fiction is the equivocation proper to the matheme which, basing itself on the fixion of the real by coming up against the
impossible, at the same time makes the symbolic work in order that it should also produce fictions, meanings, whose equivocation refers to sense.

‘Thus an object as easy to fabricate as the Moebius strip’, imagined in the fiction of a strip of paper re-sealed after a half-twist, ‘puts within hand’s reach for everyone’ the fixed real, the o-object, ‘saying’. Without it, there remains nothing except to endure, to painfully tolerate the said.

‘My fixation of this doxa-point’ (39e) is not of the dit-mension of the said. It belongs to saying, which one cannot account for otherwise than by following ‘its effects in analytic discourse’ (39e-40a). The effects of this saying (which is desire) in analytic discourse are (248) identically effects ‘of its mathematizing’ (40a: 483): effect of ab-sense, of the absence of sexual relationship, of the asphere, of interpretation inasmuch as it produces sense and goes against meaning. Mathematizing is not the product of a symbolic ‘machine’, but ‘proves to be something of a yoke (machin)’ once it has produced this symbolic machinery. This ‘yoke’, is the asphere, desire, the cross-cap producer of (symbolic-imaginary) fictions starting from the fixation, itself a fixation of sense by the o-object.

‘This term’ machin – from the Latin machina, invention, contrivance) is found already, in Cicero: Ad usum…(see p.116-117). The quotation introduced earlier the ‘asemantic signifier’ (15c), in other words the sense that is produced by homophony, grammar and logic, beyond meaning. ‘It is notable’ that this quotation already served as an exergue for the seminar of 11 April 1956, at the moment when Lacan was centring his theoretical contributions on the symbolic and the imaginary, on fiction: fiction already announced the fixation of the real point, of the o-object, of the ‘yoke’ which alone assures the possibility of the imaginary and symbolic machinery.

2. Structure (40-41; 483-485)

Sense opens out onto topology or onto the matheme. Might the goal of topology be to guide us into structure? No, structure is topology, inasmuch as topology is the ‘retroaction of the chain-like order in which language consists’ (40b; 483). What is this ‘chain-like order’? Language is articulated in tongue and speech. To speak is to use words, it is to dip into a
possible, into the reservoir of signifiers that the tongue constitutes; the
tongue itself survives on words previously spoken. Language consists in the
concatenation of speech/tongue/speech/ etc.: from speech the tongue is born,
from which speech is born, from which the tongue is re-born, etc. This
chain-like order is also the order of the discourses: if a first discourse can
give way to a new tongue, the discourse that will be elaborated from this
new tongue will be irreducible to the first discourse; and so on. As a
result ‘the analyst must first of all be analysed, since, as we know, this is
indeed the order on which his career is traced out’ (19c): he must in effect
pass through the discourses of the hysteric, the master and the academic,
before ending at the discourse of the analyst. All repetition is repetition
organized from a displacement of discourse. This chain-like order is given
in the discourse of the analyst; structure is thus the ‘retroaction’ of the
discourse of the analyst onto each of the elements of the chain that have
preceded it: for example we can only speak about the structure of the
discourse of the hysteric inasmuch as it has been illuminated by the
discourse of the analyst.

‘Structure, is the aspherical concealed in the language-like
articulation…’ inasmuch as this aspherical is the locus of the phantasy; a
closed cut comes to modify it and allows two fundamentally heterogeneous
fragments to appear: an aspherical Moebius strip ($) and the spherical
supplementary disc (the o-object), which comes to stabilize the subject-effect ($). The vanishing/reviving subject-effect is not directly ‘graspable’.
The ‘grasp’ on the subject only operates by means of the supplementary disc
(o-object).

The ‘sub-sentence’ (40bc) ‘inasmuch as a subject-effect grasps it’,
articulates a subordinate conjunction (inasmuch as), a subject group (a
subject-effect) and a verbal group (grasps it): the subject group refers back
directly to the ungraspable barred subject, the verbal group represents the o-
object or the means of grasping the subject, the conjunction marries
aspherical topology (the principal proposition) to the phantasy, $ ◊ o (the
subordinate proposition). Verb and grammatical subject are articulated in
the structure; a ‘false sense-effect’ is produced when one attempts to give
priority to one of the two: to a ‘subject effect’ (to its asphere-like whirlpool,
or to ‘grasps it’ (the object supposed to ‘reflect’ the subject in an imaginary fashion, the o-object). By taking either the spherical fragment or the Moebian part of the cross-cap, one is precipitated into the imaginary resonance of topology.

(250) ‘Here there should be distinguished the ambiguity that is registered from meaning’ and the ambiguity that ‘makes sense’ (41c). The double loop of the cut separates two fragments: in the first ambiguity, the subject and the object can be congealed in a stable (and imaginary) meaning. The second ambiguity (relative to sense) suggests the hole, suggests the journey which always comes up against the impossible; thus, it indicates the order of discourses and the retroaction of the discourse of the analyst onto each discourse; in other words, through saying (which makes a hole), the ambiguity which ‘makes sense’ suggests structure. The structure thus suggested ought not to be understood in the sense of ‘structuralism …as world view’ (note 40e). Structuralism, world view, claims to be explanatory: ‘That is why your daughter is mute/that is why your map is mute’ (your topological map is imaginary and metaphorical); this world view will not manage to make it speak, because speech only functions from the reversals of discourse and saying.

‘Thus the cut established from topology’ (40d; 484), - the closed cut on the cross-cap (fig.13, p.199) - is the said of language, but a ‘said’ which does not forget saying. This said, inasmuch as it is inscribed in the aspherical structure is already in the right logic, in what is heard; which makes the saying appear.

‘Naturally there are saids’ that predicative logic attempts to classify under an always greater universal major; this ‘universalizing supposition’ is the necessary and illusory work described in Kant’s transcendental dialectic; it corresponds to spherical topology ‘where it is the word that decides’; it corresponds to ‘the sphere’ where the article (‘the’) is defined and where the noun (‘sphere’) is all-encompassing (one is inside or outside of it). Now the sphere is only a supplement to the structure: it is in a sphere-fragment that the Moebius strip finds what allows it to become a cross-cap. This supplement is ‘fiction’. It feigns the true to plug the hole of the real, a fixion point around which the roundabout of discourses can turn.
(251) ‘One could say’ (41a) that the sphere ‘does without topology’, since it seems to exist before and independently of aspherical topology. The closed cut cuts out a sphere-fragment that has a delimited extension: ‘the cut…cuts out … the concept’, a concept that can be defined in its comprehension or its extension. ‘The language-fair, the principle of exchange, of value’ (41a) develop a logic of classes, of overlappings by genera and species on which the discourse of the capitalist depends. This capitalist fair presupposes that one concedes that everything is constructed from the universal ($\forall x. \Phi x$). This ‘universal concession’ of a piece of the cemetery for what is already dead can be nothing but ‘matter’. Thus ‘matter’ is to be ‘conceded’ for ‘dialectic’: even though what is at stake is only dead matter (subordinated by concession), we necessarily pursue our illusory search for the universal and ultimate principle (according to Kant’s Transcendental dialectic). ‘It is very difficult to support’ in its purity the spherical dit-mension where the concept is cut out in a logic of the universal constructed on the said: it is no doubt everywhere…but, for whoever wants to see it, it always blends in with the structure ‘as retroaction’ (40b) of the discourse of the analyst onto the other discourses or again as retroaction of the notall onto the other formulae of sexuation. In other words, spherical logic also implies the discourse of the analyst and the unconscious at stake in the roundabout of discourses. The sphere is ‘the surface-fiction with which the structure is clothed’: the aspherical surface is dressed up from a spherical fragment, from the supplementary disc. The line without points (the Moebius strip of saying) ‘is filled out’ by the out-of-line point (the o-object).

(Aspherical) sense is ‘foreign’ (41b) to the reduced logic of the sphere. Thus man is good and man is bad respond to the same spherical logic, and thus say strictly nothing that has a sense. ‘We may quite rightly be astonished’ that no one has taken advantage of this (252) remark to make a ‘structural reference’, namely to say that this spherical logic is only a dressing-up of structure and of sense. ‘The evident refers back to being as emptying’: what is evident in the structure, which articulates the spherical fragment with the cut constituted by the Moebius strip, refers to being
inasmuch as it is not an essence, but the emptying of essence, the emptying of the concept, the emptying of being,…‘no more nonsense’. There is no cut that modifies the structure of the sphere: whether a cut is closed or open, it makes a hole on the sphere and the bilateral surface remains bilateral: ‘the cut when all is said and done does not ex-sist from the sphere’ (41bc). The hole in the sphere is ‘evident to be sure’, but it reduces what it circles to a universal which is only possible. This ‘some possible or other’ universal is therefore ‘empty’. The framework of this logic based on the universal is the proposition. This proposition can be analysed in terms of subject, copula and predicate, or better in terms of propositional function and argument: ‘substance is only a correlate’ of the (universal) propositional function; it has issued from the predicate of the proposition (like Socrates who might be defined by the universality of man: Socrates is a man); a priori, ‘it is co-possible or not’ with the universal on which it depends. The articulation of the proposition into function and arguments allows the question of sense in the four formulae which conjugate the phallic function to be set in motion. In opposition to this articulation, the overlapping in the predicate of essences or co-possible substances (‘yes or no’) with the predicate allows ‘all the faux-pas that we amuse ourselves with’ at the level of a spherical logic. The hole in spherical logic starts from the possible, even though the evident-emptying of the aspherical topological operation starts from the impossible which animates the modification, the subversion of meanings and makes the sense plainly appear.

‘Homosexuality’ (41cd) depends on this masculine logic, articulated according to the first two formulae in a spherical topology. Without the expansion of this logic to two (253) homosexual or masculine formulae (Greek antiquity, the Arab expansion from the VIIth century on, the Christian Middle Ages and the Eucharist as actualization of universal salvation by the Church), the structure ‘would have much earlier necessitated an Other recourse’, the recourse of the ‘notall’ or the ‘Other’, a recourse which was kept waiting on account of the ‘great epochs’ evoked. At the heart of these great epochs, ‘religion alone when all was said and done’ was able ‘to constitute true opinion’ relaying Plato’s ‘orthé doxa’; now this true opinion fills out the aspherical, gives to the matheme ‘the
funds with which it found itself invested, and keeps the door open for the two ‘heterosexual’ or ‘feminine’ formulae. ‘There will always remain something’ of this fund which is true opinion, famously at stake in the Church. ‘Biblical studies’ (AE 485) are content to aim at the meaning of the Bible; they have ‘never yet saved anybody’, because they do not dispense something of the search for sense, for true opinion and for faith.

‘To work in structure’ (41e) presupposes the retroaction of the order of discourses on each one of them; to work in structure presupposes the sense which ‘never happens except in the translation from one discourse into another’ (36e); for such a sense, the ‘plug’ of meaning, which plugs the gap of the sexual relationship, source of sense – a plug operating especially in Biblical studies – ‘is of no interest’. The translation of the Bible (‘sacysent’, 37cd) only makes sense from the moment when ‘meaning-documents’ give way to the search for sense, notably to theology considered in its logical dimension.

3. The modification of the structure

‘Topology teaches’ (41e; 485) the link between the ‘number of turns’ of the cut and the ‘modification of the structure’. This modification puts the structure into mode (hysterical, master, academic, analytic modes): by revealing the modality of each discourse, the analytic discourse leads each discourse to its stopping point, to its powerlessness, to its specific ‘real’ in order to make it switch towards another discourse also marked by the impossible (42a); the putting into mode of different discourses by the discourse of the analyst allows ‘the real to be touched on by encountering it as impossible’. For topology, these modes are the sphere (universalizing logic) and the a-sphere (proper to analysis). The passage from one mode to another is carried out by a cut. But the modification will depend on number of turns that the cut will have comprized.

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1 ‘Theology’ begins with Aristotle, with whom logic ‘is extraordinarily enjoyable’ (…ou pire, 15 December 1971). This theo-logy is the part of philosophy which studies necessary, eternal and unchangeable causes (very far from ‘Biblical studies’). The -logy (already the ‘good logic’ of the impossible) here ‘dominates the theo- which (nevertheless) always remains quite solid, in its stupidity’ (ibid.).
‘Thus’ (42a), the cut passing one single time through the line of intersection of the cross-cap (see fig.13 b, p.199) transforms the whole asphere into a ‘stable spherical flap’, into a ‘supplementary disc’, into an object, into an out-of-line point, into orthé doxa. On the contrary, the cut passing twice through the line of intersection of the cross-cap (a’of fig.13), ‘the double looping’, ‘obtains’ the ‘fall of the cause of desire’. The cause of desire is also a spherical flap, but it is torn from another fragment of the surface, from a Moebius strip (which is not reduced to the cut). This latter (unilateral) surface is the barred subject: it is only ‘demonstrated’ as existence by the ‘fall’ of the supplementary disc, of the cause of desire. This strip is ex-sistence ( ) with respect to the object, to the spherical flap (which, in the case of the single cut, takes the form of being all: ).

‘This ex-sistence’ which is saying is demonstrated by the said. But this proof presupposes the difference between the ‘single turn’ and the ‘double looping’ cut, cuts which respectively engender either a ‘spherically stable flap’ with the disappearance of the subject, (255) or a ‘fall of the cause of desire’ with the apparition of the subject: the disappearing/appearing subject, ‘remains at the mercy of its said if it is repeated’: if the said is not repeated, the subject disappears; if the said is repeated, it appears only as ‘ex-sistence to the double looped cut’. Qua Moebius strip, the subject is defined by its disappearance, in other words by the median cut (or the single turn cut on the cross-cap) which makes every trace of the unilateral surface disappear: (fading of the subject). Interpretation must go through a double turn to go beyond this fading and to articulate ‘in two turns’ the object to the subject.

The vanishing of the subject (or of the Moebius strip) is a ‘nodal-point’ (42b), circumscribed by a single turn. As knot (trivial knot or simple round), the single turn transforms the asphere into a ‘stable spherical flap’ which has the same structure as the out-of-line point. This nodal-point is a ‘case’ in the sense of the fall of the said in spherical logic. But it can be taken up again in interpretation (and its double turn) and opens ‘the case for saying’ namely, the ex-sistence outside the universal, ‘saying’ as opposed to
said’. In this double turn of interpretation, the Moebius strip only survives as pure cut or as ‘hole’ (fading of the subject). With the vanishing of the unilateral surface, sense vanishes and is reduced to the (imagined or machinated) meaning of the hole: the hole is ‘machinated in it’ as imaginary and symbolic fiction.

‘The imagination of the hole has consequences, to be sure’ (42bc; 485). The hole – the hole of the lips, of the anus, of the slit in the eyelids, of the ear – contributes in effect to the erogenous zone, the source by which the Freudian drive is alimented. According to its etymology, the drive (‘Trieb’ from treiben, to float with the wind, the waves, to go with the drift) ‘derives’ from the impossible to fill hole. By producing the phallic function (or topology), the discourse of the analyst ‘has made a’ (teachable) ‘matheme’ of it, ‘where mysticism previously only testified to its trials by making them unsayable’. Thus, the (256) unsayable of the mystics is replaced by the journey of the different forms of the impossible, which, by the double turn of the said, is going to constitute saying. Whoever ‘remains at that very hole’, at the hole only imagined without the Moebius strip, remains fascinated by the ‘stable spherical flap’, by purely spherical topology, ‘from which universal discourse maintains its privilege’. This fascination by the sphere gives ‘body’ to the discourse of the academic which has precisely the (scopic and theoretical) o-object as Other. The privilege of the academic is to be installed in spherical topology by the flap of the sphere which results from the simple cut of the cross-cap.

‘With the image nothing will ever be made of it’ (42c): the image will never give the articulation of the o-object and the subject. From what ‘is sown’, from what is seeded starting from the image or the ‘semblable’, the semblable can only ‘s’oupirer’, thrust itself into the worst (Seminar XIX, … ou pire, summarized in Scilicet 5; AE 547). The worst is the said of the object which forgets the subject’s saying. To sink into the worst with a sigh presupposes that instead of the matheme of the Moebian cut, we imagine a ‘stable spherical flap’ which forgets ‘the Moebius strip of the subject’ (42a).

‘The hole is not justified by a wink, nor by a mnemonic syncope, nor by a cry’. The slit in the eyelids, the hole in the memory or the glottis are
not ‘justified’ by a ‘Quiet!’ (*motus*), by a movement of the soul, of the memory or of the spirit supposedly ‘expressed’ by the ‘hole’. All these images depend on a spherical topology where the word – ‘Quiet!’ and a buttoned lip – decides and closes.

‘A torus has a hole only for someone who looks at it as an object’ (42d; 485-486): the torus as bilateral surface, belongs to spherical topology. The imaginary, as such, has no hole. The ‘circular’ hole of the torus, that of demand, and the ‘central hole’, that of desire, are only ‘holes’ for whoever looks at them from the outside. The little ant travelling along the torus would never encounter a hole. There is only a subject of the torus starting the topological modification which transforms the torus into a Moebius strip (evident-emptying operation, 26). ‘A precise number of turns of saying’ is necessary for ‘this torus to be made…Moebius (257) strip’ (42de). The first stage of the transformation of the torus into Moebius strip implies that the single cut of the torus turns twice around the central hole of desire and once around the circular hole of demand. This first stage of the transformation ends up with the ‘bipartite strip’ which has two edges and is twisted twice. This double twist is the necessary condition for it ‘to be made … Moebius strip’ by suturing one of its edges to itself (26-27). If desire is looped in two turns, the turns of demand on the contrary ‘should be an odd number’ (43c) to transform the torus into a Moebius strip: it is right along its length that the front of demand is sewn to its back (‘a torus is better than a cross section’NB). The neurotic walks on the torus, going along both the turns of demand and the turns of desire in it; the topological modification into a bipartite strip then into a ‘contraband’ (Moebius strip, *bande*) can only be established from an odd demand articulated on the two turns of desire. Thus Lacan’s analyser (*The direction of the treatment.. E 631*) makes a demand one his mistress: that she should sleep with another man; and the mistress responds to him by a dream in which his desire is implicated twice: ‘she has a phallus and a vagina and the desire that this phallus should enter it’. The response of the mistress manifestly brings about a topological modification: the neurotic torus to which the analyser was chained as much with respect to his mistress as to Lacan is ‘modi-fied’ into a phallic function (topologically: into a cross-cap).
As Lacan has attempted to demonstrate to the IPA traffickers who ‘badly want to silt him up with their own contraband’, importing analysis in a fraudulent fashion into the academic discourse, ‘a torus... is the structure of neurosis’ (42e). This structure is the entwining of two tori: turning around the axis of the one involves turning around the core of the other and reciprocally. Turning around the desire of the one involves turning around the demand of the other and reciprocally (Seminar IX, Identification, 1961-62, in connection (258) with the torus). The ‘contra-banding of the subject’ (43a), the modification of the torus into a Moebius strip, appears from the ‘indefinitely enumerable re-petition of demand’ inasmuch as ‘two turns’ of desire are looped at the same time as an odd number of demands. Thanks to this reading of desire, there may appear in a second phase the structure of saying, explained in the cross-cap; transference should be understood as the activation of this structure. Finally, the double looping on the cross-cap articulates the matheme or interpretation. Interpretation can only be carried out in the correct sequence: desire taken to the letter, transference, then interpretation; this is the very articulation of The direction of the treatment (E 585).

‘I would simply like to get rid of the sort of incitement’ to an imagined topology ‘that our structural topology might inspire’ (43a; 486).

If ‘demand’ is ‘numerable in its turns’ (43a), this only ever concerns the one who counts the turns from outside; for an imagined topology, the surface cannot become the barred subject (the Moebius strip) and the topology is at the very most a metaphor of the subject. ‘The hole is not to be imagined’. For the one who is in the structure, the turn will be completed when it comes back to its starting point: there is only a single ‘turn’ (even if the outside observer can count the turns of demand and of desire). The turn, which transforms the torus, ‘only ex-sists’ outside the plural ‘number’ of turns: the cut alone counts, it counts ‘one’, —.

‘I insist: the turn in itself’ – namely the turn of the whorl seen from outside – ‘is not countable’ (43ab) by the one who is plunged into topology. The demands which are repeated for topology imagined from the outside, do not close, for the closing can only be established in the act of cutting, in the
surface. A turn of itself, a demand, ‘is neither said nor to say’: it is not ‘the said’ for it is not in the cut, and not belonging to the domain of the said, but of the imagined, it does not open up the question of saying. It is not a ‘proposition’. Nevertheless (259) demand always presupposes the modal of a saying which sustains it. A turn of itself depends therefore on a ‘logic, which remains to be constructed from modal logic’. This logic is currently being constructed in _L’étourdit:_ starting from the imagined topology of the neurotic torus (where we count desire and demands from an outside point of view), it is a matter at first of making the modal logic of the Moebius strip appear; then the spherical flap (o-object) demonstrates the aspherical structure (the barred subject) in the double-turned cut which makes the o-object fall. Interpretation is neither the explanation of a more or less obscure declarative proposition, nor the commentary of the modal demand: interpretation is necessarily the ‘cut’ as making the structure evident.

‘Our first depiction of the cut’ transforming the torus into a Moebius strip (43b, see 26-27) shows that one single demand (a single transversal turn) suffices for this transformation, as long ‘as it is paired with the double longitudinal turn’ of desire. Nevertheless, demand, ‘since it is enumerable’, can be repeated: the repetition compulsion is made up of demands which are repeated, which go on re-demanding. But if the demands are enumerable (repeatable), desire, for its part, goes beyond numeration and depends on the power of the continuous; desire presupposes the transfinite: demand can only be counted on the basis of desire. The demand-turn is therefore singular inasmuch as it is closed by being paired with two desire-turns in order to permit the topological operation. This turn closes in the singular, even if, seen from outside, the turns are plural.

‘It remains that’ this (inaccessible) number of turns (in the plural) has to be ‘odd’ for the evident-emptying operation to effectively transform the bi-lateral surface of the torus into a unilateral surface, into a Moebius strip, completed in a cross-cap.

The demand-turns are countable only by whoever finds himself in the surface and its cut: because of this, the ‘transfinite’ of desire on the basis of which the demands are counted (260) is ‘a requisite’ (43c). The number of turns goes beyond the countable, the enumerable and touches on the
power of the continuous. Nevertheless, the number of demand-turns must be odd for the cut to be closed in an adequate manner. Yes, no, yes, no,…, no: demand can pass through all the reversals, it must end up at its back (envers) before being looped in the double desire-turn, at the level of saying; thus love must end up at hate, whatever the number of oscillations of ambivalence, for there to be a saying. God congratulates himself on this transfinite in which the neurotic articulation of demand and of desire on the torus is modified by the structure, since God is the structure: trinity, three persons in one single God (as the transfinite number of demands is in one single cut).

This ‘dit-mension’ of demand is added to ‘the topology of our practice of saying’ (43cd). The topology of the cross-cap and of saying only become a practice on condition of grasping the said at the moment when it is odd or reversed. It is necessary in effect that the demand should cease to be paired with the Other in a specific toric entwining of neurosis. Thus, the only guarantee of this ‘odd is ‘topological subversion’.

‘Repetition…is not left to itself’, but is conditioned by ‘our practice of saying’, namely, by the discourse of the analyst, which produced it as phallic function (S₁); and this function inspires the reversal of the meanings of demand. The same remark was already valid for the unconscious: the unconscious is nothing other than the dynamic of switching from one discourse into another and this dynamic of switching depends on the discourse of the analyst.

‘Repetition’ (43de; 487) is founded on the transfinite, it is the transfinite transformed ‘into a sum’ (24a); it is in function of desire that all demands can be organized as the sequence of whole numbers (to every demand there succeeds only one demand and each demand is preceded by only a single demand). The direction of the treatment is already (261) integrally articulated by putting the practice in order: when it ceases to acknowledge reality (whose torus, tore, is it? whose fault, tort, is it?), the analyser can follow desire to the letter of the demand, inasmuch as the being of the analyst receives it in the structure; from this will flow transference and interpretation. Thus repetition is ‘conditioned’ by the direction of the treatment which orders it in terms of the double turn of desire (or the
equivocation of the letter). This conditioning implies the injunction to be odd in order to articulate desire and get ‘to the end of the analysis of the neurotic torus’.

‘I mark here its reference for a later reprise’ (43e).

4. The end of analysis (43e-44d)

‘The analysis of the neurotic torus’ (43e; 487) is the modification described in the preceding paragraph: the neurotic torus is first modified into a Moebius strip (the operation of evidence-emptying) whose hole can then be supplemented by the supplementary disc in order to make the structure in general (the cross-cap) appear. By this interpretation, by this topology, the neurotic torus is dismantled in the structure of the phantasy. It becomes the disjunction/conjunction or the cut/suture of a Moebius strip (the barred subject) and the disc (o-object). This phantastical structure only appears through the necessary link of the repetition of the (odd) demand to the double turn of desire.

The o-object ought therefore ‘fall from the hole of the strip’ (43e): the cross-cap is not transformed into a bilateral surface by a single-turn cut, which would make the Moebian part disappear definitively. The neurotic torus is first modified into a Moebius strip; the o-object, absent from the neurotic torus as well as from the strip, is introduced after the event into the Moebius strip in the form of the analyst (35b). One cannot therefore situate the o-object in the neurosis properly speaking by an ‘imaginary misuse’ (43e): it is projected into the central hole of the torus (43-44) and this central hole only exists ‘for someone who looks at the torus (262) as an object’: the projection of the o-object onto this ‘central hole’ is imaged from an extrinsic point of view, which excludes modification.

‘The odd transfinite of demand’ is only ‘resolved’, is only dissolved, is only analysed by ‘the double turn of interpretation’, by ‘the double loop of desire’ (43a). The psychoanalyst took on the function (44a) of situating this saying, which is interpretation in a double loop: the analyst acts as the
‘semblance’ of the o-object; he provides the object of interpretation, ‘the supplementary disc with which the Moebius strip is closed’ (30c).

‘The analyser only ends’ his analysis if ‘the representation of his analyst’ is modified. This representation of the analyst is not simple because it is in the changeability of the signifier: the subject is what is represented by a signifier for another signifier. But who is going to be the ‘representative’ of this movement of representation? In a first phase of the analytic treatment, the representative of the representation the subject can be the analyst, the analyser or both. The ‘representative of representation’\(^1\) is thus, in Lacanian theory, the barred subject of desire (E 554, note of 1966). The interpretation or the modification of the structure (by aspherical topology) brings about a change of representative of representation. In effect, with the double cut carried out on the cross-cap, it is the fall of the spherical disc (or of the o-object) that makes the structure appear: this fall becomes the ‘representative of representation’.

Representation (namely the movement of the signifier or free association) is no longer represented by the ‘subject’, but by the ‘o-object’ (as indicated in E 814). The subjective process of the torus in which are entwined the demand and the desire (of the neurotic and of his Other) is modified by topology into a Moebius strip which only supports (263) its own reversals if the o-object falls from the cross-cap through the double- turned cut of interpretation. Since one does not find an o-object in the torus, except by an ‘imaginary misuse’ which would situate it in the central hole of the torus, analysis cannot begin its last topological operation, its end-work, in which the analyst will become the o-object for the analyser. A work of mourning since what is at stake is the fall of the o-object, this operation loses its depressive colouring when the fall of the o-object is compensated by maniacal reactions according to the Freudian theorization of Mourning and melancholy.

The end of the analysis thus appears a ‘state of exultation’ (44b), as identification to the analyst, according to Balint (c.f. E 681); but this would

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\(^1\) The representative of representation (Vorstellungsrepräsentanz) is diverted by Lacan from its Freudian sense. For Freud, the drive, mythical and unknowable as such, can only be represented (repräsentiert) in the psychical and that in two different modes: the representation (Vorstellung) which is of the topical order of thoughts and the affect which is of the economic order of discharges.
be to take the state of exultation ‘amiss’. To identify the demand of the
analyser to the desire of the analyst is to withdraw oneself into the topology
of the neurotic torus where the demand of the one is entwined with the
desire of the other. The work of modification of the structure is forgotten
there and the o-object as ‘central hole of the torus’ is only examined from an
outside and imaginary point of view. ‘Therapeutic success’ may find a
motive in this imaginary misuse that pins down identification to the o-object
(including the form of a ‘passe’ or a hierarchical promotion). This motive
will only be called ‘substantial’ from the moment it gives a (metaphorical,
sensual) substance to a (topological, non-metaphorical, sensed) structure.
Beyond this manic state, the mourning must be completed.

‘After the end of analysis, ‘there remains the stability of the
flattening out of the phallus, or of the strip’ (44c); the identification to the
analyst and the o-object have collapsed. This collapse has only ‘stabilized’
the flattening out of the strip: the Moebius strip can no longer disappear in
the cut. Thus, the end of analysis establishes the supposed subject, the
subject of the always appearing/disappearing signifier. How assure such an
ephemeral subject? By knowledge. The subject-supposed-to-know implied
in the transference is explained by this: it is no longer the analyst, but the
journey of the four phallic formulae (264) which are twisted into a Moebius
strip. The subject, supposed to be what the signifier represents for another
signifier, is assured in the structure by the knowledge of the phallic
function. Thanks to the process of the treatment, the subject-supposed-to-
know now makes way for knowledge which gives the certainty of the
supposed subject, which is situated in the ‘three dit-mensions of
impossibility’: ‘in sex, in sense and in meaning’ (44d). The triple s of the
subject-supposed-to-know (Sujet-Supposé-Savoir, SSS) of the transference
and of the treatment is ‘analysed’ as triple S of the ‘dit-mensions of the
impossible’: sex, sense, signification. The explanations of these three dit-
mensions1 are introduced respectively by the three triple points:

1) The dimension of impossibility in sex (‘…that, dialogue from one
sex’ 44bc). Each discourse is founded on the impossibility of the sexual

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1 The three dit-mensions of the impossible take up respectively the three Hegelian figures of
the spiritual work of art, tragedy (sex), comedy (meaning), the epic (sense).
relationship; the absence of sexual relationship is played out at first between the semblance and the Other of each discourse, but is extended into the powerlessness of each discourse to reach its truth. The absence of sexual relationship provokes the switching of each discourse. For each discourse, the dialogue between one sex and another is impossible; there results from this some ‘inconvenience’ (44c), to be heard first etymologically as impossibility of ‘coming together’, of agreeing: the semblance and the Other are always disparate. Starting from this in-con-venience, the subject will come, with the roundabout of the discourses, to sense.

2) The dimension of impossibility in sense (‘…that we can say nothing’ 44c). Sense presupposes a ‘series’, a determined and limited sequence of things of the same nature forming a set. This sense only takes its sense through the impossible, only through the limit of the series, which escapes from the possible of sense. In that way the sequence which corresponds to the discourses must be limited in order that its sense and its ‘seriousness’ might appear (15c-16a). Thus the sense of demands only appears when it is looped in a (265) double turn of desire. Thus the series of three mourning tragedies in Greek theatre only takes on its sense with the comedy of the afternoon which closes the day. Thus the discourses only take on a sense from their completion by the analytic discourse. The ‘comic’ is precisely the completion of the phallic function which is pursued beyond the tragedy of the first phallic formulae. The ‘sublime’ of sublimation appears in the replacing of a sexual object by a non-sexual object and in the exchange of a sexual goal for another goal. It does not genuflect to the on-high or to the transcendent, but to the ‘comical order’ (44c) which is carried out in the displacement from the oral to the vocal: sublimation is defined by the movement of the o-object. Thus Dante’s poem (32c), *Vita Nuova*, only finds its sense after the death of Beatrice from the ‘next to nothing’ of the ‘fluttering of the eyelashes’, starting from Beatrice’s look as o-object drifting already towards the voice (*Télévision*, p.40).

3) The dit-mension of impossibility in meaning (‘…and then that insult’, 44cd). The insult – the attack – is the first and last word of the
dialogue which the epic tale of the *Iliad* (c.f. Homer: *conféromère*), as well as individual epics (the Ratman insulting his father at the age of three: ‘you towel, you lamp, you plate’) show us. All ‘dialogue’ is in fact an agglomeration of fragments of insults (*conféromère* from the Latin *conferre*, to carry together, and from the Greek *meros*, part, fragment). From the first propositional judgement that might be inscribed in dialogue up to the ‘Last Judgement’, ‘judgement’ proves to be of the order of insult, of condemnation or of damnation. The ‘meanings’, which are of the order of judgement, can be brought back to the structure of the phantasy by topological operations. For the saids – by meaning or by judgement – are ‘for saying’: they do not ‘touch the real except by losing all meaning’. In order for the structure to be unveiled, the saids must accept impossibility, They must not have ‘any more meaning’ (37a).

(266) Of all that, of ‘the three dimensions of the impossible’ (in sex, sense, meaning), the analyser having terminated his analysis, ‘will know how to make himself a conduit’. (44d) He will have the power no doubt, but a power founded on the ‘knowledge’ articulated by the logic of the impossible which ‘assures his supposed subject’.

‘If he is sensitive to the beautiful’ (44de; 488), which stabilizes things just before saying, desire or the horror of castration, he will situate this beautiful in the ‘between-two-deaths’, in this field situated between physical death and the putting to death of all parasitical ideas, in the ethics of Antigone (Seminar VII). The ethic of the beautiful (or of Antigone) remains midway in the work of the riddle proposed by the Sphynx just as much as at mid-course in the double--looped journey proposed by *L’étourdit*. Antigone does indeed hold out the hand of topology to Oedipus…but it must still follow this trajectory of topology in a double turn and not remain with the ‘single turn’ proper to doxa (42a). ‘One of these truths’ (one of the three dimension of the impossible) can parêtre to the analyser at the end of analysis, can appear inasmuch as it turns around being which is the o-object according to ‘proper logic’ which consists in ‘understanding’ the impossible (6cd): ‘it parest to him worthy of being understood’. If he is ‘sensitive to beauty’, if he stops halfway, ‘he will only entrust himself to the half-saying of the single turn’. But this half-saying
does not loop the ‘double turn of interpretation’; nothing obliges the analyser to terminate his analysis with the beautiful (based on the single turn); he can again be supported by a second saying or by the ‘double turn of interpretation’.

Let us therefore now come to interpretation.
CHAPTER 4: INTERPRETATION

(267) Structure analyses the neurotic torus, by re-ascending towards the cross-cap that makes it possible. It dismantles the torus into a Moebius strip which allows the analyser, at the end of analysis, to rediscover himself at once in sex, sense and meaning. ‘These benefits’ (44e; 488) are supported ‘by a second-saying’, as the three preceding chapters have demonstrated. Are these benefits going to last or are they ephemeral? They last, they are well established, inasmuch as they allow the saying which produced them to be forgotten. It is quite useful that saying should be forgotten behind the said in what is understood: the analyser will comfortably enjoy the benefits acquired during the treatment only inasmuch as they are inscribed, as they are established in a discourse which avoids the switching of discourses. From this point of view it is better not to become an analyst!

‘That is the cutting edge of our enunciating at the start.’ (44e): ‘That one might be saying remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood’. ‘The first said’, free association, ‘only has its structure-effects’ in that ‘saying’ is beingwith being, ‘in that saying parsoit’. The parêtre of saying comes from the second turn thanks to which there emerge at the same time the supplementary disc and the Moebius strip. By the double turn of the cut, ‘being’ (the o-object or the supplementary disc) is redoubled by the ‘parêtre’ (the barred subject or the Moebius strip). Interpretation, as a ‘double-turn’ cut of the cross-cap, makes ‘parêtre’, assures the dereliction, the desêtre of a radically barred subject.

‘In what does the parêtre consist’ (45a; 488)? The Moebius strip or the parêtre is producer of true cuts; but it is already too much to say that it ‘is’, since it only exists through the fall of being, of the o-object. The parêtre consists ‘in that (it is) producing true cuts’...and the verb ‘to be’ (it is) falls in the construction of the sentence as it is (268) written in L’étourdit! These double-turn cuts on the cross-cap make the Moebius strip (the barred subject) appear and allow the supplementary disc (the o-object) to fall.

‘Of this parêtre’ which is the Moebius strip, ‘I do not have to expose the status otherwise than by my own journey’. The barred subject has no
established status, since it is drift, reversal and switch. It is exposed only in
the course of the experience proper to saying and to the discourse of the
analyst, which dispenses it from any other justification. This experience is
pure matheme: ‘What authorises me in my case to refer myself to this pure
matheme’ (28)? Response: his experience ‘that not just anything at all can
be said. And the saying is necessary it’ (29). The barred subject is justified
not by the o-object, but by the experience, by the journey of the roundabout
discourses which separates the barred subject and the o-object.

‘To make arrêt(re) of it’, to stop the parêtre, imposes on it an
immobile, established (stabitat), ‘status’ as fixed point in the journey of the
roundabout of discourses (or the figures of sexuation), ‘would be at the
same time to pen-ètrate it’ (45ab), to enter profoundly into it no doubt, but
above all to make it ‘almost be’ (as a pen-insula is almost an island, Latin,
paene: almost). Now ‘being’ is precisely the bilateral supplementary disc to
be let drop. The Moebian part of the cross-cap ‘is made up of lines without
points through which its front face is sewn to its back face’ (39d); to stop
this journey, in order to better penetrate it, is to come back to spherical
being.

‘This saying that I recall to ex-sistence’ is closed by the ‘double turn
of interpretation’; it is through it that the closure at the end of analysis (44a)
beyond the end of the neurotic torus is produced. For the end of the analysis
presupposes that one does not forget this saying existing outside ‘the
primary said’ (45b). The end of analysis does not consist in picking the
well-stabilised fruits of psychoanalysis and forgetting saying, but in keeping
in movement the labilised structure and therefore not forgetting saying.

(269) ‘The unconscious is structured like a language’ (45b) and not
by a language. Lacan nevertheless affirms some lines later: ‘it is through
language [le langage] that I account for the unconscious’ (45d). ‘To render
an account’ is not ‘to structure’. The relationship between the unconscious
and language can operate in two different ways: ‘to render an account of the
unconscious by language’ or ‘to structure the unconscious like a language’.
The account rendered presupposes an available knowledge, the knowledge
of the academic discourse; at that level, language can serve as an agent ‘to
render an account’ of the unconscious. Structure on the contrary
presupposes a knowledge always already hidden and impossible, the knowledge of the discourse of the analyst; this knowledge, in the position of truth, works in a logic of displacement which never situates the speaker other than in one discourse among others: a discourse is not ‘not-all’ and the unconscious is the dynamic of the roundabout of discourses. This journey – that can never be totalised – operates concomitantly with the unconscious and language (‘like’). In the structure, there is no priority of the unconscious; it is a matter of the same structure, that of the unconscious like that of a language. Nevertheless, Lacan’s listeners – his ‘audience’ – were inscribed in the academic discourse. Lacan’s shafts tried hard to touch them where they were in it, ‘to startle, é-pater, them’, to highlight the pater, the father or the Name-of-the-Father, but it was ‘without anything more’. The listeners, caught up in the academic discourse, preferred to content themselves with this pinpointing of the Name-of-the-Father, thanks to which they believed themselves non-dupes (Les non-dupes errent), rather than following the structure which continually puts us off the scent. They preferred to confine themselves within the academic discourse rather than switching over to the discourse of the analyst. Swanking (l’épate) highlights the pater, the father without anything more, without the discourse of the analyst without taking on the sense of structure. The stamp of the academic discourse is stigmatised (270) by the ‘extravagance’ which consists in ‘making of the unconscious the condition of language’ (45cd) (c.f. Lacan’s preface to a so-called academic ‘thesis’; it was in fact Anika Rifflet-Lemaire’s book, Jacques Lacan; AE 393). The condition of language is not the unconscious, since there is no unconscious prior to language. Implied in the dynamic of switching discourses, the unconscious is therefore conditioned by ‘language’: language is the condition of the unconscious. Why this insistence on the definite article ‘le langage’ contrary to ‘the unconscious structured like a language’? The reason is that the condition accounting for the unconscious remains a ‘thesis’ of the academic discourse (and of linguistics), while ‘structure’ – explained in topology and saying – depends on the discourse of the analyst: linguistics studies language in its universality and psychoanalysis follows the
unconscious in its peculiar functioning, like a language. This is what must now be explained.

‘Nothing is of any use’, when one is caught on the ‘mental horns’ of the academic discourse (45d; 488). Why is that? The real presents itself as single before any generalisation: one signifier can represent one subject for one other signifier and one switch can take place starting from one discourse. It is indeed starting from a ‘one’ ($S_1$) that it can serve to make a series: one is dispatched to another ($S_2$). Now the academic discourse is caught in the mental horns of the universal and of the exception. The universal bestrides the real in logical definition: the first member of the defining proposition represents the real and the second member is composed of the knowledge supposed to determine this real. This function of definition is that of the ‘definite article’ defined by a movement which goes from the particular to the universal\(^1\). The ‘defined (271) definite’ article is part of discourse (45d; 489) not alone because it is a word among others entering into the composition of speech, but above all because the function of defining or universalising forms part of discourse (‘in general’); this function, a first horn to stick into the real, is phallic: it corresponds to meanings as well as to the first phallic formulae ($\forall x. \Phi x$).

Nevertheless it is not the whole of the phallic function; as universal ($\forall x. \Phi x$), the definite article is only the door into structure: ‘Language can only designate the structure of which there is a languages-effect’ (45e; 489): language is not a generality that would encompass the objects of linguistic knowledge; it is a moment of the structure of saying, of the effective journey of a case one after the other. There is no possible summation of languages. ‘Language’ only appears as like a language, common language; it is the only way to get into it: ‘there is no meta-language’. ‘Common sense’, universalising would like to tackle languages by their generality; the unconscious already always diverges from this universalisation. ‘The

\^1\ c.f. Gustave Guillaume *Particularisation et généralisation dans le système des articles Français* (1944) in *Langue et science du langage*. The definite article is a transversal cut in a kinetics which goes from the particular to the universal. When I say: ‘The French soldier knows how to resist fatigue’, thought is distanced from the particular in order to formulate a general proposition. The indefinite depends on the contrary on a kinetic which goes from the universal to the particular; when I say: ‘A French soldier knows how to resist fatigue’, I want for example to encourage a particular soldier to resist fatigue.
unconscious is structured like a language': it works on one discourse and can produce another one from it; there is thus justified the only possible approach of the unconscious from the ‘one’ of free association, dreams, slips, blunders, jokes always new and particular. As structure, the unconscious is in the ‘sense’ of structure which does not admit a globalising definition. ‘Languages fall under the influence of notall in the surest way since structure has no other sense there’, as Lacan has specified throughout L’étourdit by the saying, by the journey of the phallic function, by ‘topological recreation’ (46a).

‘The reference from which I situate the unconscious’ (46a; 489) is structure, as (272) topological development, as stuff of the analytic discourse. By ‘definition’ proper to the definite article, ‘linguistics escapes' from this topological structure constituted by the journey of the phallic function. Linguistics is nevertheless not simply academic discourse, it is also the other side of this discourse, it is a scientific discourse: ‘as science it has nothing to do with parêtre, any more than it noumène’s’, it only has perform something of the barred subject that it forecloses (the parêtre), nor with the o-object (the noumenon). In its sphericity linguistics ‘well and truly leads us ... certainly not to the unconscious’, since it has a ‘horror’ (c.f. Radiophonie, p.64) of the topological structure operating in the discourse of the analyst. It is the unconscious that brings linguistics into structure inasmuch as it forms part of the roundabout of the discourses. The unconscious interprets linguistics by diverting it from the definite article so as to make it turn around the ‘real by which language is justified’, around the real (always unique, particular) which moves, which provokes the movement of the discourses, the structure of the discourses. This drift, dérive (new translation of the Freudian Trieb, pulsion) is precisely the matheme (42b).

‘Psychoanalysis’ only approaches the structure of the unconscious ‘by the coming into operation of an Other dit-mension’ (46ab), a dimension which inscribes the said in the notall, in the Other as logic of the Heteros, that by which a saying comes to exist. This Other dit-mension is only opened up by the discourse of the analyst. Like every discourse, the discourse of the analyst is animated by a semblance. The specific
semblance of the discourse of the analyst is the o-object [l’objet a]; the
discourse of the analyst ‘is (a)minated...’ (46b) thanks to the o-object (the
analyst). This a-imation is interpretation which goes further than the ‘half-
saying of the single turn’: the double-turned cut makes the barred subject,
disjoined/conjoined to the o-object in the phantasy, appear.

‘The analyst pays for having to represent the fall of a discourse’
(46b; 489). Re-presentation presupposes the displacement of the signifier
and the fall of one discourse for a new discourse. At the end of the analysis,
the process of representation is itself represented by the o-object (44a). The
analyst then represents the o-object, as the (273) supplementary disc which
allows the journey of the Moebius strip as being what leads us into the
journey of the parêtre. The o-object, represented by the analyst, allows
sense to be tightened ‘around this fall’. It is the ‘fall of desire whence there
is produced the Moebian strip of the subject, this fall demonstrating it to be
only ex-sistence to the double looped cut from which it results (42ab).

Linguists may be ‘disappointed’ by the fact that the psychoanalyst does not
contribute material to their universal science. ‘Disappointment…without
any issue for them (46c), since the linguist remains imprisoned in the
function of the definite article, while the discourse of the analyst is defined
by the structure of switching. This journey of the phallic function is the ex-
planation or the dis-entangling of this structure, or again interpretation.

From the point of view of structure, ‘the analyst, since Freud, is
much further on in this than the linguist’. Saussure’s contribution, though
recognised in the Agency of the letter (E 494), seems here to be
‘disqualified’: the Saussurian signifier-signified ‘algorithm’ is only a
translation of St Augustine’s¹ signans-signatum, itself a translation of the
Stoics’ semainon-semainomenon. It is in this series that Freud seems to
have preceded Saussure, by translating the signifier as

Wahrnehmungszeichen, perceptual sign (c.f. Seminar XVIII, 12 May 1971).

Why is this primacy of Freud over the linguists significant, if both are
largely anticipated by the Stoics’ signifier? In the comparison between
linguistics and psychoanalysis, we will distinguish the dawn of linguistics

¹ The reference to the De magistro of St Augustine had been the subject of a commentary
which comes with the signifier (Saussure) and its zenith when there radiates the light of metaphor and metonymy (Jakobson) (E 799).

Freud’s lead over linguistics (46d) flows not only from the introduction of the ‘perceptual sign’ preceding the Saussurian signifier, but more particularly from the (274) dream-work which articulates the primary processes, among others condensation and displacement, in which ‘the sense-effect of metaphor and metonymy’ (Jakobson) are anticipated. What are these two sense-effects? If metaphor creates a meaning-effect, metonymy on the contrary is resistance to meaning and opens up the journey of sense and of the phallic function (E 515). This could be heard throughout the preceding pages.

If the analyst ‘is sustained by the chance’ (46d) presented in the double-turned journey depending on metonymy more than on metaphor, he will stay ahead, he will remain open to analytic discourse, proper to structure and interpretation.

From the point of view of this lead psychoanalysis traces out a new route for linguistics. On the contrary, ‘linguistics does not open up anything for analysis’ (46de; 490); enclosed in the academic discourse, defined by the function of the definite article, it does not open up a new way for psychoanalysis: the functioning of linguistics obeys at the outset the first formula of the phallic function and is inscribed in one established discourse and its inverse (the academic and scientific discourse). But did not the support that Lacan received from Jakobson, metaphor and metonymy, constitute an opening up by linguistics for psychoanalysis? Let us rather say that it is psychoanalysis which, in its own field, here uses metaphor and metonymy (S₁) in order to make something else of it (S₂), especially starting from the dream work (c.f. The interpretation of dreams). There is nothing ‘of the order of after-the-event’ for linguistics; the latter has in no way been modified by Lacan, it has not revisited its history: its previous theorisations remain unchanged. Instead of such an after-the-event effect, there is manifested a ‘backlash’; congealed in its academic discourse which wants to

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1 Contrary to linguistics, mathematical discourse does not proceed by generalisation, but by reshaping; in it a recent theory wipes out previous attempts; rereading Euclid is of no use for today’s mathematician (c.f. 37e).
ignore the journey inherent in the (275) discourse of the analyst, linguistics is content to take its ‘benefit’ and to forget the second saying (46e) by which ‘it is supported’ without knowing it.

‘The saying of the analyst inasmuch as it is effective’ (46e), the saying which effectively separates a Moebius strip and a supplementary disc, ‘realises the apophtanic...’; it is interpretation. Aristotle divided ‘discourses’ into ‘propositions’ (or ‘apophtanic’ discourses which are true or false) and modal discourses (or non-apophtanic discourses, discourses of demand, of wishing, of prayer, etc. which are neither true nor false). Now interpretation ‘is not modal’ (30a-43a); one might think that it is a proposition in the Aristotelian apophtanic sense. It is nothing of the kind. The apophtanic of interpretation is distinguished from the apophtanic of the proposition by ‘ex-sistence’, by a saying always forgotten, but made effective in the double turn of the cut that makes the structure appear. The saying of analysis – operating in interpretation – ‘puts the propositional function in its place’; the function of the proposition finds its place in the journey of the phallic function, which supplies for ‘the ab-sense of the sexual relationship’ (47a; 490). With the double-turn cut which interpretation is, saying goes through the phallic function in all its states, in each one of the four formulae of sexuation. ‘This saying is reappointed there’, namely: it doubles the simple cut. A single journey provokes ‘embarrassment’ inasmuch as it fixes meanings there where what is at stake is sense – thus of the field of historical science (37c), or ‘fields as disparate as the oracle and the outside-discourse of psychosis’ (47a). This embarrassment can be resolved provided one accepts to enter into sense and into the roundabout of the discourses. The embarrassing interpretation (history, oracle, psychosis) thus finds a solution in interpretation in the analytic sense of the double turn of saying.

The double turn of saying ‘fixes the desire’ (47a) at work in the demands. For the desire to be fixed, the surface of the neurotic torus must be transformed into a cross-cap; (276) or again, the indefinite sequence of demands must allow to appear its contradiction, its incompleteness, its undemonstrability, its undecidability, in other words what is impossible in desire. This is only done by the double turn on the cross-cap which makes
fall the \( o \)-object (whose nature it is to fall), and thus fixes the desire itself as Moebius strip. While waiting for this double-looped cut to close, the demands are indefinitely repeated, ‘they are maintained as unclosed.

Let us try to start again from the modal of demand. Can ‘modal logic’ help us here? Created with the pretension of resolving two paradoxes of implication common in the logic of propositions (the false implies anything whatsoever and the true is implied by anything whatsoever) modal logic (C. I. Lewis, 1918) only resolves these paradoxes by a deceptive trick: the usual paradoxes of implication are moreover found there under a modal disguise: ‘an impossible proposition strictly implies each proposition’ and ‘a necessary proposition is strictly implied by each proposition’. Contrary to this logic ‘which calls itself modal’, the proper modal logic, that of Lacan, starts not from saids or from declarative propositions, but from demands which are ‘restored’ in the double-turned saying of desire, in their structuring by the phallic function. These demands do not pair the necessary and the impossible (as in Lewis’ logic), but ‘the impossible to the contingent’ and ‘the possible to the necessary’ according to the repartition of sexes in the formulae of sexuation: on the feminine side (impossible) and (contingent); on the masculine side \( \forall x.\Phi x \) (possible) and (necessary). In other words, demands can be masculine or feminine, but their restoration in desire presupposes the complete double-looped circuit of saying, whose doubling introduces the equivocation characteristic of analysis.

‘This saying’ (47b; 490) which is interpretation proceeds only from the (277) unconscious. The unconscious is not a universal and necessary ‘structure’, but a particular and contingent one (‘like a’), it is therefore ‘structured like a language’, namely the \( lalangue \) that it inhabits. The neographism \( lalangue \) incorporates the definite article (and its universalisation) as a particular moment of a particular and contingent tongue: from this point of view, universalisation is only a phase of the phallic function (inasmuch as it is gone through by someone particular). \( Lalangue, \) essentially variable, is distinguished therefore by the equivocation which permits the unconscious to inhabit it in a labile way, \( de \)
labiter, namely to be the dynamic of transformation starting from this ephemeral tongue. ‘One tongue among others is nothing more than the integral of the equivocations that its history has allowed to persist in it’: it is only the point of passage towards other tongues, other states of the tongue. These equivocations are the vein, the seam from which there processes the issue of the analytic discourse: by coming up against ‘the real that there is no sexual relationship’, the analytic discourse sets in motion the only issue of analysis which is the roundabout of discourses. A tongue is the ‘depository’ of such a journey ‘throughout the ages’, the ages of French no doubt, but also the ages of a particular family and the ages of lalangue which depend on the history of one or other particular speaker. ‘This in the species’ of speakers: the real (that there is no sexual relationship) introduces us in effect ‘to the one’, to the phallic function which supplies for the absence of the sexual relationship. Starting from the single (phallic) libido, a ‘single’ sexuality is organised in which each one participates in the four formulae of sexuation. A single organ (the phallus) is disconnected from the body of speakers in order to make the phallic function appear. Phallic functioning (according to the double cut) makes ‘organs quartered by a disjunction’ appear, the different partial objects (only partially representing the phallic function that produces them, E 817). They are disconnected from the barred subject (E 634) by the operation of the double cut. After this phallic structuring of the phantasy, ‘other reals come’ within reach of this structure like a language, always on ‘the quadruple path of these approaches’, quadruple (278) o-object (oral, anal, scopic, vocal) present in the four discourses (of the hysteric, of the master, of the academic and of the analyst respectively) and structured by the four formulae and the four modes (possible, necessary, impossible, contingent). The quadruple path of approaching the real (notably in the phallic function and the double turn of saying) presupposes much more than the denumerable infinity of demands: ‘it is only infinitised from the fact that the ‘real number’ is produced from it’: for as we have seen in the demonstration of the power of the continuous (note p.154-155), the real number is constructed by the displacement between its $n^{th}$ decimal and the $n^{th}$ decimal of any number $A^n$, whatever it may be; it is by a continual displacement that the ‘real number’ is
demonstrated, the surface that bears the cut, the desire underlying the repetition of demands. Thus the listening of the analyst brings about a continual displacement, to each decimal of each demand, in order to be able to read desire in it.

Human ‘language’ (47cd) only has an effect from the structure where the real of the phallic function supplying for the absence of sexual relationship justifies the real transfinite number of all the demands, namely the desire that carries them.

That which turns around ‘the being’ of these o-objects is ‘parêtre’, including the ‘semblance of communication’, and depends on the formations of the unconscious: ‘dream, parapraxis or joke’, which correspond to three texts by Freud The interpretation of dreams 1900, The psychopathology of everyday life 1901 and Jokes 1905.

‘Nothing to do’ with a univocal language, which would directly say reality and which would be imagined starting ‘from an animal language’.

In animal language, ‘the real’ (47de; 490-491) fits univocal communication very well. In terms of ‘communication’ theory, entropy measures the uncertainty of a received message with respect to the message emitted. If the goal of animal language is univocal (279) communication, this entropy must be combated by a ‘negative entropy’: the ‘code-function’ by referring each sign to one meaning serves this language centred on univocal communication well. If the vital behaviour of animals is organised by ‘symbols in every way similar to ours…’, we speakers are not the dauphins/dolphins (‘dauphins’) of this language: our language is not an inheritance of animal language or of the superior intelligence of the cetacea. For the symbols of animal language are always univocal, while human language always presupposes equivocation as the two turns of interpretation show. Animal language is altogether inadequate to comprehend a tongue which ‘is nothing more than the integral of the equivocations that its history has allowed to persist’ (47b). As long as an ‘interpretation’ consists in saying the meaning of such and such a word, symptom, dream, etc. it remains in the search for the univocal proper to animal language; it is delusional (elle dé-lire), it goes outside the furrow of interpretation properly
so-called, it goes outside the double-turned furrow of interpretation which separates the barred subject from the o-object by articulating the phantasy. Let us follow the thread of equivocations, which is nothing other than the modi-fication of the structure.

‘By these equivocations, there is inscribed ‘the mistake of an enunciating’ (48a; 491). To one side of enunciating a said, there is situated the structure of the double loop of saying in which the Moebius strip and the supplementary disc are inscribed. Equivocation allows us to make appear the structure of the cross-cap, namely the two fragments of the cross-cap. It is the duality of these two fragments that creates an equivocation; for the parêtre, the line without points or the barred subject, is only maintained by being, the out-of-line point or the o-object which falls. The equivocations ‘are concentrated’ from three ‘nodal points’ themselves equivocal between the (out-of-line) point and the knot (the line without points). These three nodal points (the three homophonous, grammatical and logical equivocations) take up again the structure of saying proper to interpretation. To carry out the topological subversion which separates the barred subject and the o-object starting from the cross-cap, saying must count an odd number of demands (43).

(280) Beyond the contingent demands of each speaker, interpretation also necessitates the ‘presence of the odd’ (48a): every interpretation must use the three equivocations that succeed one another as three demands in order to be completed in desire or the forgotten saying. ‘The order in which we are going to present them is maintained there’ (48a-49d; 491-491): it is the order homophony-grammar-logic-homophony-etc.: grammar is required starting from homophony in order to distinguish its two senses; logic demonstrates its impossible to grammar; homophony, far from being a risky play on words, always depends already on logic (all the homophonies of L’étourdit directly concern the question of structure and of its logic). This order is maintained ‘by a double loop rather than by a single turn’ since each equivocation (homophonous, grammatical or logical) will be justified only with the explanation of the two others, namely by a new presentation of itself, by a re-presentation.
1) ‘I begin with homophony’ (48ab). All the examples of homophony quoted in *L’étourdit* depend on the logical equivocation between the asphere and the sphere which is elucidated by the double-looped cut dividing the cross-cap into a Moebius strip (§ and the supplementary disc (o). Thus: 1° the transfinite *d’eux* (the oddness of demands) is looped in two turns of desire. And this ‘keeps the trace of this soul-game’ where the object (the soul) is clipped to the barred subject. To love, ‘to make of them two together, *faire d’eux deux-ensemble*’ finds a limit in effect in the ‘*faire deux* d’eux’, namely in the two-turned cut which only gives place to desire by the fall of the *o*-object (42). 2° The *semblance* of communication takes its start in the *embleé* of the real. 3° The *paraître* of appearance is situated as *parêtre* of the Moebius strip alongside the being of the *o*-object. Up-side of homophony, there is logic; down-side there will be grammar (30a-40c-45d), indeed the ‘graph’, grammatical as its name indicates.

(281) ‘I insist that there are no holds (*coup)s* barred here’ (48b) since, arising from the forgotten saying, these homophonies play with us rather than we playing with them: we are the effect of saying. Only the poets calculate these ‘effects, *coup*s’ and the psychoanalyst makes use of them ‘when it suits’, namely in interpretation which is not without this saying.

The analyst will make use of them for the end of analysis, namely for interpretation. In neurosis, the subject is linked to the Other: the torus of the neurotic presents itself as linked to the torus of the Other, his desire is linked to the demand of the Other and his demand is aimed at the desire of the Other. According to the operations described in the chapter on topology, interpretation will pass from this toric concatenation to the bipartite strip, then to the Moebius strip, from there to the cross-cap. Nevertheless interpretation must still take the inverse path to re-present the subject on the neurotic torus and to show how the former can be constructed starting from the aspherical structure: starting from saying which bars,

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1 In *Radiophonie*, Lacan presented quite differently the poet ‘eaten by verses (*vers*) which find their arrangement without being worried whether the poet knows about it or not’ (p.57).
annuls, breaks, ‘rescinds’ the subject, it is also necessary ‘to renew the
application which is represented of it on the torus.’

‘An imaginary inflation’ (that of the neurotic torus) ‘can here help
towards the phallic transfiniting’ (48c); it highlights the repetition of the
demand (the turns around the core of the torus), then the transformation of
this surface by the phallic function. Nevertheless, it must be recalled ‘that
the cut does not function any the less’ on an un-inflated surface. That is
why, even if Freud accentuates the inflation of the phallus in his theory,
little Hans reacts by the phantasy2 of the two giraffes: the big giraffe is the
symbol of the father, but the small giraffe, rolled up in a ball or ‘crumpled’,
reacts to the phallus seen from the maternal side and makes us go from the
phallus to the phallic function (282) function. This scrap of paper has no doubt lost
its first meaning; its grammar and its logic survive.

2) ‘Interpretation is seconded here by grammar’ (48cd; 491). How
understand this grammar? It is obvious that it is not a matter of the
properties of one or other object-tongue, but the grammar of the signifier:
the diachronic difference between a signifier (S1) and this other signifier that
the first signifier can become (S2). Thus the repeated sentence of little Hans
‘I got the nonsense ‘cos of the horse (wegen dem Pferd)’ is heard as ‘horse-
drawn wagons’ (Wägen dem Pferd): a preposition (wegen) is in grammatical
equivocation with a noun (Wägen). Thus for the Ratman, ‘but’ (aber)
becomes ‘defence’ (Abwehr): a conjunction is in grammatical equivocation
with a noun. In this way étourdi is written as étourdit: an adjective is in
grammatical equivocation with a verb.

Some analysts attribute this grammatical equivocation to ‘a slippage
into indoctrination’ (48d). The Freudian doctrine is supposed not to have
remained faithful to its initial project of scientific biology. After having
clearly differentiated – in the Studies on hysteria and other texts of the same
epoch (1895) – two types of ‘internal stimuli’ (innere Erregungsquellen): a
purely somatic stimulus (cause of anxiety neurosis) and a psychic stimulus
(cause of transference neuroses), Freud abandons very quickly the
somatic ‘background world’ to retain only the internal stimuli ‘on the psi-

2 Freud notes: ‘Hans says very clearly in his own way that it was a phantasy’.
system’ (48e), namely the functioning of the psychical apparatus of the first
topography, which corresponds precisely to a grammar and a logic (see my
book *Logique de l’inconscient*).

It is not a matter of ‘hanging onto the protective railing of general
psychology’ but ‘to make subjects recite their lessons in grammar’ (48e;
492). The subjects ought in effect to repeat what they learn (their matheme)
in their grammar. We remember that the chance cause of the Ratman’s
neurosis was, for Freud, the choice between the ‘venerated (283) lady’ and a
rich relative of the mother’s adoptive family (*SE* X p.179 etc.) Freud’s
explanation was not teachable and was not a matheme so long as the
Ratman did not repeat his lesson in his transferential grammar with Freud;
he soon imagined that Freud, whom he supposed to be very rich, wanted
him to marry his daughter, to which he responded in the grammar of
dreams: ‘*He saw my daughter in front of him; she had two patches of dung
instead of eyes.*’ No one who understands the language of dreams will have
much difficulty in translating this one: it declared that *he was marrying my
daughter not for her beaux yeux but for her money*’ (ibid. p. 200)

In this way, we analysts, ‘should be prepared to revise the parts of
speech that we believed we could retain’ from what the patient said (49a;
492); in other words the ‘interpretation’ suggested by Freud (p.228) must be
revised by the ‘said’ of the analyser, here by the transferential dreams of the
Ratman. ‘The psychoanalyst must know how to ignore what he knows’ (E
349). He will be ready to revise the ‘parts of speech’ both as part of the
roundabout of discourses, namely, as capable of being submitted to the
dynamic of the unconscious and by this fact to be reversed by another
discourse, and as both elements of grammar (verb, noun, conjunction etc.)
capable of being employed for another syntactical function; in other words,
such and such a grammatical category is always subject to revision in the
process of the unconscious, a simple noun (the ‘salmon’ of the butcher’s
witty wife, for example) can take the place of a whole sentence, indeed of a
whole discourse (‘how can another be loved…by a man who could not be
satisfied by her?’, E 626) and reciprocally.

‘This of course is what linguists set themselves as an ideal’ (49a):
the subject group can comprehend a whole proposition (in Chomsky’s
‘generative grammar’). The first headline sentence – *that one might be saying remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood* – provides an example of this; to be sure the whole sentence can be taken up again as the subject of the second headline sentence, but the subject of the first (284) sentence also contains potentially all possible saids (therefore the second). ‘The English tongue *parest* propitious to Chomsky’ and his univocal transformational tree, but this ‘paraître’ is a *parêtre*, an aside of being, namely a Moebius strip which, extending its recto into verso, clearly shows the equivocation of this grammar.

Grammar has the function of responding to homophonous equivocation. In what way? ‘I am not making you say it’ (49a). ‘Saying’ is ‘the minimum of interpretative intervention’. But what is important in this formula is not its univocal sense (‘I am not making you say it’) but the double turn that the formula allows: a turn centred on the you, ‘You have said it’ and a turn centred on the I, ‘I take it all the less as my responsibility in that I did not in any way make you say such a thing’. The ‘minimum of interpretative intervention’ comprises therefore this switching of the I and the you already operating in On [you] go (*Vas*), there is not too much *étourdit* for it to return to you after being half-said (*l’après midit*). ‘On [you] go (*Vas*), there is not too much *étourdit* for it to return to you after being half-said (*l’après midit*)’ (25a). This switch is presented in every grammatical equivocation: saying is from the outset specified by the modal demand which presupposes the equivocal apparition of persons (c.f. my book *Logique de l’inconscient*, chapter 6). Even the ‘definite definite’ article’ (45de) depends on a movement, from a ‘*vas*’ to the universal and generalisation; interpretation ought at least bring into play grammar and its movements of transformations and reversals. If formal logic wants to restrict itself to pure formal languages and to allow natural tongues their *polysemy* (Frege) or if it claims to show how natural tongues all the same obey a well-formulated formal logic (Russell), psychoanalysis on the contrary takes advantage of ‘the amorphology of a language’ which allows the grammatical equivocation of the ‘*vas*’, of the ‘you’ and the ‘I’ of *lalangue* inhabited (47b–49b).
3) ‘Figure 3 now: this is logic without which interpretation would be imbecilic’ (49b). Imbecility resides in the fact of imagining that sense is condensed into a transcendence, namely into an unchangeable and eternal thing, anterior and exterior to (285) logic (36cd). Thus any interpretation which, to resolve and plug the riddle of the unconscious, would appeal to a reality outside equivocal language, could only produce imbecilic interpretations, which would efface access to impossibility and to the encounter with the real. But ‘is there a sense of imbecility?’ (36e). Without any doubt, since it is translated (especially in the quotation); in other words, since it is in the translation, interpretation cannot remain in imbecility: hence ‘interpretation would be (unreal mode) imbecilic’ if it could do without proper logic. The first people to make use of logic made a pretext of the fact that the Freudian unconscious is supposed to be ‘insensible to contradiction’ – ‘there is no contradiction in the unconscious (‘The unconscious’, in SE XIV 187) – in order ‘to transcendentalise its existence’; as we have seen above (p.234), it would have been better to say ‘in order to situate its existence in transcendence’, namely to place the unconscious outside language.

‘More than one logic’ denies itself this foundation of the principle of non-contradiction (49c); the logics which admit more than two truth-values or the logics which are not verifunctional (like modal logic or deontological logic) nonetheless remain ‘formalised’. Formalisation allows them to formulate their own impasses. These logics are thus situated in ‘the proper logic’ which measures – by the standard of grammar – the impasses that make it obligatory to pass through structure (6cd); this passage is precisely the teachable, namely the matheme.

Freud recognised grammatical and logical equivocation: just think of the logic of the paranoiac which allows the transformation of the proposition ‘I a man love him a man’. There promptly responded to him the ‘clouds of darkness’ (from Jung to Abraham) and the obscurantism of a transcendent ‘unconscious’, situated outside the logic of language and of its formalisation. Are we going to reproach Freud for this ‘obscurantist-effect’ (49c) when we know that the saying of the analyst also triggers the (286) other discourses (and their own obscurantism)? Far from reproaching some
obscurity in Freud’s saying, Lacan recognises ‘some responsibilities’ of his own on this front, by ‘l’envers of psychoanalysis’, by the other discourses (hysterical, master and academic) which share in the discourse of the analyst and in which he had necessarily taken part. Equivocation or obscurity forms an integral part of such discourses.

Proper logic proceeds from the impossible: ‘no logical development…ever proceeded except from a kernel of paradoxes’ (49d), the paradoxes of Zeno, the paradox of the liar, the paradox of the set of all the sets that do not contain themselves, the paradox of implication, etc. These paradoxes, coming up against the impossible, are designated as ‘logical equivocations’ which come as tertiary, in third place after homophony and grammar. But logical equivocation can just as well be first: is the unconscious not a knowledge that does not know itself? Homophonous equivocation would come to say this paradox. Logical equivocation can still be second: how develop the relevance of a ‘I am not making you say’ except by the paradox of an unconscious which wanted to say without saying?

The development of logical equivocation introduces three questions about the three S’s: sense, sex and meaning (signification) (c.f. the end of the analysis of the neurotic torus, 44): the first concerns sense and the matheme, the second concerns sex and the phallic function, the third concerns the meaning of demands and re-petition.

First question. During the year 1971-72, the ancient matheme, the Platonic question of what can be taught (Meno) ‘rediscovered its grip and its vigour’ in a ‘Fountain of Youth’ (49de) thanks to the seminar…ou pire and to the cycle of lectures entitled The knowledge of the psychoanalyst. How learn what one already knows? And how comprehend if one knows nothing about what it is a matter of learning? Whether one knows it or one does not know it, there is no possible apprenticeship for it. In a (287) similar fashion what can one learn from the one who says ‘I am lying’? This question is ‘refreshed by having been promoted in new terms by someone like Russell’ (in the form of the set of all the sets which do not contain themselves, or the catalogue of all the catalogues...). The new term – ‘sets’ – comes from ‘the saying of Cantor’ (and others). This saying is a journey. Does one get to the
end of the journey? To the QED? No! It is always a matter of failing
(‘who will I have failed…?’), of coming up against the impossible in order
to re-launch the question. The matheme is the circle of saying gone through
by the coming up against the impossible, a vicious circle since it justifies
homophonous equivocation by grammatical equivocation then by logical
equivocation which can be justified in its turn by homophonous
equivocation. ‘The more vicious a circle, the funnier it is, especially if one
can bring out of it something like this little bird which is called the non-
denumerable’ (1 June 1972, The knowledge of the psychoanalyst). This circle
makes there appear the structure that articulates the non-denumerable with
the denumerable, the surface of desire with the cut of demand.

Second question. The paradox of the catalogue of all the catalogues
which do not contain themselves allows us ‘to speak about the genital drive’
(49e; 493) in a logical way. Freud’s text, Drives and their vicissitudes,
comprises two parts: the first articulates the partial drives according to the
grammatical model of the active and passive opposition (to see/to be seen;
to look/to be looked at); the second part concerns love, which is not
articulated by the simple opposition of the active and the passive (to love/to
be loved), but also by two other oppositions (to love/to be indifferent; to
love/to hate). Starting from this triple opposition proper to the verb to love
(lieben), Freud considers ‘to love’ as ‘the expression of the whole sexual
current’ ‘Ausdruck der ganzen Sexualstrebung’ (G.W.X p.225-6; S.E.XIV
133). While the first part of the Freudian text tackled the drive as
grammatical equivocation (to see/to be seen), the second part goes into
logical equivocation, that Lacan compares to Russell’s paradox. Is the
totalising of (288) partial drives (like ‘love’ or like the ‘genital drive’ taking
up all the others except itself) possible? Is the totalising of the catalogues
(as the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves)
possible? The ‘genital drive’ is not articulated in any way like the other
drives. The ‘pre-genital drives’ are not arranged in the genital drive (there
is no meaning-relationship between the two), they are adjusted and
constructed ‘elsewhere’: in ‘grammar’ (to see/to be seen). In grammar, is
there not a relationship between the pre-genital drives (to see/to be seen)
and the genital drive (to love/to be loved)? Russell’s logical paradox shows
us that the ‘genital drive’ as a catalogue that would assemble all the pre-genital drives except itself is contradictory. This is not enough to exclude the genital drive from our logic (which denies itself the foundation of non-contradiction): it must therefore be fashioned in the field of the Other. How can ‘genitality’, namely ‘to love’, ‘approach’ this Other? The Other ‘takes the helm’ (49e; 493) over genitality: the Other ‘takes the helm (governs) and dominates (‘a barre’) genitality (50a), but the domination of the Other over genitality only happens because the Other ‘takes the helm’: the Other is the barred Other (‘S of barred O: notall (pastout), 25bc). This ‘division’ of the barred Other ‘is brought about in it by its passage to the major signifier, the phallus’: by its passage to the phallic function and the journey of the four formulae, there appears the notall, which presupposes the ‘S of barred O’. But at the same time, in the same journey of the phallic function, there is realised the impossibility of the sexual relationship, in other words the impossibility of the relationship between the semblance and the Other of each discourse, in other words the impossibility of love or of genitality. ‘Genitality’, thus equivalent to the sexual non-relationship, ‘cata-logue’, categorises the pre-genital drives: it gives them the brand and organises them by the verb (‘logue’) which comes from on high (‘cata-’), through the double cut of saying. It is the barred Other (and its equivocal double turn) which forms (289) the methodical list of o-objects (and of ‘extra-genital’ drives, 35c). Thus the fourth formula catalogues all phallic functioning.

Third question: Is desire, ‘the transfinite of demand’, or ‘re-petition’ (50a) accessible from the denumerable? No! As we have already seen above, re-petition ‘has no other horizon’ than a logical equivocation: the ‘deux’ at stake in the notall (c.f. the Heteros, p.148ff) is not numerable; it is only starting from the aspherical surface of desire that the cuts of demand can be enumerated. Numeration itself can only begin with a zero, defined as logical impossible, the set empty of the contradictory concept (Frege). In other words, we will take demand into account not according to its meaning (as ‘one’ demand among others), but by considering the impossible logic included in the contradictory demand (I ask you to refuse). The deux of the notall is inaccessible from the imaginary of objects to be counted; and demand has no ‘other horizon’ than this inaccessibility, than this impossible.
‘This is only a selection’ (50a) of what comes from ‘the very mouths of analysers’. Not only a selection of the benefits of analysis (‘the end of the analysis of the neurotic torus’), but also a selection of the ‘second-saying’ of interpretations.

The ‘maxims and corrections, edicts, retraction, dits et redivis, edits, dédits’ (50b) of Lacan, that constitute the selection of the analyst’s experience, might serve him as a ‘bubble’ to shut himself up away from the discourse of the analyst in a discourse other than that of the analyst, from which he could derive some ‘merit’. But this other discourse has rather the effect of an obscurantism which forgets the saying, proper to the discourse of the responsible analyst.

These other discourses can serve to guide, lay down the track, ‘by making themselves a breed of guides in it’ (50c): the guiding-guided come to replace the masters (290) and slaves (master discourse) who with the pedants-fags (academic discourse) and the bored-shits (hysterical discourse) (19ab) are the envers of psychoanalysis.

Contrary to these three discourses, the first condition introducing the discourse of the analyst is to have first being an analyser (active voice), then the one analysed who can become an analyst (19c).

Again the analyst should maintain himself in this position of analyser and always recommence this process of analysis.

The discourse of the analyst thus goes ‘against the grain’ (50c) ‘with respect to the other’ discourses and the eternal recommencing of the analyser ‘confirms’ the exigency for ‘the double loop’ on the cross-cap: this closed double loop shows the structure not alone of the aspherical surface, but also of the spherical surface. The discourse of the analyst throws light on ‘the whole set’ of the roundabout of the other discourses.

The closing of the set takes place around the hole of the real delimited by the journey of impossibles or the double turn of interpretation. The general formula of the impossible is that ‘there is no sexual relationship’ (50d). This topological journey around the hole is also the structure of the written (‘there is no pen’ which fails to testify to it’).

‘There is thus explained this half-saying that we are coming to the end of’ (50d; 493): the half-saying of the single turn is explained by the
double turn of interpretation; we arrive at the end of the this chapter on interpretation. ‘The woman through all ages’, registered by the definite article (the, 45d) in the universal of a forall (19d), the woman who participates in the naval manoeuvres of the masculine formulae (24d) is supposed to be the moment of truth (l’heure de vérité) the one on whom the truth of the saids depends. ‘The lure of truth’ (Leurre de vérité) rather, since a woman brings about a switch towards the ‘notall’, inasmuch as the truth is a lure: ‘Nothing hides as much as what unveils, as the truth’ (8a). In his search for truth, Kant found a support ‘in the starry heavens’ (Critique of practical reason, p.802) which, for the man plunged in sensation, is supposed to bear witness to a great organiser of the moral law. Lacan breaks with this recourse to the ‘starry heavens’ and the ‘transcendence’ that would make interpretation (291) imbecilic (49b). This transcendent heaven with its stars as guarantors of meaning must be broken, struck out by our Galaxy, by way of the phallic function, by the – ‘milky’ - way which is opened up by the o-object and notably by its first form, the oral or ‘milky’ object. ‘May heaven, finally broken into the milky way that we open up, grant’ – may the real of the heavens finally rid of transcendence by the way of double-turned interpretation act -, that women (‘some by not being all [?]’, confirmed by the notall in practice) ‘may come to create the moment of the real’ for the man caught up in universality (∀ₓ,Φₓ) and the singularity of the exception (-----), for l’hommodit’ (‘themanofthesaid’). The moment of truth for man is thus replaced by ‘the moment of the real’, namely by the journey of the four formulae of sexuation, according to the logic of the impossible. That the man should share in the feminine formulae and in the saying that they imply ‘would not necessarily be more disagreeable than before’, but ‘very much easier’ (22a) as much for the enjoyment of his partner as for his own.
CONCLUSION

*L’étourdit* ‘will not be a progress’ (50e; 494) since the advance into structure bring about a loss of meaning and presupposes from this point of view a regression and a ‘regret’. Instead of the meaning sought in the true opinion of Plato or of ‘right-thinking’ psychoanalysts, Lacan has introduced the pure matheme with the loss, the ab-sense and the absence that flows from it. ‘Let us *laugh* at it (*qu’on en rie*)’! Let comedy now completes the tragedy of loss! Let us laugh with the legendary ‘laughing philosopher’ and let us recreate ‘Democritus’ joke’.

Starting from the Greek negation, from the *meden* (no…not one, *ne…pas un*), the Greek philosopher splits it into *me* and *den* to give us the structure. Everything is well and truly made of atoms (*den*) and emptiness (*me*), of ‘something’ (*den*) and of ‘not…at all, *ne…pas*’ (*me*). Starting also for his part from ‘nothing, *rien*’, from the nothing of ab-sense, from the nothing of the absence of the sexual relationship, Lacan in his turn separates out from it two syllables (*rien = rie + en*) and inverts them (*en + rie*) so that ‘let us laugh at it’*

But what happens in this joke, if not the extraction of the little something which gives is place to negation? And what is done by this cut of the cross-cap which allows a portion of spherical surface – in which we have recognised the *o*-object – to fall, if not demonstrate the Moebius strip and to give its place to the barred subject? Like Democritus, Lacan does not inscribe himself in ontology: they do not start from the being that is essence; starting from the nothing, they extract from it the being of the *o*-object and a parêtre of the barred subject, which are respectively the atom and emptiness.

‘Democritus made us a gift of the *atomos*’ (51a), of the ‘radical real’, of the elementary being in which Lacan recognises the *o*-object. He did so by separating it from the *me*, from the negation which makes the subjunctive mode obligatory. What the double turn of interpretation aims at is indeed the fall of the *o*-object, separated from the (294) Moebius strip where the modal of demand lies. But where was the *o*-object before Democritus’ joke, before the cut, before interpretation? ‘The *den* was

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6 This splitting of *rien*, nothing, into ‘laugh’ and ‘at it’, and the wordplay between Greek and French does not translate into English. [Translator]
indeed the clandestine passenger”. The o-object was indeed there, ‘in secret’ (Latin: clam) accompanying our destiny along the path of equivocation (me-den, no-thing, clan-destiny, me-den, ri-en, clan-destin): it is the ‘den’, it is the ‘en’, it is ‘the clam’, by which negation is articulated, by which laughter is articulated, by which our destiny is articulated. ‘The clandestine passenger’ (the cross-cap) is unveiled by being split into ‘clam’ (the o-object) and ‘destiny’ (the Moebius strip): ‘the clam now shapes our destiny’, the o-object makes our barred subject; or again the clam, a small edible shellfish named scientifically venus mercenaire, shapes the destiny of the barred subject thanks to the diamond of the phantasy.

Democritus – reputed ‘materialistic’ because he excludes the gods from his universe – is ‘no more materialistic than anyone sensible’ (51a): by his ‘joke’ based on the ‘nothing’, he establishes in effect a sense which would arise rather alongside meaning, indeed without meaning, whilst materialism refers to ‘matter’ as a transcendent principle (37ac). This whirlwind of sense around den (Democritus), around surplus-value (Marx), around the o-object (Lacan), is less evident in Freud. Where did he get the ‘seed’? From his native land, Moravia?: the Freudian witticism (Der Wits und seine Besiehung sum Unbewusste, 1905) is inspired by ‘words ravished’ from the Kabala. But through the Kabala, has not the Freudian Wit ‘run to seed’, the seed of transcendence borrowed from the Torah and transposed – improperly - into the unconscious and into his matter?

‘For all matter, a lot of spirit is required, and of its own vintage’ (51b). To the materialism of the letter (and of the Kabala) there is opposed the spirit: the witticism (mot d’esprit) is not predetermined by a tongue, it is the invention of the one who produces it in the very movement of the unconscious. ‘Freud sensed it’ not without the regret of losing meaning in it.

(295) ‘Therefore I do not at all detest certain symptoms, linked to the intolerability of the Freudian truth’, that highlight the non-sense of psychoanalysis.

7 C. Fierens has pointed out the French homophonies: Moravia=Moravie=mot ravis=mort à vie!
They confirm it (51bc), since they play on the logic of the impossible that they put to work in ‘Freudian truth’ itself. Just as Cantor’s saying is not sterile, but engenders antinomy, contradiction or impossibility (as Poincaré’s ironic remark would have it), the discourse of the analyst ‘is not sterile, it engenders antinomy’: sense arises when meaning falls. This is the journey of the phallic function. We have seen above how this journey could be ‘supported even by psychosis’ (c.f. p.143f.).

Lacan’s discourse is here ‘more fortunate than Freud’ (51c; 494); it can ‘tackle the structure’ at stake in psychosis no longer by saids (‘the wreckage of the memoirs of a dead person’), but by saying (like L’étourdit). ‘It is from a reprise of my speech that my Schreber is born’; in other words, Lacan no longer has recourse to the ‘wreckage of the memoirs of a dead person’, as Freud did in his case history, or as he himself had done in Seminar III or in his article On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis. ‘My Schreber …’ is here ‘bi-president, a two-headed eagle’, it is the deux of desire, a double looping of Lacan’s saying reprising Freud’s saying.

‘A bad reading of my discourse it is, I dare say, a good one of it’ (51c): L’étourdit is, to be sure a bad reading of Schreber’s memoirs, of Freud and even of Lacan (On a question preliminary…); ‘with use’, it proves to be the right one, the one that ‘gets the business of sense going’. This infidelity of Lacan’s discourse (to Schreber, to Freud and to himself) has given rise to sense-effects on one or other analyser who ‘linked straight away’ onto his own sense, ‘his Oedipal material’.

‘Evidently my discourse does not always have such fortunate offshoots, rejets’ (51d): the rejection (by the analyser) of Lacan’s discourse is a rejection of the o-object; it opens up saying, which sprouts as a shoot on the stump that remains, on the stump of the (296) old felled theory. Lacan’s offspring ‘from the angle of the “influence” dear to academic theses’ are less fortunate: Lacan’s discourse seems to have been the fore-runner of ‘a whirlwind of semantophilia’ (51de). To endorse Lacan’s discourse by the pure operation of the signifier, to endorse it simply by portmanteau words (mot-valise) and homophonous equivocation, is to forget the structure of saying and interpretation: ‘For some time now we have been movalise-ing
out of sight’, ‘not alas! without owing some of it to me’; these portmanteau words are, alas, only too little the invention of those who content themselves with carrying off what Lacan has said in the valise of academic discourse.

‘I am neither consoled nor desolated by it’ (51e; 494): it is the lot of the analytic discourse to turn towards other discourses. On the other hand, that an ‘analytic society’ constructed on an academic discourse should stifle the saying (of Freud and of the analyser) is more ‘dishonourable’. ‘There, it is by tradition philistinism that sets the tone’; people prefer to close themselves off from letters and from innovations to profit from their privileges without risking anything. The so-called ‘society’ does not reunite companions (Latin: socii).

‘Everything is used by analysts’ (52a; 495) of ‘academic’ stock to file off, so as not to occupy the place of the o-object in the analytic discourse. They are determined, ‘by structure’, to have ‘a horror of psychoanalysis’ (Radiophonie p.64), because they function in accordance with the definite article (45de) which excludes the notall.

What is ‘the challenge’ (52a), to which the analyst owes his existence? It is the question from the Other and to the Other, Che vuoi?, which engages desire as ‘absolute condition’ (E 814); this desire is made explicit by the double-looped cut of the cross-cap. The absolute has ‘haunted’ knowledge and power – the ‘absolute knowledge’ of a Hegel and the absolute power of a Louis XIV – ‘derisorily’. This absolute, a hope proper to desire, is represented elsewhere by the saints: ‘the saints are the administrators of the approach to desire’ (Seminar VII, The ethics of psychoanalysis, p…). The challenge (297) proposed to the analyst is indeed a provocative declaration… ‘the tone must be lowered’; ‘the analyst is pulling out.’ He is incapable of the absolute, just as, in reality, (297) the philosopher and the monarch also are. Lacan ‘denotes’ the challenge ‘as abjection’, by abjectio (Latin), by the action of letting go, by renunciation. The analyst abandons any pretension to omniscience and omnipotence: he renounces knowing and doing in the place of the analyser; and it is by this renunciation that, precisely, he does not file off. By creating the ‘absence’ of the philosophical position, he manages to hold the place of semblance, as
object without either filing away from it or laying claim to the absolute of desire.

‘As for the love’ (52b), transference love, surrealism and the surrealist psychoanalysts wished that words ‘should make love’ – André Breton’s L’amour fou –, namely that they should make appear the so-called oblative ‘genital drive’ (49e) which would replace the partial drives. ‘Does this mean that it remains at that’, at the inevitable failure of an end-of-analysis radically impossible in function of the absence of sexual relationship? No. Analysis shows a hiding-place in it: the love letter conceals an object that has been stolen from the cross-cap: the object, which, at the place of semblance, constitutes a resource for the discourse of the analyst.

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According to the advice of Fenouillard (the first French comic strip, 1889) ‘beyond the boundary-stone, there is a limit: don’t forget!’ (Télévision, p.64); Lacan has gone beyond the narrow boundaries of the masculine formulae of sexuation (end of the first turn), there is now ‘the limit’ proper to the notall, which closes the second turn. The cut is closed after two turns of saying.

Return of the ‘letter’, which always arrives at its destination, to the interplay of said and saying, which is the clinical practice at l’hôpital Henri-Rousselle.

L’étourdit, a letter dated 14 July 1972, the French national holiday was written at Beloeil. In Belgium…

The chateau of Beloeil, chateau of the princes de Ligne, contains a painting of Charles I of England (1600-1649), who by his political and religious absolutism, alienated himself from public opinion and ended up on the scaffold. Are we to think that the absolute was missed by Lacan? ‘Not at all’, Lacan, prince of the cut rather than prince of Ligne, is not in the line of descent of the absolute.
Cockadoodledoo! 14 July French national holiday! What does France bring us? ‘Let it be known’! The tricoloured flag of knowledge turns around homophony, grammar and logic. Neighbour of the absolute, it circles the o-object under the form of look and of voice.

‘The tricoloured macaw’, coco inevitably Bel Oeil, inhabits the inn next to the chateau: as a stain of colour, the o-object here is scopic.

As a parrot, it is a speaker, who, as such, develops all the formulae of the phallic function, including the feminine formulae. ‘Without having to explore its (anatomical) sex’, it must be classified as ‘hetero-’ since as speaker, it cannot but love women.

As parrot, it is already the voice.