

The Knowledge of the Psychoanalyst

1 June 1972

As you know, here I say what I think. It is a feminine position, because when all is said and done, to think is something very particular.

So then since I write to you from time to time I have, during a little trip that I have just made, inscribed a certain number of propositions of which the first is that it must be recognised that the psychoanalyst is put, by discourse – this is a term of mine – by the discourse that conditions him – what is called, since me, the discourse of the psychoanalyst – in a position that we could say is difficult. Freud said that it was impossible *unmöglich*, it is perhaps a little monastic (*froncé*), he was speaking about himself.

Good! On the other hand, second proposition: he knows – this from experience, which means, however little he has practised psychoanalysis, he knows enough about it for what I am going to say – he knows in any case that he has a common measure with what I am saying. This is completely independent of the fact that he is informed about what I say, since what I am saying culminates, as it seems to me I proved this year, in situating his knowledge. This is the business of knowledge about the truth.

Semblance

Enjoyment

Truth

Surplus Enjoying

This is the place of the truth, for those who come for the first time. This is that of the semblance; this that of enjoyment, and this that of surplus enjoying that I am writing in shorthand here: ‘+ *de-jour*’. For enjoyment we will put a capital E. (*J*)

It is his relationship to knowledge which is difficult, not of course to what I am saying, since overall in the psychoanalytic no-man’s-land, people do not know that I say it. That does not mean that people know nothing about what I say, because it comes from experience. But people have, about what they know of it, a horror, and I can say, like that, really simply that I understand them. ‘I can say’ means: ‘I can say, if people really want me to’. But I understand them, I can put myself in their place all the more easily in that I am in it. But I understand it all the more easily in that, like everyone else, I hear what I am saying.

(110) Nevertheless, nevertheless that does not happen to me every day, because it is not every day that I speak. In reality, I understand it, namely, that I hear what I am saying, the few days – let us say one or two – that immediately precede my seminar, because it is at that moment that I begin to write to you. The other days, the thought of those that I was dealing with submerges me. I have to admit this to you, because at that moment, the impatience of what I called – and so that I can again call, because it is rare that I come back – of what I called in *Scilicet* my failure dominates me. There you are.

Yes. They know, I recall that because the title of what I have to treat here is *The knowledge of the psychoanalyst*. *Du* in this case evokes the *le* the definite article, in French anyway it is what is called definite. Yes! Why not of *psychoanalysts* after what I have just said to you? That would be more in conformity with my theme of this year namely *y a d’l’un*. There are some who describe themselves as such. I am all the less going to contest what they say because there are no others. Why do I say *du*? Because it is to them that I am speaking despite the presence here of a large number of people who are not psychoanalysts. The psychoanalyst then knows what I am saying.

They know it, as I told you, from experience, however little of it they may have, even if it is limited to the training which is the minimal requirement for the psychoanalysts they say they are.

Because even if what I called the *passee* is failed, well then, this would be limited to the fact that they have had a training analysis, but when all is said and done that is enough for them to know what I am saying. The *passee* – it is again in *Scilicet* that you can find all of that, this is rather the place that is to be indicated – when I say that the *passee* is failed, that does not mean that they have not presented themselves to the experience of the *passee*. As I have often remarked, this experience of the *passee* is simply what I propose to those who are dedicated enough to expose themselves to it for the simple end of information on a very delicate point and which consists in short, which is affirmed in the surest way, the fact is that it is altogether a-normal – the normal *o*-object – that someone who does a psychoanalysis wants to be a psychoanalyst.

You really would need a kind of aberration that would be worth, that would be worth the trouble of being offered up to everything that one could collect from it in terms of testimony. This indeed is why I provisionally established this attempt at collecting in order to know why someone, who knows what psychoanalysis is through his training analysis, may still want to be an analyst.

So then, I will say no more about what is involved in their position, simply because I chose, this year, *'The knowledge of the psychoanalyst'* as being what I proposed for my return to Sainte-Anne. It is not at all to spare the psychoanalysts, they do not have any need of me in order to have vertigo about their position, I will not increase it by telling them about it.

(111) Yes! What could be done – and I will perhaps do it at another time – what could be done in a rather piquant manner, in a certain reference that I would only call 'historical' – anyway, you will see that when it comes, if I subsist – for those who are the most cunning of them all, I will talk to them about the word temptation..

Here I am only talking about knowledge. And I point out that it is not a matter of the truth about knowledge, but of the knowledge about truth, and that this, the knowledge about truth, is articulated from the high point of what I am putting forward this year about the *'y a d'l'un'*. *'Y a d'l'un'* and nothing more, but it is a very particular One, that which separates the One from the Two and which is an abyss.

I repeat, the truth – I already said it – can only be half-said when the moment of pulsation has passed which means that I can respect the alternation, I will speak about the other aspect, of the half-true: you must always separate the good grain from the *'l'ami-vrai'* [true friend/cockle]!

As I told you earlier perhaps, I have come back from Italy where I have never had anything but praise for the welcome, even of my psychoanalytic colleagues! Thanks to one of them, I met a third who is quite up to date, anyway, to mine, of course. He works on Dedekind, and he found him completely without me. I cannot say that at the date that he began to tackle him, I was not already involved in it, but anyway it is a fact that I spoke about him later than he did. Because I am only talking about him now and he had already written a whole little work on him. He had noticed in fact the value of mathematical elements in making there emerge something that really concerns our experience as psychoanalysts. Well then, since he is very well regarded – he had done everything to achieve that – he succeeded in making himself heard in places that are very highly regarded by what is called the I.P.A. I would translate it as the Admitted Psychoanalytic Institution – so then he had succeeded in making himself heard, but what is very curious, is that he has not been published. He has been not published and he is told: "You understand, no one would understand!" I must say that I am surprised because in short, some "Lacan", of course, anyway, the things in the style that I am supposed to represent among the incompetents dealing with a certain linguistics,

people are in rather a hurry to stuff the *International Journal* with it. The more things there are in the dustbin naturally the less it can be seen! So then why, in the name of the devil, have people in this case believed they should create an obstacle? Because for me, it seems to me that it is an obstacle. And that people say that the readers will not understand is secondary. It is not necessary that all the articles of the *International Journal* should be understood. There is therefore something in this that people are not happy with.

But it is obvious, like the person that I have – not named because you would be profoundly ignorant of his name, he has still not succeeded in publishing anything – is perfectly locatable. I do not despair that, after what will filter through of my remarks today – and especially if it is known that I did not name him – he will be (112) published. Truly, it seems to be close enough to his heart for me to freely help him towards that. If it does not happen, I will talk to you a little more about him!

Let us come back to the present. The psychoanalyst has then a complex relationship to what he knows. He repudiates it, he represses it, to use the term with which in English repression the *Verdrängung* is translated, and it can even happen that he wants to know nothing about it. And why not? Who could be surprised at that? Psychoanalysis, you will say to me, so what! I can hear from here the bla-bla-bla of anyone who has not the slightest idea of psychoanalysis. I reply to what may come from the floor, as they say, I reply: is it knowledge that cures, whether it is that of the subject or the one supposed in the transference, or is it the transference, as it occurs in a given analysis? Why should knowledge, the one that I say every psychoanalyst perceives the dimensions of, why should the knowledge, as I said earlier, be avowed? It is from this question that Freud took on, in short, the *Verwerfung*, he calls it ‘a judgement when faced with the choice that rejects’ he adds ‘that condemns’ but I am condensing it. It is not because the *Verwerfung* makes a subject mad when it happens in the unconscious, that it does not reign, the same and with the same name from which Freud borrows it, that it does not reign over the world as a rationally justified power.

‘Psychoanalysts’ you are going to see, as opposed to ‘the’, psychoanalysts you see they prefer, they prefer themselves, you see. They are not the only ones. There is a tradition in this: the medical profession. In terms of preferring oneself, people have never done better except the saints. The saints: SAINTS, yes people speak to you so much about the others [*seins*: breasts] that I must be specific because the others...anyway let it go! The saints – SAINTS – also prefer themselves, this is even all they want, they consume themselves in finding the best way to prefer themselves, while there are such simple ones, as the *mede-saints* for their part also show. Anyway, they are not saints, that is self-evident.

There are few things as abject to thumb through than the history of medicine. It can be prescribed as an emetic or as a purgative, it does both. In order to know that knowledge has nothing to do with the truth,

there is nothing more convincing. One cannot even say that this reaches the point of making of the doctor a kind of provocateur. This does not mean that medicine has not succeeded – and for reasons that are connected with the fact that their platform with the discourse of science was becoming smaller – that doctors have not succeeded in getting psychoanalysis to fall into step with them. And this they know, this naturally all the more in that the psychoanalyst being very embarrassed, as I started with this, very embarrassed with his position, he was all the more disposed to accept advice from experience.

I am very keen to mark this point of history which is, in my business, in so far as it has any importance, an altogether key point, thanks to this conspiracy against which there is directed an explicit article by Freud on *Laïenanalyse*. Thanks to this conspiracy that occurred shortly after the war, I had already lost the game before becoming engaged in it.

(113) Simply, I would like to be believed on this point, because – why, I will say – if this evening I bear witness – and it is not by chance that I am doing it at Sainte-Anne because I told you that this is where I say what I think – if I declare that it is very precisely because of this, of having lost at that time, that I got involved in this game.

This has nothing heroic about it. As you know, there are a lot of games that are engaged under these conditions. It is even one of the foundations of the human condition, as someone or other has said, and this does not succeed any worse than any other enterprise. Which proves it, huh! The only problem - but it is not just for me – is that this does not leave you very free, I am saying that in passing for the person whom I don't know when, the second last seminar, who questioned me about whether or not I believed in freedom.

Another declaration that I want to make and which after all is important, since after all, I don't know, that is how I am inclined this evening, another declaration which for its part is completely proved – here I would ask you to believe me, that I did not clearly see that the game was lost. After all I was not all that clever, I perhaps thought that I had to charge along and that I would blow up the International Psychoanalytic (*Avouée*). And in this respect no one can say the contrary of what I am going to say, which is that I never dropped any one of the people that I knew were going to leave me before they went off themselves. And it is also true from the moment when the game was, in short, lost for France, which is the one I made an allusion to earlier, this little brouhaha in a doctor- psychoanalyst conspiracy from which there emerged in '53 the beginnings of my teaching. The days when the idea of having to pursue the aforesaid teaching do not come back to me, namely, a certain number, it is obvious that I have, like every imbecile, the idea of what this could have meant for French psychoanalysis (!) if I had been able to teach there where, for the reason that I have just said, I was in no way disposed to drop anyone. I mean however scandalous my propositions on *The function and field...and so on and so forth – of speech and language*, but I was

prepared to go over the furrow for years even for people who were hardest of hearing and, at the point that we are at, not one psychoanalyst would have lost any of it.

I told you that I had made a little trip to Italy. In these cases, I also go...why not, because there are a lot of people who love me: by the way, there is someone who has sent me a tooth glass! I would like to know who it is, in order to thank them, this person, there is a person who has sent me a tooth glass. I am saying that for those who were at the Panthéon the last time. It is someone that I thank all the more because it is not a tooth glass. It is a marvellous little piece of red glass long and curved, in which I will put a rose, whoever has sent it to me. But I only received one I have to say. Anyway let's leave it. There are people who love me a little bit in all sorts of corners, even in the corridors of the Vatican. Why not, huh? There are very good people. It is only there – this for the (114) person who questioned me about freedom – it is only in the Vatican that I know free thinkers. Me, for my part, I am not a free thinker, I am forced to stick to what I am saying, but down there, what ease! Ah! One can understand that the French Revolution was brought about by priests. If you knew how free they were, my friends, you would have shivers up your spine. Me for my part I am trying to bring them back to the tough things, there is nothing to do about it, they go beyond it: psychoanalysis for them is old hat! You see what freethinking can be used for: they can see clearly.

Nevertheless it was a good trade huh? There were good sides to it. When they say it's old hat, they know what they are talking about. They are saying it's finished, because after all we should be doing a little better! I say that after all to warn people, the people who are involved, and particularly, of course, those who are following me. You must have a good look at it before getting your children involved in it because it is very possible at the rate things are going, that it will collapse at a single stroke like that. Anyway, this is only for those who have committed their children to it, I advise them to be prudent.

I have already spoken about what is happening in psychoanalysis. One must all the same clearly specify certain points that I already tackled, consequently that I believe I can treat briefly at the point that we have got to. This is that it is the only discourse – and let us pay tribute to it – it is the only discourse, in the sense that I catalogued four discourses, it is the only one which is of such a kind that blackguards (*la canaillerie*) necessarily end up by being stupid about it. If one knew right away that someone who comes to ask you for a training analysis was a blackguard, one would say to him: “No psychoanalysis for you, old man! It would make you as stupid as a cabbage”. But one does not know, it is precisely carefully dissimulated. But one knows all the same at the end of a certain time, in the psychoanalysis, blackguardism being always, not hereditary, it is not heredity that is at stake, it is a matter of desire, the desire of the Other from whom the person involved has emerged. I am talking about desire: it is perhaps not always the desire of his parents, it can also be that of his grandparents, but if the desire from which he is born is the desire of a blackguard, he is unfailingly a blackguard. I have never seen an exception, and this is even the reason

why I have always been so tender towards the people that I knew were going to leave me, at least in the case when it was I who had analysed them. Because I knew well that they had become completely stupid.

I cannot say that I did it deliberately, as I told you it is necessary. It is necessary when a psychoanalysis is pushed to the end, which is the least of things for a training psychoanalysis. If the psychoanalysis is not a training one, then it is a question of tact: you must leave a guy enough blackguardism so that in the future he can get on with things in one way or another. It is properly speaking therapeutic, you have to let him survive. But as regards the training analysis, you cannot do that, because God knows what the result would be. Imagine a psychoanalyst who remains a blackguard: this haunts the thinking of everyone. Take it easy, psychoanalysis, contrary to what is believed, is always really (115) didactic, even when it is someone stupid who practices it, and I would even say, all the more so. Anyway, the only risk you run is to have stupid psychoanalysts. But it is, as I have just told you, when all is said and done, not inconvenient, because after all the *o*-object at the place of the semblance, is a position that can be held. There you are! One can be originally stupid also. It is very important to distinguish.

Good! So then I found nothing better, for my part, I found nothing better than what I call the *mathème* to approach something regarding knowledge about truth, because it is there in short that one succeeds in giving it a functional bearing. It is much better when it is Pierce who is dealing with it. He puts the functions zero and one which are the two values of truth. On the other hand he does not imagine, that one can write T or F to designate the true and the false. I already indicated that in a few sentences, I already indicated that at the Panthéon, namely, that as regards the *yad'l'un* there are two stages. *Parmenides* and then subsequently we have to get to set theory for the question of a knowledge such that it takes truth as a simple function, and which is far from being satisfied with it. Which involves a real which in truth, has nothing to do – these are mathematics – nevertheless throughout centuries it must be believed that mathematics gave up on this point any questioning, because it is with some delay, and through the intermediary of a logical questioning, that it took a step towards this question which is central for what concerns the truth, namely, how and why '*yad'l'un*'! You will excuse me, I am not the only one.

'*Yad'l'un*', around this One there turns the question of existence. I already made a few remarks on this, namely, that existence had never been tackled as such before a certain age and that people had spent a lot of time in extracting it from essence. I spoke, from the fact that there was not in Greek properly speaking something current that meant 'to exist'. Not that I was unaware of *existimi*, *existamai*, but rather that I knew that no philosopher had ever made use of it. Nevertheless it is here that there begins something that may interest us. It is a matter of knowing what exists. There only exists the One – with all that is putting pressure around us, I am also forced here to hurry – set theory is the questioning of why is there '*yad'l'un*'.

The One is not found on every street corner, whatever you may think about it, including this quite illusory certainty, and illusory for a very long time – that does not prevent people holding onto it – that you also are a One. You are one of them, it is enough for you even to try to lift your little finger to see that, not only are you not One, but that you are, alas, innumerable, innumerable each one of you. Innumerable until you were taught, which may be one of the good results of the psychoanalytic tributary that you are according to cases, completely finished (*fini*) – I am telling you this very quickly, because I do not know for how much more time I am going to be able to continue – completely finished with regard to the fact that there are men – this is clear – finished, finished, finished! As regards the women they can be enumerated.

(116) I am going to try to explain briefly something which begins to open up the path for you about this, since, of course, these are not obvious things, especially when one does not know what is meant by ‘finished’ and ‘numerable’. But if you follow a little my indications, you can read anything whatsoever, because works on set theory pullulate now, even to go against it.

There is someone very nice and that I hope to see later to apologise for not having brought him this evening a book that I did everything to find and which is out of print, which he gave me the last time, and which is called *Cantor a tort*. It is a very good book. It is obvious that Cantor is mistaken from a certain point of view, but he is unquestionably right, from the simple fact that what he put forward has had innumerable descendants in mathematics, and that all that is involved is that. This is what makes mathematics advance, it is enough that it can be defended. Even if Cantor is wrong from the point of view of those who decree, one does not know why, that they know what number is, the whole history of mathematics well before Cantor demonstrated that there is no place where it can be proved, there is no place that it is more true that the impossible is the real.

This began with the Pythagoreans for whom, one day, a blow was struck which they should have known well, because one must not take them either as babies, that the root of two is not commensurable. This was taken up by the philosophers, and it is not because it came to us through *Theatetus* that we must believe that the mathematics of the time were not up to it and were incapable of answering. That precisely by seeing that the incommensurable existed, people began to ask themselves the question about what number was.

I am not going to go through the whole history with you. There is a certain business about the root of minus one, a certain business about the root of minus one that has since been called, we do not know why, imaginary. There is nothing less imaginary than the root of minus one as was proved by what followed, because it is from it that there emerged what can be called the complex number, namely, one of the most useful and the most fruitful things that have been created in mathematics.

In short, the more objections about what is involved in this entry by the One, namely, by the whole number, the more it is demonstrated that it is precisely from the impossible that in mathematics the real is engendered. And it is precisely because of the fact that through Cantor there was able to be generated something which is nothing less than the whole work of Russell, indeed an infinity of other points that were extremely fruitful in the theory of functions, it is certain that, with respect to the real, it is Cantor who has taken the right line as regards what is at stake.

If I suggest to you – I am talking to psychoanalysts – to bring yourself up to date a little about this, it is precisely by reason of the fact that there is something to be taken from it in what is, of course, your venial sin. I am saying that because you have to deal with (117) beings who think, who think, of course, because they cannot do otherwise. Who think like Telemachus like at least the Telemachus described by Paul-Jean Toulet: “*Ils pensent à la dépense*”, well then what is at stake, is to know whether we analysts, and those that you lead are spending their time in vain or not.

It is clear that in this regard, the pathos of thinking that may result for you from a short initiation, even though again it should not be too short either, to set theory, is indeed something of a kind to make you reflect on notions like existence, for example. It is clear that it is only from a certain reflection on mathematics, that existence took on its sense. Everything that had been able to be said about it before, through a sort of presentiment, in particular a religious one, namely, that God exists, has strictly only meaning in that by putting the emphasis – I ought, to put an emphasis because there are people who take me for a master of thinking – is the following. Whether you believe or not, keep this in a little hollow of your ear – for my part I do not believe, but people don't give a damn, for those who believe, it is the same thing – whether you believe or not in God you should tell yourself clearly that with God, in every case, whether one believes in him or whether one does not believe in him he must be taken into account. It is absolutely inevitable.

That is why I rewrote on the board that around which I try to make turn something that is involved in the so-called sexual relationship.

I start again: there exists an x such that there is a subject determinable by a function which is what dominates the sexual relationship, namely, the phallic function – that is why I write it as $f(x)$ – there exists an x which determines the fact that he has said no to the function. You see that from where I am speaking, you see already the question of existence linked to something that we cannot fail to recognise is a

saying (*un dire*). It is a 'saying not' I would even go further, it is 'a saying that not'. This is capital, this is precisely what indicates to us the correct point where there ought to be taken up, for our formation, formation as analyst, what is stated by set theory, there is One 'at least One' who 'says that not'.

It is a reference, it is a reference, of course, that does not hold up even for an instant, which is not in any way teaching or teachable, if we do not connect it to this quantifying inscription of four terms, namely, what is called the universal quantor of x , of x . Namely, the point from which it can be said, as this is stated in Freudian doctrine, that there is no desire, libido – it is the same thing – except masculine. This is in truth, an error which has all its value as a reference point.

(118) That the three other formulae, namely, there does not exist this x , to say that it is not true that the phallic function is what dominates the sexual relationship. And that, on the other hand, we ought – I am not saying we can write – only at a level complementary to these three terms, we ought to write the function of 'not all' as being essential for a certain type of relationship to the phallic function inasmuch as it grounds the sexual relationship. This is obviously what makes of these four inscriptions, a set.

In this set, it is impossible to orientate oneself correctly about what is involved in the practice of analysis inasmuch as it is dealing with this something which currently is defined as being man on the one hand and on the other hand this correspondent generally qualified as woman, which leaves him alone. It leaves him alone, it is not the fault of the correspondent, it is the fault of the man. But fault or no fault, this is a business that we do not have to settle immediately, I am noting it in passing. What is important for the moment is to question the meaning of what these four functions which are only two have to do. The one, negation of the function of the other, the opposite function, these four functions inasmuch as their quantifying coupling diversifies them.

It is clear that what is meant by \bar{x} , namely, the negation of x is something that for a long time – and for a long enough time at the origin for us to be able to say that one is absolutely disconcerted that Freud should have ignored it – of x , the negation of x , namely, this 'at least One'. This One all by itself which is determined by being the effect of the 'saying-that-no' to the phallic function, is very precisely the point under which we must put everything that has been said up to the present about the Oedipus complex, in order that the Oedipus complex should be something other than a myth.

And this is all the more interesting in that what is at stake is not genesis, nor history, nor anything at all that resembles it, as it seems at certain moments in Freud it may have been stated by him, namely, an event. There can be no question of an event for what is represented for us as being before any history. The only event is in something that is connoted by something that is stated. What is at stake is structure.

That one may be able to talk about 'Every-man' as being the subject of castration is why in the most obvious fashion the myth of Oedipus has been constructed.

Is it necessary for us to return to mathematical functions to state a logical fact which is the following. The fact is that if it is true that the unconscious is structured like a language, the function of castration is necessitated there, it is exactly in effect what implies something that escapes from it. And whatever escapes from it, even if it is not – why not, because it is in the myth – something human, after all, but why not see the father of the primitive murder as an orang-utan, many things that coincide in tradition, the tradition from (119) which all the same it must be said that psychoanalysis arose: the Judaic tradition. In the Judaic tradition as I was able to state in the year when I did not want to give any more than my first seminar on the 'Names of the father, I had all the same the time to accentuate that in Abraham's sacrifice, what is sacrificed, is effectively the father, which is nothing other than a ram. Just as in every human line of descendants that respects itself, its mythical descendancy is animal. So that when all is said and done, what I told you, the other day, about the function of hunting among men, this is what is at stake, I did not say a lot about it to you of course, I could have said more to you about the fact that the hunter loves his game, just as the sons, in the event described as primordial in Freudian mythology, they killed their father.....like those that you see traces of in the Grotto of Lascaux, they killed him, my God, because they loved him, of course, as what followed proved, the continuation is sad. What follows is very precisely that all men, of x , the upside down A, the universality of men is subject to castration. That there may be an exception we will not describe it from the mythical point of view from which we are speaking. This exception, is the inclusive function: what is there to be said about the universal except that the universal is enclosed, enclosed precisely by negative possibility. Very exactly, existence here plays the role of a compliment or, to speak more mathematically, of an edge. And this is what includes the fact that there is somewhere an all x , an all x that becomes a small *petit a* I mean an upside down A of a : a – every time it is incarnated, that it is incarnated in what one can call an individual (*Un être*), an individual an individual at least that only posits itself as an individual and specifically under the heading of man.

This is very precisely what ensures that in the other column, and with a kind of relationship that is fundamental, that there might be articulated something in which there can be ranked, there may be ranked, for anyone who knows how to think with these symbols, under the heading of woman...

Simply by articulating it in this way, makes us sense that there is something remarkable, something remarkable for us, that what is stated about it is that there is not one of them who, in the statement, in the statement that it is not true that the phallic function dominates what is involved in the sexual relationship, as its validity disputed.

And in order to allow you to find your bearings in it by means of a reference that you are a little bit more familiar with, I would say, good God since I spoke earlier about the father, I would say what concerns this ‘there does not exist an x which is determined as subject in the statement of the saying that no of the phallic function’, is properly to speak about the virgin. You know that Freud made something of the taboo of virginity, etc...and other madly folkloric stories around this business, and the fact that formerly virgins were not fucked by just anyone at all, it required at least a high priest or a little lord, anyway what matter.

That is not the important thing. The important thing in effect, is that one can say about this function of the ‘living flesh’ (*vif*), this function of ‘living flesh’ so striking in the fact that it is only about a woman after all that one says that she is virile. If you have ever (120) heard talk, at least in our day, of a chap who is so, show it to me, that would interest me! There on the other hand if the man is everything that you could require along the lines of the virtuoso, veer to the port side, prepare to veer, veer anything you wish, the virile is on the side of the woman, she is the only who believes in it. So she thinks! This is even what characterises her. I will explain to you later – I have to tell you right away – that that is why – I will explain to you in detail why – that the virgo is not numerable because she situates herself, contrary to the One which is on the side of the father, she situates herself between the One and the Zero. What is between the One and the Zero, is very well known and it can be demonstrated even when one is wrong, it is demonstrated in Cantor’s theory, it is demonstrated in a way that I find absolutely marvellous.

There are at least a few people here who know what I’m talking about, so that I am going to indicate it briefly to you. It is quite provable that what is between the One and the Zero – this can be shown thanks to decimals – one uses decimals in the system of the same name: decimal, and it is very easy to show that if you suppose – you have to suppose it – if you suppose that it is numerable, the method described as diagonal can always permit there to be forged a new decimal series so that it is certainly not inscribed in what was enumerated. It is strictly impossible to construct this numerable, to give even a way, however slender it might be, of ranking it, which is indeed the least of things, because the numerable is defined by corresponding to the series of whole numbers.

It is then purely and simply from something supposed – and on this you will be very easily accused as is done in this book *Cantor a tort* – Cantor for having simply forged a vicious circle. A vicious circle, my good friends, but why not! The more vicious a circle is the funnier it is, especially if one can get something out of it, something like this little bird that is called the non-numerable, which is indeed one of the most outstanding, the cleverest, the most sticking to the real of number thing that has ever been invented.

Anyway let us leave it! The eleven thousand virgins as it is said in the legend of Doreus [?], is the way to express a non-numerable. Because eleven thousand, you understand, is an enormous figure, it is above all an enormous figure for virgins, and not simply nowadays!

So then, we, we have highlighted these facts. Let us try now to understand what becomes of this *Pas-toute* which is really the key point, the original point of what I wrote on the board. Because nowhere, up to the present, in logic, has there been put, promoted, put forward the function of not all as such. The mode of thinking, inasmuch as it is, as I might say, subverted by the lack of the sexual relationship, only thinks and does not think by means of the One. The Universal, is this something that results from the enveloping of a certain field by something which is of the order of the One. Except, which is the true signification of the notion of set, it is very precisely the following, the fact is that the set, is the mathematical (121) notation of this something where, alas, I have some responsibility, which is a certain definition, the one that I note as S barred (\bar{S}). Namely, of the subject, of a subject inasmuch as he is nothing other than the effect of the signifier, in other words that I represent a signifier for another signifier.

The set, is the way in which, at a turning point of history, people who were the least disposed to bring to light what was involved in the subject, found themselves as one might say necessitated. The set is nothing other than the subject. That indeed is why it cannot even be handled without the addition of the empty set (\emptyset).

Up to a certain point, I would say that the empty set is set apart in its necessity by the fact that it can be taken as an element of the set. Namely, that the inscription of the parenthesis that designates the set with as element the empty set (\emptyset), is something without which there is absolutely unthinkable any handling of this function, of this function which – I am repeating it to you, I think I have sufficiently pointed it out – is designed very precisely at a certain turning point to question, to question at the level of common language – I underline common, because here it is in no way any, meta-language that reigns of any sort whatsoever – to question from the point of view of logic, to question with language everything that is involved in the incidence, in language itself of number. Namely, from something which has nothing to do with language, from something that is more real than anything whatsoever, as the discourse of science has sufficiently manifested it.

Not all – the bar was missing – is very precisely what results from the fact not that nothing limits it, but that the limit is situated differently. This means that the not all, if I may say, and I will say it to go quickly, is the following. It is that contrary to the inclusion in $\forall x$ “there exists the father whose nay-saying situates himself with respect to the phallic function”, inversely it is in as far as there is the void, the lack, the absence of anything whatsoever that denies the phallic function at the level of the woman, that

inversely, there is nothing other than this something that the 'not-all' formulates in the position of the woman in the place of the phallic function. It is in effect, for her, 'not-all' (*Pas toute*). Which does not mean that she denies it under any incidence whatsoever. I will not say that she is other, because it is very precisely the style in which she only exists in this function, to deny it, which is precisely this style, which is that she is what in my graph is inscribed by the signifier of the following that the other is barred, $S(\emptyset)$.

(122) The woman is not the locus of the Other and, what is more, she is inscribed very precisely as not being the Other in the function that I give to the O, namely, as being the locus of the truth. And what is inscribed in the non-existence of what could deny the phallic function, just as here I had expressed it by the function of the empty set of the existence of the 'say that not', in the same way it is by absenting herself and it is even by being this *jouiscentre*, this *jouiscentre* that there is conjugated to what I will not call an absence, but a *dé-sence* – that the woman posits herself for this signifying fact, not only that the capital Other is not there, is not her, but that it is always quite elsewhere, at the place where the word is situated.

There remains to me – since after all you have the patience at a time which is already 11 o'clock, to continue to hear me – to highlight something which is capital in what after all here I am pushing forward for you at the end of the year, a certain number of themes which are crystallising themes, which is to denote the gap that separates each of these terms in so far as they are stated.

It is clear that between the of x, 'there exists', and the 'there does not exist', you should not be talking gibberish, it is existence.

Existence

It is clear that between 'there exists who does not' and 'there is not one who is not', there is the contradiction:

contradiction

When Aristotle notes particular propositions in order to oppose them to universals, it is between a particular positive with respect to a universal negative that he sets up the contradiction. Here it is the contrary: it is the particular which is negative and it is the universal which is positive.

Here, what we have between this not of x not of x which is not the negation of any universality, what we have – I am only going to indicate to you here, I will justify it subsequently – it is the undecidable:

undecidable

Between the two of x whose situation as all of our experience shows us sufficiently, I think, not to be simple, what is at stake is what? We will call it the lack, we will call it the flaw, we will call it if you wish desire and to be more rigorous, we will call it the **o**-object.

lack

flaw

desire

o-object

So then what is at stake is to know how, in the midst of all of that – I hope that at least some people will have taken a note of it – how in the midst of all of that there functions something that might resemble a circulation. For that, we have to question ourselves about the mode in which there are posited these four terms.

existence

contradiction

undecidable

lack

flaw

desire

o-object

This of x on the top left, is literally the necessary. Nothing is thinkable, it is above all not our function to think about us men. Anyway a women thinks, she even thinks from time to time “therefore I am”. As regards that of course she is mistaken. But anyway as regards what is necessary, it is absolutely necessary – and this is what Freud gives us with this extraordinary *Totem* and.....*Debout* – is absolutely necessary to think anything whatsoever about the relationships that are called human we don’t know why – in the experience set up by the analytic discourse, it is absolutely necessary to posit that there exists One for whom castration, is sent packing.....castration means what? That means above all leaving to desire, that

does not mean from the other. So then you see! To think that, namely starting from the woman, it is necessary that there should be one who has nothing left to desire. This is the business of the Oedipal myth, but it is absolutely necessary, it is absolutely necessary. If you lose that, I can absolutely not see what will allow you to locate yourself in it in any way whatsoever. It is very important to be able to locate oneself.

So there you are, this is the of x. I have already told you that it is necessary because of what? Because precisely of the fact that faith, I wrote there for you earlier undecidable, of what one could absolutely say nothing that is like anything whatsoever that can act as a function of truth if, if one did not admit, this necessary: there is at least One who says no. I am insisting a little. I am insisting because I was not able this evening – we were disturbed – to tell you all the nice things that I would have liked to tell you in connection with this. But I had something really good to say and, since I am being teased, I am going to tell it to you. All the same: it is the function of *é-pater*:

People have questioned a good deal the function of the *pater-familias*. We should better centre what we can require from the function of the father. This business of paternal lack, people keep yapping on about it! There is a crisis, that's a fact, it is not altogether false; the *é-pater* no longer amazes (*épater*) us. This is the only really decisive function of the father.

I already noted that it was not the Oedipus complex, that that was finished, that if the father was a legislator, that produced a President Schreber as a child. Nothing more. On any level whatsoever, the father is the one who ought to amaze the family. If the father no longer amazes the family, naturally...but we will find something better! It is not necessary that it should be the biological father, there is always one that will amaze the family which everyone knows is only a herd of slaves. There will be others that amaze. You see how the French tongue can be used for a lot of things. I already explained that the last time, I had begun with a yoke – *fondre* or “to found/melt from them a One” in subjunctive it is the same yoke: to found you have to melt (*pour fonder il faut fondre*) there are things that can only be expressed in the French tongue, this is precisely why there is an unconscious. Because they are equivocations that *fondent* in the two senses of the word. There is even nothing other than that.

If you question yourselves about the *Tous* and try to see how it is expressed in each tongue, you will find all sorts of things, absolutely sensational things. Personally, I made a lot of enquiries into Chinese because I cannot make a catalogue of the tongues of the whole world. I also questioned someone, thanks to the charming treasurer of our School, who had written out by her father how *Tous* was said in Yoruba. But it's mad you know! I am doing that for the love of art, but I know well that in any case, I will find that in every tongue there is a way to say *Tous*.

For my part what interests me, is the signifier, like One, this is what people make use of in each tongue and the only interests of the signifier are the equivocations that can emerge from it, namely something of the order of “*Fondre d’eux un Un*” and other imbecilities of this kind. It is the only interesting thing, because for us what is involved in the *Tous* you will always find it expressed: the *Tous* is necessarily semantic.

The simple fact that I say that I would like to question every tongue resolves the question, since the tongues precisely are not *pas toutes*, that is their definition, on the other hand if you question the *Tous* you understand. Yes anyway semantics comes down to what can be translated. What other definition of it could I give! Semantics is that thanks to which a man and a woman only understand one another if they do not speak the same tongue. Anyway, I am telling you all of that so that you can do some exercises and because I am there for that and then also perhaps to open up your little noodle to the use that I make of linguistics. Yes! I would like to be rid of it. So then as regards what is involved in what necessitates existence, we start precisely from this point that I inscribed earlier, from the gap of the undecidable, namely between the not all and the not one. And afterwards, it goes then to existence. And then afterwards it goes there. To what? To the fact that all men are potentially castrated. It goes towards the possible, because the universal is never anything other than that. When you say that ‘all men are mammals’ that means that all possible men maybe. And after that where does it go? It goes there to the *o*-object. It is with this that we are in relationship. And after that where does it go? It goes there, where the Woman is distinguished by not being unifying.

There you are! It only remains to complete here to go towards contradiction and to come back to the ‘Not all’ (*Pas toutes*), which in short is nothing other than the expression of contingency. You see here, as I already signalled at one time, the alternation of necessity, of contingency, of the possible and the impossible is not in the order that Aristotle gives; because here, it is the impossible that is at stake, namely when all is said and one the real. So then follow closely this little path, because it will be of use to us subsequently. You will see something of it. There you are! It would be necessary to indicate the four triangles in the corners like that, the direction of the arrows is also indicated. Have you got that? And here are the...

(126) There you are! I think I've done enough for this evening. I do not want to finish on a sensational peroration, but the question that, yes, it is well enough written. Necessary, impossible.....

X – We can't hear anything!

Lacan – Huh? Necessary, impossible, possible and contingent.

X – We can't hear anything.

Lacan – I don't give a damn! There you are. This is a way of opening things up. You will hear what follows in almost a fortnight's time. Because it is on the 14th that I will give my next seminar at the Panthéon. I am not sure that it will not be the final one.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

4th November 1971

In coming back to talk at Sainte-Anne what I would have hoped for, is that there would be interns, as they are called, who in my day were called "asylum interns"; now it is psychiatric hospitals, and all the rest of it. It was that audience that I was aiming at in returning to Sainte-Anne. I had hoped that some of them would put themselves out. Are there some of them here – I am talking about people who are actually interns – would they do me the pleasure of raising their hands? It's a crushing minority, but anyway, it is quite enough for me.

Starting from there – and as long as I have enough puff – I am going to say a few words to you. It is obvious that as always I improvise these words, which does not mean that I do not have here some little notes, but they are improvised since this morning, because I am working very hard... But this does not mean that you should feel yourselves obliged to do the same. One point on which I insisted, is the distance there is between work and knowledge, because let us not forget that this evening, it is knowledge that I am promising you, so then no particular need to wear yourselves out. You are going to see why, some already suspect it, because they have attended what is called my Seminar.

If we are talking about knowledge, I remarked, in the already distant past, the fact that ignorance can be considered, in Buddhism, as a passion. This is a fact that can be justified with a little meditation; but since meditation is not our strong point, all we need to get it across is experience. It is the striking experience that I had, a long time ago,

when I was a young doctor. Because I have been frequenting these walls for a long time – not necessarily these ones at that time – and it must be, it must date from somewhere about 1925–26, and the interns at that time – I am not talking about what they are now – the hospital interns and those who are called the asylum interns, it was no doubt a group effect, but as regards holding on to ignorance, they were more or less there, it appears! One might consider that it was linked to a phase in medicine, this phase was necessarily to be followed by the present vacillation. At that time, after all, this ignorance, do not forget that I am talking about ignorance, I have just said that it is a passion, is not for me a lesser value, nor is it a deficit. It is something else: ignorance is linked to knowledge.

(8) It is a way of establishing it, to make of it an established knowledge. For example, when one wanted to be a doctor at an epoch that, of course, was at the end of an epoch, well then, it is normal that people would have wanted to benefit, to show, to manifest an ignorance, that as I might say was consolidated. This having been said, after what I have said to you about ignorance, you will not be surprised if I point out that the *docte ignorantia* as a certain Cardinal put it, at a time when this title was not a certificate of ignorance, a certain Cardinal described *docte ignorantia* as the highest form of knowledge. It was Nicholas of Cusa, to recall him in passing. So that the correlation between ignorance and knowledge is something from which one must start essentially and see that after all, if ignorance, like that, from a certain moment on, in a certain zone, carries knowledge to its lowest level, it is not for want of ignorance, it is even the contrary.

For some time, in medicine, ignorance is no longer *docte* enough to enable medicine to survive with something other than superstitions. I will come back perhaps later if I have the time on the meaning of this word, and precisely for what it involves on this occasion about medicine. But anyway to highlight something which concerns this experience that I really want to link up after some 45 years of frequenting these walls – I am not boasting about it, but ever since I surrendered some of my *Ecrits* for *poubellication* everyone knows how old I am, it is one of the inconveniences – at the time, I must say that the degree of passionate ignorance that reigned in the res of Sainte-Anne was something impossible to conjure up. It is true that these were people who had the vocation and, at that time, to have a vocation for asylums, was something rather special.

Into the same res there came at the same time four people whose names I have no disdain in calling forth because I was one of them. The other one that I would like to recall this evening, was Henri Ey. We can say, can we not, with the length of time that has passed, that Ey civilised this ignorance. And I must say that I salute his work. Civilisation, you know, does not get rid of any discontent, as Freud remarked, quite the contrary, *Unbehagen*, the not being at ease, but anyway it has a precious aspect to it. If you think that there is the slightest degree of irony in what I have just said to you, you would be gravely mistaken. But you cannot but be mistaken, because you cannot imagine the state of the asylums before Ey got stuck into them. It was something absolutely fabulous. Now the story has moved on and I have just received a circular marking the alarm that exists in a certain zone of this milieu with respect to this movement that promises all sorts of sparks and that is called anti-psychiatry. People would really like me to take a stance

on this, as if one could take a stance on something which is already an opposition. Because to tell the truth, I do not know if it would be appropriate to make some remarks about it, some remarks inspired by my old experience, the one that I have just evoked (9) precisely and to distinguish, on this occasion, psychiatry and *psychiatrie*. The question of the mentally ill or of what are called, to put it better, psychoses, is a question that is not at all resolved by anti-psychiatry, whatever may be the illusions that some local enterprises harbour about it. Anti-psychiatry is a movement whose meaning is liberation from the psychiatrist, if I can express myself in that way. And it is quite certain that it does not take that path.

It does not take that path because there is a characteristic that all the same one must not forget in what are called revolutions, which is that this word is admirably chosen to mean, returning to the starting point. The circle of all that was already known, but is amply demonstrated in the book that is called "*The birth of madness*" (*sic*) by Michel Foucault. The psychiatrist has in effect a social service to perform. He is the creation of a certain historical turning point. The one that we are going through is not in any way close to lightening this responsibility, nor to reducing its place, which is the least that one can say. So that this leaves the questions of anti-psychiatry a little out of synch.

Anyway, this is an introductory indication. But I would like to point out that, as regards the medical residences, there is something that is all the same striking which lends them a certain continuity with the more recent ones. It is the degree to which psychoanalysis has not, with respect to the angle that knowledge takes on there, psychoanalysis has not improved anything. The psychoanalyst, in the sense that I posed the question in the year '67 – '68, when I introduced the notion of *du psychanalyste*, preceded by the definite article, at a time when I was trying before an audience that at that time was rather large, to recall the logical value, that of the definite article. Anyway let us leave it, the psychoanalyst does not seem to have changed anything with respect to a certain basis of knowledge. After all, all of that is normal. Changing the basis of knowledge is not something that happens from one day to the next. The future belongs to God, as they say, namely, to good luck, to the good luck of those who had the lucky inspiration to follow me. Something will come out of them if the little pigs don't eat them up. This is what I call good luck. For the others there is no question of good luck. Their lot will be regulated by automatism, which is completely the contrary of luck, good or bad.

What I would like this evening is this. What I would like is that those, what they may commit themselves to, so that the psychoanalysis that they use leaves them no chance, I would like to avoid for them there being established a misunderstanding in the name, like that, of something which is the effect of the goodwill of some of those people who follow me. They have understood well enough – anyway as best they can – what I said about knowledge as being made up of a correlate of ignorance. And so, that tormented them a little.

There were some among them, I do not know what provoked them, a literary provocation of course, things that you find in the writings of Georges Bataille, for example, because (10) otherwise I do not think it would have occurred to them...there is non-knowledge (*le*

non-savoir). I should say that Georges Bataille gave a lecture on non-knowledge, and that you can find that perhaps in two or three places in his writings. Anyway, God knows that he did not gloat about it and in particular on the day of his lecture, there, at the *salle de Géographie*, at St Germain des Prés, which you know well because it is a place for culture. He did not utter a word, which was not a bad way to display non-knowledge. People sniggered and they were wrong, because now non-knowledge is chic. You can find it, can you not, almost everywhere in the mystics, it is even from them that it comes, it is even in them that it has a sense. And then finally, you know that I insisted on the difference between knowledge and truth. So then, if the truth is not knowledge, it is because it is non-knowledge. Aristotelian logic: “Everything that is not black, is not-black” as I noted somewhere. I noted it, it is certain, I articulated that this tangible frontier between truth and knowledge, is precisely where analytic discourse is held. So then there you are, the road is wide open to put forward, to lift the flag of non-knowledge. It is not a bad flag. It can serve precisely to rally what is not, after all, a rare thing to recruit as a clientele: crass ignorance, for example. That also exists by the way, it is becoming more and more rare. Only there are other things, there are aspects... of laziness for example, that I have spoken about for a very long time. And then there are certain forms of institutionalisation, the concentration camps of the good Lord, as people said in the past, within the University, where these things are well received, because it looks chic. In short, a whole dumb show is carried out, is it not, you go first, Madam Truth, the hole is there is it not, that is your place. Anyway it’s a discovery, this non-knowledge.

To introduce a definitive confusion on this delicate subject, the one that is precisely the point in question in psychoanalysis, what I called this tangible frontier between truth and knowledge, one could hardly do better. There is no need to date it.

Anyway, 10 years before, another lucky find was made which was not bad either, with respect to what I have to call my discourse. I had begun it by saying “the unconscious is structured like a language”. People found an extraordinary contraption: the two chaps who could have best worked along this track, spun this thread, were given a very nice job: *Vocabulaire de la Philosophie*. What am I saying *Vocabulaire de la Psychanalyse*. You see the slip, huh? Anyway it’s as good as Lalande.

Lalangue, as I write it now – I have no blackboard...well, write *lalangue* in one word: that is how I will write it from now on. You see how cultivated they are! So then you can’t hear anything! Is it the acoustics? Will you try to fix it? It is not a ‘d’ it is a ‘gu’. I did not say that the unconscious is structured like *lalangue* but is structured like a language, and I will come back to it later.

(11) But when those responsible that I spoke about earlier were launched on the *Vocabulaire de la Psychanalyse*, it is obviously because I had put on the agenda the Saussurian term *lalangue* which I repeat I will henceforth write as a single word. And I will justify why. Well then, *lalangue* has nothing to do with the dictionary, whatever it may be. A dictionary has to do with diction, namely, with poetry or with rhetoric for example. This is not nothing, huh? It goes from invention to persuasion, anyway it is

very important.

Only, it is precisely not this aspect that is related to the unconscious. Contrary to what I think, the mass of listeners think, but that all the same a good number know already, already know if they have listened to the few terms in which I tried to make a passage to what I say about the unconscious: the unconscious is a matter first of all of grammar. It also has a little to do, a lot to do, everything to do with repetition, namely, the aspect that is quite contrary to what a dictionary is used for. So that it was a rather good way to ensure that those who could have helped me at that time to follow my trail, to deviate them. Grammar and repetition is a quite different aspect than the one that I pinpointed earlier as invention, which is not nothing of course nor is persuasion. Contrary to what is, I don't know why, still very widespread, the useful aspect in the function of *lalangue*, the useful aspect for us psychoanalysts, for those who have to deal with the unconscious, is logic.

This is a little parenthesis that links up with the fact that there is a risk of loss in this absolutely improvised and ethical promotion, to which I really gave no opportunity for people to be mistaken about it, the one that is propelled from non-knowledge. Is there any need to demonstrate that there is in psychoanalysis firstly and fundamentally knowledge. This is what I am going to have to prove to you.

Let us lay hold of it from one end: this first massive character, the primacy of this knowledge in psychoanalysis. Do I have to remind you that when Freud tried to account for the difficulties that there are in opening up psychoanalysis, an article of 1917 in *Imago*, if I remember correctly, and in any case which was translated, it appeared in the first number of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, "A difficulty in the path of psychoanalysis" is what it is called. The fact is that the knowledge involved does not easily get across, like that. Freud explains as best he can, and it is even in this way that he is open to misunderstanding – not by chance – this famous term of resistance, which I think I have managed at least in a certain zone, to no longer have dinned into us. But it is certain that there is one where, I have no doubt, this famous term of resistance which he is obviously permanently apprehensive about still flourishes. And then, I should say, why not dare to say that we all have our little slippages. It is always resistances that favour these slippages. Sometime soon people will discover some in what I said; but (12) after all, it is not so certain. Anyway, in short, Freud makes a mistake. He thinks that against resistance there is only one thing to do, which is revolution. And in so doing he completely masks what is at stake, namely, the very specific difficulty in bringing into play a certain function of knowledge. He confuses it with carrying out what is pinpointed as a revolution in knowledge.

It is in this little article – he will take it up later in *Civilisation and its discontents* – that there is the first substantial piece on the Copernican revolution. It was a commonplace of University knowledge at the time. Copernicus – poor Copernicus – had accomplished the revolution. It was he – as they say in all the textbooks – who put the Sun in the centre and had the Earth turning around. It is quite clear that despite the schema that clearly shows this in effect in "*De Revolutionibus*.....etc" on this Copernicus had strictly

speaking taken no sides and no one would have dreamt of picking a quarrel with him about it. But anyway, it is in effect a fact, that we have gone from geo- to helio-centrism and that this is supposed to have delivered a coup, a 'blow' as it is put in the English text, to some supposed cosmological narcissism.

The second 'blow', which is biological Freud evokes for us in Darwin on the pretext that as regards what is on Earth, people took some time to get over the new announcement, the one that saw man related as a cousin to modern primates. And Freud explains the resistance to psychoanalysis in this way: what is attacked, is properly speaking this consistency of knowledge which means that when one knows something, the least that can be said about it, is that one knows that one knows.

Let us leave to one side what he recalls in this connection, because this is the core, what he adds, namely, the daubing in the form of the ego which is constructed around that, namely, the one who knows that he knows, well, it's me.

It is clear that this reference to the ego is secondary with respect to the fact that a knowledge knows itself and that the novelty is that what psychoanalysis reveals is that it is a knowledge that is unknown to itself. But I ask you, what would be new in that, namely, of a kind to provoke resistance, if this knowledge was of the same kind as that of everybody else, specifically the animal, where nobody dreams of being surprised that in general the animal knows what he needs. Namely, that if it is an animal that lives on the ground, he is only going to plunge himself into water for a limited time: he knows that this is of no use to him. If the unconscious is something surprising, it is because this knowledge is something different. It is this knowledge of which we have an idea, so little grounded moreover from all time, because it is not for nothing that people have evoked inspiration, enthusiasm, from all time, it is, namely, that this unknown knowledge that is at stake in psychoanalysis, is a knowledge that is well and truly articulated, is structured like a language.

(13) So that here, the revolution, as I might say, put forward by Freud, tends to mask what is at stake: the fact is that this something which does not get across, revolution or no, is a subversion which is produced where? In the function, in the structure of knowledge. And this is what does not get across, because in truth, the cosmological revolution, one cannot really say, apart from the disturbance that this created for some doctors of the Church, that it is something that in any way is of such a nature that man, as one says, should feel himself to be in any humiliated by it. That is why the use of the term revolution is so unconvincing, because the very fact that there was a revolution around this point, is rather exciting, as regards narcissism. And it is exactly the same as regards Darwinism. There is no doctrine that puts human production on a higher level than evolution, make no mistake. In one case as in the other, cosmological or biological, all these revolutions leave man no less in place as the flower of creation. That is why we can say that this reference was really not well thought out. It is perhaps precisely designed to mask, to get across what is at stake. Namely, that this knowledge, this new status of knowledge, is something that ought to involve a completely new type of discourse, which is not easy to hold and up to a certain point, has not yet begun.

The unconscious, I have said, is structured like a language. Which one? And why did I say a language? Because as regards language, we are getting to know a little bit. People talk about object-language in logic, whether it is mathematical or not. People talk about metalanguage. People are even speaking about language, for some time, at the level of biology. People talk about language without rhyme or reason. To begin with, if I say that I am talking about language, it is because what is at stake are common features that can be encountered in *lalangue*. *Lalangue* being itself is subject to a very great variety but there are nevertheless constants. The language that is at stake, as I took the time, the care, the pain and the patience to articulate, is the language where one can distinguish the code from the message, among other things. Without this minimal distinction, there is no place for speech. That is why when I introduce these terms, I call them “Function and field of speech” – for speech it is the function – “and of language” – for language it is the field. Speech, speech defines the place of what one can call the truth. What I mark, from its coming on the scene, for the use that I want to make of it, is its fiction-structure, and also moreover its lying [structure]. In truth, make no mistake, the truth does not tell the truth – not even half – except in one case: it is when she says ‘I am lying’. It is the only case when one can be sure that she is not lying because she is supposed to know it. But Otherwise, namely, Otherwise with a capital O, it is quite possible that she tells the truth all the same without knowing it. This is what I tried to mark with my S, brackets of O, S(Ø) precisely and barred. That at least that, you cannot say that it is not in every case a knowledge, for those who follow me, that it is something that must be taken into account to guide oneself, even if it is out of pure expediency. This is the first point of the unconscious structured like a language.

(14) The second, you did not have to wait for me – I am talking to psychoanalysts – you did not have to wait for me to know it because it is the very principle of what you do once you interpret. There is no interpretation that does not concern...what? The link between what, in what you hear, is manifested in terms of speech, the link between that and enjoyment. It may be that you do it, in a way innocently, namely, without you ever noticing that there is no interpretation that ever means something else, but an analytic interpretation is always that. Whether the gain is secondary or primary, the gain is of enjoyment. And that, it is quite clear that this thing emerged from Freud’s pen, not immediately, because there is a stage, there is the pleasure principle, but anyway it is clear that one day what struck him, is that whatever one does innocent or not, what is formulated, whatever one does, is something that is repeated.

The agency, I said, of the letter, and if I use agency it is, like all the usages that I make of words, not without reason. It is because agency resonates also at the level of jurisdiction, it also resonates at the level of insistence, where it gives rise to this module that I defined just now, at the level of a certain logic. It is in this repetition that Freud discovers the beyond of the pleasure principle. Only there you are, if there is a beyond, let us no longer talk about a principle, because a principle which has a beyond, is no longer a principle, and let us leave to one side at the same time the reality principle. Clearly all of this must be examined again. There are not after all two classes of speaking beings: those who are governed according to the pleasure principle and the reality principle and those who are

beyond the pleasure principle, especially since, as they say – make no mistake – clinically, they are indeed the same.

Primary process is explained in a first moment by this approximation given by the opposition, the bi-polarity of pleasure principle/reality principle. It has to be said, this outline is untenable and only designed to allow the listeners who are the contemporaries of these first statements, who are – I do not want to abuse this term – bourgeois listeners, namely, who have absolutely not the slightest idea of what the pleasure principle is, to swallow what they could. The pleasure principle is a reference to ancient morality: in ancient morality, pleasure, pleasure, which consists precisely of making the least possible of it. *Otium cum dignitate* is an asceticism that one could say rejoins that of the swine, but not at all in the sense in which it is understood. The word swine (*porceau*) did not mean in ancient times to be a pig, it meant that it was very close to animal wisdom. It was an appreciation, a touch, a mark given from outside by people who did not understand what was at stake, namely, the highest refinement of the morality of the Master. What on earth could that have to do with the idea that a bourgeois has about pleasure and moreover, it has to be said, of reality?

In any case – this is the third point – what results from the insistence with which the unconscious gives us what it formulates, is that if on the one hand our interpretation only ever has the meaning of pointing out what the subject finds in it, what does he find in it? (15) Nothing that ought not to be catalogued in the register of enjoyment. That is the third point.

Fourth point: where does enjoyment lie? What does it need? A body. To enjoy, a body is necessary. Even those who promise us eternal beatitude can only do so by supposing that the body is conveyed there: glorious or not, it has to be there. You need a body. Why? Because the dimension of enjoyment for the body, is the dimension of the descent towards death. It is moreover very precisely how the pleasure principle in Freud announces that he knew well from that moment on what he was saying. Because if you read him with care, you will see there that the pleasure principle has nothing to do with hedonism, even if it is bequeathed to us by the most ancient tradition, it is in truth the unpleasure principle. It is the unpleasure principle, to the degree that by stating it at every moment, Freud goes off the rails. In what does pleasure consist he tells us: it is to lower tension. As if it were not the very principle of everything that is called enjoyment, something to enjoy, that it produces a tension. This indeed is why, when Freud is on the path of *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, of the beyond of the pleasure principle, what does he state to us in *Civilisation and its discontents*, if not that very probably well beyond the repression described as social, there ought to be – he writes it textually – an organic repression.

It is curious, it is a pity that one has to take so much trouble for things that are said so obviously, and get the following to be noticed: that the dimension by which the speaking being is distinguished from the animal, is assuredly that there is in him this gap through which he would be lost, through which he is permitted on the body or the bodies, whether it is his own or that of his fellows, or that of animals who surround him, to give rise in

them, for their or his own gain, to what is properly speaking called enjoyment.

It is assuredly more strange that the journeyings that I have just underlined, those which go from this sophisticated description of the pleasure principle to the open recognition of what is involved in fundamental enjoyment. It is more strange to see that Freud, at this level, thinks he has to have recourse to something that he calls the death instinct. Not that it is wrong, only to say it in this way, in this so learned a fashion, is precisely what the savants that he generated under the name of psychoanalysts can absolutely not swallow.

This long cogitation, the rumination about the death instinct, which is what characterises – it can be said – the whole of the international psychoanalytic institution, this way that it has of splitting itself, of sharing itself, of dividing itself up, does it admit it, does it not admit it, here I am stopping, I have not got that far, these interminable labyrinths about this term, which seems to have been chosen to give the illusion that, in this field, something had been discovered that one might say is analogous to what in logic is called a paradox, it is astonishing that Freud, given the path he had already opened up, did not (16) feel he should highlight it purely and simply. The enjoyment which is really of the order of erotology that is within anyone's reach – it is true that at that time the publications of the Marquis de Sade were less widespread – that is why I thought I should, as a way of fixing a date, to mark somewhere in my *Ecrits* the relationship between Kant and Sade.

If, by proceeding in this way nevertheless I think all the same that there is an answer, it is not necessary that he any more than any of us, knew all he was saying. But instead of talking trivially about the primitive death instinct, which comes from the outside or comes from the inside or turning back from the outside onto the inside and generating belatedly, finally falling back on aggressivity and fighting, people could perhaps have read the following. In Freud's death instinct, which lends itself perhaps to saying that the only act, after all – if there is one – which might be an accomplished act – you should understand that I am talking, like I was talking last year, about a discourse that might not be a semblance, in one case as in the other none exists, neither a discourse nor such an act – that would be, if it could be, suicide.

This is what Freud tells us. He does not tell it to us like that, in the raw. Clearly, as it can be said now, now that the doctrine has opened up its path a little and we know that there is no act except a failed one and that it is even the only condition of a semblance of success. This indeed is why suicide deserves to be objected to. The fact is that it does not need to have remained an attempt for it to be in any case failed, completely failed from the point of view of enjoyment. Perhaps the Buddhists with their tins of petrol – because they are in the news – we know nothing about it, because they do not come back to bear witness.

Freud's text is a pretty text. It is not for nothing that he brings in for us the soma and the germen. He senses, he sniffs out that it is here there is something to be explored. Yes, there is something to be explored, it is the fifth point that I stated this year in my Seminar

and which is expressed as follows: there is no sexual relationship.

Naturally, that appears like that to be empty noise, a little '*efloupi*' [?]. All you need is a good fuck to prove the contrary to me. Unfortunately, it is the one thing that proves absolutely nothing of the sort, because the notion of relationship does not quite coincide with the metaphorical use that is made of this simple word relationship: 'they had a relationship' is not quite that. One can seriously talk about relationship, not just when a discourse establishes it, but when the relationship is stated. Because it is true that the real is there before we think about it, but the relationship is much more doubtful: not only must it be thought of, but it must be written. If you are not capable of writing it, there is no relationship. It might be perhaps very remarkable if it proved, as long as this has begun to be a little elucidated, that it is impossible to write what is involved in the sexual relationship. The matter is important, because precisely we are, through the progress of what is called science, in the process of taking very far a whole lot of little affairs that are situated at the level of the gamete, at the level of the gene, at the level of a certain number (17) of choices, of sortings, that one can describe as one wishes, meiosis or differently, and which seem to clearly elucidate something, something passes at the level of the fact that reproduction, at least in a certain zone of life, is sexed.

Only this has absolutely nothing to do with what is involved in the sexual relationship, inasmuch as it is very certain that in the speaking being, there is around this relationship, in so far as it is grounded on enjoyment, a range that is absolutely admirable in its display and that two things have been demonstrated by Freud, by Freud and the analytic discourse. Namely, the whole range of enjoyment, I mean everything that can be done in appropriately treating a body, indeed one's own body, all of that, to some degree shares in sexual enjoyment. Only sexual enjoyment itself, when you want to put your hand on it, if I can express myself in this way, is no longer sexual at all. It is lost.

And this is where there comes into play everything that is built up from the term phallus and which indeed here is something that designates a certain signified, a signified of a certain perfectly vanishing signifier. Because as regards defining what is involved in being a man or being a woman, what psychoanalysis shows us, is very precisely that it is impossible and that to a certain degree, nothing particularly indicates that it is towards the partner of the other sex that enjoyment should be directed, if enjoyment is considered, even for a moment, as the guide of what is involved in the function of reproduction.

We find ourselves here confronted with the shattering of, let us say, the notion of sexuality. Sexuality is at the centre, without any doubt, of everything that happens in the unconscious. But it is at the centre in that it is a lack. Namely, that in the place of anything whatsoever which might be inscribed about the sexual relationship as such, there is substituted the impasses which are those generated precisely by the function of sexual enjoyment, in so far as it appears as this sort of mirage that Freud here gives the mark of being absolute enjoyment. And it is so close that precisely it is not absolute. It is not so in any sense. First of all because as such, it is destined to these different forms of failure that are constituted by castration for masculine enjoyment, division for what is involved in feminine enjoyment. And that on the other hand, what enjoyment leads to

has strictly nothing to do with copulation, inasmuch as it is, let us say, the usual style – it will change – by which reproduction is carried out in the species of the speaking being.

In other words there is a thesis: there is no sexual relationship – I am talking about the speaking being. There is an antithesis which is the reproduction of life. It is a well known theme. It is the current flag of the Catholic Church and in this respect we have to salute its courage. The Catholic Church affirms that there is a sexual relationship: it is the one that culminates in producing little children. It is an affirmation which is quite tenable, simply it is unprovable. No discourse can sustain it, except a religious discourse (18) in so far as it defines the strict separation that exists between truth and knowledge. And thirdly, there is no synthesis unless you call synthesis this remark that the only enjoyment is to die.

These are the points of truth and knowledge that it is important to punctuate as regards what is involved in the knowledge of the psychoanalyst, except for the fact that there is not a single psychoanalyst for whom it is not a dead letter. As regards synthesis, one can trust them to sustain its terms and to see them quite elsewhere than in the death instinct. If you get rid of Nature, as they say, is that not so, it returns at a gallop.

It would be well all the same to give its true sense to this old proverbial formula. Nature, let us talk about it, this indeed is what is at stake. Nature is everything that vests itself with the livery of knowledge – and God knows there is no lack of it – and a discourse that is uniquely designed for knowledge to appear in livery is the University discourse. It is quite clear that the investiture that is at stake, is the idea of nature. It is not ready to disappear from the front of the stage. Not that I am trying to substitute a different one for it. You must not imagine that I am one of those who oppose nature and culture. First of all if only because nature is precisely a fruit of culture. But anyway this relationship, knowledge/truth or if you like truth/knowledge is something that we have not begun to have even the smallest beginning of agreement, like what is involved in medicine, in psychiatry and a whole lot of other problems. We are going to be submerged before too long, in four or five years by all the segregation problems that will be entitled and that will be castigated by the term of racism. All the problems which are precisely those that are going to consist in what is simply called the control of what happens at the level of the reproduction of life among beings who find themselves because of the fact that they speak, having all sorts of problems of conscience. What is completely unbelievable, is that people have not yet noticed that problems of conscience are problems of enjoyment.

But anyway, we are only beginning to be able to say them. It is not at all sure that this has the slightest consequence, because we know in effect that interpretation demands, to be accepted, what I called when I began, work. Knowledge for its part is of the order of enjoyment. We absolutely cannot see why it would change its bed. What people are waiting for, denounce under the heading of intellectualisation, simply means that they are used from experience to notice that it is in no way necessary, it is in no way sufficient to understand something for anything whatsoever to change. The question of the knowledge of the psychoanalyst is not at all that that it should be articulated or not, the question is of knowing what place one must be at to sustain it. It is obviously on this that

I will try to indicate something, and I do not know if I will be able to give a formulation of it that is transmissible. Nevertheless I will try.

(19) The question is to know the measure to which what science, the science to which psychoanalysis, nowadays just as much as in the time of Freud, can do nothing other than tag along behind, what science can reach about what has to do with the term real.

The Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real.

It is clear that the power of the Symbolic has no need to be proved. It is power itself. There is no trace of power in the world before the apparition of language. What is striking in what Freud sketches out about pre-Copernicus, is that it imagines that man was quite happy to be at the centre of the universe and that he believed himself to be the king of it. This is really an absolutely fabulous illusion! If there was something that he got an idea of in the eternal spheres, it is precisely that the last word about knowledge was there. What in the world know something – time is necessary for that to pass – are the ethereal spheres. They know. And this indeed is why knowledge is associated, from its origins, to the idea of power.

And in this little announcement at the back of the big package of my *Ecrits* you will see, because – why not admit it – I am the one who wrote this little note – who other than I could have done it, you can recognise my style and it is not at all badly written – I invoke *les Lumières* (the Enlightened).

It is quite clear that the Enlightened spent a certain time being elucidated. In a first phase, they really made a mess of things. But anyway, like hell, they were paved with good intentions. Contrary to everything that may have been said, the Enlightened had as a goal to state a knowledge that was not a homage to any power. Only, one must really regret to have to note that those who occupied this office were a little bit in the position of valets with respect to a certain type – I must say rather happy and flourishing – of master, the nobles at the time, for them to have been able in any way to end up with anything other than this famous French Revolution which had the result that you know. Namely, the establishment of a race of masters more ferocious than all that one had seen at work up to then.

A knowledge that is able for nothing, the knowledge of impotence, this is what the psychoanalyst, from a certain perspective, a perspective that I would not qualify as progressive, this is what the psychoanalyst may convey.

And to give you the tone of the track along which this year I am hoping to pursue my discourse, I am going to give you the title, the first fruits – to allow you to lick your chops – I am going to give you the title of the Seminar that I am going to give at the same place as last year, thanks to some people who were willing to work to preserve it for us.

(20) It is written as follows. First, before pronouncing it, that's an O and that's a U... Three dots – you can put in whatever you like, that way I give it to you to meditate on...

This OU, is the OU that is called *vel* or *aut* in Latin: ...OU PIRE.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

2nd December 1971

What I am going to do with you this evening is obviously not – any more than it was the last time, it is obviously not what I set out to do this year - to give the next step of my seminar. It will be like the last time, a talk.

Everyone knows – many ignore it – the insistence that I put, in the case of those who ask me for advice, on the preliminary conversations in analysis. That has of course an essential function for analysis. There is no possible entry into analysis without preliminary conversations. But there is something that approaches it about the relationship between these conversations and what I am going to tell you this year. Except that this can absolutely not be the same, given that, since it is I who speak, it is I who am here in the position of the analysand.

So then what I was going to tell you – I could have taken it from many different angles, but when all is said and done it is always at the last moment that I know what I have chosen to say – and for this conversation today, it seemed to be a propitious moment concerning a question that was put to me last evening by someone from my School. It is one of the people who take their position a little to heart and who posed the following question which has of course in my eyes the advantage of getting immediately into the core of the subject. Everyone knows that this rarely happens to me, I make my approach in prudent steps. The question that was put to me is the following: Is the incomprehension of Lacan a symptom?

I am repeating it then textually. It is someone on this occasion I easily pardon for having put my name, which can be explained because he was face to face with me, instead of what would have been more appropriate, namely, my discourse. You see that I am not shirking anything: I call it 'my'. We will see later whether this 'my' deserves to be retained.

What matter. The essential thing in this question was in what it was aimed at, namely, whether the incomprehension in question, whether you call it one thing or another, is a

symptom.

I do not think so. I do not think so first of all because in a sense one cannot say that something which has all the same a certain relationship with my discourse, which is not confused with it, which is what one can call my word, one cannot say that it is absolutely (24) misunderstood. One might say at a precise level, that your number is the proof of it. If my word was incomprehensible, I do not see what you would be doing here in such numbers. All the more so because after all this number is made up in large part of people who keep coming back. And then that, like that, at the level of a sampling that comes back to me all the same, it happens that people express themselves in this way that they do not always understand well or at least that they do not have the feeling of understanding. To take up anyway one of the latest testimonies that I received about it, about the way in which everyone expresses themselves, well then, despite this sentiment of not really being with it, nevertheless, I was told in this latest testimony, that this helped the person in question, to find his bearings in his own ideas, to be illuminated, to be illuminated himself on a certain number of points. One can say that at least for what concerns my word, which is quite obviously to be distinguished from discourse – we are going to try to see how – there is not properly speaking what is called incomprehension.

I underline right away that this word is a teaching word. Teaching then, on this occasion, I distinguish from discourse. Since I am speaking here at Sainte-Anne and perhaps through what I said the last time people might sense what that means for me, I have chosen to take things at what we might call an elementary level. It is completely arbitrary but it is a choice.

When I was giving a paper at the *Société de Philosophie* on what I called at that time my teaching I made the same decision. I spoke as if I were addressing myself to people who were very backward. They were no more so than you, but it is rather the idea that I have of philosophy that required that. And I am not the only one. One of my very good friends who gave a paper recently at the *Société de Philosophie* gave me an article on the foundation of mathematics in which I pointed out to him that his article was at a level 10 or 20 times higher than what he had said at the *Société de Philosophie*. He told me that I should not be surprised at that, given the response he had received. This indeed is what proved to me also, because I had responses of the same kind at the same place, this indeed is what reassured me for having articulated some things at the same level that you can find in my *Ecrits*.

There is then in certain contexts a less arbitrary choice than the one that I am defending here. I am defending it here in function of certain elements in my memory which are linked to the following. The fact is that after all, if at a certain level my discourse is still misunderstood, it is because, let us say for a long time, it was in a whole area, forbidden, not to understand it, which would have been, as experience has proved, within the reach of many, but forbidden to come and listen to. This is what is going to allow us to distinguish this incomprehension from a certain number of others. There was a prohibition. And that, faith, that this prohibition came from an analytic institution is surely significant.

(25) Significant means what? I did not say signifying (*signifiant*). There is a great difference between the signifier/signified relationship and signification. Signification makes a sign. A sign has nothing to do with the signifier. As sign is – I present that in a corner somewhere in the last issue of this *Scilicet* – a sign, whatever one may think of it, is always the sign of a subject. Which is addressed to what? This is also written in this *Scilicet* – I cannot develop it any more here, but this sign, this sign of prohibition assuredly came from true subjects, in every sense of the word, from subjects who obey in any case. That it should have been a sign that came from an analytic institution is well designed to make us take the next step.

If the question was put to me in this form, it is in function of the fact that in psychoanalysis incomprehension is considered to be a symptom. It is accepted in psychoanalysis, it is, one could say, generally admitted. Things have got to such a point that this has passed into common consciousness. When I say that it is generally admitted, it goes beyond psychoanalysis, I mean the psychoanalytic act. Things have a certain consciousness – there is something which gives the style of common consciousness – have got to the point where people say and where you hear people saying: “Go and have yourself psychoanalysed” when...when what?

When the person who says it considers that your behaviour, your remarks are as Monsieur de Lapalisse would say, a symptom. I would point out to you all the same, at this level, from this angle, symptom has the meaning of a truth value. And this is how what has passed into common consciousness is more specific than the idea that, alas, many psychoanalysts can manage to have – let us say that there are too few of them – namely, the equivalence between symptom and truth value. It is rather curious, but moreover it has this historical correspondent that this proves that this sense of the word symptom was discovered, exposed, before psychoanalysis came into play. As I often underline, this equivalence is very properly speaking the essential step taken by Marxist thinking.

Truth value, to translate the symptom into a truth value, we ought here to put our finger, once more, on the kind of knowledge that is presupposed in the analyst by the fact that it is necessary that he should be aware of what he interprets. And to make a parenthesis here simply in passing – it is not along the line of what I am trying to get you to follow – I should mark, I mark nevertheless that this knowledge is as I might say presupposed for the analyst. What I emphasised about ‘the subject supposed to know’ as grounding the phenomena of transference, I always underlined that this does not imply any certainty in the analysand subject that his analyst knows very much. Far from it. But this is perfectly compatible with the fact that the knowledge of the analyst should be envisaged by the analysand as very doubtful, which moreover – this has to be added – is frequently the case for very objective reasons. Analysts after all, do not know as much about it as they ought for the simple reason that often they do not work very hard. This changes absolutely nothing with regard to the fact that knowledge is presupposed for the function of the analyst and that it is on this that the phenomena of transference depend. I close the parenthesis. Here then is the symptom with its translation as truth value.

The symptom is truth value and – I point out to you in passing – the reciprocal is not true, the truth value is not a symptom. It is a good thing to note at this point for the reason that truth is not something whose function I claim can be isolated. Its function, and specifically where it takes place, in speech, is relative. It is not separable from other functions of the word. A further reason for me insisting on the fact that even reducing it to value, in no case is it to be confused with the symptom. It is around this point of what the symptom is that the first phases of my teaching pivoted. Because analysts were in such a fog about this point that the symptom – and after all perhaps it is owing to my teaching that this is no longer displayed so easily – that the symptom is articulated – I mean, in the mouth of analysts – as the refusal of the aforesaid truth value. There is no relationship.

It has no relationship with this one direction equivalence – I have just insisted on it – of the symptom to truth value. This brings into play what I will call – what I will call like that because we are among ourselves and I said it was a conversation – what I would call without any more formalities, without worrying myself that the terms that I am putting forward are already so worn out at the most advanced point of philosophy, this brings into play the being of an individual (*l'être d'un étant*). I am saying the being because it seems clear to me, it seems to be accepted that ever since philosophy has been going around in circles on a certain number of points, I say the being, because what is at stake is the speaking being. It is from being speaking – I apologise for the first being – that he comes to being, anyway that he has this feeling. Naturally he does not get to it, he fails. But this dimension of being that has opened up all of a sudden, one could say that for a good period of time, it had an effect on the system...of philosophers at least. And one would be quite wrong to ironise. Because if it had an effect on the system of philosophers, it is because they have an effect on everybody's system and that what is designated in this exposure by analysts of what they call resistance. Around this I carried on for a whole stage of this teaching of which my *Ecrits* bear the trace, I carried on a fight for a whole stage. It was indeed to question them about what they knew, what they were doing by bringing into play on this occasion what one could then call the fact that the being of this sacred individual of which they speak – not completely without rhyme or reason - they call it 'man' from time to time, in any case, it is called that less and less ever since I have been among those who have expressed some reservations about it – this being does not have any special tropism with respect to the truth. Let us say no more about it.

So then there are two meanings of symptom: the symptom is a truth value, it is the function that results from the introduction, at a certain historical time that I have sufficiently dated, of the notion of symptom. The symptom does not cure itself in the same way in Marxist dialectic and in psychoanalysis. In psychoanalysis, it has to do with something which is the translation into words of its truth value. That this should give rise to what is experienced by the analyst as a being of refusal, in no way allows it to be (27) settled whether this feeling deserves to be retained in any way. Since moreover, in other registers, precisely the ones that I evoked earlier it is to quite different procedures that the symptom has to yield. I am not in the process of giving preference to any one of

these procedures and all the less so in that what I want you to understand, is that there is another dialectic than the one that is imputed to history.

Between the question: is psychoanalytic incomprehension a symptom and is the incomprehension of Lacan a symptom, I would place a third: mathematical incomprehension. This is something that shows itself, there are people, and even young people, because this is only of interest among the young for whom this dimension of mathematical incomprehension exists. Is it a symptom? It is certain that when one interests oneself in these subjects who manifest mathematical incomprehension, fairly widespread still in our time, one has the feeling – I use the word feeling just as earlier, for what analysts have made of resistance – one has the feeling that it comes, in the subject who is the prey of mathematical incomprehension, from something which is like a dissatisfaction, a maladjustment, something experienced precisely in the handling of the truth value.

The subjects who are the prey of mathematical incomprehension expect more truth than the reduction to these values that are called, at least in the first steps of mathematics, deductive values. The articulations that are described as proofs seem to them to lack something which is precisely at the level of a requirement of truth. This bivalency: true or false, certainly and, let us say, not unreasonably, leaves them baffled and up to a certain point one can say that there is a certain distance between the truth and what we can call on this occasion a figure (*le chiffre*). The figure is nothing other than the writing, the writing of its value. That bivalency is expressed depending on the cases by 0 and 1 or by T and F, the result is the same. This by reason of something which is required or appears to be required by certain subjects. And you were able to see or to hear that earlier I did not speak in any way at all about a content – in the name of what would one call it by this name, because content does not mean anything, as long as one cannot say what is at stake. A truth does not have a content, a truth that is described as one. It is truth or it is a semblance, a distinction that has nothing to do with the opposition between the true and the false. Because if it is a semblance, it is a semblance of truth precisely. And what mathematical incomprehension comes from, is that precisely the question is posed as to whether truth or semblance, is not – allow me to say it, I will take it up again more learnedly in a different context – are not all one.

In any case this point is not going to be opposed by the logical development which has been made in mathematics. Because if you read at any point whatsoever the texts of Mr (28) Bertrand Russell, who moreover took the trouble to say it explicitly, mathematics is very precisely what busies itself with statements about which it is impossible to say whether they have a truth, or even if they mean anything whatsoever. This indeed is a rather extreme fashion of saying that all the care precisely that he has lavished on the rigour of putting mathematical deduction into shape, is something that is assuredly addressed to something quite different to the truth, but has an aspect that is all the same not unrelated to it. Otherwise there would be no need to separate it out in such an emphatic fashion!

It is certain that, not identically to what is involved in mathematics, logic, which strives

precisely to justify mathematical articulation with respect to truth, culminates or more exactly is affirmed, is affirmed at our epoch in this propositional logic. About which the least that can be said is that it appears strange that the truth being posited as a value which constitutes the denotation of a given proposition, of this proposition, it is posited in the same logic that it can only generate another true proposition. That implication in a word is defined there from this strange genealogy from which it would result that the true once it has been reached could not in any way by anything that it implies turn into the false. It is quite clear that, however slight the chances that a false proposition – which on the contrary is completely accepted – generates a true proposition, ever since the time that things have been proposed in this alleyway that we are told is one of no return, for a long time there should have been nothing other than true propositions!

In truth, it is curious, it is strange, it is only tolerable by reason of the existence of mathematics, by its existence independently of logic that such a statement could hold up even for an instant. There is somewhere here a confusion which ensures that assuredly the mathematicians themselves are so uneasy about it, that everything that has effectively stimulated this logical research concerning mathematics, everything at every one of its points, this research has come from a feeling that non-contradiction cannot in any way suffice to ground truth, which does not mean that it is not to be wished for, even required. But that it is sufficient, assuredly not.

But let us not go any further along this path this evening because this was only an introductory talk to a handling which is precisely the one whose path I am proposing this year to make you follow. This confusion about mathematical incomprehension is likely to lead us to the idea that as regards the symptom – mathematical incomprehension – it is in short the love of truth, as I might say, for itself that conditions it.

This is something different than the refusal that I spoke about earlier, it is even the contrary. It is even as I might say a positive tropism for truth at a point where people have succeeded in completely conjuring away its pathetic side. Only there happens here, in a certain way of presenting mathematics, which, to illustrate the effort described as logical, something that is nonetheless presented in a way that can be handled, is up to date and with no other logical introduction, in a simple and elementary way in which (29) obviousness, as one says, allows a lot of steps to be conjured away. It is curious that, at the point, among the young, at which mathematical incomprehension manifests itself it is no doubt around a certain void that is felt about what is involved in the truth of what is articulated, that these phenomena of incomprehension happen. And that one would be quite wrong to think that mathematics is something which in effect has succeeded in emptying out everything that is involved in the relationship to truth of its pathetic aspect. Because there is not just elementary mathematics and we know enough history to know the pain, the trouble generated at the moment of their ex-cogitation by the terms and the functions of infinitesimal calculus just to stay with that. Indeed later the regularising, the confirmation, the logicising of the same terms and the same methods, indeed the introduction of a number raised higher and higher, more and more elaborated of what we must at this level call the *mathème*. And to know that assuredly the aforesaid *mathèmes* do not involve in any way a retrograde genealogy, do not involve any possible

presentation for which one would need to use the term historical. Greek mathematics shows very well the points where even there where it had the chance, by procedures described as those of exhaustion, to approach what became of it at the moment of the emergence of infinitesimal calculus, it nevertheless did not reach it. It did not take the path and if it is easy, starting from infinitesimal calculus, or to put it better from its perfect reduction, to situate, to classify, subsequently what was involved at once about the procedures of proof of Greek mathematics and also the impasses that they were committed to in advance as perfectly locatable afterwards, if this is how things are, we see that it is absolutely not true to talk about the *mathème* as something which is in any way detached from the requirement of truth. It is indeed in the course of innumerable debates, of debates about words, that the emergence at every phase of history – and if I spoke about Leibniz and of Newton implicitly, indeed about those who with incredible daring in some element or other of encounter or adventure in connection with the term of *tour de force* or *coup de chance* is recalled, they were preceded, for example, by an Isaac Barrow. And this is renewed at a time very close to us and with the Cantorian effraction where assuredly nothing is done to diminish what I called earlier the dimension of the pathetic which was able to go in Cantor's case as far as a threat of madness. And I do not think either that it is enough to tell us that it was because of his career disappointments, of oppositions, indeed of the insults that the aforesaid Cantor received from the leading university people of his epoch. We are not in the habit of finding madness motivated by objective persecutions – assuredly everything is designed for us to make us question ourselves about the function of the *mathème*. Mathematical incomprehension must then be something different to what I called this requirement which emerged in a way from a formal void. Far from that, it is not sure, to judge from what happens in the history of mathematics, that it is not from some relationship to the *mathème*, even the most elementary one, with a dimension of truth that incomprehension is generated. It is perhaps the most sensitive who understand the least. We already have a kind of indication, of notion of that at the level of Socratic dialogues of what remains to us of (30) them, of what we can presume about them. There are people after all for whom perhaps the encounter precisely with truth, plays a role that the aforesaid Greeks borrowed a metaphor for. It has the same effect as an encounter with the torpedo fish: it numbs them. I would point out to you that this idea which comes – I mean in the metaphor itself – from the contribution, the confused contribution no doubt, but that of course is what it is used for, a metaphor, it is to give rise to a meaning which goes far beyond its means, the torpedo fish, and then the one who touches it and who drops dead from it is obviously - this was not yet known at the moment when the metaphor was constructed - it is obviously the encounter of two fields not in harmony with one another, field being taken in the proper sense here of magnetic field.

I would point out to you also that everything that we have touched on here and that culminates at the word field – this is the word that I used when I said: *Function and field of speech and language*, the field is constituted by what I called the other day in a slip: *lalangue*. This field considered in this way making of it the key to incomprehension as such is precisely what allows us to exclude from it any psychology. The fields in question are constituted from the real, just as real as the torpedo fish and the finger that has just touched it, by an innocent. It is not because we tackled the *mathème* along the

paths of the symbolic that it does not have anything to do with the real. The truth in question in psychoanalysis, is what, by means of language, I understand by the function of psychoanalysis. It is what by means of language, I understand by the function of the word, approaches but in an approach that is in no way that of knowledge, but I would say, of something like induction, in the sense that this term has in the constitution of a field, from the induction of something which is quite real, even though we cannot speak about it as a signifier. I mean that have no other existence than that of the signifier.

What am I talking about? Well then, about nothing other than what is called in common language men and women. We do not know anything real about these men and these women as such, because this is what is at stake: it is not a matter of dogs and bitches. It is a matter of what is really involved for those who belong to each of the sexes starting from the speaking being. There is not a shadow of psychology here. Men and women are real. But we are not able to articulate in connection with them the slightest thing in *lalangue* that has the slightest relationship with this real. If psychoanalysis does not teach us that, what does it say, because it is always coming back to it!

This is what I am stating when I say that there is no sexual relationship for beings who speak. Because their speech as it functions, depends, is conditioned as speech by the fact that the sexual relationship, is very precisely forbidden as speech to function in it in any way that allows us to account for it. I am not in the process of according the primacy to anything in this correlation: I am not saying that speech exists because there is no sexual relationship. That would be quite absurd. I am not saying either that there is no sexual (31) relationship because speech is there. But there is certainly not a sexual relationship because speech functions at this level which is found, through psychoanalytic discourse, to be opened up as specifying the speaking being. Namely, the importance, the pre-eminence in everything that is going to ensure at its level the semblance of sex, semblance of simple men and women as it was put after the last war. They were called nothing else: *les bonnes-femmes*. That is not quite how I will speak about them because I am not an existentialist.

In any case, the constitution through the fact that the individual, that we were talking about earlier, that this speaking individual, the fact that it is only from the word that there proceeds this essential point is absolutely, on this occasion, to be distinguished from the sexual relationship, which is called enjoyment, the enjoyment that is called sexual and which alone determines in the individual I am speaking about what it is a matter of obtaining, namely, copulation. Psychoanalysis confronts us with the fact that everything depends on this pivotal point that is called sexual enjoyment and which finds itself – it is only the remarks that we gather in the psychoanalytic experience that allow us to affirm it – which finds itself not being able to be articulated in a copulation that is a little sustained, even a fleeting one except by requiring to encounter something which only has a dimension from the *lalangue* and which is called castration.

The opaqueness of this core that is called sexual enjoyment and of which I would point out to you that the articulation in this register which has to be explored called castration only dates from the recent historical emergence of psychoanalytic discourse. Here, it

seems to me, is something that well deserves that one should work at formulating its *mathème*. Namely, this something that is proved otherwise than from what is undergone, undergone in a sort of shameful secret, which because it has been made public by psychoanalysis, remains nonetheless just as shameful, just as deprived of an outcome. Namely, that the entire dimension of enjoyment, namely, the relationship of this speaking being to his body – because there is no other possible definition of enjoyment – no one seems to have glimpsed that the question is at this level. What in the animal species enjoys his body and how. Certainly we have traces of it among our cousins the chimpanzees who delouse one another with every sign of the liveliest interest. And so? Why is it that in the speaking being, this relationship to enjoyment that one calls, by reason of the fact that it is the discovery of psychoanalysis is much more developed than sexual enjoyment emerges earlier than the maturity of the same name. This seems to be enough to render infantile everything that is involved in this range, a short one no doubt, but not without variety, of enjoyments that are qualified as perverse. That this should closely relate to this curious enigma which ensures that one can only operate on that with what seems to be directly linked to the operation to which sexual enjoyment is supposed to aim at, that one cannot in anyway engage on this path whose ways are determined by speech, without it being articulated in castration, it is curious that it was never before a ...I do not mean an attempt, because, as Picasso said: “I do not seek: I find”, I do not attempt, I settle, before I settled the key point, the nodal point was *lalangue* and in the field of *lalangue*, the operation of speech. There is not a single analytic interpretation (32) which does not exist to give to some proposition that is encountered its relation to an enjoyment, to what ...what does psychoanalysis mean? That it is speech that assures the dimension of truth to this relation of enjoyment. And again it remains no less assured that it cannot in any way say it completely. It can only, as I put it, half-say this relation, and forge a semblance of it, very precisely what is called – without being able to say very much about it precisely: people make something of it, but people cannot say much about it, it seems on the type – the semblance of what is called a man or a woman.

Some two years ago, I managed along the path that I am attempting to trace out, to articulate what is involved in four discourses, not historical discourses, not mythology - the nostalgia of Rousseau, indeed the Neolithic one are things that only interest University discourse. It is never so happy, this discourse, than at the level of knowledge that no longer means anything to anybody, because the University discourse is constituted by making of knowledge a semblance. Here it is a matter of discourses which constitute in a tangible way, something real. This frontier relationship between the Symbolic and the Real, we live in it, make no mistake: the Master discourse still holds up, and how! I think you can put your finger sufficiently on it for me not to need to indicate to you what I could have done if it had amused me, namely, if I was seeking popularity. Show you the little turning point somewhere which makes of it the discourse of the Capitalist. It is exactly the same thing, simply it works better, it functions better, you are all the better screwed! Anyway, you don't even think about it. Just as for the University discourse, you are firing on all cylinders, in believing to have created dismay, the month of May! Let us say no more about the Hysterical discourse, it is scientific discourse itself. This is very important to know to make little prognostications. This in no way diminishes the merits of the scientific discourse.

If there is one thing certain, it is that I was only able to articulate these three discourses in a *mathème* because the analytic discourse had emerged. And when I talk about analytic discourse, I am no longer in the process of talking to you about something of the order of knowledge. People should have noticed for a long time that the discourse of knowledge is a sexual metaphor and see what follows from that, namely, that since there is no sexual relationship, there is no knowledge. People have lived for centuries with sexual mythology, and naturally, a large share of analysts ask for nothing better than to delight in the dear memory of an inconsistent epoch. But this is not what is at stake. What is said is said, I wrote on the first line of something that I am in the process of cogitating to let you have it at some time, what is said is a fact (*de fait*): from the fact of saying it.

Only there is an obstacle; everything is in it, everything emerges from the obstacle. It is what I call l'*Hachose* – I put an '*H*' in front so that you could see that there is an apostrophe, but precisely I ought not to put it there, it ought to be called the *Hachose*, in (33) short the *objet-a*. The **o-object**, is certainly an object, but only in the sense that it is substituted definitively for every notion of the object as supported by a subject. This is not the relationship described as that of knowledge. It is rather curious, when one studies it in detail, to see that this relationship to knowledge, has finished up by bringing it about that one of these terms, the subject in question, was no longer anything more than the shadow of a shadow, a completely vanished reflection. The **o-object** is only an object in the sense that it is there to affirm that nothing of the order of knowledge fails to produce it. It is a quite different thing than knowing. That psychoanalytic discourse can only be articulated by showing that this **o-object**, for there to be a chance of an analyst, it is necessary that a certain operation, that is called the psychoanalytic experience, has brought this **o-object** to the place of the semblance. Naturally, it could absolutely not occupy this place if the other reducible elements in a signifying chain did not occupy the others. If the subject and what I call the master signifier, and what I designate by the body of knowledge were not distributed at the four points of a tetrahedron. This is what, to put you at ease, I drew on the board in the form of little things that cross over like that, within a square with one side missing, it is obvious that there would be absolutely no discourse. And what defines a discourse, what opposes it to speech, I say, because this is what the *mathème* is, I say that this is what determines for a speaking approach, what determines the real. And this real I am talking about is absolutely unapproachable, except along a mathematical path. Namely, in mapping out – for that, there are no other paths than this latest discourse of the four, the one that I define as the analytic discourse and which permits in a way that it would be exaggerated to say that it is consistent. Quite the contrary, it is from a gap, and properly speaking the one that is expressed by the thematic of castration, that one can see from where there is assured the Real from which all this discourse stems.

The Real of which I speak – and this in conformity with everything that is accepted – but this only if it were by the deaf! – accepted in analysis, namely that nothing is assured as regards what seems to be the end, the finality of sexual enjoyment, namely, population, without these steps very confusedly glimpsed, but never separated out into a structure comparable to that of a logic and which is called castration.

It is very precisely in this that the logical effort ought to be a model, indeed a guide for us. And do not make me talk about isomorphism. And the fact that there is somewhere a gallant little wretch from the university who finds that my statements on truth, the semblance, enjoyment and the surplus enjoying, to be formalistic, indeed hermeneutic... why not? What is at stake is what is called in mathematics rather – curious thing – this is a happy encounter – a generative operation. We will try this year, somewhere other than here, to approach like that prudently, from a distance and step by step – because you must not expect, on this occasion, what may be produced in terms of sparks, but they will come.

The **o-object** that I spoke to you about earlier, is not an object: it is what allows these four discourses to be tetrahedric, each of these discourses in its own way – and this of course is what cannot be seen, cannot be seen by whom? A curious thing, analysts. The (34) fact is the **o-object**, is not a point that is localised somewhere the four others or the four that they form together, it is the construction, it is the tetrahedric *mathème* of these discourses.

The question then is the following: from what are these *achosiques* beings, the incarnated **o**'s that we all are in different ways, most a prey to the incomprehension of my discourse? There, it is true the question can be put. Whether it is a symptom or whether it is not one, is a secondary matter. But what is very certain, is that theoretically it is at the level of the psychoanalyst that the incomprehension of my discourse must dominate. And precisely because it is the analytic discourse. Perhaps it is not the privilege of the analytic discourse. After all, even those who, the one who pushed furthest and who obviously missed it because he did not know about the **o-object**, but has pushed furthest the discourse of the Master before I brought the **o-object** into the world, is Hegel to name him. He always told us that if there was someone who understood nothing about the discourse of the Master, it was the Master. As a result, of course, he remains in psychology, because there is no Master, there is the Master-signifier and the Master follows on as best he can. That does not favour in any way the comprehension of the discourse of the Master in the case of the Master. It is in this sense that the psychology of Hegel is correct.

It would be also, of course, very difficult to sustain that the hysteric, at the point where she is placed, namely, at the level of the semblance, that she is in the best place there to understand her discourse. Otherwise there would have been no need for the sudden change brought about by psychoanalysis. Let us say nothing, of course, about university people! No one has ever believed that they would have the cheek to sustain an alibi so prodigiously manifest as is the whole of the university discourse.

So then why would analysts have the privilege of being accessible to what is the *mathème* of their discourse? There is every reason on the contrary for them to install themselves in a sort of status whose interest precisely - but these are not things that can be done in a day – whose interest in effect might be to demonstrate what results in these inconceivable theoretical lucubrations which fill the journals of the psychoanalytic world.

That is not the important thing. The important thing is to interest oneself and I will try no doubt to tell you what this interests consists in. It is absolutely necessary to exhaust all its aspects. I have just given an indication of what may be involved in the status of the analyst at the level of the semblance, and it is not, of course, any less important to articulate in its relationship to truth. And the most interesting thing – make no mistake, it is one of the only meanings that can be given to the word interest – is the relationship that this discourse has to enjoyment, enjoyment that, when all is said and done sustains it, that conditions it, that justifies it, justifies it very precisely from the fact that sexual enjoyment...I would not like to end by giving you the idea that I know what man is.

(35) There are surely people who need me to toss them this little fish, I can toss it to them after all, because this does not connote any kind of promise of progress ...*ou pire*. I can tell them that it is very probably this in effect that specifies this animal species: it is a quite anomalous and bizarre relationship with its enjoyment. This may have some little extensions on the side of biology, why not? What I note simply, is that analysts have not made the slightest progress with regard to the biological reference of analysis, I underline it very often. They have not made the slightest progress, for the simple reason that it is very precisely the anomalous point where an enjoyment, which, an unbelievable thing, biologists can be found in the name of the fact of this limping and also amputated enjoyment, castration itself which seems in man to have a certain relationship to copulation, to the conjunction then, of what biologically, but without, of course, this conditioning absolutely anything in the semblance, which in the case of man culminates at the conjunction of sexes. There were then biologists who extended this absolutely problematic relationship to animal species and display to us – there was a big book on that, which received immediately the favourable patronage of my dear comrade Henri Ey, about whom I spoke to you with the tenderness that you were able to sense the last time – perversion in the animal species, in the name of what? That the animal species copulate, but what proves to us that it is in the name of some enjoyment or other, perverse or not? You really have to be a man to believe that to copulate brings about enjoyment! So then there are entire volumes on it to explain that there are some who do that with hooks, with their *pa-pattes* [?], and then there are others who send things, contraptions, sperm into the interior of the central cavity as in the flea, I believe, and then people are astonished what enjoyment they must have in doing such things!!! If we were to do that with a syringe in the peritoneum it would be voluptuous. This is how people believe they are constructing something properly. While the first thing you can put your finger on, is very precisely the disassociation and that it is obvious that the question, the only question, the very interesting question, is to know how something that we can for a moment say is correlative to this disjunction of sexual enjoyment, something that I call *lalangue*, obviously this has a relationship with something real, but from the fact that this can lead us to *mathèmes* that allow us to build up science, that then, that is really the question. If we were to look a little bit more closely at how science is made up – try to do that one little time, a tiny little approach – *Science and truth*... There was a poor chap, on one occasion whose guest I was at the time, who was sick of hearing me talking about this, and after all this is how people can see that my discourse is understood, he is the only one who was sick of it! He was a man who showed himself in a thousand ways not to be someone very able. Anyway, me, I have no kind of passion for the mentally

handicapped, I distinguish myself in this respect from my dear friend Maud Mannoni, but since one also encounters mentally handicapped people at the Institute, I do not see why I should move. Anyway, *Science and truth* attempted to approach a little thing like that. After all, this famous science was perhaps constructed with almost nothing. In which (36) case one would better explain how things, an appearance so conditioned by a deficit that *lalangue* can lead you straight there.

There you are, these are the questions that perhaps I will tackle this year. Anyway I will do my best.....*Ou pire!*

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

6th January 1972

We do not know whether the series is the source of serious. Nevertheless, I find myself confronted with this question which is posed by the fact that obviously I cannot continue here what elsewhere is defined as my teaching, by what is called my seminar. Even if only because not everyone is aware of the fact that I hold a little conversation here every month. And since there are people who sometimes travel rather far to follow what I say elsewhere under the name of seminar, it would not be right, I mean to continue it here.

So then, in short, it is a matter of knowing what I am doing here. It is certain that it is not quite what I was expecting. I have been influenced by this crowd which means that those whom in fact I convoked to something that was called "The knowledge of the psychoanalyst", are not at all necessarily absent from here, but are a little swamped. To those who are here, even, I do not know whether, in alluding to this seminar, I am talking about something that they know. They must also take into account that, for example, since the last time, those that I encounter here have found themselves at it. Precisely, I have begun this seminar. I opened it up, if one is a little bit attentive and rigorous, one cannot say that this can be done in one go. In fact we have had two of them. And that is why I can say that I began it, because if there were not a second time, there would not have been a first one. This is of interest to recall something that I introduced some time ago in connection with what is called repetition. Repetition can obviously only begin at the second time, which is found, from the fact that, if there were not a second, there would not have been

a first, which finds itself therefore being the one that inaugurates repetition. It is the business of zero and 1. Only with the 1, there cannot be repetition, so that in order that there should be repetition, not for that to be opened up, it is necessary that there should be a third.

This is what seems to have been glimpsed about God. He only begins...it took some time to see it, or indeed it was always known, but it was not noted because after all we cannot swear about anything in this sense, but anyway my dear friend Kojève insisted a lot on this question of the Christian Trinity.

In any case, there is obviously a world, from the point of view of what interests us – and what interests us is analytical – between the second time which is what I thought I ought to underline with the term *Nachträglich*, what is deferred.

(40) These are obviously things that I will take up – not here – but only at my seminar, I will try to come back to it this year. It is important because that is why there is a world between what psychoanalysis contributes and what was contributed by a certain philosophical tradition which is certainly not negligible, especially when we are dealing with Plato who clearly underlined the value of the dyad. I mean that starting from it, everything collapses. He must have known what it was that was collapsing, but he did not say. In any case, that has nothing to do with analytic *Nachträglich*, the second moment. As regards the third whose importance I have just underlined, it is not simply for us that it takes it on, it is for God Himself.

At one time, and in connection with a certain tapestry that was being displayed at the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, which was very beautiful, and that I strongly urged everyone to go and see, you saw the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit who were represented strictly by the same figure, the figure of a rather noble and bearded personage. The three of them were looking at one another, that makes more of an impression than to see someone before his own image. From three on this begins to have a certain effect.

From our point of view as subjects, what is it that can begin with three for God himself? This is an old question that I posed very quickly at the time when I began my teaching. I posed it very quickly and then I never renewed it, I will tell you right away why. It is because it is obviously only starting from three that he can believe in himself.

Because it is rather curious, it is a question that was never posed, to the best of my knowledge, does God believe in himself? This would nevertheless be a good example for us. It is quite striking that this question that I posed rather early and that I do not think vain, should not have given rise, apparently at least, to any activity, at least among my co-religionists, I mean those who are instructed under the shadow of the Trinity. I understand that for the others, this did not strike them, but for these, truly, they are ‘*incorreligionible*’.

Nothing can be done about it. Nevertheless I had there some famous people from the hierarchy that is called Christian. The question can be asked of whether it is because they are so much into it – and I have trouble believing this – that they understand nothing or – something that is much more probable – their atheism is so total that this question has no effect on them. This is the solution that I tend towards. You cannot say that it is what I called earlier a guarantee of seriousness because this can only be an atheism, in a certain way a somnolence, which is rather widespread. In other words, they have not the slightest idea of the dimension of the milieu that they have to swim in. They survive – which is not quite the same thing - they survive thanks to the fact that they hold hands. So then like that by the hand...there is a poem by Paul Fort of this type: “*If all the girls in the world – that is how it begins – held hands etc...they could encircle the whole world*”. It is a mad idea, because in reality the girls of the world have always dreamt only of that, but the boys on the contrary – he speaks about (41) them also - in this the boys understand one another. They all hold one another’s hands. They all hold one another’s hands, all the more because if they did not hold one another’s hands, each one would have to confront a girl all alone and that is something they do not like. They have to hold one another’s hands. For girls it is a different business. They are drawn into it in the context of certain social rituals. Consult “*The dances and legends of Ancient China*”. This is...it is chic, it is even Che King – not shocking – it is Che King. It was written by someone called Granet who had a kind of genius that has absolutely nothing to do either with ethnology – he was incontestably an ethnologist – nor with sinology – he was incontestably a sinologist. So then this man called Granet put forward then that, in Ancient China, girls and boys confronted one another in equal numbers. Why not believe him? In practice, in what we know in our own day, boys were always there in a certain number, more than ten, for the reason that I put before you earlier, because to be alone, each and every one confronted with his girl, I explained to you: it is too risky. For the girls it is different things. Since we are no longer at the time of Che King, they form groups of two, they become best friends with a friend up to the point, of course, that they manage to tear a lad out of his regiment. Yes, Mister! Whatever you may think about it and however superficial these remarks may appear to you, they are grounded, grounded on my experience as an analyst. When they have turned a chap away from his regiment, naturally they drop their friend, who moreover does not get on any the worse for all that.

Yes! Anyway with all of that I have let myself go a little. Where do I think I am! It came to me like that from thread to needle, because of Granet and this astonishing story of what alternates in the poems of ‘Che King’, this choir of boys opposed to the choir of girls. I allowed myself to be drawn along like that to talking about my analytic experience of which I gave a lightening glimpse, because it is not the foundation of things. Here is not where I am going to expose the foundation of things. But where am I, that I believe myself, to speak in short, able to speak about the foundation of things. I believe myself to be even with human beings or even the genuine article! That is how, that nevertheless is how I address myself to them. But it is that, it was talking about my seminar that drew me along, towards fundamental things. Since after all, you are perhaps the same, I spoke as if I were speaking to them, what led me to speak as if I were

talking about you and – who knows? – that leads to speaking as if I were speaking to you. This was nevertheless not my intention. It was not at all my intention because, if I have come to speak at Sainte Anne, it was to speak to psychiatrists, and very obviously, you are very obviously not all psychiatrists. Anyway after all, what is certain, is that it is a parapraxis. It is a parapraxis which then at every instant runs the risk of succeeding. Namely, that it may be that after all I am speaking to someone. How know to whom I am speaking? Especially since when all is said and done you count in this affair, because I try... You count at least in the fact that I am not speaking where I intended to speak because I intended to speak in the Magnan Amphitheatre and I am speaking in the chapel.

(42) **Did you hear that? I am speaking in the chapel!** That is the answer. I am speaking in the chapel, that means to the wall!

This parapraxis is more and more successful! I know now who I have come to speak to: to what I was always talking to in Sainte Anne, to the wall! I have no need to come back to it, it was some time ago. From time to time I came back with some title of a lecture, about what I am teaching, for example, and then some others, I am not going to give a list. I was always talking to the wall.

Lacan – Who has something to say?

X: We ought all leave if you are talking to the wall.

Lacan – Who is talking to me there?

X – The wall.

Now I am going to give a commentary on the fact that talking to the wall interests some people. That was why I was asking just now who spoke. It is certain that the walls, in what is called – on what was called in the time when people were honest, an asylum, a clinical asylum, as was said – walls all the same are not nothing.

I will say more: this chapel appears to me as a place that is extremely well made for us to touch on what is involved when I talk about walls. This kind of concession of the layman for those interned, a chapel with its furnishings from well meaning people, of course. Not that it is extraordinary, huh, from the architectural point of view, but anyway it is a chapel with the arrangements that one can expect of it. People forget too often that architecture, whatever effort is made to avoid it, is designed for that: to construct walls. And that walls, faith...it is all the same very striking that since what I was speaking about earlier, namely, Christianity, leans perhaps through it a little bit too much towards Hegelianism it is

designed to circumscribe a void. How we can imagine that this is what the walls of the Parthenon and some other baubles of the kind whose ruined walls remain to us fulfilled is very difficult to know. What is certain, is that we have absolutely no testimony of it. We have the feeling that throughout this whole period that we pinpoint with this modern etiquette of paganism, there were things which happened on different feast days that are called, whose names have been preserved because there were Annals which dated things like that: “*It was at the great Panathemes that Adymant and Glaucon....etc*” you know what follows “*encountered someone called Cephal*”. What was happening there? It is absolutely unbelievable that we don’t have the slightest idea about it!

(43) On the contrary as regards the void we have a very good idea, because everything that has been bequeathed to us, bequeathed by a tradition that is called philosophical, puts the void in a very special place. There is even someone called Plato who made his whole idea of the world pivot around that, make no mistake, he is the one who invented the cave. He made a dark room of it. There was something happening outside, and all of this, passing through a little hole, created all the shadows. It is curious, it is here perhaps that we might have a little thread, some little trace. It is obviously a theory that allows us to put our finger on what is involved in the **o**-object.

Just suppose that Plato’s cave is the wall where my voice makes itself heard. It is obvious that the walls make me enjoy! And that is why you all enjoy, each and every one of you, by participation. Seeing me talk to the wall is something that cannot leave you indifferent. And think about it: if you suppose that Plato was a structuralist, he would have noticed what was really involved in the cave, namely, that it is no doubt there, that there language was born. Matters have to be turned upside down, because, of course, man has been crying for a long time, like any other one of those little animals who mew for their mother’s milk. But to notice that he is capable of doing something, which of course, he understands for a long time – because in the babbling, in the confusion, everything happens – but in order to choose, he must have noticed that K’s resonates better from the back, the back of the cave, from the back wall, and that B’s and P’s come out better at the entrance, this is where he heard their resonance.

I am letting myself go this evening, because I am talking to the wall. You must not believe that what I am saying to you here, means that I got nothing other from Sainte Anne. I only managed to speak at Sainte Anne very late on. I mean that the idea of it never came to me except having to carry out some trivial duties, when I was a *chef de clinique*. I would tell some little stories to those on placement, it is even there that I learned to put myself squarely behind the stories that I tell. I told them one day a story about the mother of a patient, a charming homosexual that I was analysing, and, without being able to do otherwise than seeing the tortoise in question coming, she cried out: “And I thought that he was impotent!”. I was telling this story, ten people among the...the only people there were on placement, recognised her immediately! It could be nobody else but her. You know what a man of the world is! That naturally

created a stir, because I was reproached for it, even though I had said nothing other than this sensational scream. Ever since that inspired me with a lot of prudence in terms of the communication of cases. But anyway that again is a little digression, let us take up our thread.

Before speaking at Sainte Anne, anyway, I had done a lot of different things there, even if it were only to come there and fulfill my function and of course, for me, for my discourse, everything starts from there. Because it is obvious that, if I am talking to the wall, I started on it rather late, namely, that before hearing what they sent back to me, namely, my own voice preaching in the desert – this is a reply to the person...well before that, I heard, I heard (44) things that were quite decisive, anyway, that were such for me. But that, that is my own business. I mean that the people who are here under the heading of being within the walls, are quite capable of making themselves understood, provided one has the proper ears for it!

In a word, and to pay tribute to her for something that she is not at all personally responsible for, it is as everyone knows, around this patient that I pinpointed by the name of Aimée – which was not her's, of course – that I was drawn towards psychoanalysis.

She was not the only one of course. There were some others before and then there are also a certain number that I allowed to speak. It is in this that there consists what is called my case presentations. It sometimes happens that afterwards I speak about it with some people who have attended this sort of exercise, anyway this presentation which consists in listening to them, which obviously is not something that happens to them at every street corner. It sometimes happens that in speaking afterwards to some people who were there to accompany me, to pick up whatever they could, it sometimes happens, in speaking about them afterwards to learn about them, because it is not immediate, one must obviously harmonise one's voice to what the walls reflect back.

It is indeed around this that there is going to turn what I will perhaps try this year to question: it is the relationship of something to which I give a lot of importance, namely, logic. I learned very early on that logic could make you odious to the world. It was at a time when I was studying someone called Abelard, drawn, God knows, by a whiff of something! For my part, I cannot say that logic made me absolutely odious to anyone at all except to some psychoanalysts, because after all...it is perhaps because I managed to seriously sound out its meaning.

I managed to do so all the more easily, in that I absolutely do not believe in common sense. There is sense, but there is no common one. There is probably not one among you who understands me in the same sense. Moreover, I strive to ensure that the access to this sense is not too easy, so that you have to put something

of yourselves into it, which is a salubrious and even therapeutic secretion. Secrete sense vigorously and you will see how much more easy life becomes! [*sens*: sense or meaning]

That is why I noticed the existence of the **o**-object which each of you has the potential germ of. What gives it its power and at the same time the power of each of you in particular, is that the **o**-object is completely foreign to the question of meaning. Meaning is a little daubing added onto this **o**-object to which each one of you has your own attachment.

It has nothing to do with either sense or reason. The question on the agenda, is what reason has to do with that to which, anyway I ought to say that many people are inclined to reduce it: to reduce it to “*raison*”. Write: R.E.S.O.N. write it out. Do it to please me. It is (45) a spelling created by Francis Ponge who, since he is a poet, and since he is a great poet, is someone that we ought in this question, take account of in what he tells us. He is not the only one. It is a very grave question, that I have only seen seriously formulated, outside of this poet, by mathematicians. Namely, what reason - that we will be satisfied for the moment to grasp as part of the grammatical system - has to do with something that is necessary – I am not saying intuitive, because this would mean falling back onto the slope of intuition, namely, something visual – but with something precisely that resonates.

Is what resonates the origin of *res* of what makes reality? It is a question, a question that touches very properly speaking on everything that we can extract from language, under the heading of logic. Everyone knows that it is not enough and that it required some time – one could have seen it coming for some time, since Plato precisely – to bring mathematics into play. And it is there, it is there that the question is posed of where to centre this real to which logical questioning makes us have recourse to and which is found to be in mathematics. There are mathematicians who say that one can in no way orientate oneself on this junction that is described as formalism, this logical mathematical point of junction. That there is something beyond, to which after all homage is only rendered by all these intuitive references from which this mathematics believed it could purify itself and which seeks beyond for what *raison*, to have recourse to for what is at stake, namely, the Real. This evening is not the time, of course, that I am going to be able to tackle the matter here.

What I can say, is that it is from a certain angle which is that of a logic that I was able in a journeying which, to start from my patient Aimée, culminated at my second last year of seminar, to state under the title of four discourses towards which there converge the target of a certain actuality, that I was able, along this path to do what? To give at least the reason for walls. Because whoever inhabits these walls, these walls here, the walls of a clinical asylum, it would be well to know that what is situated and defined by psychiatry as such, is its situation with respect to these walls, these walls through which the lay world brought about in itself the exclusion of madness and what it means. This can only be tackled along the path

of an analysis of discourse. In truth, analysis was so little designed before me that it is true to say that there was never on the part of psychoanalysts the slightest discordance that arose with regard to the position of psychiatry. And that nevertheless, in my *Ecrits*, one can see collected something that I made understood, before 1950, under the title of *Remarks on psychic causality*, I rose up against any definition of mental sickness which took cover behind this construction made of a semblance which, in pinpointing itself as organo-dynamic left nonetheless entirely to one side what was involved, in the segregation of mental illness. Namely, something which is different, which is linked to a certain discourse, the one that I pinpoint as being the discourse of the Master. Again history (46) shows that this discourse has survived in a way that is profitable for everyone, up to a certain point at which it became by reason of a tiny slippage which happened unnoticed for those involved, the thing that specifies it since then as the discourse of the capitalist, of which we would have not the slightest kind of idea if Marx had not busied himself in completing it, in giving it its subject, the proletariat. Thanks to which the discourse of capitalism spreads everywhere that the form of the Marxist state reigns.

What distinguishes the discourse of capitalism is this: the *Verwerfung*, the rejection, the rejection outside of all the fields of the symbolic with what I already said this has as a consequence: the rejection of what? Of castration. Every order, every discourse that has a kinship with capitalism leaves to one side what we will call simply the things of love, my good friends. You must understand, huh, that is simply nothing!

This indeed is the reason why two centuries after this slippage – let us call it the Calvinist one after all, why not – castration has finally made its disruptive entry in the form of the analytic discourse. Naturally analytic discourse has not yet been able to give even an outline articulation of it, but anyway it has multiplied its metaphor and it has noticed that all metonymies emerge from it.

There you are! It is in the name of this, carried by a kind, by a sort of brouhaha which happened somewhere on the side of psychoanalysts, that I was led to introduce what was obvious in the psychoanalytic novelty. Namely, that it was a matter of language and that it was a new discourse.

As I told you, the *o*-object in person, namely, this position into which one cannot even say that the analyst brings himself: he is brought, he is brought there by his analysand...the question that I am posing is: how can an analysand ever want to become a psychoanalyst. It is unthinkable. They come to it like marbles in certain games of tric-trac, like that, that you know well, which finish by falling into the hole. They come to it without having the slightest idea of what is happening to them, anyway once they are there they are there and at that moment all the same something awakens. That is why I proposed that it should be studied.

In any case, when this storm happened among the marbles, you cannot imagine the gaiety with which I wrote this *Function and field of speech and language*. How did it come about that I welcomed like that,

among all other sorts of sensible things, a sort of exergue in the style of a jingle, that you will find in...you only have to look into part 4, as far as I remember, it is something that I found in an almanac...huh...it was called: “Paris in the year 2000”. It is not without talent! It is not without talent even though we have never heard any more about the name of the chap whose name I quote – I am honest – and who tells us this thing that in the end has only...that comes here into this business of ‘function and field’ like a hair in a bowl of soup, it begins like this:

Between man and woman,

There is love,

Between man and love.....

You have never noticed, huh, this thing in his contraption!

There is a world.

Between man and the world

There is a wall.

You see, I had anticipated what I was going to say to you this evening, I am talking to the wall. As you will see this has no relationship with the chapter that follows. But I could not resist it. Since I am talking to the walls here, I am not giving a class, so then I am not going to tell you what, in Jacobson is enough to justify that these six verses of doggerel are all the same poetry. It is proverbial poetry, because it rhymes:

Between man and woman there is love

But of course! There is even nothing but that!

Between man and love there is a world

This is what has always been said, there is a world, like that, there is a world means: you will never get there! It seems like nothing at the beginning: “*Between man and woman there is love*”, that means that (Lacan claps his hands)...it sticks, a world, it floats, huh! But with: “*There is a wall*”...here you have understood that “*between*” means “*interposition*”. Because the “*between*” is very ambiguous. Elsewhere, at my seminar, we will speak about mesology, what has the function of “*between*”. But here we are involved in poetic ambiguity and – it must be said – it is worthwhile.

Réson! Erase *réson* – (from the board).

Love

‘Love is there, here, the little circle.’

(48) Good! What I have traced out for you there, on the board, this board that turns, is a way, a way like any other of representing the Klein bottle. It is a surface that has certain topological properties about which those who do not know about it can inform themselves. It is very like a Moebius strip, namely, to what one simply does in twisting a little strip of paper and sticking it after a half turn. Only here, this constitutes a tube, it is a tube which, at a certain place, turns back on itself. I do not mean to tell you that this is the topological definition of the thing, it is a way to image it of which I make sufficient use for some of the people who are here to know what I am talking about.

So then as you see, since all the same the hypothesis, is that between the man and the woman, this ought to give here, as Paul Fort was saying earlier, a circle, so then I put the man on the left - pure convention - the woman on the right, I could have done the inverse. Let us try to see topologically what pleased me in these six little verses of Antoine Tudal to give him his name. “*Between man and woman there is love*”. That communicates at full blast. Here, you see, it circulates! It makes common cause, the flux, the influx and everything that is added on to it when one is obsessional, for example oblativity, this sensational invention of the obsessional. Good! So then love is there, the little circle which is everywhere, except that there is a place where it is going to return on itself, and in a spectacular way! But let us remain at the first phase: between man (on the left), woman (on the right), there is love, this is the little circle. This person whom I told you was called Antoine, you must not believe in any way that I ever say a word too many, this was to tell you that he is of the masculine sex, so that he sees things from his own side.

It is a matter of seeing what is going to happen now, how it can be written, what is going to happen between the man, namely him, the “*pouète*”, the “*pouète of Pouasie*” as our dear Léon Paul Fargue put it, what is between him and love? Am I going to be forced to go back to the board again? You have seen earlier that it was a rather vacillating exercise. Good! Well then not at all, not at all: because all the same, on the left, it occupies the whole place. So then what is between him and love, is precisely what is on the other side, namely, that it is the right hand side of the schema. Between man and love there is a world, namely, that this covers the territory first of all occupied by the woman, there where I wrote W on the right hand side. That is why the one that we will call the man, on this occasion, imagines that he knows the world, in the biblical sense like that. That he knows the world, namely, quite simply this sort of dream of knowledge which arrives there in the place of what was, here in this little schema, marked by the W of the woman.

What allows us to see topologically what is really at stake, is that, subsequently, when we are told: “*between man and the world.....*” this world substituted for the volatilising of the sexual partner, how has it happened, this is what we will see afterwards, well then, “*there is a wall*”, namely, the place where this

return occurs, this (49) return that I introduced one day as signifying the junction between truth and knowledge. I did not say for my part that it was cut, it was a poet from Papouasie who says that it is a wall, it is not a wall: it is simply the locus of castration. Which means that knowledge leaves intact the field of truth, and reciprocally moreover.

Only what must be seen, is that this wall is everywhere. Because this is what defines this surface, it is that the circle or the point of return – let us say the circle, because I represented it by a circle – is homogenous over the whole surface. This is even what brings it about that you would be wrong to represent it for yourselves as an intuitively representable surface. If I were to show you right away the sort of cut that is enough to volatilise this surface as specific, topologically defined, to volatilise it instantly, you would see that it is not a surface that one can represent to oneself, but that it is something that is defined by certain coordinates – let us call them, if you wish, vectorial – such that in each one of the points of the surface the return is always there, in each of its points. In such a way that as regards the relationship between man and woman, and everything that results from it with regard to each one of the partners, namely, its position and also its knowledge, castration is everywhere.

Love, the love that this communicates, that it flows that it fuses, that it is love! Love, the good that the mother wants for her son, *l'amour*, it is enough to put in the (a) to rediscover what we put our finger on every day, it is that even between the mother and the son, the relationship that the mother has with castration, counts for something!

Perhaps, to have a healthy idea of what is involved in love, we should perhaps start from that which, when it is played out, seriously, between a man and a woman, it is always with castration at stake. This is what is castrating. And what passes by this defile of castration, is something that we will try to approach along paths that are a bit rigorous: they can only be logical, and even topological.

Here I am talking to the wall, indeed to *(a)murs*, and to *(a)murs-sements*. Elsewhere I am trying to account for it. And whatever may be the use of walls for keeping the voice in good shape, it is clear that the walls, no more than the rest, can have this intuitive support, even if we have all the resources of the art of architecture.

A curious thing, when I defined these four discourses which I spoke about earlier and which are so essential to map out what, whatever you do, you are always in some way subjects of, and subjects, I mean supposed, supposed to what happens from what happens to a signifier and it is clear that it is the master of the game and that you are not with regard to something who is another not to say the (50) Other, that you are only its supposed. You do not give it any meaning. You do not have enough of it yourselves for that. But you give a body to this signifier that represents you, the Master- signifier!

Well then! What you are in all of this, shadows of a shadow literally, you must not imagine that substance is the eternal dream of attributing it to yourselves, or indeed something other than this enjoyment from which you are cut off. How can you not see the likeness between this substantial invocation and this unbelievable myth, of which Freud himself became the reflection, of sexual enjoyment which is indeed this object which runs, which runs, like a ferret, but whose status no one is able to state except that it is this supreme status, precisely. It is the supreme point of a curve to which it gives its meaning, and it is precisely also from which the supreme escapes. And it is from being able to articulate the range of sexual enjoyments that psychoanalysis took its decisive step. What it demonstrates, is precisely that the enjoyment that one could call sexual, which might not be a semblance of the sexual, is marked by the index – nothing more, up to now – of what is only stated, of what is only announced as the index of castration.

The walls, before taking on a status, taking shape, it is here logically that I reconstruct them these S_1, S_2 , and this \circ that I played around with you for some months. This all the same is the wall behind which of course, you can put the meaning of what concerns us, of that whose meaning we believe we know: truth and semblance, enjoyment, surplus enjoyment.

But all the same, with respect to what moreover has no need of walls to be written, these terms, like four cardinal points with respect to which you have to situate what you are, the psychiatrist may well after all notice that the walls, the walls to which he is linked by a definition of discourse...because what he has to deal with is what? It is no other illness than the one defined by the law of the 30th June 1838 namely “someone who is dangerous to himself and to others”.

It is very curious, this introduction of danger into the discourse on which the social order is established. What is this danger? “Dangerous to themselves” anyway, society only lives by that, and “dangerous for others”. God knows that in this sense total liberty is left to each one.

When I see protests arising in our day against the use that was made – to call things by their name and to go quickly, it is late – in the USSR of asylums, or of something that ought to have a more pretentious name, to shelter there, let us say, opponents, but it is quite obvious that they are dangerous for the social order in which they are inserted.

(51) What separates, what distance is there, between the way of opening the doors of the psychiatric hospital in a place where the capitalist discourse is perfectly coherent with itself, and in a place like ours where it is still babbling? The first thing that perhaps psychiatrists, if some of them are here, can receive, I am not saying from my word, which has nothing to do with the business, but from the reflection of my voice from these walls, it is a matter first of knowing what specifies them as psychiatrists.

This does not prevent them, within the limits of these walls, from hearing something other than my voice. The voice, for example, of those who are interned here, because after all that may lead somewhere...even to giving rise to a correct idea of what is involved in the **o**-object.

I shared with you this evening, in short, some reflections and of course they are reflection to which my person as such is no stranger. This is what I detest most in others. Because after all, among the people who listen to me from time to time and who are called, God knows why, my pupils, one cannot say that they deprive themselves of reflecting.

The wall can always be a *muroir* [hospice for the dying ?].

This no doubt is why I came back to say things at Sainte-Anne. It is not properly speaking delusional, but all the same I kept something of these walls close to my heart.

If I was able with the passage of time, to succeed in building up with my **S**, my **\$**, my **S₁**, my **S₂** and the **o**-object, the *raison d'être*, however you may write it, perhaps after all you will not take the reflection of my voice from these walls as a simply personal reflection.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

3rd February 1972

I am going to continue then a little on the theme of the knowledge of the psychoanalyst. I am only going to do it here within the parentheses that I already opened up the first two times. I told you that it is here that I accepted, at the request of one of my pupils, to speak again here this year for the first time since 1963.

I told you the last time something that is articulated in harmony with what surrounds us: I am talking to the wall! It is true that I gave a commentary on this statement: a certain schema, the one taken up from the Klein bottle, which ought to reassure those who may feel themselves to be excluded from this formula. As I have explained for a long time what one addresses to the wall has the property of rebounding. That I speak to you in this way indirectly was certainly not designed to offend anyone, because after all, one can say that this is not a privilege of my discourse!

I would like today to clarify in connection with this wall, which is not at all a metaphor, to clarify what I may say elsewhere. Because obviously, there is a justification, in talking about knowledge, that it is not at my seminar that I do it. What is at stake in effect is not any old knowledge, but the knowledge of the psychoanalyst.

There you are! To introduce things a little, to suggest a dimension to some people, I hope, I would say that...that one cannot speak about 'love', as they say, except in an imbecilic or abject manner, which is an aggravation. Abject is the way that people speak about it in psychoanalysis. That one cannot then speak about love, but that one can write about it, ought to strike you. The letter, the love letter (*la lettre d'(a)mur*), to continue on this little ballad in six (56) verses that I commented on here the last time, it is clear that this should end up by biting its tail, and that, if it begins between man, and nobody knows what he is, "*between man and love there is a woman*" and then as you know, it continues – I am not going to start up again today – and that ought to terminate at the end, at the end there is a wall. Between man and the wall there is precisely ... love, the love letter. The best thing in this curious surge that is called love, is the letter, it is the letter that can take on strange shapes.

There was a chap, like that, 3,000 years ago, who was certainly at the acme of his success, of his success in love, who saw appearing on the wall something that I already gave a commentary on. I am not going to take it up again. *Mene, Mene*, that was said *Tequel, Oupharsim*, which is usually – I don't know why – articulated as *Mane, Thecel, Phares (Daniel, 5, 25-28)*.

When the love letter comes to us – because as I explained on a number of occasions, letters always reach their destination, happily they arrive too late, besides the fact that they are rare. It sometimes happens also that they arrive on time. These are the rare cases when rendezvous are not missed; there are not many cases in history when that happened, as to this rather ordinary Nebuchadnezzar.

In order to get into my subject, I will not push things any further, even though I may take it up again. Because this love, as I am presenting it to you, has nothing very amusing about it. Whereas I, I am unable to sustain myself otherwise than by amusing, serious or comic amusement. What I explained the last time, is that serious amusements took place elsewhere, in a place where I am sheltered, and that for here, I reserved comic amusements. I do not know whether I will be this evening quite up to it, by reason perhaps of this introduction about the love letter. Nevertheless I will try.

I explained, two years ago, something that, once it had passed into the *poubellic* domain, took on the name of quadripode. I was the one who chose this name and you could ask yourselves why I gave it such a strange name: why not quadriped or tetrapode? That would have had the advantage of not being bastardised. But in truth, I asked myself that when I was writing it, I do not know why I stayed with it. Then I subsequently asked myself how bastardised terms like that were described in my childhood, half-Latin, half-Greek. I am sure I knew what the purists called it, and then I forgot. Is there someone here who knows how there are designated these terms that are constructed for example like the word sociology or quadripode, from a Latin element and a Greek element? I am begging whoever might know it to say it! ...Well then it is not very (57) encouraging! Because since yesterday, yesterday, that means the day before yesterday – I began to look for it and since I still haven't found it, since yesterday I telephoned ten people who seemed to me to be the most likely to give me the answer... Well... Well then, *tant pis!*

My quadripodes in questions, I call them that to give you the idea that you can base yourself on them as a way, because I was in the mass media, of reassuring people a little. But in reality, on the inside I explained the following, in connection with what I isolated about the four discourses, four discourses that result from the emergence of the latest one, the discourse of the analyst. The discourse of the analyst contributes, in effect, to a certain contemporary state of thought, an order by which there can be illuminated other discourses which had emerged much earlier. I arranged them according to what is called a topology, one of the simplest topologies, but which is nonetheless a topology, a topology in the sense that it can be put into mathematics. And it is in a rudimentary fashion, namely, that it is based on the grouping of no more than four points that we will call 'monads'.

This seems completely unimportant. Nevertheless it is so strongly inscribed in the structure of our world that there is no other foundation to the fact of the space in which we live. You should carefully note that, putting four points at equal distance, is the maximum of what you can do in our space. You will never be able to put five points at an equal distance from one another. This tiny shape, that I have just recalled here, is there to make you sense what is involved. If the quadripodes are not tetrahedral but tetrade, the fact that the number of vertices are equal to that of the surfaces is linked to this same arithmetical triangle that I traced out in my last seminar (cf. 19.1.72). As you see, to establish either one or the other is not all that easy. You are used to the position on the left, so that you no longer even sense it any longer, but that on the

right is no more comfortable: imagine yourselves sitting on a tetrahedron that is set on its point. It is nevertheless from there that one must start for everything that is involved in what constitutes this type of social seat that is established in what is called a discourse. And this is what I properly put forward in my second last seminar. The tetrahedron, to call it by its present appearance, has curious properties. The fact is that it is not like this one, regular – the equal distance is only there to recall for you the properties of the number four, with regard to space – if it is indifferent, it is properly impossible for you to define a symmetry in it. Nevertheless it has this particular quality. The fact is that if its sides, namely, the little strokes that you see which join what are called in geometry vertices, if you vectorise these little strokes, namely, if you give them a direction, it is enough for you to posit as a principle that none of these vertices will be privileged in something, which would be necessarily a privilege. Because if that happened, there would be a least two which could not benefit from it – if then you posit that nowhere can there be a convergence of three vectors, and nowhere a divergence of three vectors from the same vertex, you will obtain (58) necessarily then the arrangement:

2 arriving	1 parting
2 arriving	1 parting
1 arriving	2 parting
1 arriving	2 parting

Namely, that all the aforesaid tetrahedrons are strictly equivalent and that in every case, you can, by suppressing one of the sides, obtain the formula by which I schematised my four discourses:

The discourse described as that of the Master
 The discourse of the University
 The discourse of the Analyst
 The discourse of the Hysteric

In accordance with this:

Which is the property of one of the vertices, the divergence, but without any vector that manages to nourish the discourse, but that inversely, at the opposite side, you have this triangular trajectory. This is enough to allow there to be distinguished in every case, by a character that is absolutely special, these four poles that I am stating with the terms of truth, of semblance, of enjoyment and of surplus enjoying.

This is the fundamental topology from which there emerges every function of the word and which merits a commentary.

There is in effect a question that the discourse of the analyst is well designed to give rise to: know what is the function of speech (*la parole*). *Function and field of speech and language*, is how I introduced what ought to lead us to this present point of the definition of a new discourse. Not certainly that this discourse is mine: at the moment of time I am talking to you, this discourse has been well and truly established for almost three quarters of a century. Just because the analyst himself is capable in certain zones, of refusing what I say about it, does not mean that he is not a support of this discourse and, in truth, 'to be a support', means simply, on occasion, 'to be supposed'. But the fact that this discourse can take on a sense from the very voice of someone who is in it – this is the case for me just as much as for anyone else – is precisely what makes it worth our while to pause on it, in order to know from where it takes on this sense.

In hearing what I have just put forward, the question of sense, may seem to you not to pose problems, I mean that it seems that the discourse of the analyst appeals sufficiently to interpretation for the question not to be posed. Effectively, in a certain analytic (59) scribbling, it seems that one can read – and this is not surprising, and you will see why – every sense that you wish, up to the most archaic. I mean to have there as an echo, the sempiternal repetition of what, from all time, has come down to us under this term, this term of meaning, in forms of which it should really be said that it is only their superimposition that creates a meaning. Because, why is it that we understand anything whatsoever about the worn-out symbolism in Sacred Scripture, for example? Aligning it to a mythology, whatever it may be, gives rise as everyone knows to one of the most deceptive kinds of slippage? For some time no one has taken it seriously. That when one studies in a serious way what is involved in mythologies, it is not to their sense that one refers, it is to the combinatorial of mythems. You should refer on this point to works whose author I do not think I have to remind you of again.

The question is really then of knowing where meaning comes from.

I used because it was very necessary, I used, to introduce what is involved in analytic discourse, I used without any scruple the path described as linguistic. And to temper the ardour which, may have been awoken too early, to bring you back to the ordinary 'fringe', I recalled that there is only sustained something worthy of this title of linguistics as a science, that there is only sustained something which seems to have the tongue as such, indeed speech, as object that this is only sustained on condition of swearing among themselves, among linguists, to never, never again – because this had been done for centuries – never again even from a distance, to allude to the origin of language. It was among others one

of the slogans that I had given to this form of introduction articulated in my formula: “The unconscious is structured like a language”.

When I say that it was to avoid my audience returning to a certain ‘fringy equivocation’ – it is not for myself that I use this term, it is Freud himself, and specifically precisely in connection with what are called Jungian archetypes – it is certainly not to lift this prohibition now. There is absolutely no question of speculating on any origin of language whatsoever, I said that it is a question of formulating the function of speech.

The function of speech, it is a long time since I put that forward, is to be the only form of action which posits itself as truth. What is, not speech, this is a superfluous question: not only do I speak, do you speak, and even it speaks, as I said, it happens all by itself. It is a fact, I would even say that it is the origin of all facts because nothing whatsoever takes on the rank of being a fact until it is said. It must be said that I did not say “when it is spoken”: there is something distinct between speaking and saying. A word which grounds the fact, is a saying, but speech functions even when it is not grounding any fact. When it commands, when it prays, when it insults, when it utters a wish, it does not ground any fact.

(60) We are able here today – these are not things that I would reproduce down below, at the other place where happily I say more serious things! Here, because it is implied in this seriousness that I am always trying to develop further and remaining always at the aforesaid point, like at my last seminar. I hope that at the next one, there will be fewer people because it was not funny – but anyway we can have a laugh here, these are comic amusements.

In the order of comic amusement, it is not for nothing, that in cartoons speech is spelt out for you on banners, there the word is like something where there is an erection (*bande...rôle*) or not! It is not for nothing that this establishes the dimension of truth. Because the truth, the true, the true truth, the truth which as it happens has begun to be glimpsed only with the analytic discourse, this is what this discourse reveals to each and every one, who simply commit themselves to it in an oriented fashion as an analysand. The fact is – forgive me for taking up this term again, but since I began, I will not abandon it – the fact is that over there, in the *place du Panthéon*, I call . The fact is that to have a hard on, has no relationship with sex, not with the other one, in any case!

To have a hard on – we are here *intra muros* – to have a hard on for a women – we must all the same call things by their name – that means giving her the function of , that means to take her as a phallus. The phallus is not nothing! I already explained, down there where things are serious, I already explained what that brings about, I told you that the meaning of the phallus, is the only case of a genitive that is fully balanced. That means that the phallus, the fact is that what I explained to you this morning – I am saying

that for those who have a little awareness – the fact is that what Jakobson explained to you: the phallus is meaning. It is that through which language signifies, there is only a single *Bedeutung*: the phallus.

Let us start from this hypothesis, this will very largely explain for us the whole function of speech. Because it is not always applied to denoting facts – this is all that it can do, one does not denote things, one denotes facts – but it is quite by chance, from time to time. Most of the time it supplies for the fact that the phallic function is precisely what ensures that in the case of man there are only what you know: bad relations between the sexes. While everywhere else, at least for us, they seem to... go with the flow.

So then that is the reason that in my little...quadripode, in my little quadripode, you see at the level of truth, two things, two vectors that diverge. This expresses that enjoyment, which is right at the end of the right hand branch, is certainly a phallic enjoyment. But that one cannot say sexual enjoyment and that, as regards what maintains any one of these funny animals, those who are the prey of speech, it is necessary that there should be this pole correlative to the pole of enjoyment *qua* obstacle to the sexual relationship. It is this pole that I designate as a semblance. It is just as clear for a partner, anyway if we dare, as is done every day to pinpoint them by (61) their sex, it is striking that the man and the woman make a pretence (*font semblant*) each one in this role. When there is only this business...but the important thing at least when what is at stake is the function of speech, is that the poles should be defined, that of the semblance and that of enjoyment.

If there were in man what we imagine there to be in a purely gratuitous fashion, an enjoyment specified by sexual polarity, that would be known. It was perhaps known, whole ages boasted about it, and after all – we have numerous testimonies – unfortunately purely esoteric – that there were times where people really believed how that could be held up. There was someone called Van Gennep whose book appears excellent to me, who picks out things here and there – anyway, like everyone else, he picks out more closely into what is involved in the written Chinese tradition – whose subject is sexual knowledge. It is not very widespread, I assure you, nor very illuminating either! But anyway, have a look at that if it amuses you: *Sexual life in Ancient China*. I defy you to get anything out of it that might be of use to you in what I was calling earlier the contemporary state of thinking!

The interest of what I am highlighting does not lie in saying that from all time things have been the same as the point to which we have got to. There was perhaps, there perhaps still is somewhere, but, it is curious, it is always in places where you must really seriously prove your credentials before entering it, places where there occurs between men and women this harmonious conjunction which makes them believe to be in the seventh heaven. But it is all the same very curious that we never hear tell of it except from the outside.

On the other hand, it is quite clear that through one of the ways that I have finally to define that it is rather with that each one has a relationship with the other. This becomes fully confirmed once one looks at what is called, using a term that is very fitting, like that, thanks to the ambiguity of Latin and of Greek, is called ‘homos’ – ‘ecco homo’ [*sic*] as I put it. It is quite certain that the homos have much better and more frequent and more firm erections.

What is curious, but anyway it is all the same a fact which for a person that for a certain time we have heard spoken about, this creates no doubt. Do not be deceived by it, all the same, there is ‘homo’ and ‘homo’, huh! I am not talking about André Gide, you must not believe that André Gide was a homo!

(62) This introduces us to what follows. Let us not lose our bearings, what is at stake is meaning. In order for something to have meaning in the contemporary state of thoughts, it is sad to say it, but it has to posit itself as normal. This indeed is why André Gide wanted homosexuality to be normal; and, as you may be able perhaps to have echoes of it, in this sense, there is a crowd of them. In no time at all this is going to be taken as normal, to the point that we will have new clients in psychoanalysis who will come to tell us: “I have come to see you because I don’t think I’m a normal paedophile!” It’s going to create a traffic jam!

And analysis is part of that. If the notion of normal had not taken on, following certain accidents of history, such an extension, this would never have happened. All the patients, not alone that Freud took on but it is very clear to read that it is a condition. To go into analysis, at the start, the minimum is to have a good university formation. This is clearly stated in Freud. I ought to underline it, because the University discourse about which I have a lot of bad things to say, and for the best of reasons, but all the same it is what feeds analytic discourse.

You understand, you can no longer imagine yourselves – this in order to make you imagine something, if you are capable of it, but who knows...drawn along by my voice – you cannot imagine what a zone was at the time that is called, because of that ‘ancient’, when *doxa* – you know about *doxa*...the famous *doxa* that is spoken about in *Menon, mais non, mais non!* – there was a *doxa* which was not of the university kind. But currently there is no *doxa* however futile, however lame, however scattered, however stupid it may be which does not find its place somewhere in university teaching! There is no example of an opinion, however stupid it may be, which is not mapped out, indeed on occasion that it is mapped out, to be taught!

That falsifies everything! Because when Plato spoke about *doxa* as something that he literally knows what to make of as a philosopher who was trying to ground a science, he noticed that *doxa* was found at every street corner: there are some that are true. Naturally, he is not able to say why, any more than any other philosopher, but no one doubts that they are true, because in truth, they are necessary. This gives a context, but one completely different to what is called philosophy, that *doxa* is not normalised. There is no trace of

the word norm anywhere in ancient discourse. We are the ones who invented that, and naturally by seeking out an extremely rare Greek noun!

We must all the same start from there in order to see that analytic discourse did not appear by chance. We had to be at the final state of extreme urgency for it to emerge. Naturally, since it is a discourse of the analyst, it takes on, like all my discourses, the four that I named, the meaning of an objective genitive. The discourse of the Master, is the discourse about the Master, and this was clearly seen at the acme of the philosophical adventure, in Hegel. The discourse of the analyst, is the same thing. We speak about the (63) analyst, he is the **o**-object as I have often underlined. Naturally, that does not make it easy for him to grasp properly what his position is. But on the other hand, it is all ease, because it is that of the semblance.

So then our Gide, to continue the thread – I am taking Gide, and then I will leave him, then we will take him up together, and so on – our Gide there, because he is all the same exemplary, he does not show us a way out of our little affair, far from it! His affair is to be desired, as we commonly find in analytic exploration. There are people who are not desired when they were little children. This pushes them to do things so that they may be so later on. It is very common. But things must be well separated out all the same. This is not unrelated, not at all, to discourse. It is not one of those words that emerge more or less everywhere during Carnival. Discourse and desire have the closest relationship. That is why I managed to isolate – at least I think I did – the function of the **o**-object. It is a key point which not enough advantage has been taken of, I must say. Yet that will come in its own time.

The **o**-object, is that by which the speaking being is determined when he is caught up in discourses. He does not know at all what determines him: it is the **o**-object, by which he is determined, he is determined as subject, namely, he is divided as subject, he is the prey of desire. This seems to happen in the same place as subversive words, but it is not at all the same. It is quite regular, it produces – it is a production – this produces mathematically – make no mistake about it – this **o**-object as cause of the aforesaid desire.

It is again the one that I called, as you know, the metonymical object, the one that runs along what is unfolded as discourse, a more or less coherent discourse, until it runs into something and the whole business ends up in something milk and watery. It nevertheless remains that it is from that – and this is what is interesting in it – that we get the idea of the cause. We believe that in nature, that there must be a cause, under the pretext that we are caused by our own bla-bla-bla. Yes! There are all the features, in André Gide, that things are indeed the way I have told you. There is first of all his relation with the supreme Other. You must not at all believe, despite what he may have said, that the big Other did not have an impact. There where the **o** takes shape he even had a quite specific notion about it, which was that the pleasure of the big Other, was to upset that of all the little ones!... As a result he copped on very well that there was here a troubling point which saved him obviously from the abandonment of his childhood. All

his teasing of God, was, finally, something strongly compensatory for someone who had started so badly. He is not the only one.

I had begun at one time – I only did a single lecture in what are called my seminars – something about the Name of the Father. Naturally I began by the father himself. Anyway, I spoke for an hour, an hour and a half, about God's enjoyment. If I said that it was a mystical ... mockery it was in order never to speak about it (64) again. It is certain that ever since there has only been a single God, a single and unique one, anyway the God who made emerge a certain historical era, he is precisely the one, the one who upsets the pleasure of others. This is even the only thing that counts. There were indeed Epicurians who did everything they could to teach the method, not to allow oneself to be upset by anyone. That was a disaster. There were others, who were called Stoics who said: "But on the contrary one must row along with divine pleasure". But that also fails as you know, it only works between the two. It is worrying that counts. With that you are all in your natural arena. You do not enjoy, of course, it would be an exaggeration to say it, all the more so because in any case, it is too dangerous. But anyway, it cannot be said that you do not have some pleasure, huh! It is even on this that the primary process is grounded.

All of this brings us up against it: what is meaning? Well then, it would be better to start again at the level of desire. The pleasure that the other gives you is well known, this is even called in a more noble area, art (*l'art*). This is where one has to consider the wall attentively, because there is an area of meaning well illuminated for example by someone called Leonardo de Vinci, as you all know, who left some manuscripts and some tiny toys. Not too many, he did not populate museums, but he spoke profound truths. He spoke profound truths that everybody should always remember – he said: "Look at the walls"...like me, then, since that time, he has become the Leonard of families. We give presents of his manuscripts, there is a luxury piece of work, even to me, I was given a pair, can you imagine! But that does not mean that it is not legible...so then he explains to you: look carefully at the wall like here, it's a little dirty. If it were better maintained there would be spots of dampness and even perhaps mildew. Well then if we are to believe Leonardo, if there is a stain of dampness, it is a very good opportunity to transform it into a Madonna or even a muscular athlete. That even lends itself to it still more because in the dampness, there are always shadows, hollows. It is very important to notice that there are a class of things on walls that lend themselves to figures, to artistic creation, as they say. It is the figurative even here, the stain question. It is necessary all the same to know the relationship between that and something else that can come onto the wall, namely ravines, not simply of the word – even though that happens, this indeed is how it always begins – but of discourse. In other words whether mildew on the wall and writing are of the same order. That ought to interest here a certain number of people who, I think, not very long ago – it is beginning to date a bit - busied themselves with writing things, love letters, on the walls. It was a bloody beautiful time. There are some people who have never been consoled for the time when one could write on walls and when from something in *Publicis* people deduced that it was the walls that spoke. As if that could happen!

I would simply remark that it would have been much better if nothing had ever been written on the walls. What is already written on them should be taken away. Liberty–Equality–Fraternity, for example, is indecent! “No smoking” is not possible, all the more so because everyone smokes, there is in that a tactical error. I already said it earlier for the love letter (*la lettre d’(a)mur*) everything that is written reinforces the (65) wall. This is not necessarily an objection. But what is certain, is that you must not believe that it is absolutely necessary, but it is useful all the same because if nothing had ever been written on a wall, whatever it may be, this one or others, well then, it is a fact, we would not have taken a step towards the meaning of what is to be seen beyond the wall.

You see, there is something that I will be led to talk to you a little about this year: it is the relationships between logic and mathematics. Beyond the wall, to say it to you right away, there is only, to the best of our knowledge, this real which is signalled precisely by the impossible, by the impossible of reaching it beyond the wall. It nevertheless remains that it is the real. How were we able to manage to get an idea of it? It is certain that language made some contribution to it. This is even why I am attempting to make this little bridge that you were able to see being initiated in my last seminars, namely, how does the One make its entry. This is what I expressed already for the last three years with the symbols S_1 and S_2 . The first, I designated like that, so that you could understand in it some little thing, about the master signifier and the second about knowledge.

But would there be an S_1 , if there were not a S_2 ? This is a problem, because it is necessary that there should be two first of all in order that there should be S_1 . I tackled the matter at the last seminar, by showing you that in any case, there are at least two even for a single one to emerge: zero and one, as they say, makes two. But that is in the sense that one says that it cannot be gone beyond. Nevertheless one goes beyond it when one is a logician, as I already indicated to you by referring to Frege. But anyway, it appeared no less to you of course that it was gone beyond cheerfully and that I indicated to you at that time – I will come back to it – that there was perhaps no more than a little step. That is not what is important.

It is quite clear that someone whom some of you have heard no doubt speaking for the first time this morning, René Thom, who is a mathematician, he does not favour the fact that logic, namely, the discourse that is held on the wall, is something that is even sufficient to account for number, the first step in mathematics. On the other hand, it seems to him that it can account, not simply for what is traced out on the wall – it is nothing other than life itself, that begins with dampness, as you know – take into account by number, algebra, functions, topology, take into account everything that happens in the field of life. I will come back to it. I will explain to you that the fact that he rediscovers, in a particular mathematical function, the very outline of the curves which construct the first dampness before rising up to man, that this fact pushes him towards this extrapolation of thinking that topology can provide a typology for natural

tongues. I do not know whether the question can be currently settled. I will try to give you an idea where its current impact is, nothing more.

What I can say, is that in any case, the splitting of the wall, the fact that there is something set up in front, that I called speech and language, and that it is from another side that work is happening, (66) perhaps mathematically, it is quite certain that we cannot have a different idea of it. That science is based, not, as is said on quantity, but on number, the function of topology, is something of which there is no doubt. A discourse that is called Science, found a way to construct itself behind the wall. Only what I believe I should clearly formulate and what I think makes me agree with everything that is most serious in the scientific construction, is that it is strictly impossible to give to anything whatsoever that is articulated in algebraic or topological terms the shadow of a meaning. There is meaning for those who before the wall are happy with the stains of dampness that are found to be so favourable for being transformed into a Madonna or the back of an athlete. But it is obvious that we cannot be satisfied, anyway, with these confused meanings. This only serves, when all is said and done, to reverberate on the lyre of desire, on eroticism, to call things by their name.

But in front of the wall, other things are happening, and this is what I call discourses. There have been others than my four, that I enumerated and which are only specified moreover by having to make you perceive immediately that they are specified as such as only being four. It is quite sure that there were others of which we no longer know anything and which converge towards these which are the four which remain to us, those that are articulated from the circuit of o , S_1 and S_2 and even of the subject – who pays the piper – and who from this circuit, by being displaced according to the four vertices in turn, allows us to detach something for us to find our bearings. This is something that gives us the present situation of what is grounded in terms of the social bond, discourse. Namely, something that whatever place one occupies in it, that of the master, of the slave, of the product or of what supports the whole business, whatever may be the place one occupies in it one never hinders anything.

What does meaning arise from? This is why it is very important to have made this separation, an awkward one no doubt, that Saussure made – as Jakobson recalled this morning – between the signifier and the signified, something that he inherited – not without reason – from the Stoics whose very particular position in these sorts of manipulations I described to you earlier. What is important, of course, is not that the signifier and the signified are unified and that it is the signified that allows us to distinguish what is specific in the signifier, quite the contrary, it is the signified of a signifier, what I articulate by the little letters that I showed you earlier. The signified of a signifier, where one can attach something that may resemble a meaning, this always comes from the place that the same signifier occupies in another discourse. It is indeed that which came into all their heads when the analytic discourse was introduced: they thought they understood everything...Poor unfortunates! Happily thanks to the care I have given it, this is not the case

for you. If you understood what I talk about elsewhere, where I am serious, you would not believe your ears. This is even why you do not believe your ears. It is because in reality you understand it, but after all you keep your distance; it is not quite comprehensible (67) since, for the great majority, the analytic discourse has not yet captured you. This will come unfortunately, because it is more and more important.

I would like all the same to tell you something about the knowledge of the analyst, on condition that you do not remain there. If my friend René Thom manages to find so easily by cuts in complicated mathematical surfaces, something like a drawing, a series of stripes, something that he moreover calls a point, a chip, a crease, a fold, and make an absolutely captivating use of it. If, in other words, if there is between a particular slice of a thing that can only exist because one can write: “There exists which satisfies the function F of x ”, yes if he does that with such ease, it nonetheless remains that as long as this has not accounted in an exhaustive fashion for what after all, despite everything, he is necessarily forced to explain to you, namely, common language and the grammar around it, there will remain here a zone that I call “a zone of discourse” and which is the one on which the analysis of discourses throws a vivid light.

What can be transmitted in this in terms of a knowledge? Anyway, you have to choose! It is the numbers that know, that know because they managed, they managed to move this organised material at a point that of course was immemorial, and which continued to know what they are doing. There is one thing that is quite certain, which is that it is in the most exaggerated fashion that we put a meaning into it, that the whole idea of evolution, of perfecting, while in the animal chain that is presupposed, we see absolutely nothing which bears witness all the same to this so called continual adaptation. To the point that it was necessary all the same to renounce it and to say that after all those who got through, there, are those who were able to get through. That is called natural selection. It means strictly nothing. This has like that a little meaning borrowed from the discourse of a pirate, and then why not that or another one? The clearest thing that appears to us, is that a living being still does not know very well what to do with one of his organs. And after all, it is perhaps a particular case of making obvious, through analytic discourse, the embarrassing aspect that the phallus has.

That there should be a correlation between that, as I underlined at the beginning of this discourse, a correlation between that and what is fomented by the word, we can say nothing more about it. That, at the point that we are at of the contemporary state of thinking – that is the sixth time that I have used this formula, it is quite clear that this does not seem to annoy anybody. It is indeed nevertheless something that it would be worthwhile returning to, the contemporary state of thinking, I am making a piece of furniture of it but it is nevertheless true, huh? It is not idealism to say that thoughts are just as strictly determined as the latest gadget. In any case in the contemporary state of thinking, we have the analytic discourse which, when you wish really to understand it for what it is, is shown to be linked to a curious adaptation. Because when all (68) is said and done, if it is true, this business of castration, that means that in man, castration is

the means of adapting to survive. This is unthinkable, but it is true. All of this is only perhaps an artifice, an artefact of discourse. That this discourse, so learned in completing the others, that this discourse can be sustained, is perhaps simply a historical phase. Sexual life of Ancient China may perhaps flower again, there will be a certain number of pretty filthy ruins to swallow up when that happens...

But for the moment, what is meant by this meaning that we contribute?

This meaning, when all is said and done, is enigmatic, and precisely because it is meaning. There is somewhere, in the second edition of a volume, of this volume that I allowed out at one time that is called *Ecrits*, there is a little adjunct which I call: "The metaphor of the subject". I played for a long time on the formula so much enjoyed by my dear friend Perelman "an ocean of false knowledge". One is never quite sure – I would advise you to start from there – of what I have in the back of my head, precisely when I am amusing myself! "An ocean of false knowledge", is perhaps the knowledge of the analyst, why not? Why not, if precisely it is only from his perspective that there can be decanted the fact that science has no meaning, but that any meaning of discourse, since it is only sustained from another, is only partial meaning.

If the truth can only ever half say itself, this is the core, this is the essential of the knowledge of the analyst, it is that at this place that I called tetrapode or quadriped at the place of truth we have S_2 knowledge. It is a knowledge itself which is then always to be put in question. As regards analysis, there is on the other hand one thing that must prevail: which is that there is a knowledge that is drawn from the subject himself; in the pole place of enjoyment, the analytic discourse puts $\$$. It is in this stumbling, in this failed action, in the dream, in the work of the analysand that there results this knowledge, this knowledge that, for its part, is not supposed. It is knowledge, an out of date knowledge, a scrap of knowledge, a tiny scrap of knowledge: that is what the unconscious is. This knowledge is what I assume, I define since I am able to posit it, the new feature in the emergence, only from the enjoyment of the subject.

The Psychoanalyst's Knowledge

3rd March 1972

I apologise. This is the first time I've been late. I warn you that I am ill. You are here, I am here also. Indeed it is for you. By that I mean that I feel abnormally well under the influence of a little temperature and of some drugs. So that, if ever this situation were to change suddenly I hope that those who have been listening to me for a long time will explain to the new ones that this is the first time that this has happened to me.

So then I am going to try, this evening, to be up to what you expect, what you expect here where as I have said I amuse myself. It is not absolutely necessary that this should always remain on the same tone. I hope you will excuse me, it is certainly not due to my abnormal state. It will indeed be along the line of what I intend to tell you this evening.

Elsewhere, obviously, I do not make things easy for my audience. If some of those who are here – I can see some of them – remember what I spoke about the last time, I spoke in short about this thing that I summarised in the Borromean knot. I mean a chain of three, which is such that by detaching one of the rings from this chain, the other two cannot hold together for a single instant. From what does that arise? I am forced to explain it to you, since after all I am not sure that put forward, quite simply, in a crude way like that it is enough for all of you.

This means a question about what is the condition of the discourse of the unconscious, it means a question posed about what language is. In effect, this is a question that has not been settled. Language ought to be tackled in its grammar, in which case – this is certain, it relates to a topology...

X: What is a topology?

Lacan: What is a topology? What a nice person! A topology is something that has a mathematical definition. Topology is something that is tackled first of all by non-metrical relationships, by relationships that can be put out of shape. It is properly speaking the case for these sort of flexible circles that constitute my:

I ASK YOU TO REFUSE WHAT I AM OFFERING YOU.

Each one is something closed and flexible and which only holds up by being linked to the others. Nothing can be sustained all by itself. (72) This topology, by reason of its mathematical insertion, is linked to relationships – this precisely is what my last seminar demonstrated – it is linked to relationships of pure significance. Namely, that it is in so far as these three terms are three that we see that the presence of the third establishes a relation between the other two. This is what is meant by the Borromean knot.

There is another way to tackle language and, of course, this is a contemporary matter. It is current because of the fact that someone that I named – as it happens I named him just after what Jakobson did, but, as it happens, I had known him just before – it is someone called René Thom. And this person attempts in short, certainly not without having opened up certain paths in it, to tackle the question of language from the semantic angle. Namely, not from the signifying combinatorial inasmuch as pure mathematics can help us to conceive of it as such, but from the semantic angle. Namely, not without having recourse also to mathematics, to find in certain curves, I would add, certain shapes I would add that can be deduced from these curves, something that would allow us to conceive of language as, I would say, something like the echo of physical phenomena. It is starting, for example, with what is purely and simply a communication of the phenomena of resonance that there would be elaborated curves which, since they are valid in a certain number of fundamental relations, are found secondarily to be collected together, to be homogenised, as one might say, to be taken up into the same parenthesis from which there would result diverse grammatical functions. It seems to me that there is already an obstacle to conceiving things in this way: the fact is that one is forced to put under the same term ‘verb’ very different types of action. Why would language, in a way, have gathered together in the same category functions whose origin can only be conceived of under very different types of emergence? Nevertheless the question remains in suspense.

It is certain that there would be something infinitely satisfying in considering that language is in a way modelled on functions that are supposed to be drawn from physical reality, even if this reality can only be tackled from the angle of a mathematical functionalisation.

What I, for my part, am in the process of putting forward for you, is something that fundamentally is attached to the purely topological origin of language. I believe I can account for this topological origin starting from the fact that it is essentially linked to something that comes from the angle, in the speaking being, of sexuality. Whether the speaking being is speaking because of something that happened to sexuality because he is a speaking being, is an affair that I will abstain from settling and leave you to look after.

The fundamental schema of what is involved and that, this evening, I am going to try and push a little further before you is the following. The functions described as ‘sexuality’ are defined inasmuch as we know something about it – we know a little about it even if only by (73) experience – from the fact that there are two sexes, whatever may think a celebrated author who I ought to say, at one time, before she produced this book that is called *The second sex*, believed, by reason of some orientation or other – for, in truth, I had not yet begun to teach anything – believed she should consult me before producing *The second sex*. She called me on the telephone to tell me that undoubtedly she needed my advice to clarify what should be the psychoanalytic contribution to her work. Since I pointed out to her that it would require

indeed at least – this is a minimum, because I have been speaking for 20 years and it is not by chance – that it would require five or six months for me to disentangle the question for her, she pointed out to me that there was no question, of course, that a book that was already in train should wait so long, the laws of literary production being such that it seemed to her that she should rule out her having more than three or four conversations with me. After which, I declined this honour.

The foundation of what I am, for some time, in the process of bringing forward for you, very precisely since last year, is very precisely the fact that there is no second sex. There is no second sex from the moment that language comes into function. Or to say things differently concerning what is called heterosexuality, it is very precisely in the fact that the word *heteros*, which is the term that is used to say ‘other’ in Greek is very precisely in this position for the relationship that in the speaking being is called sexual, of emptying itself *qua* being. And it is precisely this void that it offers to the word that I call the locus of the Other, namely, that in which there are inscribed the effects of the aforesaid word. I am not going to elaborate what I have said – because after all that would delay us here – with some etymological references. How *heteros* is said in a certain Greek dialect that I will even spare you the trouble of naming for you, *ateros*, how this *heteros* is linked to *deuteros* and very precisely marks that this *deuteros*, on this occasion, is, as I might put it, elided.

It is clear that this may appear surprising, since it is obvious that for some time such a formula – because I do not know whether there is a reference to the time when it was formulated – such a formula is very precisely what is ignored. I nevertheless claim and I sustain before you – this is what you see on the board – that this is what psychoanalytic experience contributes. For this, let us recall on what there rests the conception we may have, not of heterosexuality – since it is in short very well named, if you follow what I have put forward just now – but of bisexuality.

(74) At the point that we have got to in our statements concerning the aforesaid sexuality, what do we have? What we refer to – and you must not believe that this is self-evident – what we refer to, is a supposedly animal model. There is then a relationship between the sexes and the animal image of copulation, which seems to be for us a sufficient model of what is involved in a relationship and, at the same time, that what is sexual, is considered as a need. This is not – far from it believe me – what was always the case. I do not need to recall what is meant by ‘to know’ in the biblical sense of the word. From all time the relationship of *nous* to something that would undergo a passive stamp, that is described differently, but undoubtedly whose most usual Greek name is *ule*, from all time the style of the relation that is generated from the spirit was considered as modelling not at all simply the animal relation, but the

fundamental style of being with what was held to be the world. For a long time the Chinese appealed to two fundamental essences which are respectively the feminine essence that they call the Yin opposing it to the Yang which it happens that I wrote – by chance no doubt, underneath.

If there were a relationship that could be articulated on the sexual plane, if there were a relationship that could be articulated in the speaking being, should it be stated – this is the question - about *all of those* of the same sex to *all of those* of the other. This is obviously the idea that suggests to us, at the point that we are at in the reference to what I called the animal model: the aptitude of each one on one side to be true for all the others of the other. You see then that the statement is promulgated in the form, the significant semantic form of the universal. To replace, in what I said ‘each one’ by ‘anyone whatsoever’ or by ‘anyone one at all’ – anyone at all who from one of these sides – we would be completely in the order of what suggests what might be called – you should recognise in this conditional something that is an echo of my *Discourse that MIGHT not be a semblance* – well then by replacing ‘each one’ by ‘any one at all’, you would be right into this indetermination of the fact that it is chosen in each ‘all’ to respond to all the others

This ‘each one’ that I used first has all the same this effect of reminding you that after all, as I might say, the effective relationship does not fail to evoke the horizon of the ‘one to one’, that ‘to each his/her own’. This, this bi-univocal correspondence, echoes what we know, namely, that it is essential to presentify number. Let us note the following, which is that we cannot from the start eliminate the existence of these two dimensions and that one can even say that the animal model is precisely what the animistic phantasy suggests. If we did not have this animal model, even if the choice is to encounter, bi-univocal coupling is what appears to us, namely, that there are two animals who copulate together, well then, we would not have this essential dimension which is very precisely that the encounter is unique. It is not by chance that it is from this, from this alone, that there is fomented the animistic model: let us call this the encounter of soul to soul. Anyone who knows the condition of the speaking being (75) has no reason to be surprised that the encounter, starting from this foundation, will precisely have to be repeated *qua* unique. There is here no need to bring into play any dimension of virtue. It is the very necessity of what in the case of the speaking being happens as unique: it is the fact that it is repeated. This indeed is why that it is not from the animal model that there is sustained and there is fomented the phantasy that I called animistic. Namely, that it is a phantasy that is there to say, language does not exist, which is obviously not without interest in the analytic field.

What gives us the illusion of the sexual relationship in the speaking being, is everything that materialises the universal in a behaviour which is effectively of a herd kind in the relationship between the sexes. I already underlined that in the sexual quest or hunt, as you wish, the boys encourage one another and that for the girls, they like to take it up as long as it is to their advantage. This is an ethological remark that I am making, for my part, but which settles nothing, because it is enough to reflect on it to see in it a rather

equivocal turn- about that will not be able to be sustained for long. To be more insistent here and to stick to the most basic experience – I mean the one that is really at ground level – analytic experience, I will remind you that the Imaginary which is the one that we reconstitute in the animal model – that we reconstitute according to our own ideas of course, because it is clear that we can only reconstruct it by observation. But on the other hand we have an experience of the Imaginary, an experience which is not an easy one, but that psychoanalysis has allowed us to extend. And, to say things crudely, it would not be difficult for me to make myself understood that if I put forward – I am going to call this crudely right away, it is cruel it must be said – well then, good God, that in every sexual encounter, if there is one thing that psychoanalysis allows to put forward, it is indeed some profile or other of another presence for which the popular term of *partouze* [group sex] is not absolutely ruled out. This reference has nothing decisive in itself, because after all one could take on a serious air and say that here precisely is the stigmata of anomaly, as if the normal – in two words – could be situated somewhere. It is certain that in putting forward this term, the one that I have just pinpointed with this vulgar name, I was certainly not seeking to make vibrate in you the erotic lyre. And that if simply it has a little wake-up value, this at least gives you this dimension, not the one that may here have an echo of Eros, but simply the pure dimension of awakening. I am certainly not here to amuse you about this!

Let us now try to open up what is involved in the kinship of the universal with our affair, namely, the statement by which objects ought to be divided into two ‘alls’ of an opposite equivalence. I have just made you sense that there is no need to require the equinumericity of individuals and I would add that I believed I could sustain what I had to put forward simply from the bi-univocity of coupling. These are what would be, if it were possible, two Universals defined by the simple establishment of the possibility of a relationship of one to the other or of the other to one. The so-called relationship has absolutely nothing to do with what is commonly (76) called sexual relationships. We have a whole pile of relationships to these relationships. And as regards these relationships, we have also some little relationships. This occupies our terrestrial life...at the level at which I am placing it, it is a matter of grounding this relationship in universals: how the universal ‘Man’ is related to the universal ‘Woman’? This is the question which is imposed on us from the fact that language very precisely requires that it should be through this that it is grounded. If there were not language, well then, there would be no question either. We would not have to bring the universal into play.

This relationship, to be specific, makes the Other absolutely foreign to what might here be purely and simply secondant. It is what perhaps this evening, will force me to emphasise the O by which I mark this Other as empty, with something supplementary, an ‘H’, the ‘*Hautre*’ which would perhaps not be a bad way of letting there be understood the dimension of ‘*Hun*’ which may come into play here, or for us to notice that, for example, all the philosophical lucubrations we have did not emerge by chance from someone called Socrates who was manifestly hysterical, I mean clinically. Anyway we have the report of

his manifestations of a cataleptic order. If this person called Socrates was able to sustain a discourse which not for nothing is at the origin of the discourse of science, it is very precisely for having brought, as I define it, to the place of the semblance, the subject. And this, he was able to do very precisely because of this dimension which for him presentified the '*Hautre*' as such, namely, this hatred for his wife, to call her by her name. This person, was his wife to the point that she '*s'affemait*' to such a point, that he, it was necessary at the moment of his death for him to ask her politely to withdraw to leave to this aforesaid death all its political signification. This is simply an indicative dimension concerning the point where there lies the question that we are in the process of raising.

I said that if we can say that there is no sexual relationship it is certainly not in all innocence. It is because the experience, namely, a style of discourse which is absolutely not that of the Hysteric, but the one that I inscribed in terms of a quadripodic division as being the analytic discourse and that what emerges from this discourse, is the dimension never up to now evoked about the phallic function. Namely, it is something which means that it is not from the sexual relationship that there is characterised at least one of the two terms and very precisely the one to which there is attached here the word l'*Hun*. Not at all that its position of *Hun* is reducible to this something that one describes by the term male or in the Chinese terminology the essence of Yang. It is very precisely on the contrary because of what is after all by being recalled to emphasise the meaning, the veiled meaning because it comes to us from afar, of the term organ. It is precisely something that is only an organ, to emphasise things, as a tool. It is around the tool that analytic experience encourages us to see turning everything that is stated about the sexual relationship. This is a novelty, I mean responds to the emergence of a discourse which undoubtedly had never yet come to light, and which could not have been conceived of without the previous emergence of the discourse of science inasmuch as it is the insertion of language into the mathematical real.

(77) I said that what stigmatises this relationship as being profoundly subverted in language is very specifically the fact that there is no longer a way, as has been done nevertheless, but in a dimension that appears to me to be a mirage, it can no longer be written in terms of male essence and female essence. That it is the 'not being able to be written' what does that mean, since after all it has already been written. If I reject this ancient writing in the name of analytic discourse, you could put a much more valid objection to me. That I for my part also write it, since moreover – this is what I have shown once more on the board – it is something that claims to support what with a writing? The network of the sexual business.

Nevertheless this writing is only authorised, only takes its form from a very specific writing, namely, what allowed there to be introduced into logic the irruption precisely of what I was asked about earlier, namely, a mathematical topology. It is only starting from the existence of the formulation of this topology that we have been able, from any proposition, to imagine that we might make a propositional function. Namely,

something that is specified from the empty place that is left there and in function of which the argument is determined.

Here, I would like to point out to you that very precisely what I borrow, on occasion, from mathematical inscription, in so far as it is substituted for the first forms, I am not saying formalisations, for the forms outlined by Aristotle in a logical style. That this inscription then under the heading of argument function could, it seems, offer us a term that is easy to specify sexual opposition. What is necessary? It would be enough that the respective functions of male and of female be very precisely distinguished as the Yin and Yang. It is very precisely because the function is unique, that what is at stake is always a ϕ of x , that there is generated, as you know – since it is not possible, from the simple fact that you are here, that you do not have some little idea of it – that there is generated the difficulty and the complication.

ϕ of x affirms that it is true – this is the meaning that the term function has – that it is true that what is referred to the exercise, to the register of the sexual act, refers to the phallic function. It is very precisely inasmuch that it is a matter of the phallic function, from whatever side we look at it, I mean from one side or from the other, that something solicits us to ask then how the two partners are different. And this is very precisely what is inscribed by the formulae that I put on the board.

If it proves that from the fact of equally dominating the two partners the phallic function does not make them different, it nonetheless remains that we should search for the difference elsewhere. And this is why these formulae, those written on the board, deserve to be questioned about the two aspects, the aspect on the left being opposed to the aspect on the right, the upper level being opposed to the lower level. What does that mean? What that means deserves to be a little (78) auscultated, as I might say, namely, to be questioned I would say first of all about what they may be able to show about a certain abuse.

It is clear that it is not because I used a formulation made up of the eruption of mathematics into logic that I use it in quite the same way. And my first remarks are going to consist in showing that in effect the way in which I make use of it is such that it is in no way expressible in terms of the logic of propositions. I mean that the way in which the variable, what is called the variable, namely, what gives way to the argument, is something that here is altogether specified by the quadruple form under which the relation of the argument to the function is posited.

To simply introduce what is at stake, I would recall to you that in the logic of propositions, we have, in the forefront – there are others – the four fundamental relations which in a way are the foundation of the logic

of propositions, which are respectively negation, conjunction, disjunction, and implication. There are others, but these are the first and all the others can be referred back to them. I am putting forward that the way in which there are written our positions of argument and of function is such that the relation described as negation by which what is posited as truth can only be denied by the word 'false', well then, very precisely this is unsustainable here. Because you can see that at whatever level it may be, I mean the lower level and the upper level, the statement of the function, namely, that it is phallic, the statement of the function is posited, either as a truth, or precisely as to be set to one side. Since after all the true truth, would be precisely what is not written, but here can only be written in the form that contests the phallic function. Namely: "It is not true that the phallic function is what grounds the sexual relationship". And in the two cases, at these two levels which are as such independent, and it is not at all a matter of making one the negation of the other, but on the contrary of one an obstacle to the other. On the contrary, what you see being divided up, is precisely a 'there exists' and 'there does not exist'. It is an 'All' on the one hand 'every x', namely, the domain of what is there defined by the phallic function. And the difference of the position of the argument in the phallic function, is very precisely that it is 'not every' woman that is inscribed in it. You clearly see that, far from one opposing the other as its negation, it is quite the contrary from their subsistence, here very precisely as negated, that **there is an x** that can be sustained in this beyond of the phallic function. And on the other side, **there is not one** for the simple reason that a woman cannot be castrated for the best of reasons. It is a certain level, it is (79) the level of what is precisely barred to us in the sexual relationship, while at the level of the phallic function, it is very precisely in that to the 'All' there is opposed the 'not all' (*Pas Toutes*) that there is a chance of a division between the left and the right of what is grounded as male and as female. Far then from the relation of negation forcing us to choose, it is on the contrary that far from having to choose we have to divide out, that the two sides are legitimately opposed one another.

I spoke, after negation, about conjunction. Conjunction, I will have no need, to settle its account on this occasion, other than to make the remark, the remark that I hope that there are enough people here who would have vaguely thumbed through a book on logic for me not to have to insist, namely, that conjunction is founded very precisely on the fact that it only takes on its value from the fact that two propositions can both be true. It is precisely what does not allow us in any way what is written on the board. Because you see clearly that, from the right to the left, there is no identity and that very precisely where it is a matter of what is posited as true, namely, of x, it is precisely at this level that Universals cannot join together, the Universal of the left hand side only opposing the other side, the right hand side, by the fact that there is no Universal that cannot be articulated, namely, that the woman with respect to the phallic function is only situated from the fact that 'not all' are subject to it. The strange thing is that inasmuch as the disjunction no longer holds up, if you recall that the arrangement only takes on a value from the fact that two propositions cannot be, it is impossible that they should be false at the same time. It is undoubtedly, we will say, the strongest or the weakest relation. It is undoubtedly the strongest in that it is the hardest one to deal with.

Because a minimum is necessary for there to be a disjunction, for the disjunction to make it valid that one proposition should be true, the other false, that naturally both are true, this adding to what I called ‘one true the other false’ – it is perhaps ‘one false the other true’. There are then at least three combinatorial cases where the disjunction holds up, the only thing that it cannot admit is that both are false.

Now we have here two functions posited as not being – I told you this earlier – the true truth, namely, those that are on top. We seem here to lay hold of something which gives the hope, namely, that at the very least we will have articulated a real disjunction. Now, notice what is written which is something that I will have occasion to articulate in a way that will make it alive, which is that it is only precisely from one side that this $\neg x$ with the sign of negation above it, namely, that it is inasmuch as the phallic does not function that there is a chance of sexual relationship, that we have posited that there must exist an x for that. Now on the other side what do we have? That there exists no other, so that one can say that the fate of what might be a style under which the differentiation of the male and the female, of the man and the woman might be sustained, in the case of the speaking being, this chance that we have that there should be the following, is that if at a level there is discord – and we will see what I mean by that in a little while – I mean at the level of the (80) Universals which are not sustained by the fact of inconsistency of one among them. What happens when we set aside the function itself? The fact is that, if on the one hand it is supposed that *there exists an x* that satisfies a denied $\neg x$, $\neg x$, on the other side we have the explicit formulation that *no x*, which I illustrated by saying that the woman, for the best of reasons, could not be castrated. But there is only precisely the statement *no x*, namely, at the level where disjunction would have the chance of being produced, on one side we only find ONE – or at the very least what I put forward in terms of *at least one* – and on the other very precisely non-existence, namely, the relationship of ONE to ZERO.

Very precisely, at the level that the sexual relationship might have a chance, not at all to be realised, but simply to be hoped for beyond the abolition, by setting it to one side, of the phallic function, we only find as a presence, can I dare say, one of the two sexes. It is precisely the fact that obviously we must bring to the experience that you are used to seeing stated in this form that the woman gives rise to from the fact that the universal for her only gives rise to the phallic function, where she participates, as you know – this is, alas, the only too common experience not to veil the structure – but she only participates in it only by wanting it

- take it away from the man
- or, good God, she requires its service from him, in the case “.....*ou pire*” – make no mistake about it – that she restores it to him. But very precisely this does not universalise it, if only from the fact which is this root of the ‘not all’ (*pas toutes*) that she conceals a different enjoyment to phallic enjoyment, enjoyment that is described as properly feminine which in no way depends on it.

If the woman is 'not all', it is because here enjoyment, for its part, is dual. And this indeed is what Tiresias revealed when he came back after having been, by the grace of Zeus, Thérèse for a time, with naturally the consequences that we know about and which were there in fact as it were displayed, as I might say, visible – make no mistake – for Oedipus to show them what was waiting for him for having precisely existed for his part as a man of this supreme possession which resulted from the dupery in which his partner maintained him about the true nature of what she was offering for his enjoyment. Or indeed – let us put it differently – for want of the fact that his partner asked him to refuse what she was offering him, this obviously manifesting, but at the level of myth, the fact that, in order to exist as a man at a level that escapes the phallic function, there was no other woman than her who for him ought precisely not to have existed.

There you are. Why this 'ought not to have', why the theory of incest? This would make it necessary for me to engage myself on this path of the 'Names of the Father', in which very precisely I said I would never again get involved. That is how it is, because as it happened I re-read, because someone asked me to do so, this first lecture of the year 1963 – you remember – at Sainte Anne. This indeed is why I came back to it, I re-read it, it is worth re-reading, it (81) is readable, it has even a certain dignity so that I will publish it if I publish anything more, which does not depend on me! Others would have to publish something with me that would encourage me. If I publish it, it will be seen with what care I mapped out then – but I have already been saying this for five years – onto a certain number of registers, the paternal metaphor in particular, the proper name. There was there everything that was necessary in order that, with the Bible, one could give a meaning to this mythical lucubration of my sayings. But I will never do it again. I will never do it again because after all I can be satisfied with formulating things at the level of the logical structure which after all has its own rights.

What I want to tell you, is that this \bar{x} , namely, that *there does not exist any other* which, at a certain level, the one at which there would be a chance that there might be a sexual relationship, that this *heteros* as absent, is not at all necessarily the privilege of the feminine sex. It is simply the indication of what is in my graph – I am saying that because it had its little destiny – of what I wrote in terms of the signifier of \emptyset . That means: the Other, from wherever one takes it, the Other is absent, from the moment that what is at stake is the sexual relationship.

Naturally at the level of what functions, namely, the phallic function, there is simply this discord that I have just recalled. Namely, that on one side and the other, here for the moment, we are not in the same position. Namely, that on one side we have the Universal founded on a necessary relationship to the phallic function and on the other side a contingent relationship because the woman is 'not all'.

I am underlining then that at the upper level of the relationship founded on the disappearance, the vanishing of the existence of one of the partners which leaves empty the place for the inscription of the word, is not at that level the privilege of either side. Only in order for there to be a grounding of sex, as they say, they must be two. Zero and One, undoubtedly that gives two, that gives two on the symbolic plane, namely, inasmuch as we agree that existence is rooted in the symbol. This is what defines the speaking being.

Assuredly he is something, perhaps indeed... who is not what he is. Only this being is absolutely ungraspable. He is all the more ungraspable in that he is forced, to support himself, to go by way of the symbol. It is clear that a being when he comes to the point of being no more than the symbol, is precisely this being without being, in which, by the simple fact that you speak, you all participate. But on the contrary it is quite certain that what is supported, is existence, and inasmuch as to exist is not to be, namely, that it is to depend on the other. This indeed is where you are, all from some angle or other, by existing, but as regards what concerns your being, you are not all that much at ease! Otherwise you would not be seeking out an assurance of it with so many psychoanalytic efforts.

There is obviously here something altogether original in the first emergence of logic. In the first emergence of logic, there is (82) something quite striking, which is the difficulty, the difficulty and the oscillation that Aristotle shows about the status of the particular proposition. These are difficulties that have been underlined elsewhere, that I did not discover. And for those who would like to refer to them, I would advise them to read number 10 of the *Cahiers pour l'analyse* where there is a first article by someone called Jacques Brunswig which is excellent on this. They will see there being perfectly highlighted the difficulty that Aristotle had with the particular. It is because assuredly he sees that existence can in no way be established except outside the Universal. This indeed is why he situates existence at the level of the Particular, and the Particular is in no way sufficient to sustain it, even though it gives the illusion of it thanks to the use of the word 'some'.

It is clear that on the contrary what results from a formalisation described as quantors – described as quantors by reason of a trace left, in philosophical history, by the fact that someone called Apulius who was a novelist of not very good taste and certainly an unbridled mystic and who was called Apulius, as I told you, he wrote *The golden ass* – it is this Apulius who one day introduced the fact that in Aristotle what concerned the more and the some was of the order of quantity. It is nothing of the kind. It is on the contrary simply two different styles of what I could call, if you will allow me this which is a little improvised, the incarnation of the symbol. Namely, that the passage into everyday life, that there are 'all's and 'some's in every tongue. This indeed assuredly forces us to posit that language ought all the same to have a common root and that since tongues are very profoundly different in their structure, it must indeed be that it is in relationship to something that is not language.

Naturally, one can understand here that people find things a little tricky and that, that what they sense as being this beyond of language can only be mathematics, people imagine, because it is number, that what is at stake is quantity. But perhaps precisely, but perhaps precisely is it not properly speaking number in its whole reality to which language gives access, but simply by being able to lay hold of the Zero and the One. It would seem to be along this path that the entry to the Real is made, this Real which alone is able to be the beyond of language, namely, the only domain where there can be formulated a symbolic impossibility.

This fact that, from the relationship that for its part is accessible to language, accessible to language if it is grounded very precisely on the sexual non-relationship, that it is unable then to confront the Zero and the One, this will find, will easily guarantee its reflection in the elaboration by Frege of his logical genesis of numbers.

As I told you, or at least indicated, what creates a difficulty in this logical genesis, namely, precisely the gap, that I underlined for you in the mathematical triangle, between this Zero and this One, a gap that reduplicates their opposition in terms of confrontation. That already what may intervene is only there from the fact that we have here the essence of the first couple, that this can only be a third and that the gap as such is still left of the two. This is something that is essential (83) to recall by reason of something that is much more dangerous to allow subsist in analysis than the mythical adventures of Oedipus, which are not of any difficulty in themselves, inasmuch as they admirably structure the necessity that there should be somewhere *at least One* who transcends what is involved in the grip of the phallic function. The myth of the primitive father means nothing else. This is very adequately expressed in it for us to be able to make an easy use of it, besides the fact that we find it confirmed by the logical structuring which I am reminding you of by what is written on the board.

On the other hand, assuredly there is nothing more dangerous than the confusions about what is involved in the One. The One, as you know, is frequently evoked by Freud as signifying what is involved in the essence of Eros which is supposed to be made up precisely of the fusion, namely, that libido is supposed to be this sort of essence which from the two, would tend to make a one and which, good God, in accordance with an old myth which assuredly valid from a mystical point of view, is supposed to be what one of the fundamental tensions of the world depends on. Namely, to only make one, this myth which is really something that can only function on the horizon of a delusion and which properly speaking has nothing to do about anything whatsoever that we encounter in our experience. If there is something that is quite patent in the relationship between the sexes and that analysis does not simply articulate but is designed to bring into play in every sense, and if there is indeed something which creates a difficulty in the relationship, it is very precisely the relationships between men and women and that there is nothing in it that resembles something or other that is spontaneous, precisely outside this horizon that I spoke about earlier, as being in

the last resort grounded on some animal myth or other and that in no way does Eros have a tendency to the One. Far from it!

It is in this measure, it is in this function that every precise articulation of what is involved at the two levels, from the fact that it is only in discord that there is grounded the opposition between the sexes inasmuch as they can in no way be established from a Universal. That at the level of existence, on the contrary, it is very precisely in an opposition that consists in the cancellation, the emptying out of one of the functions as being that of the other, that the possibility of the articulation of language conceals, this is what appears to me what is essentially to be highlighted.

Note that earlier, having spoken to you successively about negation, about conjunction and disjunction, I did not push to the limit what was involved in implication. It is clear that here again implication, for its part, can only function between the two levels, that of the phallic function and that which sets it aside. Now, nothing of what is involved in disjunction, at the lower level, at the level of the insufficiency of the universal specification, nothing implies for all that, nothing requires that it should be *if and only if*, the syncope of existence that is produced at the upper level, is effectively produced, that the discord at the lower level is required, and very precisely reciprocally.

(84) On the other hand, what we see, is once more there functioning in a way that is distinct but separated, the relation of the upper level to the lower level. The requirement that there exists ‘at-least-one-man’ which is the one that seems to be expressed at the level of this feminine that is specified as being a ‘not all’, a duality, the only point at which duality has a chance of being represented, there is only here a requisite that I might describe as gratuitous. Nothing requires this ‘at-least-one’, except the unique chance – and again it is necessary that it should be played out – of the fact that something functions on the other side, but as an ideal point, as a possibility for all men to reach it by what? By identification. There is here only a logical necessity that is only required at the level of the wager.

But note on the other hand what results from it as regards the barred Universal – and this is why this ‘at-least-one’ by which the Name of the Father, the name of the mythical Father, is supported, is indispensable. Here I am bringing forward a glimpse which is the one that is lacking to the function, to the notion of species and of class. It is in this sense that it is not by chance that this whole dialectic was missed out in the Aristotelian forms.

Where finally does there function this of x, this ‘there-exists-at-least-one’ who is not the slave of the phallic function? It is only from a requisite, I would say of a type that is despairing from the point of view of something that is not even supported by a universal definition. But on the contrary note that with regard to the Universal marked of x. of x, every male is a slave of the phallic function. What is meant then

by the 'at least one' as functioning to escape from it? I would say that it is the exception. It is indeed the occasion when what is said, without knowing what it says, the proverb that 'the exception confirms the rule', is there to support us. It is curious that it is only with the analytic discourse that a Universal can find, in the existence of the exception, its true foundation which ensures that undoubtedly we can in any case distinguish the Universal thus grounded from any use rendered commonplace by the philosophical tradition of the aforesaid Universal. But there is a singular thing that I rediscover by enquiring, and because as a result of an old formation, I am not completely ignorant of Chinese, I asked one of my dear friends to remind me of something that obviously I had only more or less preserved as a trace and it was necessary to have it confirmed for me by someone whose maternal tongue it is. It is assuredly very strange that, in Chinese, the denomination of 'all men' if I can express myself in this way, that what is at stake is the articulation of TO that I am not going to write for you on the board because I am tired, or the older articulation which is pronounced as Tchia (?). Anyway if you find that amusing I am going all the same to write it for you.

Can you imagine that one can say for example: all men eat, well then that is said? and? 'Mei' insists on the fact that it is (85) indeed there, and if you have any doubt about it, the numeral 'Go' shows you clearly that they are counted. But this does not give 'all', so then one adds on '(?)' which means without exception.

I could of course quote for you, other things, I could tell you that 'All the soldiers perished', they are all dead, in Chinese they say: 'Soldiers without exception caput'.

The 'all' that we see being displayed for us from the inside and that only finds its limit in inclusion is taken up into larger and larger sets. In the Chinese tongue one never says '?' nor '?' except in thinking of the totality that is at stake as content.

You may say to me 'without exception' ...but, of course. What we for our part discover in what I articulate for you as a relation here of unique existence with respect to the status of the universal, takes on the figure of an exception. But moreover is this idea not simply the correlate of what I called earlier 'the void of the other'.

The way in which we have made progress in the logic of classes, is that we have created the logic of sets. The difference between the class and the set, is that when the class is empty, there is no longer a class, but that when the set is empty, there is still this element of the empty set. This indeed is the reason why, once more, mathematics gives rise to a progress in logic.

And this is where we can, because we are continuing to talk, but it is soon going to finish, I assure you, it is to see here then where there can be taken up again the unilaterality of the existential function for what is involved in the Other, of the other partner in so far as it is 'without exception'. This 'without exception', that is indicated by the non-existence of the x on the right hand part of the board. Namely, that there is no exception and that this is something that has no parallel, symmetry, with the requirement that I called earlier 'despairing' of the 'at least one'. It is another requirement which is based on the fact that when all is said and done the masculine Universal can be based on the assurance that there does not exist any woman who has been castrated, and this for reasons that appear obvious to him. Only this does not have in fact – as you know – any more import for reason because it is a quite gratuitous assurance. Namely, that what I recalled earlier about the behaviour of the woman sufficiently shows that her relation to the phallic function is quite active. Only here, as earlier, if the supposition grounded, in a way, on the assurance that it is indeed a matter of an impossible – which is the most complete form of the real – this does not shake for (86) all that what I might call the fragility of the conjecture. Because in any case the woman is not any more assured of it in her universal essence, for the simple reason of the following: the fact is that the contrary of the limit, namely, that there is none, that there is no exception. The fact that there is no exception does not any more assure the Universal that is already so badly established by reason of the fact that it is discordant, does not assure anymore the Universal of the woman. The 'without exception', far from giving to some 'All' a consistency, naturally gives still less to what is defined as 'not all', as essentially dual.

There you are! I hope that this remains for you as a necessary hinge to what we will attempt later in a steep climb, if assuredly we are carried along the path where there should be severely questioned the irruption of this strangest thing, namely, the function of the One. People ask a lot of things about what is involved in animal mentality which is only of use to us here, after all, as a mirror reference, a mirror before which, as before all mirrors, one purely and simply denies.

There is something that one could ask oneself: for the animal, is there a One?

The exorbitant aspect of this emergence of this One, if what we will be lead elsewhere to open up and this indeed is the reason that, for a long time I have invited you to re-read, before I tackle it, Plato's *Parmenides*.

To articulate them – I mean as such, this is a parenthesis – I did not write it – to articulate them in each of these two horizons is then – this I wrote – to proceed according to these horizons themselves, since the mention of their beyond of the horizon – is only sustained by their position – when this starts to bore you, tell me, and I will tell you the things that I have to tell you this evening – by their position, I write, in a discourse of fact.

(90) For the analytic discourse, this ‘of fact’ implicates me sufficiently in these effects for it to be said that they are due to me, that they are designated by my name.

L’amur, what I designated here as such, reverberates it differently by the means of what are called precisely called the edge, the means of the edge (*bord*), of this *bord-homme*. The *bord-homme*, inspired me, I wrote that: “*Brrom brrom – ouap-ouap*”. This was the discovery of someone who in the past gave me children. It is an indication about the voice, *l’a-voix*, which, as everyone knows barks (*aboie*), and the look (*l’a-regard*) also which does not *aregarde* so closely. And the trick (*astuce*) that makes a trick. And then *l’amerde* also which from time to time made a graffito with rather insulting intentions, in newspaper pages about my name. Anyway that’s life. As someone who is amusing himself for the moment says, it’s fun! In short, it is true.

These effects have nothing to do with the dimension that can be measured from what I have done, namely, that it is a discourse that is not properly speaking my own that I give a necessary dimension to. It concerns the analytic discourse which, since it is not yet – and with good reason – properly constituted, finds itself needing some opening up which is what I spend myself on, starting from what? Simply from this fact that my position is determined by it.

Good. So now, let us talk about this discourse and about the fact that the position as such of the signifier is essential in it.

I would like all the same, given the audience that you constitute, to make one remark. It is that this position of the signifier is designated from an experience that it is within the reach of any one of you to have for you to notice what is at stake and how essential it is.

When you know a tongue imperfectly and when you read a text, well then, you understand, you still understand. That ought to make you a little bit aware. You understand in the sense that beforehand you know what is said in it.

Naturally, the result is that the text may contradict itself. When you read for example a text about set theory, you are given an explanation about what constitutes the infinite set of whole numbers. On the next

line, you are told something that you understand, because you continue to read: “You must not believe that just because it goes on forever that it is infinite” since it has just been explained to you that this is what it is, you give a start. But when you look closely at it you find the term that designates what is at stake is ‘deem’[?], namely, that it is not about that that you ought to make a judgement. Because they know that this series of whole numbers do not stop, that it is infinite, it is not because it is indefinite. So you see that it is because, either you have skipped over ‘deem’ or that you are not familiar enough with English, that (91) you have understood too quickly. Namely, that you have skipped over this essential element that a signifier makes possible, this change of level thanks to which you have for a moment the feeling of a contradiction.

You should never skip over a signifier. It is in the measure that the signifier does not bring you to a halt that you understand. Now to understand, is always to be understood oneself in the effects of the discourse, which discourse as such organises the effects of the knowledge that are already precipitated by the simple formalism of the signifier. What psychoanalysis teaches us, is that every naive knowledge – this is written and that is why I am reading it for you – is associated with a veiling of enjoyment which is realised in it and poses the question of what is betrayed in it about the limits of power, namely, what? About the outline that is imposed on enjoyment.

Once we speak, it is a fact that we suppose something about what is spoken, this something that we imagine is supposed in advance, even though it is sure that we only ever suppose it subsequently.

It is simply to the fact of speaking that there is referred, in the present state of our knowledge that it can be perceived that what speaks, anything whatsoever, is what enjoys itself as a body, what enjoys a body that lives it out as what I already stated about the ‘*tu able*’, namely, as *tutoyable*, about a body that *tutoies* and a body about which it says ‘*tue-toie*’ along the same line.

What is psychoanalysis? It is the mapping out of what is understood as obscure, of what is obscured in understanding, because of a signifier which marked a point of the body. Psychoanalysis, is what reproduces – you are going to find yourselves on an ordinary track – a production of neurosis. On this everyone is agreed. There is no psychoanalyst who has not seen it. This neurosis that is attributed not without reason to the action of parents can only be reached in the whole measure that the action of the parents is articulated precisely – this is the term with which I began the third line - from the position of the psychoanalyst. It is in the measure that it converges towards a signifier that emerges from it that neurosis is going to be ordered in accordance with the discourse whose effects have produced the subject. Every traumatic parent is in short in the same position as the psychoanalyst. The difference, is that the psychoanalyst, from his position, reproduces the neurosis and the traumatic parent for his part produces it innocently.

What is at stake is to reproduce this signifier from what was its efflorescence. The operation of the analytic discourse is in short to create a model of the neurosis. Why? In the measure in which it has removed a quantity of enjoyment. Enjoyment requires in effect the privilege: there are no two ways to construct it for everyone. Any reduplication kills it. It only survives because of the fact that its repetition is useless, namely, always the same. It is the introduction of the model that this useless repetition completes. A completed repetition dissolves it because of the fact that it is a simplified repetition.

(92) It is always, of course, about the signifier that I am talking when I talk about “*yadl'un*” to stretch this *dl'un* to the whole measure of its empire, because it is assuredly the master signifier. It must be approached, where its talents have been left, in order to put it, for its part, up against it.

This is what makes the point that I have arrived at this year useful as an incidence, having no other choice but that...*ou pire*. This mathematical reference so called because it is of the order where the *matheme* reigns, namely, what produces a knowledge which even if it is only produced, is linked to the norms of surplus enjoying, namely, of what is measurable. A *matheme* is what is properly and alone teaches: all that is taught is the One. But even then you have to know what is at stake. And that is why this year I am questioning it.

I will not continue my reading any longer, which I read, I think, slowly enough and which is a little difficult, in order that, some questions may arise for you about each one of the terms that I clearly spelled out. And that is why now I am going to talk more freely to you. There was someone, the other day, who coming out from the last thing at the Pantheon – he is perhaps here again – came to question me on the subject of whether I believed in freedom, I told him that he was very funny. And then since I am still rather tired, I broke away from him. But this does not mean that I would not be ready, on this point, to make some personal confidences to him. It is a fact that I rarely speak about it. So that this question comes from his initiative. I would not regret knowing why he asked me it.

So what I would like then to say more freely, is that in making an allusion in this text to the way by which I find myself in the position of opening up this analytic discourse it is quite obviously inasmuch as I consider it as constituting, at least potentially, this sort of structure that I designate by the term of discourse. Namely, that by which, by the pure and simple effect of language, a social bond occurs. People noticed that without for all that needing psychoanalysis. It is even what is usually called ideology.

The way in which a discourse is organised so that it gives rise to a social bond inversely involves that everything that is articulated in it is organised from its effects. This indeed is how I understand what I articulate for you about the discourse of psychoanalysis: the fact is if there were not a psychoanalytic

practice, nothing of what I could articulate about it would have the effects that I expect from it. I did not say 'would not have a meaning'. What is proper to meaning, is to be always confusing, namely, to make the bridge, to believe it is making a bridge between one discourse, in so far as it gives rise to a social bond with what from a different order comes from a different discourse.

The annoying thing, is that when you proceed, as I have just said in this writing 'that it is a matter of proceeding', namely, to envisage (93) from a discourse what plays the function of the One in it, what do I do from time to time? If you will allow me this neologism what I do is '*enologie*'. With what I articulate, anyone can construct an ontology with what it involves, beyond precisely these two horizons that I marked as being defined as the horizons of the signifier.

In the University discourse you can set about taking up what creates a model from my construction, by supposing in it an arbitrary point, some essence or other would become for some reason or other the supreme value. It is quite particularly advantageous to what is proposed to the University discourse in which what is at stake, is, according to the diagram that I sketched out of it, to put S_2 where? At the place of the semblance.

Before a signifier is really put in its place, namely, precisely mapped out from the ideology for which it is produced, it always has effects of circulation. Meaning precedes, in its effects, the recognition of its place, the place that it establishes.

If the University discourse is defined by the fact that in it knowledge is put in the position of the semblance, this can be monitored, this is confirmed by the very nature of teaching in which you see what? A false ordering of what could be displayed, as I might say, throughout the centuries, in terms of different ontologies. Its high point, its culmination is in what is gloriously called 'the history of philosophy', as if philosophy did not have - and it is easily simply - its source in the adventures and misadventures of the discourse of the Master, that must be renewed from time to time. What causes the variability of philosophy is, as is sufficiently affirmed from the points from which precisely the notion of ideology emerged, as if then the cause in question did not lie elsewhere. But it is difficult that every process of articulation of a discourse, especially if it has not yet been mapped out provides a pretext for a certain number of premature blisters of new beings.

I know well that all of this is not easy and that I must all the same - and this in the good tradition of what I am doing here - that I should tell you more amusing things.

So then let us talk about the analyst and love.

Love, in analysis – and of course this comes from the position of the analyst – love, we speak about. With all due respect, it is not spoken about any more than elsewhere, since after all, that is what is love is used for. It is not the most marvellous of things. But anyway in our time people speak a lot about it. It is even prodigious, for some time, that people continue to speak about it (94) because when all is said and done for some time people might have noticed that it does not succeed any better for all that. It is clear then that it is in speaking that one makes love. So then the analyst, what is his role in all of this? Can an analysis really make a love successful? I have to tell you, for my own part, that I don't know any example of it. And nevertheless I tried! For me it was of course, because I did not come down in the last shower, a wager. I hope that the person in question is not here, I am almost sure! I took someone, thank God, that I knew beforehand needed a psychoanalysis, but on the basis of this demand – you can see the sort of rubbish I get into to verify my affirmations! – on the basis of the fact that he had at all costs to make a *conjugo* with the woman who had a place in his heart. Naturally of course it failed, thank God, in the shortest possible time.

Let us cut this short because after all these are only anecdotes. It is a different matter. Some day when I am in form and when I will take the risk of carrying on like La Bruyère I will deal with the question of the relationships of love with the semblance. We are not here this evening to delay on these trifles!

What is at stake is something that I want to come back to because it seemed to me to have opened up the matter. It is the relationship of all these things that I am in the process of restating, that I am recalling to you with a light touch, about the truths of experience, namely, the function of sex in psychoanalysis.

I think all the same that I have opened even the deafest ears on this point by the statement of the fact which deserves to be commented on that there is no sexual relationship. Naturally, this is worthwhile articulating. Why should a psychoanalyst imagine that the foundation to which he refers is sex?

There is not the slightest doubt that sex is real. And its very structure, is the dual, the number 'two'. Whatever people may think, there are only two: men, women, they say and people persist in adding the Auvergnians! That is an error. At the level of the real, there are no Auvergnians. What is at stake when we are dealing with sex, is the other, the other sex, even when one prefers the same one. It is not because I said earlier that as regards what is successful in a love, the help of psychoanalysis is precarious, that you should think that psychoanalyst doesn't give a damn about it, if I can express myself in this way. That the partner in question is of the other sex and that what is at stake, is something that has a relationship with his enjoyment – I am talking about the other, of the third, in connection with whom there is stated this '*parlage*' about love – the psychoanalyst cannot be indifferent to it, because the one who is not there, for him, it is indeed that, the real.

This enjoyment for its part, the one that is not 'in analysis', if you will allow me to express myself in this way, plays the function for him of the real. What he has on the other hand in analysis, namely, the subject, he takes for what he is, namely, as an effect of (95) discourse. I would ask you to note in passing that he does not subjectivise him. That does not mean that all of this, are just his own little ideas, but as subject he is determined by a discourse from which he has derived for a long time and this is what is analysable.

The analyst, I want to specify is in no way nominalist. He does not think about the representations of his subject, but he has to intervene in his discourse, by procuring for him an extra signifier. This is what is called interpretation. As regard what is not within his scope, namely, what is in question, namely, the enjoyment of the one who is not there, in analysis, he takes it for what it is, namely, assuredly as being of the order of the real, because he can do nothing about it.

There is something striking, which is that sex as real, I mean dual, I mean that there are two of them, no one ever, even Bishop Berkeley dared to state that it was a little idea that everyone had in his head, that it was a representation. And it is very instructive that throughout the whole history of philosophy nobody ever thought of stretching idealism that far.

What I have just defined for you in this connection, is the fact that especially for some time, we have seen what was involved in sex by means of a microscope. I am not talking about sexual organs, I am talking about gametes; you should take into account that all of that was lacking until Leuwenhoek and Swammerdam. As regards what is involved in sex people were reduced to thinking that sex was everywhere: ... ? nature, *nous*, the whole bag of tricks, all of that was sex. And female vultures made love with the wind!....

The fact that we know in a certain way that sex is found there, in two little cells which are not alike, from that and under the pretext that as regards sex, of course, well before people knew that there were two types of gametes, in the name of that, the psychoanalyst believes that there is a sexual relationship.

We have seen psychoanalysts, in the literature, in a domain that one can say is not very filtrated, find in the intrusion of the male gamete, of the *spermato* as they say, and again the *zoide* in the envelope of the ovule find there the model of some redoubtable break-in. As if there were the slightest relationship between this reference which does not have the slightest relationship, except in the crudest metaphor, with what is involved in copulation. As if there could be there anything whatsoever that is referred to what is brought into play in the relationships that are described as love, namely, as I said at the very beginning, a lot of words.

This indeed is the whole question. And it is indeed here that the evolution of the forms of discourse is much more indicative for us in what is at stake – it is from the effects of discourse – much more indicative than any reference to what totally, even though it is sure (96) that there are two sexes, to what remains totally in suspense. Namely, of whether what this discourse is capable of articulating includes, yes or no, the sexual relationship.

This is what it is worthwhile putting in question. The little things that I already wrote on the board, namely: [These formulae show some modifications]

the opposition of a x and of a non- x , of a ‘there exists’ and of ‘there does not exist’, at the same level, that of ‘it is not true that x ’ and on the other hand ‘every x is in conformity with the function of x ’ and of this ‘not all’ – which is a new formula ‘not all’ – and nothing more – ‘is able’- in the right hand column – ‘to satisfy the function described as phallic’. It is around this, as I will try to explain in the seminars that follow, namely, elsewhere, it is this, namely, in a series of gaps which are found at every point to presume in function of these terms, namely, here, here and here the four points stated above. But different gaps and not always the same, this is what deserves to be highlighted in order to give its status to what is involved, at the level of the subject, about the sexual relationship.

This sufficiently shows us the point to which in its very grammar language traces out the effects described as those of the subject. This sufficiently overlaps something that was only discovered first of all from logic. So that we are able from now on to attach ourselves, as I have done since some of the appeals that I am making here, to listening to a signifier in order for me to attempt to give it a meaning. Because it is the only case – and with good reason – that this term ‘meaning’ is justified in stating it: “There is something of the One”.

Because there is something which ought all the same to appear to you, which is if there is no relationship, the fact is that in the two each remains one. The unbelievable thing, is that the psychoanalysts whose mythology has been denounced with more or less reason, it is funny that it is precisely the one people have failed to expose that is most within hand’s reach.

When the gametes join together, what results is not the fusion of two. Before that can come about, you need a hell of a lot to be cleared out: that is called meiosis. And the new one is constructed from what we can very correctly call – why not, I don’t want to go too far, I will not say the debris of each one of them, but anyway each of them who have left a certain amount of debris.

To find – and my God, from the pen of Freud – the idea that Eros is grounded (*se fonde*) – in the subjunctive: you see the equivocation, but I do not see why I should not make use of the French tongue, (97) between foundation and fusion – that Eros should found itself by making one out of two. This is obviously a strange idea from which of course there proceeds this absolutely extravagant idea incarnate in the preaching which nevertheless our dear Freud rejects with his whole being. He reveals to us in the clearest fashion in *The future of an illusion*, and in still others things again, in many other places in *Civilisation and its discontents*, his repugnance for this idea of universal love. And nevertheless, the foundational force of life, of the life instinct, as he puts it, is supposed to be entirely in this Eros which is supposed to be a principle of union.

It is not simply for didactic reasons that I am going to put forward before you something on the subject of the One which may be said to combat this gross mythology, besides the fact that it will perhaps allow us not simply to exorcise Eros – I mean the Eros of Freudian doctrine – but our darling Thanatos also with which we have been pissed off for long enough.

And it is no harm in this respect, to make use of something which not by chance was brought to light some time ago. I already introduced the last time, a consideration about what can be referred to as set theory. Naturally, do not rush into it like that! Why not also, because one can also have a little laugh at it: men and women are also a set. That does not prevent each of them from being on their own side.

It is a matter of knowing whether, as regards what is involved in the One of which there is question, we might not be able to draw some light from the set, a set of course that was never designed for that.

So then since here I am sending up trial balloons, I am simply proposing to myself to try to see with you what within this may serve, I would not say as an illustration, what is at stake is something quite different. What is at stake is what the signifier has to do with the One. Because, of course, the One did not simply emerge yesterday. It even arose all the same in connection with two things that are quite different: in connection with a certain use of measuring instruments and at the same time something that was absolutely unrelated to it, namely, the function of the individual.

The individual, is Aristotle. Aristotle was very struck by these beings that were always reproduced in the same way. This had already struck somebody else, someone called Plato, and in truth, I think it was because he had nothing better to offer us to give us the idea of form that he came to the point of stating that the form is real: he had to illustrate, as best he could, his idea of the idea. The other, of course, points out that all the same, form is very pretty, but that what it is distinguished by is the fact that it is simply what we recognise in a certain number of individuals that resemble one another.

We have gone down different metaphysical slopes. We are not in any way interested about the way in which the One is illustrated, whether it is from the individual or whether it is from a certain (98) practical use of geometry, whatever perfecting you may be able to add to the aforesaid geometry by the consideration of proportions, of the difference that is manifested between the height of a post and that of its shadow. For a long time we have noticed that the One poses other problems, and this for the simple fact that mathematics has made a little progress. I am not going to go back on what I stated the last time, namely, differential calculus, trigonometric series and, in a general fashion, the conception of the number as defined by a sequence. What appears very clearly, is that the question is posed here quite differently as regards what is involved in the One, because a sequence is characterised by the fact that it is set up as the sequence of whole numbers. It is a matter of accounting for what a whole number is.

I am not of course going to state set theory for you. I simply want to highlight the point that we had to wait for a long time, the end of the last century, it is only for a little more than a hundred years that people have attempted to account for the function of the One. It is remarkable that the set is defined in such a way that the first aspect in which it appears should be that of the empty set and that on the other hand this constitutes a set, namely, that in which we say that the empty set is the only element: this gives you a set with **one** element.

This is where we are starting from and, the last time – I am saying it for those who weren't there at the Pantheon, where I began to approach this slippery subject – that the foundation of the One by this very fact proves to be very properly constituted from the place of One lack (*d'Un manque*)

I illustrated it crudely from the pedagogical use in which what is at stake is to make the aforesaid set theory understood. To make you sense that the aforesaid set theory has no other direct object than to make it appear how there can be generated the proper notion of the cardinal number. Through bi-univocal correspondence – I illustrated it the last time – it is at the moment where there lacks, in two comparative series, a partner, that the notion of the One emerges: there is **one** lacking.

Everything that is said about the cardinal number emerges from the fact that if the series of numbers always necessarily implies one, and a single successor, if inasmuch as it is in the cardinal that there is realised from the order of number what is at stake, it is properly in the cardinal series *qua* beginning at zero, that it goes as far as the number that immediately precedes the successor.

In stating it to you like this in an improvised fashion in my statement I made a mistake: that for example of speaking about a series as if it were already ordered. Take away this something that I did not affirm, but simply that each number corresponds cardinally to the cardinal that precedes it while adding to it the empty set.

(99) The important thing of what I would like to make you sense this evening, is that if the One emerges as an effect of lack, the consideration of sets lends itself to something which, I believe, is worthwhile being mentioned and that I would like to highlight, from the reference to the fact that set theory has allowed there to be distinguished in the order of what is involved in the set, two types: the finite set and to admit the infinite set.

In this statement, what characterises the infinite set is properly speaking to be posited as equivalent to one or other of its subsets. But as Galileo had already remarked, and he did not have to wait for Cantor, the series of all squares is a bi-univocal correspondence with each one of the whole numbers. There is in effect no reason to ever consider that one of these squares would be too large to be in the series of whole numbers. This is what constitutes the infinite set as a result of which we say that it can be reflexive. On the contrary, as regards what is involved in the finite set it is said, as being its major property, that it is open to being exercised in properly mathematical reasoning, namely, in the reasoning that is used for what is called induction. Induction is acceptable when a set is finite.

What I would like to point out to you, is that in set theory, there is a point that, for my part, I consider as problematic. It is that which relates to what is called the non-numerability of the parts – by that you should understand subsets – as they can be defined starting from a set.

It is very easy, if you start from the following, to take the cardinal number, you have a set that is composed for example of six elements. If you describe as subset the grasping in a set of each one of these five elements, then groups that are formed from two of these elements in five, it is easier for you to calculate how many subsets this will give you. There are very exactly ten. Then you take them in threes: there will still be ten. Then you take them in fours: there will be five of them. And you would arrive at the end to the set in so far as there is only one of them present here, which includes five elements. To which it is necessary to add the empty set which, in any case, without being an element of the set, is manifest as one of its parts. Because the parts are not an element. What is ordered from them, is written as follows:

1	1
4	5
6	10
4	10
1	5

What does it turn out that we have defined as a part of the set?

The empty set is there, the five elements $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta\varepsilon$, for example, are there.

(100) What comes subsequently, is $\alpha\beta$, $\alpha\gamma$, $\alpha\delta$, $\alpha\varepsilon$. You can do the same thing starting from β , then starting from ... etc. You will see that there are ten of them.

Subsequently here you have $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta$ with a lack of ε . And you can, by having each one of the letters missing, obtain the necessary number of five for the regrouping as parts of the elements. As a result of which, you will find something certain – it would be enough for me to complete this statement of a set at cardinal 5 that you could subsequently put to one side, which is that referred to a set of four elements. In other words, imagine it from a tetrad; you see that you have a tetrad, that you have six lines, that you have four vertices, that you have four faces, and that you also have the empty set (in the left-hand column).

The remark that I am making has something that results from it. I only alluded to the other case to show that in the two cases, the sum of the parts is equal to 2 to the power of n. N being precisely the cardinal number of the elements of the set. We are not dealing here, in any way whatsoever, with anything that shakes set theory. What is stated in this connection about numerability has all its applications, for example, in the remark that nothing changes in the category of the infinite of a set if there is withdrawn from it a series that is in some way numerable.

Nevertheless the contribution which is made of non-numerable in the fact that undoubtedly, that in any case one cannot apply to a set, a finite set, the sum of its parts defined as they have just been, is it – I am asking the question – the best way to introduce the non-numerability of an infinite set?

What is at stake is a didactic introduction. I dispute it from the moment when the property of reflexivity as applied to the infinite set and which includes it lacking the inductivity characteristic of finite sets, allows nevertheless there to be written – as I have been able to see in some places – that the non-numerability of the parts of the finite set are supposed to emerge – I underline it – through the induction of the fact that these parts would be written as the infinite set of whole numbers is written: 2 to the power of alpha prime.

I dispute this, and how do I set about disputing it? I dispute it starting from the fact that there is some artifice, when what is at stake are the parts of the set, taking them in their mounting order whose addition gives in effect 2 to the power of n.

But it is clear that if you have on the one side a, b, c, d, e, - to Frenchify the Greek letters that I wrote on the board, I had a reason for that – and if you contribute to it what corresponds to them a, b, c, d corresponding to e; a, b, c, d, e corresponding to c, you see that the number of parts, if you substitute here a partition,

culminates at a formula that is very different, and you are going to see why it is of interest to me: it is because the number, is two to the power of n minus one.

(101) Here I can only, given the time and then the fact that, after all, all of this does not interest absolutely everyone here, but I would like on this point, I would urge, I have to say as I usually say, in this desperate way – I encourage the grammarians from time to time to give me a little hint, they always send me one, it is always the bad ones – I urged a large number of mathematicians already to reply to me about this and, in truth, they have turned a deaf ear because I have to say to you that they stick to this numerable nature of the parts of the set, like a tick in a dog's hide. Nevertheless I am proposing something which has its little interest, I am going here directly to a goal that is going to leave to one side a point on which I would like to finish afterwards, but I am going straight to one that is of interest. Its interest is the following, the fact is that in substituting for the notion of the parts that of partition, it is necessary in the same way, that we have admitted that the parts of the infinite set, must be two the power of alpha zero. Namely, the smallest of the transfinite, the one that constitutes through the set, the cardinal of the set of whole numbers, instead of having: two to the power of alpha zero, we have: two to the power of alpha zero minus one.

I suspect that this may make anyone at all sense what is exaggerated in the supposition of the bi-partition of an infinite set. If, as the formula itself carries the trace of, what we call the set of parts culminates at a formula that contains the number 2 raised to the power of the parts culminates at a formula which is quite acceptable, and especially from the moment that we put in question induction when we are dealing with the infinite set, how can it be that we should accept a formula that so clearly manifests that what is at stake is not the parts of the set but its partition.

I would add something which has its own interest. I know that alpha to the power of zero, of course, is only an index, an index which is not taken by chance, and an index forged to designate – because there are a whole series of others admitted in principle, the entire series of whole numbers can serve as an index for what is involved in the set inasmuch as it grounds the transfinite. Nevertheless, from the moment that what is at stake, is the function of the power, and that it seems that we have sufficiently abused induction in allowing ourselves to find in it the test for non-numerability of the parts of the infinite set, can it be, that by looking closely at it we might find not here, at this zero, a different function, the one that it has in the exponential power. Namely, that, whatever number it may be, the exponent (*exposant*) zero as regards what is involved in the power, is equal to One, whatever the number may be. I underline: any number whatsoever to the power of one is itself. But a number to the power of zero, is always one, for the very simply reason that a number to the power of minus one, is its inverse. So then it is the one here that serves as a pivotal element.

From this moment on, the partition of the transfinite set culminates at the following. Namely, that if we make aleph zero equal on this occasion to one, we have as regards what is involved in the partition of the set, something that appears in effect to be quite acceptable. Namely, that the succession of whole numbers is supported by nothing other than by the reiteration of the One. It is by reproducing itself that the One that has emerged from the empty set constitutes (102) what I put forward the last time as being, in principle, manifested in Pascal's triangle, what is involved at the level of the cardinal of monads. And that behind there is supported what I called – I am saying it for those who are deaf who have questioned themselves about what I said – the '*nade*'. Namely, the One inasmuch as it emerges from the empty set and is the reiteration of lack.

I am underlining very specifically the fact that the One that is at stake, is very properly what set theory is only substituted for as reiteration, that the empty set, that in which it manifests – it, set theory – the true nature of the '*nade*'.

What is in effect affirmed at the source of the set, this from the pen of Cantor, which is certainly as has been said 'naïve' at the moment when it opened up this really sensational path, what the pen of Cantor affirms, is that as regards what is involved in the elements of the set, this means that what is at stake is something as different as one might wish, on the simple condition that we posit each one of these things. That it will go as far as to say the object of the intuition or of thought, this is how he puts it – and in effect why should we refuse it to him. This means nothing other than something that is as eternal as you wish. It is quite clear that starting from that moment when intuition was mixed up with thought, what is at stake is the signifier which of course is manifested by the fact that all of this is written a, b, c, d.

But what is said, is very properly the fact that it is ruled out then, in the belonging of an element to a set, that any element whatsoever should be repeated as such. It is then as distinct that every element whatsoever of a set subsists, and that as regards what is involved in the empty set it is affirmed at the source of set theory that there can only be one. This One, the '*nade*' inasmuch as it is at the source of the emergence of the numerical One, of the One from which the whole number is made, is then something which is posited as being at the origin of the empty set itself. This notion is important, because if we question the structure, it is only in the measure that, for us, in analytic discourse, the One suggests itself as being at the source of repetition. And that then here what is at stake is precisely a kind of One which finds itself marked by never being in what is involved in the theory of numbers anything but a lack, an empty set.

But there is, from the moment that I introduced this function of partition, a point in Pascal's triangle that you will allow me to question. With the two columns that I have just made, I have enough to show where my questioning is brought to bear. This is (103) what I am stating.

1 1	1 1 1 1 1 1	
4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
6 10	1 3 6 10	
4 10	1 4 10	
1 5		1 5
1	1	

Pascal's Triangle

If it is true that we have as a number of partitions only the number that previously was affected to the set of n minus one, to the set whose cardinal number is less than a unit of the cardinal of a set, look at how, by generating from this number which corresponds to the presumed parts of the set that we will to be brief lower, lower than one, as element, to find as Pascal's triangle has already taught us, the parts that are going to compose – they will find themselves in a bi-partition – that are going to compose as a part, according to the first statement, the upper set. We have on each occasion to make the addition of what corresponds in the left hand column to the two numbers which are situated immediately on the left and above the first one: to obtain here the number ten, here the number four and the number six.

What does that mean if it is not that, to obtain the first number, that of the monads of the set, the elements, of the cardinal number of the set, it is uniquely by having carried out, I would say by an abuse of office, to have put the empty set at the level of the monadic elements. Namely, it is in adding the empty set to each of the four monads of the preceding column that we obtain the cardinal number of the monads of the elements of the upper set.

1 1 1 1 1 1
1 2 3 4 5
1 3 6 10
1 4 10
1 5
1

Let us now simply try, in order to help me to represent the thing, to see what this gives on a schema. And let us take, in order to be more simple, the still earlier column, let us take here three monads and no longer four. The set, we represent by this circle.

(104) But I do not at all require that the empty set should be necessarily at the centre; but simply by representing it we have it here.

We have said that this empty set when it will be a matter of constructing a tetrahedric set, this empty set will come to the rank of the monads of the preceding one. Namely, that to represent it as this, by a tetrahedron – of course it is not a tetrahedron that is at stake, what is at stake is number – if it is designated by Greek letters α , β , γ we will have here, as a fourth element for an element in the order of these subsets, what we will have as an empty set.

But it nevertheless remains that the empty set, at the level of this new set, still exists, and that it is at the level of this new set that what has been extracted from the empty set we will describe differently, and since we already have α , β , γ , we will call it δ . What does this lead us to see? It is at the level of the element of the anti-penultimate subsets, namely, to designate this one, namely, this one, let us say to remain at the level of intuition, of five quadrangles, that one can highlight in, let us also say, a polyhedron with five vertices, here also we have to take up what? The four triangles of the tetrad. In so far as what? In so far as in these four triangles we are going to be able to make three different subtractions, this being added to it, which constitutes it as a set or more exactly as a subset.

How can we have made up our count, except at the same level, at which we would only have three subsets by adding to the these simple elements of the set, namely α , β , γ , δ , as not taken up into a set, namely inasmuch as defined as elements, they are not sets, but as isolated from what includes them in the set, they should be counted, for us to have our count of four. To furnish the part of the figure 5 at the level of a set of 5 elements, we have to bring into play elements of four in number as simply juxtaposed, but not taken up into a set, a subset that in this case means what? That we should notice the fact that in set theory, each element is worth any other. And it is indeed in this way that unity can be generated from it. It is precisely because of the fact that it is said that the concept of ‘distinct’ and of ‘defined’ on this occasion represents the following, the fact is that ‘distinct’ only means ‘radical difference’ since nothing can resemble it. There are no species. Everything that is distinguished in the same way is the same element. That is what this means.

But what do we see? We see the following, that by only taking up the element of pure difference, we can see it also as the sameness of (105) this difference. I mean to illustrate that an element in set theory, as was already proved at the second line, is altogether equivalent to an empty set, since the empty set can also act as an element. Everything that is defined as an element is the equivalent of the empty set. But in taking this equivalence, this sameness of absolute difference, by taking it as isolatable, and this not taken up into this set-like inclusion, as I might say, that would make a subset of it, this means that the sameness as such is counted at a certain point!

This appears to me to be extremely important, and very specifically for example, at the level of the Platonic operation which makes of similitude an idea of subsistence, in the realist perspective, the universal in so far as this universal is reality.

What we see, is that it is not at all at the same level – and this is what I made an allusion to in my last discourse at the Pantheon – it is not at the same level that the idea of the fellow (*semblable*) is introduced. The sameness of the elements of the set is, as such, counted as playing its role in the parts of the set. This matter has certainly its importance for us, because what is at stake in analytic theory? Analytic theory sees the One being highlighted at two of its levels. The One is the One which is repeated; it is at the foundation of this major incidence in the talk of the analysand that it exposes with a certain repetition, with regard to what? A signifying structure.

What is it, on the other hand, to consider the schema that I gave of the analytic discourse, what is produced from placing the subject at the level of the enjoyment of speaking? What is produced and what I designate at the level described as that of surplus enjoying, is that S_1 , namely, a signifying production that I am proposing, while leaving me the duty to make you sense its impact, that I propose to recognise in what is involved in what? What is the sameness of the difference? What does it mean that something that we designate in the signifier by different letters, is the same? What can be meant by saying ‘the same’, if not precisely that it is unique, starting from the very hypothesis from which there starts in set theory the function of the element.

The One that is at stake, that the subject produces, let us say the ideal point in analysis, is very precisely on the contrary what is involved in repetition. The One as single, the One inasmuch as whatever may be the difference that exists, all the differences that exist, all the differences are of equal value, there is only one of them, that is **the** difference.

(106) It is on this that I wanted to finish this discourse this evening, between the late hour and my weariness which both are impacting on me. The illustration of this function of S_1 as I put it in the statutory formula of analytic discourse, I will give in the sessions that follow.