

CHRISTIAN FIERENS

Reading L'étourdit

Lacan 1972

Translated by Cormac Gallagher

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Preface

(7)¹ Is it readable?

As a writer Lacan's whole life could be summarised by the wish 'in the end to be properly read' (*Lituraterre, Autres Ecrits*, p.13). Far from being material for a simple reading, the *Ecrits* of 1966 and *a fortiori* the *Autres Ecrits*, published in 2001, should be deciphered as rebuses. In that, they fall into step with what is reserved for the dream in the Freudian *Traumdeutung*. There each fragment – obscure or not – is supposed to be subjected to the work of speech, of association and of saying, in the belief that a sense might appear. But in decrypting the *Ecrits*, is one reading them properly?

In the course of a six year long seminar aimed at interpreting Lacan's writing from A to Z, one text appeared particularly obscure and enigmatic to me: *L'étourdit* resisted decipherment. I promised myself to make an index of the obscurities of the text and to work on them one by one. In the course of this explanatory unpacking, the index expanded with new obscurities unperceived or minimised during the first reading: obscurity slipped into the texture of the illumination. Was I going to be plunged paradoxically into the darkness of a text closing in on itself in a terminal hermeticism?

If the number of my questions grew, I also noticed that this unpacking illuminated not only certain obscure points, but also the warp and woof of the text itself. Making my way in semi-darkness, the accomplishment of my desire – to interpret *L'étourdit* – remained in suspense until day dawned and the threads of explanation knotted and unknotted sufficiently to form an interpretation. For interpretation is not absolute clarity. Constructed from light and shade, interpretation finds a response for each question in as much as each response re-launches the questioning.

(8) For whom then is this interpretative dawn? Not for the text, *étourdit*, which has little regard for and remains blind to commentary. Perhaps for the benevolent look which will only find in it what it is willing to put into it, in other words the response of its work.

¹ Numbers in brackets refer to pagination of: *Lecture de L'étourdit, Lacan 1972*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2002

Perhaps also for the blind look of the one who, in the shade, will betray the enigma in it?
[*énigme*: translated as enigma or riddle]

The blind look of Tiresias who beyond display (*monstration*) and demonstration raises his voice and makes us divine the absence at stake in interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

(9) *L'étourdit* is the primary form that diverts us from our conscious semantics, it is the apparition of the unconscious in its dimension of non-sense, and it opens up a beyond of common meaning.

Starting from this *étourdit* which is on the same level as the unconscious, might it be a matter of recalling the implication of the subject in his enunciating? Or again is interpretation subjective, predetermined by the subject? Let us say it right away: interpretation – in the psychoanalytic sense of the term – is not modal, it is not dependent either on the subjectivity, or the inter-subjectivity of the personages present, even if transference and counter-transference may operate perversely on it. It is not a matter either of going from the subjective state of dizziness (*étourdi*) to the subjective state of awareness.

If, in itself, psychoanalytic interpretation is not subjective, from where does it draw its objectivity? From the text no doubt, on condition of not hearing it from meaning alone. Interpretation is in no way to be reduced to explaining the meaning of the text! The analyst worthy of the name knows this well when he brings the whole weight of interpretation to bear on the objective quotation of the analysand: you said it in the slightest stumbling (*linguae* or *calami*). The turns say again and again what you have already said.

Let us open up then the question of *L'étourdit* from the objective letter of the text. The listener first hears *l'étourdi*; but the final letter *t* of *l'étourdit* directly invalidates this comprehension; the listener to the (10) substantive participle *l'étourdi* changes his mind therefore and becomes a reader of the letter. In truth, the literal sequence *l'étourdit* has no sense, unless by making a pronoun of the *l'* and a verb of *étourdit*: 'that amuses and bewilders (*étourdit*) him'. The letter *t* poses the question: where has the grammatical subject of this literal sequence *l'étourdit* gone? *L'étourdit* goes beyond the meanings of its components, it addresses us abruptly: where has the grammatical subject disappeared to? Who will make it appear? By the development of its questions, *L'étourdit* will induce an effect of (psycho-) logical subject in as much and with the result that according to it, the listening subject will be transformed into a subject reader of the letter, he will be

Other. This new subject, an effect of writing, verifies precisely what is at stake in Lacan's *Ecrits*, as *The purloined letter* announces it to us. That is to read properly, that is interpretation at the same time as the disappearance-apparition of a subject.

L'étourdit which is phonetically possible is graphically impossible. The possible *étourdi* is contradicted by the writing of an impossible *étourdit*. Possible and impossible, *étourdit* is an enigma all the more difficult in that this signifier will come only one single time in the text. That the title condenses the text, that it is its pivot or gives its interpretative key, the enigma of *l'étourdit*, must be elucidated from its occurrence in the text.

The taking up again of the noun *étourdit* in the text, which can be called the taking up again of S_1 in S_2 or the taking up again of a signifier in another signifier, is inscribed in a paragraph occupying a central place well delimited by quotation marks. This paragraph is also the only paragraph in quotation marks:

'You have satisfied me, littlecutman (*petithomme*). You have comprehended, that is what was required (*fallait*). On [you] go (*Vas*), aid (*l'après midit*) Thanks to the hand that will respond to you, because you call her Antigone, the very one who can tear you apart because I sphynx my notall (*pastoute*) in her, you will even be able towards evening to make yourself the equal of Tiresias and like him, because of having played the Other, divine what I told you' (25a; 468)²¹.

What do these quotation marks tell us? The paragraph puts on stage an enunciating necessarily different to that of the remainder of the text. Who are the 'I' and the 'you' of this direct discourse?

Who speaks in this paragraph? The response is not explained outside the quotation and appears enigmatic not simply for the pressurised reader, but still more for the attentive reader. The speaker nevertheless designated herself twice within the text itself: 1⁰ 'You have satisfied (*satisfait*) me'; grammatically, it would therefore be a being of the

^{1 2} The first number in brackets refers to the page of the first edition of *L'étourdit* in *Scilicet*, 4, Seuil, Paris, 1973: The letters a, b, c, d, e locate the passage in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th section of the page. The approximate page numbers of *Autres écrits* are given for convenience. The letter E refers to J.Lacan's *Ecrits*, Seuil, Paris, 1966.

feminine gender who speaks, and 2⁰ ‘I sphynx my notall (*pastoute*)’; as Sphynx, she would pose her riddles. To whom?

No doubt, the Sphynx addresses her riddle to Oedipus and we could slip into her skin to pose the question of our own enigmatic truth, as Freud had already done to disentangle his own rather unusual family history. But more directly, the paragraph in quotation marks follows the preceding paragraph written by Lacan: it would be addressed then first of all to Lacan himself. What is more the grammar of *L’Etourdit* much as he has contributed to the approach of the *pastoute* (that we will provisionally leave in the riddle of the Sphynx). Lacan’s contribution to the *pastoute* is structured in three moments that are (12) counted out: first four, then two, finally three (explained as the quadruped of the four places of the four discourses, the bipod of the sexes and the tripod formed by the two sexes plus the phallus or by the phallic triangulation). Four, two, three, the order is sufficiently bewildering and enigmatic for us to hear in it the quotation of the riddle of the Sphynx. Who is the creature that successively walks on four paws (the morning), on two paws (at midday) and on three paws (the evening)? The question of the Sphynx would therefore be addressed to Lacan himself, a new Oedipus faced with the ancient question: what is man?

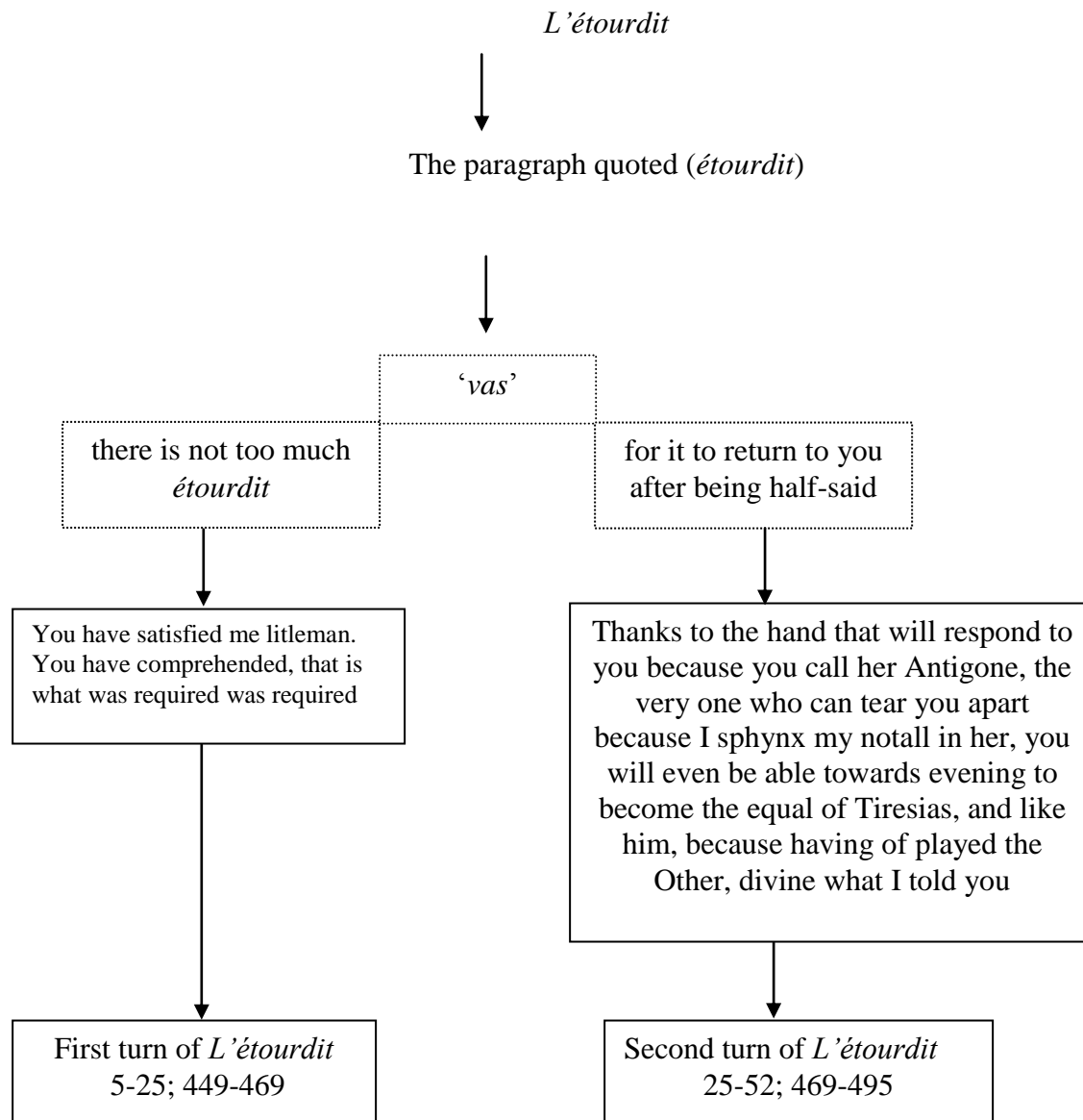
The roles would thus be clearly shared: ‘I’ would be the Sphynx, ‘you’ would be Lacan. But why not have clearly named the interlocutors involved in this direct discourse?

Let us return to our quotation or to our riddle.

Formally, the enigmatic paragraph is composed of four sentences:

- 1) ‘You have satisfied me, littlecutman’.
- 2) ‘You have comprehended, that is what was required’.
- 3) ‘On (you) go, there is not too much *étourdit*, for it to return to you after being half-said.
- 4) ‘Thanks to the hand that will respond to you because you call her Antigone, the very one who can tear you apart because I sphynx my notall (*pastoute*) in her, you will even be able towards evening to make yourself the equal of Tiresias and like him, because of having played the Other, divine what I told you.

The third sentence contains the term *étourdit* and opens with a *Vas* which articulates two propositions, a juxtaposed causal ('there is not too much *étourdit*') followed by a subordinate consecutive (for it to return to you after being half-said), or again a first half-said followed by a second half-said. If the term *étourdit* is the articulation of the text of *L'étourdit*, then the two propositions of the third sentence ought to articulate the text by means of the paragraph.



Vas, the only verb of movement in the discourse of the Sphinx, is for all that another verbal form from which the subject is effaced. Might it be the imperative of the Sphinx directed at Lacan? The spelling of *vas*¹ formally contradicts it. *Vas* is not an imperative form (which is written *va*). *Vas* can only be a properly conjugated form of the verb *aller* (to go): *tu vas*. And, grammatically, we do not write *vas* without its subject. The effacing of the grammatical subject then puts in question again the interpretation ‘you go’, *tu vas*, and makes a new (14) possible value for *vas* appear: the ancient form of the first person of the present indicative of the verb to go: *je vas*, ‘I go’. It is from this ‘*élégante allée*’ (17a; 460) at first a-personal, from the grammatical equivocation, *je/tu vas*, that the (psycho-) logical subjects involved in the quotation will be explained: [you] are inscribed in a movement of going on condition of absenting yourself as a person since this advance is also mine (that of a woman and of her enigma). What is this going (*vas*)? The Sphinx gives the response: the going starts from the *étourdi(t)* in as much as there is not too much of it and response is not without three graphical appendices: the *t* of *étourdit*, the *s* of *vas* and the *t* of *après-midi*. These three letters are not too much in order to go from a possible phonetics (*étourdi*, *va*, *midi*) to an impossible grammar (*étourdit*, *vas*, *midit*). What meaning can we give to these three supernumerary letters? At first sight, none. This indeed is what refers us back to the sounds, to the rhymes of the *dit* (*étourdit/midit*) mediated by the movement which goes from one to the other. There are not too many turns said (*des tours dits*) for it to return to you after being half-said. Beyond the homophonous equivocation, passing by way of the grammatical equivocation, we already hear the logical equivocation proper to saying, which goes from one thing said to the other. This saying arises from the detours of the things said, the fragments of what is said, the ‘half-said’ impossible to synthesise. Between *étourdit* and *midit*, *vas* divides the whole text in two: it is halfway through the text that the Sphinx appears with her half-body (woman-lion) to pose to Oedipus the question of the half-said truth about man: what is a man?

But what is a half-said that is re-said if not a quotation? And what is something said that makes itself understood as half-said, if not a riddle? *L’étourdit* is going to illuminate the half-saying in the double register of quotation and riddle. These two threads of the

¹ The editor of *Autres Ecrits* has ‘corrected’ the *vas* to *va*.

quotation and the riddle intersect and are woven together. We have started from the quotation of the riddle (of the direct discourse of the Sphinx) to (15) set en route the riddle of the quotation, to pose the question: what is meant by going over saying a second time? What is meant by quoting?

Interpretation has precisely as medium the two registers of quotation and riddle¹. *L'étourdit* will deal with psychoanalytic interpretation. How will it deal with it? In what manner? In the manner of an interpretation: *L'étourdit* interprets interpretation. The taking up again of the title in the discourse of the Sphinx is already the degree zero of interpretation: *étourdit* is quoted and remains enigmatic (it is, in particular, a term foreign to the habitual lexicon of psychoanalysis).

The articulation of the title with the paragraph, as we have seen, announces still more to us: psychoanalytic interpretation is always played out in two turns (said by *L'étourdit*):

First turn of what is said in interpretation or first part of L'étourdit

The first part presented in the third sentence as 'there is not too much *étourdi*' indicates a first half-said which is not too much. This first half-said was already expressed by the Sphinx: 'You have satisfied me littlecutman. 'Me' appears as the riddle personified by the Sphinx and 'you' as the response personified by Lacan. The riddle sought a precise blossoming (the feminine mystery) and the littlecutman has satisfied her as he was able. For the man habitually prefixed by good, gentle or prudent (good man, gentleman or prudent man) is here prefixed by a little confronted with the riddle. Why? The homophonous equivocation (*petithomme/petit homme*) opens up to us, by means of the letter (of the *gramma*), the path of logical equivocation which will be played out between the enigma and the (16) interpreter: little man before the riddle because *peti thomme* [the explanation of this will be given later (18de): the cut (*thomme*) proper to petition (*peti*), in the register of the demand which gives to the male his petty virile character] The satisfied, referring to the inexhaustible enigma of a woman, and the littlecutman to the

¹ 'These two registers, in as much as they participate in a half-saying, are what give us the medium – and, one might say, the heading – under which interpretation intervenes. Interpretation – those who use it notice this – is often set up by a riddle. A riddle found as far as possible in the of the discourse of the psychoanalysand, and that you, the interpreter, can in no way complete by yourself, that you can not consider as an avowal without lying. Quotation on the other hand, sometimes taken from the same text...' (Sem. XVII, 17.12.69, p.11; unpublished translation by Cormac Gallagher).

inadequacy of the man, now appear fundamentally disparate: the relationship between these two terms is properly impossible, 'there is no sexual relationship'.

The first chapter of the first part (*The relationship of meaning*), will start from what is said in the riddle in order to seek in it relationships of meaning (for example 4 paws, 2 paws, 3 paws).

The riddle is for the one who can say something about it (second chapter: saying).

And this saying culminates necessarily at the impossible relationship between the riddle and its interpreter, between the Sphinx and Oedipus, between a woman and a man (third chapter: *the absence of sexual relationship*).

The riddle right away indicated a satisfaction. But who can say she is satisfied if there is no relationship between a woman and a man? One satisfies a function as one satisfies a need; it is the function of the riddle that is satisfied by the little cutman which serves her as argument (without exhausting the domain of the aforesaid function). This function will be called the phallic function (fourth chapter). Here the articulation of the first turn or the quotation of the riddle is completed: we will have comprehended how the riddle functions, what is said by it and its absence (first turn: the relationship of meaning and the absence of sexual relationship).

A remainder subsists, the second sentence: 'You have comprehended, this is what was necessary'. We know Lacan's distrust of comprehension, even if he does not recoil from 'taking things together, *prendre ensemble*', from summarizing a conceptual totality, indeed a whole theory, in audacious short-cuts.

(17) What is the role of this comprehension? A problem all the more crucial in that for us it is a matter of comprehending *L'étourdit*. The comprehension is not terminal, but inaugural of a 'this is what was required'. Far from the good conscience of having comprehended, the required (*fallait*) introduces rather a fault (*faillie*) into comprehension and this fault will serve to re-launch the phallic function arising from the absence of sexual relationship. For the formulae built on the phallic function (*c'est ce qu'il phallait*) will make there appear the notall which had served as a motor for the movement of the first turn without us knowing.

But what will we say about this discrete motor? We can only grasp it by letting it turn. Here then we have started on a second turn: '[You] go, there is not too much *étourdit*, for it to return to you after being half-said'.

Second turn of what is said by interpretation or second part of L'étourdit

What difference will we draw between the two turns, between the first half-said and the second half-said? The Sphinx says it in her *pastoute* (in italics in the text): it is the notall that will inscribe a difference between the two turns. The four chapters of the first turn can then be taken up again in the light of this notall; the four chapters of the second turn will be the same except for that fact that they will highlight between them and their homonyms of the first turn a saying irreducible to what is said (the difference between the two). By this there will be illuminated the riddle of the quotation: what is meant by re-saying if not already interpreting (second turn: the discourse of the analyst and interpretation).

I will summarily point out the possible sections of this second part according to the propositions of the fourth sentence pronounced by the Sphinx:

- 1) 'Thanks to the hand that will respond to you because you call her Antigone', the hand by which Lacan guides himself here is the topology of surfaces (chapter 1) which takes up again the question of the signifier, illuminated now by the phallic function developed (18) up to the notall;
- 2) 'the very one that can tear you apart because I sphynx my notall in her', this topology tears the analyst apart in order to situate him at his specific place in the discourse of the analyst (chapter 2) which permits saying in general to be illuminated;
- 3) 'you will even be able towards evening to make yourself the equal of Tiresias'; it is a matter of equalling Tiresias in his comprehension of structure (third chapter) which is the development of the absence of sexual relationship;
- 4) 'and like him, by having played the Other, divine what I have said to you'. It is a matter of going from the Other to interpretation (fourth chapter) which is nothing other than going over the function of the riddle, of the phallic function.

Let us recapitulate the turns that we will speak about:

1. *First turn: the signifier and the absence of sexual relationship*

Chapter 1: the meaning-relationship

Chapter 2: saying

Chapter 3: the absence of sexual relationship

Chapter 4: the phallic function and the formulae of sexualisation.

2. *Second turn: the discourse of the analyst and interpretation*

Chapter 1: the teaching of topology

Chapter 2: the discourse of the analyst

Chapter 3: structure

Chapter 4: interpretation.

FIRST TURN:
**THE SIGNIFIER AND THE ABSENCE OF SEXUAL
RELATIONSHIP**

(21) As we have seen, the sense of *L'étourdit* – the work of analysis – is given to us by a verbal form without a subject (*vas*); the text takes off from the equivocation of a verb (or of a function) which is going to determine a subject rather than being animated by it.

The jubilee of *l'hôpital Henri-Rousselle*, scene of his case presentations, gives Lacan the opportunity of explaining the principles of his work of analysis. Far from being a simple presentation of sick people, which would be limited simply to the case, the work of analysis always presupposes a double presentation and therefore a re-presentation. The individual only enters analysis, only becomes an analysand in so far as he goes beyond his simple presentation and allows himself to be presented a second time by his slips, blundered actions, symptoms and dreams: by his unconscious. The subject in analysis, the analysand, is circumscribed by a double discourse. He is presented and presented again: he is re-presented. 'The subject is what the signifier represents for another signifier'. To be sure, the patient presents himself in his own words; he only becomes an analysand if what he says is not what he means to say; if his words say something other than what they meant, if his words become signifiers (one signifier for another signifier, $S_1 \rightarrow S_2$). The subject only exists by this double turn of the signifier.

The work of analysis apparently involves two people: the analysand and the analyst. It is not obvious that they properly speaking play a role, even though it may be tempting to consider the patient as the object of a treatment in which the analyst would be the subject acting.

From the side of the 'patient', it is never a matter of an objective case or a clinical illustration of a specific problem (case presentation). The analysand is nothing other than the activation of the unconscious in the practice of the signifier to which alone he is invited; he is (22) therefore subject, represented by a signifier for another signifier. In other words, analysis right away goes beyond the case presentation and goes on to the representation of the subject by the signifier. The object of study of psychoanalysis thus proves itself to be this strange twice-presented subject.

From the side of the practitioner, the subjective presence of the analyst is very problematic. Whether he speaks or keeps silent, the work that he accomplishes in no way prejudices the interest and the importance that the analysand will attach to him; the analyst moreover will gain by not letting himself be guided by such considerations. The

attention that the analysand directs at him as a person remains peripheral with respect to his own function. This function of the analyst is illuminated by Lacan's saying at Saint-Anne (*The knowledge of the psychoanalyst*) as well as at Henri-Rousselle (*L'étourdit*). If these two accounts are 'vacuoles' (5b; 449) inserted into the teaching of the seminar, they both aim at situating the place of the analyst in the machinery of the treatment: the locus of the analyst here is a vacuole, a little pocket around which the life of the analytic cell turns. This vacuole – fundamentally equivocal – is at once cavity, a void (in the geological sense of vacuole) and a full cellular element (in the biological sense of the term). Empty, it is the locus of the semblance, full, it is the object of desire. As vacuole, namely, as object of desire at the place of the semblance, the analyst – absent and present – will serve as a de-centred axis around which the successive discourses of the analysand will gravitate. As pivot of the treatment, the analyst condenses in himself the two senses of the word vacuole as well as the two foci of revolution (empty and full) of analysis. This vacuole is the **o**-object.

The work of analysis is thus determined by these two phases: the barred subject (the analysand) and the **o**-object (the analyst). Their articulation in the phantasy (\$ ◇ **o**) necessarily follows a path that is proper not alone to the imagery of a particular phantasy but to its logic: after a representative double buckle, *boucle* (revealed in the double buckle, in the two turns of *L'étourdit*), it comes back to its (23) starting point. The letter in as much as it concerns the **o**-object 'always arrives at its destination' (E 30). For this destination is not the addressee who can read the letter, but rather the real that the letter circles, *cerne*, the vacuole which makes a place especially for the addressee. And when Lacan forms the wish to be in the end properly read, we should hear 'in accordance with the proper destination' or again according to the double turn of the journey of the signifier, articulated in the psychoanalytic experience. In other words, in reading Lacan properly, we will share his experience in the detours of what is said that *L'étourdit* is aiming at. We will go through the two halves of the text at the same time as the cut of the phantasy on which the barred subject and the **o**-object depend.

A double buckle then....But from what point will we start? Let us follow the thread of the letter that phantasy articulates and always finishes by coming back to its starting point. Let us take the path of the signifier in scraps, in fragments, in morsels of signifier.

These morsels are nevertheless not the remains of just any banquet whatsoever. Drawn from the seminar...*ou pire*, they are collected from the psychoanalytic discourse.¹ They will reach the destination even if they only appear as outcroppings, odds and ends, rejects of the seminar.

¹ In opposition to Kierkegaard's *Philosophical morsels*, Lacan takes his morsels from his analytic discourse, ...*ou pire* (21 June 1972). The psychoanalyst thus responds to the philosopher at the same time as Lacan's...*ou pire* responds to the '*Ou bien...ou bien*' of the same Kierkegaard, reversing in it a philosophy of the good (centred on the discourses of the master and of the university) into a philosophy of the worst (decentred by the discourse of the hysteric and the analyst).

CHAPTER 1: MEANING-RELATIONSHIP AND SENSE

(25) Here are two morsels of the psychoanalytic discourse (*'...ou pire*):

- (1) *'That one might be saying remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood'.*
- 2) *'This statement which appears to be assertive since it is produced in a universal form, is in fact modal, existential as such: as is testified by the subjunctive by which its subject is modulated.'* (5d; 449)

These two sentences or these two morsels plunge us into double presentation, into the representation of one (1) for and in the other (2) and this re-presentation will lead us to the barred subject and to the **o**-object.

The first morsel speaks about saying as impersonal process. This saying where the persons are not yet determined is not directly available: it is forgotten behind the said. Is it enough then to obliterate the said for saying to supervene? Would it be enough to efface the statement for the mystery of enunciating to appear? No: there are not too many saids, turns said, *d'étourdit*: the understudy (*doublure*) is welcome so that the said can be understood. The difference between the said and what is understood, between the presentation and representation, will reveal saying: even if it is forgotten behind the said, it only comes about because there is something understood. [From a technical point of view, the abbreviation of the said, the 'short sessions' will only be justified in as much as they produce an 'understood'].

The second morsel, the second sentence is a re-presentation of the first, not as a commentary on its material content, but as a formal, grammatical and logical analysis of the first. This formal analysis opposes the appearance of assertion of the first to its effectively modal nature. The second sentence says: the assertive character of the first sentence [assertion claims to say how things effectively are] is only (26) an appearance, it is in fact modal. This appearance of assertion is produced because the proposition is universal: the first sentence concerns every saying whatever it may be. It will always be true that saying remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood. In expressing myself thus, I have already understood a saying in the place of 'that one might be saying'.

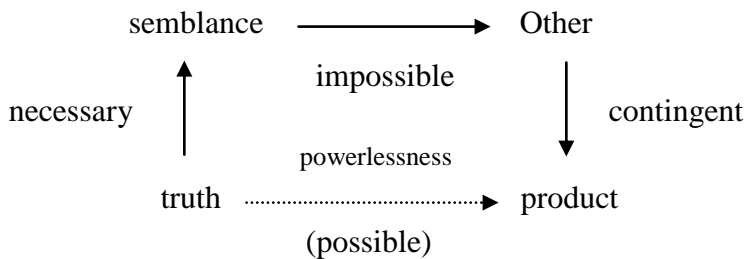
Now the subjunctive ‘that one might be saying’ bears witness to a modality on which the said and what is understood depend. If the indicative ‘remains’ shows that the assertion is intended to be universal – which reinforces the objectivity of the passives ‘is said’ and ‘is understood’ – the presence of the active subjunctive ‘might be saying’ resituates the sentence as contingent; ‘that one might be saying’ must be established, and it is precisely what is forgotten. The subjunctive points to an outside contribution, a taking into account of thinking in the thought. No assertion has then a universal value, it only claims to have it; and, despite appearances and the disguise of certitude that the indicative induces, every assertion is always the result of a saying: ‘for the said to be true, one must still say it, there must be a saying’. To assert is to dissimulate the modal character of any proposition. If assertion depends on an outside point of view, it then participates in the ex-sistential. It is obvious that this ex-sistential as such has nothing to do with scholastic existence: ex-sistence is not the effective reality of an asserted fact, but the outside point of view of thinking with respect to what is thought. Thus the second sentence indicates the logical path of the interpretation of the two sentences: the modal is opposed to the assertion in order to make the concept of ex-sistence appear. It is only from this ex-sistence, from this outside point of view, that the assertion and the universal are possible.

Lacan will start from the grammar of these two sentences and from ‘their meaning-relationship’ (5e) (the said in each of the two sentences referring back to the other) to logically deduce from it a sense (not just an understood, but also a saying). A meaning is first of all attached to the said. The meaning-relationship inscribes the said in a much larger organization: it inscribes it in a discourse. This deduction will occupy two pages (6-7; 450-451). The distinction between meaning and sense (27) will be ‘emphasized further on’ as ‘antinomy’ (36-37).

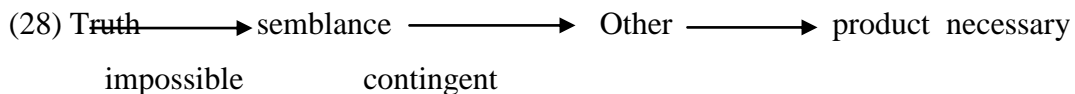
These two logical pages, even if they seem to touch only on being, the universal or the assertive, already lead us towards the real as impossible: they already announce the aporia on which all discourse is brought to a halt. Why is that?

A discourse is a practice of speech constitutive of a social bond between two partners: thus the hysterical discourse binds the hysteric to the one that she questions, the master binds the master to his slave or to his disciple, the academic discourse binds the teacher to his student, the psychoanalytic discourse binds the analyst to his analysand. Nevertheless

the two partners of each discourse are fundamentally disparate; the social bond between them is marked by the radical impossibility of making them ‘dialogue’: there is no true relationship between them. It is up to each of the two partners to sustain itself on its own side: the first of the two partners, the semblance, will be sustained by a truth that necessarily determines it, in order to address itself to the second, the Other; and this Other can only reply to the first by emitting a contingent product; this product is then a possible fruit dependent on the truth which determined the first partner; this product is nevertheless powerless to return to the truth of the discourse. Each discourse engenders products that have no outlet inside this discourse. Such is the aporia or powerlessness of a discourse in general. The matrix of any discourse comprises four places joined in two’s by four modalities.



Or again:



The psychoanalytic discourse never functions alone: it has the particularity of implicating the analyst and the analysand in the other discourses. What is more it pushes each discourse to develop itself from its impossibility and to demonstrate its powerlessness. Before this aporia, every discourse is led to reverse itself in favour of a new discourse and a new attempt at a social bond. The psychoanalytic discourse pushes each discourse to its ‘highest power’, namely, to its powerlessness. The real is the exhaustion of each discourse. In this sense, the analytic discourse is the science of the real: it is the science of discourses in as much as each one of them goes towards its own powerlessness. This will be taken up again as the text continues. The science of the real, the science of the switches of discourse, concerns all analysts even if they do not know it.

Why ‘spare’ them? They would learn it in any case from events¹, namely, in the real of the *passages a l’acte* of analysands which will remind them *in actu exercito* the highest power of this logic made up of aporias and impossibilities.

Contrary to classical logics which avoid or resolve logical aporias, the logic proper to psychoanalytic discourse accommodates itself to them; therefore this logic sets en route the impossible of each discourse in order to demonstrate its powerlessness or aporia. It moreover entails demonstrating the aporia of the psychoanalytic discourse itself and passing from it to another discourse.

1. The signifier and the discourses.

(29) The rule, the first step in analysis, is free association, namely, the signifier; a signifier is always differentiated from itself: it is defined by the possibility ‘of making use of it to signify something other’ than what it says (E 505). Also, a signifier (S₁) becomes necessarily other, it is always transformed into another signifier (S₂).

Having thus posed the preliminary rule, we can take any pair whatsoever (S₁ S₂) of morsels, of signifiers to tackle the meaning-relationship. Thus *l’étourdi* (S₁) becomes *étourdit* (S₂) to introduce the enigma of saying. Thus the Ratman defended himself from his obsessive ideas by an *aber*, ‘but’ (S₁) which is transformed into *abér* (S₂) in which Freud hears the military defences (*Abwehr*) dear to the patient and to his father. Thus every letter, every word, every sentence, every discourse offers itself up to this speech which renews and transforms its meaning: all speech gives rise to something of the signifier (by the transformation of one signifier into another signifier).

The morsels chosen by Lacan illuminate this transformation proper to the signifier (S₁ S₂) by the sentences➡

S₁ ‘*That one might be saying remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood*’

S₂ ‘*This statement which appears to be assertive since it is produced in a universal form, is in fact modal, existential as such: as is testified by the subjunctive by which its subject is modulated*’.

¹ The term ‘event’ – ‘the event has chosen’ (E 256ff) – already indicated in 1953 a process which, independently of a previous actor, determines and presents the subject secondarily: the subject will only be re-presented in it.

We also see here that S_2 is a derivation or a distortion of S_1 . S_2 is what is understood of the said in S_1 . But where is saying?

Like the first example chosen by Lacan (*étourdi* → *étourdit*), our two morsels have a content relative to saying which concerns the signifier itself. The material of our two morsels is nothing other than the signifying form in general. As a result of which, any signifier whatsoever will carry with itself in its form of signifier the whole content of *this* $S_1 - S_2$, of these two sentences chosen by Lacan. The example of the Ratman (*aber abér*) articulates for its part also (30) the said and understood to make a saying exist.

If S_1 is a distortion of S_2 , S_1 and S_2 are necessarily in relationship and this meaning-relationship implies a temporal order: S_2 comes after S_1 . This temporal succession, S_1 then S_2 , will be inscribed in different places in one or other discourse in as much as the matrix of the discourses implies a temporal arrangement of places: 1) truth, 2) semblance, 3) Other, 4) product.

Let us make the vector ($S_1 \rightarrow S_2$) slide over the matrix vector of places (truth
semblance → Other → product).

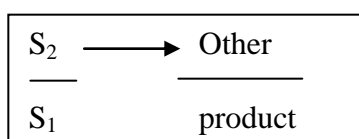
Our two terms are inscribed in this general structure of discourse in such a way that S_1 precedes S_2 . We can inscribe $S_1 \rightarrow S_2$ in three different ways in the matrix of discourses:

1⁰ S_1 is the sup-posed truth taken up again by S_2 : this relationship is proper to the academic discourse; a knowledge is in the position of semblance on condition that it takes up again an S_1 taken as truth;

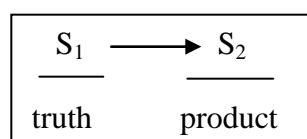
2⁰ S_1 is the semblance putting the Other, S_2 , to work: this relationship belongs to the master discourse, the master's order triggers the work of the slave or of the disciple S_2 ;

3⁰ S_1 is the Other that produces S_2 : this relationship is particular to the hysterical discourse; a signifier is put to work and produces hysterical knowledge.

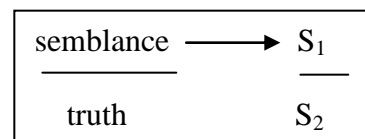
Let us represent these three discourses



academic discourse



master discourse

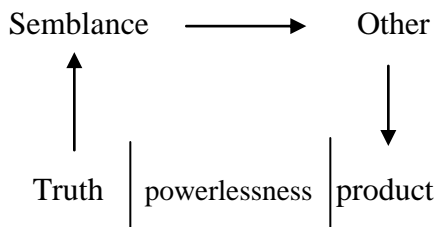


hysterical discourse

Our two sentences must therefore be registered in one of these three (31) possibilities, the fourth possibility where S_1 is in the position of product and S_2 in the position of truth is excluded by virtue of the powerlessness proper to all discourse. It will have been noticed that the psychoanalytic discourse is absent here: it is characterised precisely by the absence of meaning-relationship $S_1 \rightarrow S_2$.

Each of the three non-analytic discourses is established thanks to its own meaning-relationship: the academic discourse finds its stability in the necessary, the master discourse in the impossible, the hysterical discourse in contingency. But how then explain the passage from one discourse to another?

The product of a discourse is never put into direct relationship with the truth of this same discourse: such is the specific powerlessness of any discourse.

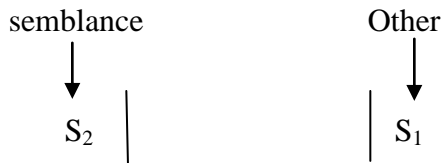


When the Other of a discourse comes up against the powerlessness of its own discourse, when the product of its work proves to be powerless to rejoin the truth of this same discourse, then the Other reverses the discourse in which it was confined and triggers off another discourse: thus the Other of the hysteric (S_1) becomes the semblance of a master discourse; thus the Other of the master discourse (S_2) passes to the semblance of a academic discourse. The new discourse is nevertheless each time impossible, for the semblance and the Other are always disparate in it. Also a new reversal of discourse is always possible.

This mechanism of reversing one discourse into another opens up a succession of discourses, on condition of course that the Other clearly accepts each time to notice his major powerlessness and to trigger off the new discourse.

The psychoanalytic discourse is characterised by a particular powerlessness, the powerlessness of the passage from S_1 to S_2 :

(32)



But if S_2 is a transformation of S_1 , how can it be radically disconnected from it? How explain this powerlessness between S_1 and S_2 ? The meaning-relationship has broken down; this already implies that the psychoanalytic discourse must go beyond the question of the meaning-relationship and divert from sense towards ab-sense (which we will do in the passage from Chapter 1 to Chapter 2). But let us not anticipate.

In posing the question of the absence of relationship between S_1 and S_2 , the psychoanalytic discourse puts in question the powerlessness inherent in this relationship which stabilised each of the three other discourses. The psychoanalytic discourse destabilizes them in effect by pushing them as far as their own powerlessness, with as consequence the reversal of each of these discourses into another. The 'real' of the psychoanalytic discourse is thus the journey of the different discourses starting from the aporia of each discourse. The unconscious is nothing other than the dynamic which provokes this roundabout of discourses.

The logic from which psychoanalysis starts is in effect a succession of logical impasses that make the powerlessness of a discourse tip over in order to make the impossibility of the following discourse appear. Such is the real touched on by the psychoanalytic discourse. Sole knowledge possible of the real, this discourse is the 'science of the real' (6a; 449). Psychoanalysis is going to push logic to its highest power, not by eliminating the logical paradoxes that it encounters, but by finding in the powerlessness of each discourse, the force to switch towards another discourse. The psychoanalytic discourse is the science of changes of discourse.

From the signifier and the discourses, we distinguish three types of interpretation:

1° two heteroclite meanings, depending on two different signifying chains (for example an obsessional doubt and an anal drive), can be (33) brought together and put into

relationship through the mediation of an outside third (the interpreter); this kind of interpretation does not follow the furrow traced out by the signifier ($S_1 \rightarrow S_2$). In this sense it is '*dé-lire d'interprétation*, a delusion of interpretation'.

2° two connected signifiers in the same signifying chain ($S_1 \rightarrow S_2$) establish by themselves an ineluctable and objective meaning-relationship, which depends on one of the three discourses. Thus when the *aber...*(but...) with which the Ratman chased away his delusional obsessions is transformed into *abér* close to *abwehr* (of a military or other defence), the meaning-relationship between *aber* (S_1) and *abér* (S_2) is already established: the interpretation is objective and can be read as a semblance of knowledge (academic discourse), as the Other at work (master discourse) or as product of a theory (hysterical discourse).

3° there still remains the final possibility: in the psychoanalytic discourse, the difference between S_1 and S_2 is marked by such powerlessness that the interpretation does not seem to be produced. We will see that it is starting from this aporia that psychoanalytic interpretation ought to be situated.

Before tackling interpretation properly so-called where it would be a question of signifiers (2° and 3°), let us examine the interpretation that goes outside this furrow, the one that makes a relationship between meanings (1°).

2. A relationship between heteroclite meanings or the delusion of interpretation.

The putting into relationship of heteroclite meanings for 'the greater good' of the patient may go very far.

To discover instead of the infinite variety of meanings an ultimate meaning which would explain all the others, such is, according to Kant, the goal of reason (just as much in its speculative use as in its practical use). In a similar way the 'psychoanalyst' might understand the import of certain memories (understanding) and give himself as mission the (34) reconstruction of the missing links with the goal of finding the umbilical meaning of the whole history of the patient (reason).

The meaning-relationships would thus be aimed at reconstructing a first meaning from which all the others would flow. This first meaning neither perceptible nor memorable is supposed to be deduced from a series of relationships of meanings, namely, of relations

between meanings that are more and more encompassing. In judgment, two meanings can be put into relation in three different ways (corresponding to the Kantian categories of relation): categorical judgement attributes a predicate to a subject; hypothetical judgement links a consequence to a cause; disjunctive judgement establishes an alternative between two realities. In conformity with these three types of relation, reason will then respectively search for the primal subject which will never be a predicate, the cause which will never be a consequence, the community, the set of all the disjunctions to which it itself does not belong. This triple tendency polarises reason towards a triple primordial meaning or towards a triple unconditioned: an unconditioned in the order of categorical judgement (the first substance subject which potentially gathers in its thought everything that can be known: this is the soul), an unconditioned in the order of hypothetical judgement (the first cause of everything that has a cause: this is the world), an unconditioned in the order of disjunctive judgement (God who gathers together in himself every disjunction). Kant demonstrates in the transcendental dialectic (*The critique of pure reason*) that these three ideas (the soul, the world and God) are the necessary illusions on which are constructed the three branches of metaphysics: psychology, cosmology and rational theology. Hence the embarrassment admitted by Kant when he discovers that the supreme faculty of knowing, reason, is the faculty of necessarily deluding oneself!

Might psychoanalysis escape this embarrassment? Or might it only be an illusion? In parallel to Kant's *Transcendental dialectic*, (35) psychoanalysis would like to distance itself from the different branches of metaphysics (psychology, cosmology and rational theology) and decompose these rational illusions: '...in large measure, the mythological conception of the world, which animates even the most modern religions, is nothing other than a psychology projected onto the outside world (...) One might then give oneself the task of decomposing, by placing oneself at this point of view, the myths relative to paradise and to original sin¹, to God, to evil and to good², to³immortality³, etc and to translate metaphysics into metapsychology' ⁴

¹ Namely, rational cosmology.

² Namely, rational theology

³ Namely, rational psychology

(Freud, *The psychopathology of everyday life*, SE VI p.258-9; GW IV. p.288). No more than the Kantian reason, does analysis escape from these ideas that are at once illusory and necessary and poses its own transcendental ideas: man as final substance of his knowledge, the unconscious as final cause of the whole psychical world, the Oedipus complex as a gathering together of every disjunction. For psychoanalysis, man, the unconscious and the Oedipus complex thus replace the soul, the world and the God of metaphysics in the same search for a primal meaning on which the succession of categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive judgements would depend. Kant showed the parallogism proper to the supposed subject, the antinomy that the supposed world conceals, the ideal specific to the supposed God. Similar demonstrations highlight the illusory, even though necessary character of our three psychoanalytic illusions (man, the unconscious and the Oedipus complex)⁴.

Reason tends to put all these diverse meanings into relationship. In questioning itself about the meaning of a life, psychoanalysis also tends to put into relationship all the meanings of this life. The goal is each time to find the first meaning that would account for all the others meanings. This illusory and necessary work of reason (as much from (36) the Kantian point of view as from the point of view of psychoanalysis), I called the 'delusion of interpretation' because it is not based on the furrow of the signifier. We now come to the interpretation that follows the thread of the signifier (S₁ S₂).

3. *The meaning-relationship of the signifier and interpretation* (6a–7a; 450-451).

If Kant (and some 'psychoanalysts') tackles the question of reason by a series of relations between different meanings, psychoanalysis tackles the question of interpretation by the meaning-relationship internal to the signifier. Over against a reason polarised towards the search for a primal signified, another 'reason' turns towards the signifier and its grammar. The grammar of the signifier is reduced to saying: a well-formed signifier (S₁) satisfies the condition of representing the subject for the same signifier that has become other (S₂). The (grammatical) relationship between the two signifiers appears first of all as spatial: S₁ is integrated into an S₂ that follows it, S₁ is

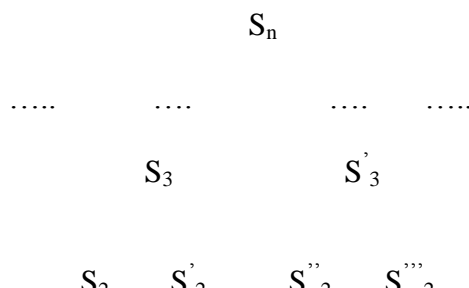
⁴ These demonstrations can be found respectively in *Subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire*, in Freud's *The unconscious* (1915), in *L'étourdit*.

always in S_2 . The common denominator of S_1 and of S_2 seems then to be clearly S_1 and their meaning-relationship ought then to pass by way of S_1 . Thus the ‘but’, *aber* of the Ratman (S_1) will remain contained in his defences, *abér-Abwehr* (S_2). Thus our sentence S_2 would contain S_1 , which, quoted in the form of tautology, would be taken up again identical to itself (‘*tauto*’ S_1) by the speech of the other (‘*logy*’ of S_2): ‘The statement (that one might be saying remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood = S_1) is in fact modal’ or again ‘The statement S_1 is in fact modal’. One would thus construct an S_2 which would contain S_1 , then an S_3 that would contain the S_2 , an S_4 that would contain the S_3 , and so on in stages of growing complexity $S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4, \dots, S_n$. So that while the movement of classical metaphysics goes back towards the three primal ideas (the three unconditional conditions), the movement of the signifier would seem for its part to generate more and more complex signifiers, to end in a final signifier considered as term of the analysis.

(37) Thus the generation of an ultimate signifier would tend towards a universal term that would take up again all the past signifiers, just as the search for a primal signifier would tend towards a universal principle that would announce all the signifieds to come.

Whether one tackles the meaning-relationship(s) by the signified or by the signifier (or respectively by a delusion of interpretation or by interpretation), the movement will be polarised towards a universal. Only the direction of the movement seems to differ: a regressive movement towards the primal unconditional for a meaning-relationships centred on the signified, a progressive movement towards the final construction for the meaning-relationship centred on the signifier. Can one however reduce the meaning-relationship to these directions of the search for a universal, - turned towards the past for the signified, - turned towards the future for the signifier?

The sequence of signifiers ($S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4, \dots, S_n$) could be represented by a particular type of arborescent graph:



This spatial generation corresponds to Chomsky's generative grammar:

(38)

Sentence			
Subject group		Verbal group	
Article	noun	Verb	Verbal complement
The	Sphynx	speaks	to Oedipus

This successive dovetailing does not correspond to the signifier. The grammar of the signifier is not the grammar of a logical-mathematical system assembling simple elements in order to compose greater units. In place of the house of cards of generative grammar, S_2 always contains S_1 (as in Chomsky's generative grammar), but, in addition, S_1 is already always waiting for S_2 , a signifier (S_1) is always for another signifier (S_2); thus *étourdi* is only a signifier if it is understood as destined to serve for something other than a univocal use (for example *étourdit*). The signifier is thus defined by its equivocation, where proper logic is already understood. S_1 and S_2 (both constitutive of the signifier) quote one another in a reciprocal referral internal to the signifier (S_1 is always already for S_2 , S_2 again always contains S_1).

Let us first of all show this reciprocal referral internal to the signifier for our two sentences exemplifying the difference of the signifier $S_1 \rightarrow S_2$.

On the one hand, the first sentence S_1 already announces the import of the second S_2 : 'that one might be saying (the sentence S_2) remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood'. Or again the subject of S_1 can be S_2 .

On the other hand, the second sentence S_2 quotes S_1 : the subject of S_2 is S_1 . The quotation or the taking up again of S_1 by S_2 differentiates ‘two tautologies’: S_2 takes up again the same (*tauto*) speech (*logos*) as S_1 , namely, the appearance of assertion of S_1 (the first tautology) proved by the universality of S_1 (the second tautology). The quotation, the taking up again or the tautology constitutes the ‘thesis’.

This referral of S_1 to S_2 and of S_2 to S_1 is product of something said which contradicts the ‘thesis’, the quotation of S_1 . The said is called (39) here ‘antithesis’ explained by the predicate group of S_2 (6b): from the grammar of S_1 , from its ‘subjunctive’, S_2 exposes the pure possible modality ‘that one might be saying’.

The enunciating of S_2 by S_1 [that one might be saying (the sentence S_2)] remains forgotten behind the said in what is understood] and the exposure of the modality of S_1 by S_2 [S_1 is in fact modal] seems to depend uniquely on the particular content of our couple $S_1 - S_2$. It is nothing of the kind, as can be shown for any signifier whatsoever.

Thus *étourdi* always already announces something of the other (here *étourdit*) and *étourdit* again and always quotes *étourdi*. But the thesis (the quotation of *étourdi* in *étourdit*) is in addition contradicted by the modality of *étourdit*, one is only giddy (*étourdi*) from the modality of the turns and of the detours that are said, *d’étourdit* (*détours dits*). Thus *aber*, the restrictive ‘but’ of the Ratman, always announces already something other (here *abér*) and *abér* always and ever quotes ‘*aber*’. But the simple quotation is in addition contradicted by the modality of the restrictive ‘but’, which will operate on the mode of military defences (*Abwehr*) in which the Ratman is implicated in the line of descent from his father.

S_2 makes an enigma appear in S_1 : S_1 claims to be assertive or verifunctional (a function of the truth) and in as far as it is for S_2 , S_1 is modal (opening out onto its possible metaphors). How can one be at the same time non-modal (assertive) and modal? But S_1 also announces an enigma of S_2 : S_2 claims to be other than S_1 while quoting it tautologically. How can one be – at the same time – other and the same (*tauto*)? S_1 and S_2 are thus articulated by reciprocal quotations and intersecting enigmas.

The modal of assertion pre-supposes a point of view outside what is affirmed (it is the necessarily outside point of view of S_2 on S_1). The other of the same also pre-supposes a point of view outside what is understood (it is the necessarily outside point of view of S_1

on S_2). The articulation of S_1 and of S_2 necessarily highlights an ex-sistence, a place (40) outside the said and what is understood; a saying outside the said is called into existence of what is understood; a saying outside what is understood is called to existence by means of the said. Once there is a signifier (namely, the said and understood, S_1 and S_2), there does not cease to be written – necessarily¹ – the ex-sistence of saying. Such is the path through which the necessary comes about (6c). This saying is neither the said, nor what is understood, it is in the movement of quotation and the intersecting enigma of the couple $S_1 - S_2$. This examination is already an interpretation of the meaning-relationship between S_1 and S_2 ; it presupposes the diverse inscriptions of this relationship in the three discourses (hysterical, master and academic). It is remarkable that this journey between S_1 and S_2 remains outside them and that it is at the same time implied by – and inherent to the difference of the signifier $S_1 - S_2$. The universal of S_1 , in as much as it always already implies the S_2 , presupposes necessarily an ex-sistence that borders this universal. The flock of sheep implies a shepherd who gathers them at least in intention for there to be a flock; the said and the understood in their universal movement presuppose a saying that limits them for the said and what is understood to be. Saying is not the generator of the said, but the journey that articulates the said and what is understood in their quotations and their intersecting enigmas. Saying is already interpretation.

To Chomsky's generative grammar there is opposed the grammar of the signifier, which is nothing other than the articulation of S_1 and S_2 , including the 'moment of ex-sistence' that we cannot detach from it. How comprehend this moment of ex-sistence?

Ex-sistence should first of all be distinguished from the fact of being or of existing.

Along the lines the ontological argument of St Anselm who deduced the existence of God from the analysis of his perfection (there is no perfection without the cherry on the cake, namely, without existence), the existence of the Cartesian subject, *Cogito ergo sum*, is demonstrated (41) in the thought: the Cartesian subject is nothing other than the thought itself, *cogito, ergo sum cogitans*.

Ex-sistence is not the scholastic or Cartesian existence. When Lacan says 'there where I think, I am not' and 'there where I am, I do not think' (Seminar IX), there already

¹ The necessary is to be understood as 'what does not cease to be written', in the journey of S_1 and S_2 . Therefore the 'necessarily' is redundant.

appears a disconnection between thought and ex-sistence; I pose myself now from my already past thoughts and what I will soon be from my current thoughts will be different to my current ex-sistence. Far from being stable and inside my cogitations, my ex-sistence is fundamentally labile and outside the said and what is understood. To find saying, we cannot remain either in the said, nor in what is understood, nor in the one and the other, but it is a matter of being dislodged from any stable place in the movement of intersecting quotation and enigma of S_1 and S_2 .

While existence was posed inside the symbolic, inside essences and thoughts, the ex-sistence of saying, even though posed from the said and what is understood, remains out of synch with respect to the couple of S_1 and S_2 , it is outside the symbolic, outside the said, outside the thetical plane of truth: it is 'real'.

The ex-sistence called for by the signifier can only be situated from the discourse (6c), namely, by the signifier in as far as S_2 already exposes in it a point of view (of thought). This moment of ex-sistence is in the movement of the signifier implied by its enigma: from enigma to enigma, from discourse to discourse, the logic of the signifier is developed without ever finding an ultimate point where it can stop; the incompleteness of this logic is perceptible from its elementary structure.

The 'path along which the necessary arises' (6c), the path along which there comes the necessary saying is the following: firstly, the said in S_1 is understood in S_2 as assertive tautology (the same speech), this first passage is not made without a homophonous equivocation (c.f. *étourdi* – *étourdit* or *aber* – *abér*); secondly, this S_2 discovers in S_1 a problematic modality (is S_1 pure assertion or is it modal?), this second passage introduces 'that one might be saying' not without a grammatical equivocation (that of the detours of the said or the modes (42) of defence); thirdly, saying is developed as necessary ex-sistence, namely, as outside the said and inherent to this very S_1 that is said, not without an apparent contradiction, not without a logical equivocation. 'Proper logic' (6cd; 450) thus organises its modes of acceding to the necessity of saying: 1° 'for the said to be true' (S_1 – homophonous equivocation), 2° 'it must still be said' (S_2 revealing the modality of S_1 – grammatical equivocation), 3° 'that there should be a saying' (the ex-sistence of saying or logical equivocation). Proper logic advances thus by organising its modes: 1° the possibility opened by the homophonous equivocation of the signifier, 2° the

contingence that one might be saying unveiled by the articulation of S_1 with S_2 , 3° what is necessary for the ex-sistence of saying which must be gone through. We only pass from the contingency ‘that one might be saying’ to the necessary of saying (to what does not cease to be written) in the movement of going over this saying. This movement proceeds from the impossible: it is by making each discourse work from its own impossibility to its powerlessness that we provoke a change of discourse, which constitutes the journey of saying. The sequence of modes acceding to the necessary of saying is therefore written: possible, contingent, impossible, necessary. These modes succeed one another without co-existing: they are inconvenient (*in-com-modes*) and proper logic is thus displaced modestly and moderately from one mode to the other without ever being able to gather them together; ‘a word to the wise’, it advances by coming up against the powerlessness of each mode of discourse in order to make it switch towards the following mode.

Grammar – already present in the slightest thing said (S_1) that is understood (S_2) – measures the force of logics wanting to circumscribe the norms of saying; for these logics are isolated from grammar, namely, from the mechanism of the signifier. Grammar necessarily introduces the subjunctive ‘that one might be saying’ from S_1 before one can speak about saying. These logics can be decomposed into their parts by the grammar from which they come. It is the fact ‘that one might be saying’ that opens up for them a passage towards their own development. The whole power of these logics is therefore (43) concentrated in this movement which goes from S_1 to S_2 , then to ‘that one might be saying’ and finally to saying. This movement is made by coming up against the powerlessness of each of these stages.

All the logics open up a passage through the mediation of grammar in the circuit of the said, of what is understood and of saying. There is no meta-language, there is no superior language which can serve to establish the truth (or falsity) of the propositions of an object- language without being itself referred to its own paradoxes, to its own powerlessness. Thus when propositional logic makes use of mathematical calculation to formalise the truth (or the falsity) of its propositions (‘the true implies the true’ is true is equivalent to $T \rightarrow T = T$), there appears at the same time the powerlessness of this mathematical calculation to grasp ‘implication’ in the common sense of the word and the paradoxes of material implication (‘the false implies anything whatsoever and the true

is implied by anything whatsoever'). Despite the crutch of mathematics, propositional logic is without a crutch to tell us what is at stake in implication. To every logic, there remains its imbecility (*lat: imbecillitas*, etymologically: the character of what is without a stick, without a crutch). Thus each logic (including mathematical logic) reveals its weakness, its imbecility, its powerlessness which refers it on to another logic, just as the powerlessness of one discourse provokes the switch towards another discourse. Proper logic thus highlights the powerlessness of each logic which provokes each time the passage to a new logic. Since the discourse of the analyst formalises this going over different logics, might it not be tempting to use it instead of metalanguage? The discourse of the analyst is itself caught up in the operation of the signifier and in the roundabout of discourses: it is not 'meta' and will be subjected, for its part also, to its own imbecility, to its own powerlessness which will reverse it into another discourse.

4. *The universal and the existence of a saying* (7a-7e; 451).

(44) 'By extending this process', by generalising this analysis of the couple S_1 / S_2 as we have done, there is born the formula 'there is no universal which must not be contained by an existence that denies it': every universal first of all presupposes the modality 'that one might be saying' and subsequently of a saying as necessary. This saying, outside the 'the said' of the universal is not the said: ex-sistence contains the universal while excepting itself from this universal (it is the shepherd or the fold which contains all the sheep without being one of them). The containing of every universal by an ex-sistence which is outside it nevertheless seems contradicted by the objective universal: 'all men are mortal' (7b). Even though this stereotype articulates the great questions of reason: the all, man and death, 'it is not stated from nowhere'; in other words, an ex-sisting saying has posed this universal, encircled it while excepting itself from the circle of humans and mortals the better to circumscribe them. This stereotype was constructed from a signifier in position of semblance, it depends on the master discourse (of Aristotle). Nevertheless the logic that dates this stereotype is not from Aristotle; it feigns this nullubiquity, it behaves as if there were no locus for saying such a stereotype, as if there was not this ex-sistence of saying which posed it. To what end? 'To provide an alibi for what I name the discourse of the master'. From its own impossibility, every discourse plunges into a

certain embarrassment. A first way of responding to this embarrassment is to push this discourse as far as its own powerlessness and by this to lead it to reverse itself into another discourse and in this reversal to make a saying appear. Another way of responding to this embarrassment is to avoid the question and to pretend nullubiquity, or again to act as if saying did not exist. Here it is a matter of creating an alibi for the impossible situated between S_1 and S_2 . Who then suspends this impossible relationship proper to the master discourse if not the sceptic?

The sceptic opposes the said and relativises it. He hears its discordance: 'everything is mortal', 'everything is relative'. As if from (44) nowhere and using an alibi, the sceptic nonetheless remains situated in the frame of the discourse of the master; 'now it is not only from this discourse of the master', even recast by the sceptic, that 'a saying takes on sense' (7b).

The nullubiquity of the sceptic abolishes perhaps the traditional master; by his slogan of doubt and hesitation, he nevertheless always functions from a place of semblance in the master discourse. The structure of the discourse of the sceptic remains that of the discourse of the master; despite the effacing of the master, the place of the semblance remains occupied by a S_1 (by the sceptical slogan). Remaining in the same discourse, even while developing in it certain variants (like scepticism), does not yet allow a saying to take on sense; the place of the semblance must be occupied by something other than the first signifier S_1 . Saying does not take on a sense in a particular discourse, but from a change of discourse or, which comes back to the same thing, when the place of the semblance is the theatre of a putsch, of a reversal of power, for example when the master-signifier (S_1) is replaced by knowledge (S_2): the sense of one discourse must always be sought in another discourse. This passage from the said to saying through the mediation of a change of discourse is strangely illustrated by the witticism of Lemberg-Cracow¹. This witticism works according to Freud from scepticism. But does not its humour go beyond scepticism in the articulation of the discourses that it implies! While, for the sceptic, contradictory positions succeed one another in the same master discourse, here, in

¹ Two Jews meet at a station in Galicia. 'Where are you going?' says one – 'To Cracow', says the other. – 'What a liar you are' exclaims the other. You say that you are going to Cracow so that I will believe that you are going Lemberg, but I know well that you are going to Cracow.' (Freud, *Jokes and the unconscious*, SE VIII, 115)

a single witticism, a semblance of information is reversed by another semblance in which the liar's concealment finds a respondent in the Other as detective; a academic discourse of information is articulated to a hysterical discourse producing a theory of lying. Thus this witticism highlights – beyond (46) the said in a lying way – a saying that presupposes the said, what is understood and the movement that animates them.

Saying is locatable from a place (the semblance) around which at least two discourses turn: in the example of the witticism of Lemberg-Cracow, the semblance of the information discourse is replaced by the semblance of a subject divided in his own lie. Can this place of semblance, from which a saying takes on its sense, be for all? No! Every universal is posed from an ex-sisting saying, every universal presupposes the semblance which equals and gathers together the elements which will constitute the universal. These elements are things said that are equal, similar and homogeneous, they are declared to be identical from a certain point of view, which is that of the semblance, they are officially confirmed (*homologués*). The point of view of the semblance gathers together men, homogenises them: 'it is from there that it is officially confirmed (*s'homologue*) that all are mortal' (7bc). We will see later that this official confirmation depends on man (*homme*) logic, on masculine logic. But what then is this semblance that seeks the universal that explains all? We rediscover here the very principle of Kantian reason: the search for the universal that would contain all the judgements and the question of the triple unconditional: what is the subject, that is only subject? What is the first cause, which has not been caused? What is the locus that collects together all possible disjunctions? Reason is engaged in the question of the universal because it seeks the good, especially the well-being that will recompense good actions in the future world, beyond death. This reason is not a thing, it is a 'place' outside death and from this place, it can look after (*veiller*) the 'good of all'. '*On veille à la merveille du bien de tous*' (7c). *Merveille* is the mother who looks after the marvel of the good of all. The universal is thus gathered together from the 'benevolence', which far from being neutral, is on the contrary a marvel, a 'mother's heart'. If this mother is not explain-ed it is indeed because the marvel of benevolence depends neither on an agent nor on a person, but on a reason; and one can only speak of 'mother' as a (47) metaphor of the place of the semblance who looks after the good of all. Two types of semblance are favourable to this benevolent

universalization ('particularly when what looks after it is a semblance of the master-signifier or of knowledge'): the semblance of the discourse of the master addressed to knowledge and to its movement of universalization and the semblance of the discourse of the academic which addresses its universal knowledge to the student. The 'ritornelle of philosophical logic' is reduced for Lacan to the alternation of the discourse of the master and of the academic. Thus the moral question (master) and academic (knowledge) alternate, or again the universal of the good (proper to the *Dialectic* of the *critique of practical reason*) and the universal of knowledge (proper to the *Transcendental dialectic* of the *Critique of pure reason*).

These two universals are reduced to the possible: they always depend on the semblance which has posed them. 'Even death' (7d): men are gathered together as mortal only under the crook of a reason that articulates death as 'possible' (all men are mortal). It is reason, in the position of semblance, that poses the double universality of the moral law and of the natural law. If we efface the semblance, the consequence of the semblance will be effaced in proportion: the law 'is alleviated by being affirmed as formulated from nowhere, namely, as being without reason'. On the one hand, the weight of Kant's moral law or the weight of the superego (identified by Freud to Kant's moral law) depends on the place from which this superego or this law is enacted (Kant's *practical reason*); the alleviation of the superego and of this moral law can only come from the setting aside of practical reason. We will obtain an alleviation of this superego if the universalisation is 'without reason', freed especially from every reason for doing good. On the other hand, the empirical law, which ranks humans among the mortals depends on speculative knowledge (on Kant's *pure reason*) and the putting into parentheses of pure reason also alleviates this natural law.

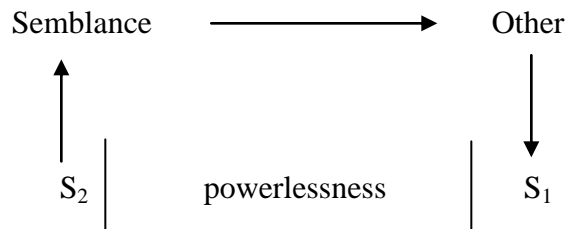
(48) With free association, psychoanalysis proposes to the analysand the setting aside of the two reasons (practical and pure); 'being without reason', by being formulated from nowhere, the law (moral as well as empirical) gives way to the simple saying in as much as this saying is supported only by its own proper functioning. What then is the origin of this saying? Saying starts from the discourse in as much as it is inscribed in the roundabout of discourses, which is the real of analysis. The suspension of the author of saying, of the speaker, precisely reverses the reason of the so-called agent of discourse; at

this place the semblance will make there appear the structure of the roundabout of discourses which alleviates the law. Nevertheless the sceptic, for his part, also, provokes an alleviation of the moral law (*ataraxia*) and of the empirical law (scepticism): by effacing not simply the author of saying but the function of saying, the sceptic for his part also presents the law as being without reason, namely, purely aleatory and without definitive value. But he only produces this alleviation by feigning to be nowhere, while analysis produces alleviation by the displacement of discourses. By this generalised displacement of discourses, we already leave the ritornelle of philosophical logic which consisted in the alternation of the master discourse (Kant's *practical reason*) and of the academic discourse (Kant's *pure reason*). 'Without reason', the semblance is no longer reserved to S₁ (master discourse) or to S₂. 'The absence' (8a) of reason at this place invites us to pass on to the psychoanalytic discourse.

Psychoanalysis clearly perceives this mechanism of alleviation which escapes the philosophical ritornelle or the closed analysis of the two sentences. But 'before rendering to analysis the merit of this apperception', let us recall the structure of saying, of the said and of what is understood: none of the three can serve as a foundation and as a base for the two others. This simple fact raises an objection to any attempt at a logic of stages (Chomsky), of a meta-language or of a theory of logical types (Russell). The structure of the concatenation of the two sentences prohibits reducing the first sentence to a branch of the (49) tree of the second, since it itself can in effect take the second sentence into one of its own branches ('behind the said'). [The French subjunctive is not dependent on a singularity of French syntax, it does not result from a secondary transformation as Chomsky's generative grammar would have it, it depends on saying which, in the movement of the said and of what is understood, contradicts any logic of stages].

From the meaning-relationship proper to the signifier, as it operated in the master and academic discourses, we have posed ourselves the question of the reversal of discourses. It is the powerlessness of the product to rejoin the truth of a discourse that pushes the Other to trigger a switch towards another discourse by taking the place of the semblance there.

If analysis is the science of these switches of discourse, the powerlessness of its own discourse will be its own resource and this powerlessness is the powerlessness to establish a meaning-relationship: S_1 does not enter into relationship with S_2 .



The psychoanalytic discourse is characterised by the absence of the meaning-relationship: there is no meaning-relationship between S_1 in the position of product and S_2 in the position of truth. Interpretation will not be reduced to a putting into relationship of S_1 and S_2 , still less a putting into relationship of heteroclite meanings (as in the delusion of interpretation). Let us rather say that it will be a matter of a roundabout in which the meaning-relationship proper to the signifier passes through all the types of discourse (hysterical, master, academic), without forgetting the motor of this roundabout: if a signifier represents the subject for another signifier, this radical otherness prohibits for all (50) time that a relationship should be definitively established between them. Prohibited from having a relationship, these signifiers leave us inter-dicted. It is from this absence of a relationship that we must start up again.

CHAPTER 2: FREUD'S SAYING

(7e-10d; 452-454)

(51) The signifier (S_1) represents the subject (\$) for another signifier (S_2). In the master discourse the signifier, taken as a semblance (S_1), can be used for something quite other, quite Other (S_2). The master discourse is stabilized in the relationship between S_1 and S_2 . It develops the meaning-relationship. As a practice of free association, a practice of the signifier, should analysis be polarised towards the meaning-relationship? Does analysis consist in separating out such a relationship from the remarks of the analysand? In this way free association would always culminate in a significant relationship: 'Whatever you might say, it will always end up by cross-checking with itself'.

To be sure, the signifier of the master discourse is at stake in analysis. Nevertheless the meaning-relationship remains incapable of treating the manifestations of the unconscious, which never cease to surprise and to astonish. How overcome this incapacity proper to the master discourse, if not by reversing this discourse, in other words by pushing it towards its own powerlessness? It would therefore be a matter of accentuating, not the meaning-relationship, but the impossibility between S_1 and S_2 : S_2 is radically Other than S_1 . The relationship between S_1 and S_2 leads to sense, as it has been separated out in the preceding chapter. The difference, the impossibility between S_1 and S_2 deviates from sense: it is ab-sense.

Therefore the discourse of the analyst cuts sense, in order to highlight ab-sense: the intervention of the analyst is a cut in sense, a scansion or a punctuation. In a similar fashion, *L'étourdit* (7e-8a; 451) also cuts the sense brought out by the two preceding pages in (52) order to make appear the ab-sense, the syncope of sense (or the abyss far from any bottom the *Ab-grund* far from any *Grund*). This however does not render void the relevance of the philosophical remark, since psychoanalysis clearly notes that ab-sense is only produced from sense: ab-sense is posed as outside sense with respect to

sense. Philosophy moreover established the flight of sense (c.f. *Logic of sense* by Deleuze). The analyst goes further: ‘the analyst creates (*fait*) ab-sense’.

What does he intend to do by creating ab-sense? The analyst makes the wager of listening to ab-sense, the distancing from sense and the non-sense at stake in the formations of the unconscious: ‘such is his own everyday resource’ (8a). His practice will therefore be a practice of abstention, which in particular suspends the master discourse and its meaning-relationship.

The master discourse and the discourse of the analyst thus appear as the inverse (*l’envers*) of one another: in the master discourse S_1 and S_2 are in the position of semblance and of Other; in the psychoanalytic discourse, they are in the position of product and of truth.

S_1	S_2
truth	product

master discourse

semblance	Other
S_2	S_1

psychoanalytic discourse

Now between the product and the truth of a discourse there is no direct relationship; psychoanalysis is therefore based in truth on the absence of the meaning-relationship.

The psychoanalytic discourse which cuts S_1 from S_2 poses the obscure question of the truth of the discourses, especially its own, of its knowledge (S_2); if the everyday resource of the analyst is to distrust the clarity of sense, ab-sense – the absence of the meaning-relationship – will state the riddle of the truth. Every explanation of the sense of a symptom forgets the ab-sense that is involved in it, just (53) as the display of the ‘purloined letter’ exposed in the middle of the chimney-piece hid its mystery. For the truth, *aletheia* is only offered in the truest way by hiding itself (E 21). The truth is not therefore the unveiling of what is hidden; ‘nothing hides as much as what is unveiled, as the truth...’ (8a). The unveiling is a veil; and the said is completed by forgetting (*lethe*) saying. The riddle of the truth oscillates between unveiling (*aletheia*) and hidden obscurity (*Verborgenheit*).

This truth limping between a veiling and an unveiling is nothing other than the alternative movement of opening and closing proper to the unconscious; it is played out in the switch from one discourse (which is veiled) to another (which is unveiled). We can already say that this movement will be comprehended from the phallic function [the phallic moreover always pre-supposes the alternation of veiled–unveiled (E 626-627)]. We comprehend therefore the importance of this passage in the economy of *L'étourdit*: it leads us from the meaning-relationship (our first chapter) to the phallic function (fourth chapter).

The difference between philosophical saying, which takes on its sense in the meaning-relationship, and psychoanalytic saying, which manifests itself at first by its abstention, its ab-sense, should not make us forget the 'fraternity' between these two sayings which both involve changes of discourse: on the one hand, the oscillation of veiling-unveiling is only perceived by philosophy by means of a discursive oscillation (between the master and the academic); on the other hand, psychoanalysis is the science of changes of discourse. The saying 'that nothing is hidden as much as what is unveiled', is nevertheless only rendered incontestable in the practice of psychoanalytic discourse from ab-sense, which will show that saying is forgotten and hidden in the relationship to the said.

1 Ab-sense or Freudian practice

Does the practice of psychoanalytic listening in terms of ab-sense confirm 'the logic by which castration and the Oedipus complex are articulated in analysis' (8ab; 452)? We know that according to Freud, (54) the Oedipus complex is closed by the threat of castration in the case of the boy, while in the case of the girl, the Oedipus complex opens with the discovery of her real castration. Freud modulates the theory of phallic universality on the very pivot of possible or effective castration (the threat of castration vs. natural castration). This same rock of castration will be the final obstacle to psychoanalytic treatment for both the man and the woman: the man is supposed to stop his analysis for fear of having to confront a still threatening castration, the woman because of the disappointment coming from an already completed castration with no possible compensation (*The dissolution of the Oedipus complex*, 1924). But the

phallus is not simply the organ of sexual relations; it is also the organon which conditions in the last resort all logical relations. Reason recognises it then as universal. So it is that the phallus will also be the major in the different syllogisms corresponding to the three Kantian categories of relation (categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive judgements). It is the subject, it is the world, it is God. For psychoanalytic mythology, it is man, it is the unconscious, it is the Oedipus complex: the phallic will therefore be seen as human, unconscious, or oedipal. But this universal articulation of castration and of the Oedipus complex is constructed along the line of relationships of sense ('the delusion of interpretation') and not along the line of the signifier (interpretation).

Let us take up our question again: does the exercise of ab-sense confirm 'the logic by which castration and the Oedipus complex are articulated in analysis' (8ab)? No! Here Lacan does not follow Freud. For him it is ruled out that this exercise of ab-sense confirms purely and simply the Freudian articulation of castration and the Oedipus complex: 'For those who listen to me...*or worse*, this exercise *would have only, n'eût fait que*, confirmed...' The use of the pluperfect subjunctive indicates that the possibility envisaged is contested (and in fact ruled out) and Lacan gives the reference: his seminar ('for those who listen to me...') more precisely the seminar ...*ou pire*, from which the two morsels at the beginning of *L'étourdit* (55) are drawn. The Freudian model showed its limits early on: a psychoanalysis centred on the male and his phallus proves to be insufficient. The practice of analysis does not turn around the universality of man, of the unconscious or of the Oedipus Complex.

It is nevertheless not a question of ridding oneself of Freud. Not alone because the masculine model is both illusory and necessary, but also because Freud is not to be reduced to this model, to this delusion of interpretation.

'Freud puts us on the path of the fact that ab-sense designates sex' (8b; 452). From the point of view of the universality of the phallus (of man, of the unconscious and of the Oedipus Complex), we might hope to find an unconditional foundation to put meanings in relationship; in the exercise of psychoanalysis, we will on the contrary discover an abyss, something bottomless (*Ab-grund*, to take up again Heidegger's word, in *Identity and difference*), an absence (*ab-sens*), non-sensical things which attract the particular attention of the analyst and of the analysand. It is the *Witz*, the witticism that turns the

page of sense, the page that sought the ultimate foundation in man, the unconscious or the Oedipus Complex. The ab-sense in question is then the ab-sense of the philosophical page, not insofar as it is supposed never to have taken place, but insofar as it gives – in sense – the starting point of a whole work, the work of the dream, the slip of the tongue, the witticism, etc. Ab-sense presupposes therefore the passage from sense to ab-sense.

If ab-sense deviates from sense, to where does it lead? What is the direction of the Sphinx's *vas*? 'Ab-sense designates sex' (8b; 452). But what sex? Anatomical sex or the totality of sexual questions? The totality of human beings or the totality of women? The suspension of sense in the practice of free association reveals the question of sex in the speaking being. This question does not find a satisfactory response in chromosomic or anatomical reality. Sex in the speaking being is not determined by any foundation previous to (56) language; it is the ab-sense of any *a priori* determination.

In the Freudian theory of the Oedipus complex and of castration, sex functioned from sense; it was centred on the relation to the phallus, sense and the pleasure principle. In this sense, the functioning of the anatomical organ could summarise it by metaphor. On the contrary, when it is designated by ab-sense, by the practice of the suspension of sense, sex is no longer centred on the relation, but on the impossibility of relationship, on the *Beyond of the pleasure principle*: 'there is no sexual relationship'. One can thus distinguish the *sens-absexe*, which, articulating the universals of castration and the Oedipus complex, corresponds to an economy of (masculine) pleasure and the *sexe-absens*, which, opening *Beyond the pleasure principle*, corresponds to an economy of (feminine) enjoyment. The exercise of analysis, far from confirming the universality of the *sens-absexe* (the meaning-relationship), also operates from the *sexe-absens* (which escapes from the meaning-relationship).

Sense (*absexe*) oriented according to a logic of the universal allows individuals to be classified in different diagnostic categories, but also to decide on the class of opponents and the class of adherents to psychoanalysis, etc. (for example, in *Three essays on the theory of sexuality*, 1905-1920, SE VII, p.226, n.1); this inflated sense of oedipal development allows a classification into one or other file (diagnostic, ideological, etc.). The 'word' corresponds to this sense: one is neurotic or not, an adherent of psychoanalysis, etc. 'It is the word that decides' (8b; 452) by yes or by no: reality falls

within the sphere of a particular word or outside it: the third is excluded. The unfolding of the sphere of the word, which is ‘the inflation of this *sens-absexe*’, does not fail to evoke the tumescence of the masculine organ; beyond this evocation, this inflation allows anything it likes to be encompassed, in accordance with the model of illusory and necessary ideas (the ego, the world and God/man, the unconscious and the Oedipus Complex) which, for reason, comprise the whole universe.

(57) As a counterpoint to this masculine binary sense centred on the word and articulated above as universal and ex-sistence, ab-sense proposes a new melody, which will modulate the masculine sense. Through it, sense is decentred by the signifier: this *sens-ab-sens* having become fourfold will henceforth be called feminine even though it is not a prerogative of women. The classical Freudian perspective took up again a philosophical meaning-relationship: the articulation of universality and particularity. What Lacan opens up, puts in question this philosophical relationship by the absence of the philosophical page, by the ab-sense proper to sex: Lacan shows that psychoanalysis goes beyond the perspective of the meaning-relationship. Saying is no longer approached by a meaning-relationship and its sense, but by absence: the psychoanalyst works from this void, from this vacuole, which can already be called the *o*-object.

The reversal of a classical Oedipal theory into Lacanian theory, the reversal of a philosophical perspective into psychoanalytic listening, the reversal of a masculine sexuality into a sexuation opening out to femininity, this triple subversion opens up the question of saying which is not reduced to the myth of an individual producer of the said, of a primal Father or of God the creator.

The meaning-relationship makes saying appear: ‘It does not go without saying’ (8b).

Nevertheless, as I have already said, it is not a matter of forgetting Freud, since it is he who sets us on the path of sense that opens out onto ab-sense and sex. ‘The sense of a return to Freud, is a return to Freud’s sense’ (E 405, *The Freudian thing or the sense of the return to Freud in psychoanalysis* 1955). From the first page of *L’étourdit*, it was a matter of showing the sense of two sentences in the perspective of psychoanalytic discourse. Having taken the trouble of analysing their meaning-relationship, Lacan had come to analytic experience properly so-called, to ab-sense and non-sense: the return to Freud shows how the truth is always eclipsed, hides what is unveiled, strays between

sense and non-sense. The Freudian truth, which speaks in (58) dreams, symptoms and the other formations of the unconscious contradicts itself and in that way, is undone: there only remains to us the said by it, ‘the truth said, *le dit de la vérité*’ (8c; 452). There is nothing said which goes beyond the half-said, the said is never everything. One must radically distinguish ‘the truth said’ that we can gather as one cites a dream, from the truth of saying which escapes us and always remains enigmatic. ‘Thus it is that the said does not go without saying’. The possible quoting of the said is coupled with the necessary enigma of saying: but said and saying it remain outside one another.

The two first pages had applied themselves with ‘difficulty’ (7e) to the study of the meaning-relationship in order to make saying appear. Now that it is a question of starting from ab-sense, Lacan easily introduces this same saying: ‘It is easy to make this tangible in the discourse of mathematics’ (8c; 452). The ease of this new exposition flows from putting meaning (the signifier will be considered as ‘a-semantic’) and persons (c.f. the *vas* of the Sphynx) in parenthesis; the signifier is not reduced to a semanteme (for example the radical *chant-* of the word *chanter*), it always pre-supposes the morpheme (for example, the inflection *-ais* of the verb conjugated *je chantais*); but more generally, the signifier used for something quite other, corrupts (*altère*) the word in its grammar, in its morphology (for example a noun becomes a verb in *l’étourdit*), before corrupting it in its sense. Therefore the putting in parenthesis of sense (or the ab-sens) reveals the question of a pure grammar.

Contrary to the logical-positive requirement which would have it that every text has a tangible meaning, mathematical discourse allows itself at a particular point of its development not to have any graspable sense, ‘which does not prevent it precisely from being, among all discourses, the one which is developed with the most rigour’ (Seminar XVIII, 17 February 1971). From this point of view, mathematics can serve as a model for psychoanalysis which, for its part also, advances quite rigorously without being founded on meaning.

2. Mathematical saying and the wall of the impossible

(59) By refusing to base itself on reality, mathematical discourse is withdrawn from the question of whether what it says is true and operates only on a semblance that it can

extend in its deduction. If such a semblance is posed (hypothesis), then one can deduce such a conclusion (thesis). The likelihood (*vraisemblance*) is therefore disarticulated, dissected into a semblance and a truth which cannot communicate directly. Anyone who cannot admit the disjunction between the semblance and the truth is ineluctably plunged into the incomprehension of mathematics. The love of immediate truth is incompatible with mathematics which does not establish its deduction from a reality, but only from a semblance posed as hypothesis. One cannot nevertheless write just anything. If mathematics is not constructed on the basis of reality, it must base its arithmetic not on the foundation of objects to be counted, but of number separated out from any reality, on the foundation of zero as cardinal of the impossible or contradictory concept (Frege). In the same way psychoanalysis for Lacan bases its practice not on the foundation of meaning-relationships, but on the absence that can be separated out from meanings, on the *sexe-ab-sens* (or again, as we shall see, on the impossibility of the sexual relationship).

Two mathematical examples will illustrate how a saying is developed from a non-sense.

A negative number multiplied by itself always gives a positive (minus by minus gives plus), in other words the concept of the square root of a negative number has no sense, there is no number that multiplied by itself gives a negative number. From this non-sense, mathematical discourse can imagine a type of number which is the square root of a negative number: it is enough for it to define $i = \sqrt{-1}$ (i equals the square root of minus one). By the creation of this number 'i', there is opened up the definition of imaginary numbers (ix) and of complex numbers ($y + ix$). The said by these numbers (60) does not come from any reality, because there is no negative number which multiplied by itself gives a negative number, i has therefore neither sense nor reality. The said here only depends therefore on the new mathematical saying which arbitrarily posed that a negative number could have a square root. [This saying is not limited to the historical discovery of a new mathematical invention, but poses and re-poses anew $i = \sqrt{-1}$ every time complex numbers are used].

Another saying, also freed from any concrete reality, is again at work in reasoning by the absurd: saying poses here the said, not from a reality, but as simple supposition. This supposition involves logical consequences, in particular things said that are going to be

revealed as absurd; from the properly logical sequence that it implies as the said, it is a matter of summoning saying, to call upon it to switch over into another saying which will not involve the absurd conclusions of the first saying. Saying is going to have to reverse into the contrary position. Saying must now pose its thesis, which is the position contradicting the first supposition. Mathematics thus articulates the reversal of an saying: in that way to say that there is no square root of negative numbers, then say $i = \sqrt{-1}$; thus saying the antithetical supposition which is going to be revealed as absurd, in order to be able to say the thesis.

The mathematical saying which poses the said independently of reality 'begins with Euclid' (8d) with the introduction of the notion of postulate, undemonstrable unless it is obvious. As opposed to a pre-language obviousness, a mathematical saying postulates the said axiomatically, independently of any reality whether immediate (the postulate is not obvious) or mediate (the postulate is not proved). 'No need for Cantor's saying to touch on that' even if saying which posits the said independently of reality is particularly obvious in the story of Cantor and set theory. [We shall see later that Cantor's saying proves, (61) for example, the existence of a transcendent infinity that is not numerable (see the note on page 154) without being able to construct it in reality].

But how will this saying appear in the framework of psychoanalysis?

From the absence of a sense attached to reality, there has developed 'the marvellous flowering' which, in mathematical logic, distinguishes inconsistency, incompleteness, the undemonstrable and the undecidable (8e; 452). These four impossibles seem to be the respective contradictories of the consistent, the complete, the provable and the decidable. Every time 'it is not that': it is not consistent, it is not complete, it is not provable, it is not decidable; but this repetitive affirmation itself is only 'the wail of an appeal to the real', it still touches only on the said and, as such, must be ousted for there to appear saying which progresses all along 'the wall of the impossible', namely, which runs through the sequence of inconsistent, incomplete, undemonstrable, undecidable. In the formula 'I ask you to refuse what I am offering you / because it's not that' (Seminar XIX, *...or worse*, 9 February 1972), the cause ('because it's not that') has to efface itself in favour of the articulation of saying which circulates in the demand, in the refusal, in the offer.

Let us hug 'the wall of the impossible' by passing successively to the inconsistent, to the incomplete, to the undemonstrable, to the undecidable:

1⁰ From the inconsistent to the incomplete (8e; 452) first. A system of axioms or of propositions is inconsistent (or contradictory) if it allows one to say: A and not A at the same time. Thus the unconscious tolerates perfectly well contradictory things to be said and psychoanalysis establishes the inconsistency inherent in the system in as far as it is a compromise between a desire and its contrary. How will psychoanalysis disentangle this inconsistency proper to the symptom? It can neither passively admit it nor eliminate the contradiction inherent to the symptom and to the unconscious.

(62) 2⁰ In face of contradiction there is imposed on the contrary a suspension of judgement or a halt to saying before any completeness of the said (one could say for example that the said about early childhood is always incomplete to explain the symptom). From the inconsistency of the said *qua* symptom, we pass on to the incompleteness of the said that is supposed to explain the symptom or the postulates that are supposed to ground a system.

3⁰ Interrogating subsequently saying confronted with the inconsistency and the incompleteness of the said, it may now appear that its postulates are not only incomplete but even undemonstrable. Saying is powerless to demonstrate or to recover by construction the things said that are missing. This undemonstrable character must nevertheless be proved during the treatment (it is not enough simply to establish empirically the lacunae in the anamnesis and the symptomatic contradictions, it must also be proved how these impossibilities are constitutive of the history of the analysand and that the missing saids are undemonstrable: this would be the Gödel theorem of psychoanalysis.

4⁰ The 'wall of the impossible' extends still further: there must still 'be added to it the undecidable, because of not being able to exclude demonstrability from it' (8e). A mathematical example: a perfect number (a number equal to the sum of its divisors, for example: $28 = 14 + 7 + 4 + 2 + 1$) is, it appears, always even: we do not know of any exception, but it is not proved, without us knowing whether it can be or not. The undecidable is indeed the radical fault in saying which, even if it cannot demonstrate things said that escape it, is still powerless to decide on its own powerlessness. There is

no saying which circumscribes saying, there is no metalanguage; the big Other is barred without anyone ever being able to decide about its bar.

The impossibility of saying is thus developed in the search for the said which remains half-said in truth, enigmatic and inexhaustible.

The simple affirmation of the insufficiency of the said ('that's not it) is only 'the wailing of an appeal to the real' (8e): the affirmation that the said is inappropriate is only the a,b,c, the scream of the new-born (63) infant, newly born to speech. The scream must rather be developed by hugging the wall of the impossible, 1^0 by the inconsistent, 2^0 by the incomplete, 3^0 by the undemonstrable, 4^0 by the undecidable, in order to make there appear a saying in movement which, as we shall see, is only completed in a first loop by the 'notall..'.¹

3. *A discourse embarrassed by its language* (8e-9c; 452-453)

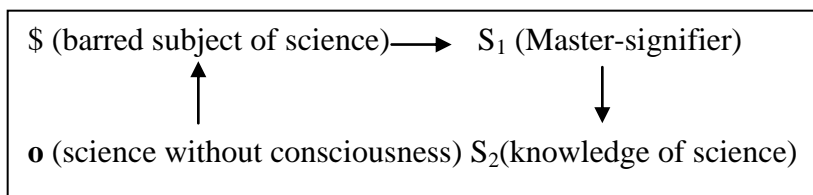
In 1953 Lacan opposed the field of language to the function of speech: the field of language extends over the whole of history and the question of its origin has no sense; speech on the contrary is a current practice that can begin or end. Towards 1970, in Lacan's teaching, speech is replaced by discourse as it is articulated in the roundabout of discourses starting from the impossible; the field of language is no longer opposed to the function of speech but to the functioning of discourse. Thus Lacan creates an opposition between mathematical language and the mathematical discourse. Thus he opposes the language of the unconscious, the unconscious structured as a language, to the discourse of the analyst which arranges this unconscious.

Now for the mathematician as for the psychoanalyst, this opposition between language and discourse gives rise to the same embarrassment. The opposition between the discourse of the mathematician and his language has the goal of introducing the analytic discourse from the language of the unconscious. Thus the sentence 'It is in analysis that it (language) is arranged into a discourse' can be understood in two distinct senses, the first of which will illuminate the second: 1^0 it is in mathematical analysis, that the notions of limit, of continuity and of infinity particularly intervene that mathematical language is

arranged into a mathematical discourse, and 2^0 , it is in psychoanalysis as a treatment that the language of the unconscious is arranged into the discourse of the analyst. On the one hand, mathematical analysis, dealing with structures and calculations linked to the notions of limit (64) and of continuity develops set theory from Cantor on and provokes ‘the marvellous flowering’ of the impossibilities of saying. On the other hand, the field of unconscious language only develops into a discourse thanks to psychoanalysis which puts to work the dynamic of switching from one discourse to another. Saying only exists in the switching from one impossible to another or from one discourse to another.

In what way does (mathematical versus unconscious) language embarrass us? According to Russell’s quip, ‘mathematics is a science where one does not know what one is talking about nor whether what one says is true’, the embarrassment is thus doubly specified: 1^0 its language is in no way constructed from reality, 2^0 as a consequence of which, it is not verifiable. The embarrassment of psychoanalysis is 1^0 that the unconscious is not constructed from reality, (ii) as a consequence of which, interpretation is not a truth-function. Lacan takes up again the embarrassment of the mathematician in the paragraph ‘Being the language...’ (9ab; 453), while the embarrassment of the psychoanalyst will be treated in the following paragraph: (‘this having been noted, saying...’ 9bc; 453), which will be examined later in the chapter (*4. Saying in the roundabout of discourses*). The two pages on the meaning-relationship turned essentially around the discourses of the master and of the academic (‘semblance of the master signifier or of knowledge’ 7c). Now, it is the discourses of the hysteric and of the analyst that are going to be stressed respectively in these two paragraphs. Let us examine them.

‘Being the language that is most suitable for scientific discourse’, mathematics is obliged to be the truth of this discourse, it is science, without being for all that consciousness of the visible processes of science, without being the (barred) subject of the conscious science of the master signifier and of its knowledge. Science is not knowledge, it is the scientific discourse or the discourse of the hysteric in its totality; (65)



This 'science without consciousness' is not an unconscious knowledge or a knowledge in the position of truth in the discourse of analysis; it is science, namely, the scientific discourse from which consciousness has been removed, namely, the semblance (\$), the Other (S_1) and the product (S_2); the science without consciousness is the **o-object**.

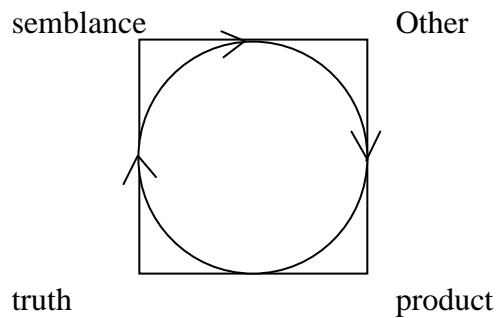
What allows me to thus equate the science without consciousness and the **o-object**? 'Our good friend Rabelais' promises science without consciousness (9ab). And the latter is the 'ruin of the soul'; in the seminar on *Transference* Lacan presents the **o-object** as what gives access to the science without consciousness of which 'Rabelais says that it is the ruin of the soul' (Seminar VIII, 12.4.61). The first access to the **o-object** is the oral object, which is the truth of the hysterical discourse. And if Lacan attributes its paternity to Rabelais, it is not because of the latter's rhetoric, but indeed because with Grandgousier and Gargantua, his inexhaustible inventions turn around the oral **o-object** promised by our friend Rabelais. The prologue of *Gargantua* recalls the *Symposium* and the Socratic *agalma* coveted by Alcibiades. Four centuries later, Lacan will take up the same reference to introduce the **o-object** (c.f. Seminar VIII).

The expression 'science without consciousness' has still another connotation that is not to be neglected. In the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, Hegel wants to introduce science as a system of knowledge. This Hegelian science is deduced from the common experience of consciousness (first chapter of the *Phenomenology*). Lacan introduces science without consciousness in opposition to this science with a (66) consciousness that is proper to Hegel and in opposition to the philosophical ritornello alternating the master and the academic discourses. Science without consciousness introduces another discourse, the hysterical discourse. 'A philosopher can only remain dumb' before science without consciousness. In effect philosophy has constructed itself around its own **o-object**, the soul, the vacuole of philosophy. Science without consciousness as **o-object** of the hysterical or scientific discourse dislodges the **o-object** of philosophical discourse, it is nothing but the ruin of the soul or again the soul is 'floored' by science without

consciousness (Seminar XXI, 12 February 1974). One form of **o**-object (science without consciousness) replaces another one (the soul): it is the ruin of the soul.

Remark 1. Philosophy and mathematical language (note to 9; 453).

‘The philosopher is inscribed (in the sense that one says of a circumference) in the discourse of the master’. All discourse is inscribed as a circuit in the square determined by the four places:



The philosopher is inscribed in the discourse of the master starting from the place of truth: ‘in it he plays the role of the fool’, he holds the place of the truth. How can one hold the place of the truth except by making the discourse inscribed in the square of places turn? It does not matter whether the philosopher knows that he expresses himself as the unconscious of the master, as the truth of the master, as the language of the master; that he should be unconscious or without consciousness is secondary. What is important is that the role of the truth should be held. Thus Hegel, qua philosopher, holds its role in his master discourse, without being conscious of his place in this discourse, without knowing the impact of what he says, particularly (67) about mathematics. In the preface of the *Phenomenology of the spirit*, Hegel speaks ‘as correctly about mathematical language as Bertrand Russell’: if mathematical truth is neither in knowing by heart nor in the experimental knowing of a theorem, neither is it in the proof, which only concerns the relation of the subject to mathematical truth. The mathematician and mathematics are therefore external to one another: on the one hand the mathematician does not see the internal necessity of constructions which lead to the demonstration of a theorem (Pythagoras’ theorem, for example) and on the other hand mathematics does not touch on anything that concerns the subject, it is limited to the poverty of its end, to size alone (still according to Hegel). Quite correctly, Hegel regrets that the mathematics of 1800 passes

in silence over the cut (the relation of the line to the plane), or the incommensurability of the relationship of the diagonal to the circumference, or the notion of infinity. The Hegelian conception of mathematics is of course to be attributed to his times and we cannot reproach him for not knowing topology or the works of Cantor, born in 1845. Contrary to Hegel, Russell, coming after Cantor and the development of the discourse of science, encounters a mathematics which has integrated the notions of cut, of incommensurability, of infinite and which, as language, is truth in the discourse of science. For Hegel, mathematics remained silent, outside discourse and outside language (as Kojève showed, c.f. *Kant*, p.25). Hegel, condemned by his epoch to lose his bearings in mathematics, by not seeing its place in scientific discourse, had nonetheless situated very precisely the lacunae that the works of Cantor and topology subsequently filled in.

From what has gone before, we could conclude, a little rapidly, that Lacan wanted to do without Hegel. Nevertheless Lacan tells us: ‘Kojève (1902-1968) whom I hold to be my master, because he initiated me into Hegel...’. Why this recognition?

(68) Lacan’s project is to articulate not a discourse, but a roundabout of four discourses. If Hegel was not able to situate the mathematics of his epoch in scientific discourse, his whole work is nevertheless constructed as a logic of movement, where one figure of the Spirit switches towards the following figure starting from its own aporia; the roundabout of discourses is directly inscribed in this dialectic of a thinking that is always in movement. It is in the context of four discourses, that it must be understood that Lacan recognises Kojève as his master.

Caught up very early in the great current of the communist revolution, Kojève (1902-1968) leaves Russia in 1919, studies philosophy (in particular oriental) at Heidelberg and decides to set himself up in Paris, where he undertakes a comprehensive study of mathematics (Cantor) and of physics. At the Sorbonne from 1933 to 1939, he gives a course devoted to Hegel’s *Phenomenology of the spirit* which Lacan attends. How was he Lacan’s master? Kojève initiated Lacan into Hegel not alone through the *Phenomenology of the spirit* but also by his own changes of discourse. His starting discourse, the master discourse of communism, was also the one to which he returned, having traversed the scientific discourse and the academic discourse. Kojève did not philosophise, he *philosophisait*, was only a philosopher and a academic teacher in order

to return to his starting discourse: he was ranked in the academic discourse provisionally, namely to provide himself with knowledge with a view to return to his starting discourse. The majority of his writings⁵ date from this academic time and were moreover published posthumously ('posthumously showing his derision for the whole adventure'). After the war, Kojève returned to his master discourse: the grey eminence of ministries and of commissions, he worked as a top official in the service of the interests of France, then of Europe, and finally of less developed countries: 'the great officer knows how to deal with (69) buffoons (namely, farcical academic people) as well as the others, in other words as the subjects of the sovereign', namely, as slaves of the *master* (my parentheses). This forced passage from one discourse to another (master, scientific and academic discourses) prepared him clearly for knowing that his knowledge only functioned as a semblance and to treat it as such; the contempt of Kojève for this knowledge was sustained by his starting discourse: just as the master has contempt for the slave (S₂). Kojève had contempt for his own academic knowledge (S₂). Kojève thus prepared Lacan's theory of discourses.

4 *Saying in the roundabout of discourses*

As opposed to the sadness, into we are plunged by any rigid discourse (of the master, of the academic), 'gay science rejoiced in presuming the ruin of the soul' from science without consciousness, from the *o*-object, truth of the hysterical discourse or again from mathematical language, truth of the scientific discourse. Gay science or gay knowledge (*sçavoir*) evoke both Rabelais' deep throat and the discoveries mobilising the provincial troubadours of the 12th century, animated by the missing object, the *algama*, the *o*-object. 'As opposed to sadness, there is gay *sçavoir*, which, for its part, is a virtue. A virtue does not absolve anyone from sin – original as everyone knows. The virtue that I designate as gay *sçavoir* is an example of it, by manifesting what it consists of: not to comprehend, to delve into sense, but to shave it as closely as possible without it becoming a glue for this virtue, for that to enjoy deciphering, which implies that at the end gay *sçavoir* simply ends up in a collapse, a return to sin' (*Télévision*, p.40; AE 526). Gay *sçavoir* consists in

⁵ *Essays on a reasoned history of Pagan philosophy*, (1968-1973), *Kant*, 1973, *Concept, time and discourse*, 1990.

transforming deciphering (which belongs to the domain of the meaning-relationship) into interpretation insofar as it is a matter of shaving sense by going through the discourses with the fall of the *o*-object as consequence. But to mention gay science is also to evoke Nietzsche's ('Gay knowledge'. He denounces Hegel's ideal of science, which (70) presupposes consciousness (with which precisely the *Phenomenology of the spirit* begins). Because consciousness – which is not far from our 'meaning-relationship' – is for Nietzsche a pure reactive force and therefore properly speaking sad. 'The will to power', the affirmation as ex-sistence, gay *sçavoir*, *fröhliche Wissenschaft*, the *gaya scienza* borrowed from the Provençal of the Middle Ages, thus subverts Hegelian *Wissenschaft*, which, for Nietzsche, could not be gay because it began with consciousness.

Lacan's path diverts the sad discourse of the master. Science without consciousness ought to ruin the soul, strip the soul as a substance settled in its normal good functioning in order to make appear the *o*-object, the truth of the discourse of the hysteric. Nevertheless 'neurosis survives it' (9b; 453): the truth of the hysterical discourse (science without consciousness) is not enough to repress hysterical neurosis. Lacan will take up the question again in the second loop of *L'étourdit* (c.f. our third chapter devoted to structure): neurosis is surpassed only in the structure involving the roundabout of the *four* discourses.

By turning away from a search for sense in order to prefer absence to it, we have gone from the couple of master-academic discourses to the couple of analytical-hysterical (or mathematical-scientific) discourses. At the point that we are at in it, there apparently exist two different ways of approaching saying: 1⁰ by a switch between the discourse of the master and the discourse of the academic (and this displacement makes up the ritornello of philosophical logic) and 2⁰) by the mathematical language of scientific discourse, namely, by the *o*-object, truth of the hysterical discourse. But saying must not simply be situated in one or other passage of the roundabout of discourses; it ought to be demonstrated as constitutive of each one of the reverses of discourse. This demonstration depends on the discourse of the analyst in which, for the second time, a discourse is embarrassed by its language (it is the embarrassment of the discourse of the analyst with the unconscious).

Having remarked on the persistence of neurosis in the experience of gay science or the persistence of hysterical neurosis in hysterical (71) discourse, Lacan returns to the demonstration of saying, *dire*. It is a matter of demonstrating saying, which is precisely not the said, *dit*, (neither hypothetical nor thetical): saying is demonstrated ‘by escaping from the said’ (9b; 453). This privilege of escaping from the said is assured by ‘saying no’ which develops under different modes.

The demonstration of saying is situated ‘in a confrontation with the wall of the impossible’ (8e). It is not going to remain with the affirmation of the inconsistent, it is not going to remain with the refutable, in which case saying would consist simply in reversing its supposition into the contradictory supposition, as in the demonstration by absurdity. In order to demonstrate saying, we must pass to the affirmation of the incompleteness of the said, then take the measure of the indemonstrability of the said, to end up with undecidability of saying. Saying does not culminate then at the said (inconsistent versus coherent), but takes the measure of its own powerlessness at every stage of its journey and spends its journey hugging the wall of the impossible. ‘It is only by not leaving the impossible a leg to stand on that powerlessness takes on the power of making the patient into the agent (*Radiophonie*, p.98) or, more precisely, of making the Other become the semblance. The displacements of the Other towards the place of the semblance make the hysterical discourse turn into the master discourse, the master discourse into the academic discourse, the academic discourse into the psychoanalytic discourse, the psychoanalytic discourse into the hysterical discourse each of these reversals is an saying no to the discourse which is reversed. Thus saying ‘does not belong to the dimension of truth’. Escaping from any rigid discourse, it is only found in the demonstration, in the switching from one discourse to another: ‘saying is demonstrated’ (9b). This saying, which is an saying no, goes to sense (*sens*) in order to reverse it in favour of *l’ab-sens* and of a series of switches of discourse.

Lacan describes in the lines that follow, three switches of discourse (hysterical master, master academic, academic analyst) which leave us confronted with the wall of the impossible; one could (72) recognise successively in these three switches: 1⁰ the passage from the inconsistent to the incomplete, 2⁰ the passage from the incomplete to the indemonstrable, 3⁰ the passage from the indemonstrable to the undecideable.

If one goes towards sense, it is to grasp there the *contien*, not the contradiction (9bc). In the hysterical discourse, the hysteric proposes the contradiction and goes from contradiction to contradiction while remaining in the same discourse. Through the mediation of its Other (S_1), the discourse of the hysteric produces a universal S_2 , for example the Freudian thesis: ‘every dream is the accomplishment of a wish’; as the witty butcher’s wife did in her dream, one may contradict this hysterical knowledge, this Freudian thesis and produce a different knowledge, still hysterical: there are dreams that are not the accomplishment of desire. One remains in the discourse of the hysteric. The spirit of the hysteric is to produce such contradictions (here ‘every dream is the fulfilment of a wish’/ ‘every dream is not the fulfilment of a wish’). The contradiction is not yet an saying no, it does not go on to another discourse. Saying no, starting from the hysterical discourse, is to go towards the master discourse. If the Other of the hysteric (S_1) ceases to play the game of the hysteric, if it manages to reverse the hysterical discourse by existing with respect to the hysteric, then it passes to the position of semblance in the following discourse (the master discourse); contradictory knowings (*savoirs*) are no longer the product of hysteria, but the master contains them as his Other; he commands and keeps a grip on all these contradictions. But mastery is not simply maintaining, holding by the hand, it is also containing (*contien*), holding by the cunt, by the sexual organ of the hysteric, indeed the matrix of her discourse.

This field, even if it contains contradictions, will nevertheless always remain incomplete. Thus two master discourses could eternally confront one another in a process of reciprocal negation: one must go beyond the reciprocal refutation of these incomplete (73) discourses (on which the sceptic bases himself to establish his ‘nullubiquity’) to make the indemonstrable appear in this debate of masters. Saying no now involves going from ‘the resumption of negation’ to ‘the response’. The true response is not what always contains the debate, but what entertains the question, namely indemonstrability. This response opens up the academic discourse.

Saying no, is to pass finally from ‘correction’ to ‘rejection’: starting from the said in the academic discourse (as response), saying is demonstrated, not as correction to the response, which would only keep us at the said in the academic and in the problematic of the demonstrable/indemonstrable; saying can on the contrary be developed in the very

dimension of rejection of demonstrability (which is the case of the undecideable). It is from this rejection that the discourse of the analyst appears ('the analyst as rejected from his discourse' (33b), 'the promise of rejection for analysts' (35b). By this rejection outside demonstrability and outside the said, saying appears now as undecideable and disengaged from the said.

'Responding in this way suspends what is true in the said' (9c): the said is suspended in favour of saying produced by the switches of discourses and this saying is illuminated by the discourse of the analyst.

The latter is not for all that outside the roundabout of discourses, it is not a meta-language (6de; 450). Situated on the same surface as the other discourses, it can only illuminate them by a 'tangential light' (9c; 453) without ever being able to stand back. In what follows in *L'étourdit* we will notice how this illumination reveals the general structure and the four places of each one of the four discourses as well as their specific modality: the truth as possible, the semblance as necessary, the Other as impossible, the product as contingent.

The 'demonstration' of the said is defined by the journey 'to the foot of the wall of the impossible or by the mechanism of reversal of discourses; the fact is that all along the path one goes from the said to saying: - thus one or other universal statement (*dit*) produced by the hysteric does not find itself simply contra-dicted (as in the demonstration by the absurd); but it is reversed by the master (74) discourse (which is embodied once the hysteric gives himself over to free association and gives to the signifier the place of semblance); thus, what is incompletely said put to work by the signifier in the master discourse does not stay with its affirmation or its negation; but it is reversed by the academic discourse; thus, finally, does not knowledge, the indemonstrable semblance of the academic, offer itself to correction or rectification (that too many so-called analysts want to inflict on it); but it introduces an undecideable cast-off: on the stump of the great academic tree that has been well cut there grows saying, the off-shoot of psychoanalytic discourse. These different acts of saying no, these switches of discourse suspend the truth of a first discourse, which they replace by its semblance: from the semblance of a first discourse, the switch creates the truth for the new discourse. So then the signifier, knowledge, the subject or the **o**-object go through the four places of the discourse in a

counter-clockwise direction: product, Other, semblance, truth. It is not the truth that is expressed by a semblance of truth, but the semblance switches towards the truth: the switch runs counter to any *vrai-semblance* (apparent truth). The truth of the said does not dominate the roundabout; let us rather say that the semblance of today will determine the truth of tomorrow. No truer than any other, the discourse of the analyst is not outside the roundabout: it is the response to the discourse of the academic and it summons the discourse of the hysteric. Thus each discourse pre-supposes the discourse from which it comes; each discourse conserves, denies and renews the discourse that has preceded it according to an *Aufhebung* which forever prevents the clock from going back to zero.

Remark 2 ‘To say what there is’ (9cd-10d)

Can one not have a direct relationship both of the truth (of the said) and of the real, namely, without the detour of saying and the figures of the impossible, without the roundabout of discourses? Can one not (75) aim at a direct truth as the adequation of intelligence to the real? ‘I will metaphorise for the moment as incest the relationship that the truth entertains with the real’ (9cd; 453). If the real engenders the truth, the truth cannot return directly to the real; the truth adequate to the real should be forbidden in order that there should be established a different structure of the truth, of the real and of ‘saying which is demonstrated’. How escape from this incest of a truth that is a replica of the real? By the practice of saying and of the impossible: ‘Saying is formulated in saying no, in other words as a stage in the roundabout of discourses: ‘saying comes from where it (the real) determines it (the truth)’ (9cd; 453). Thus the truth never appears except in the quarter turn of discourse that ousts it from its place: the truth content of the first discourse is then no longer in the position of truth, it has become the product of the second discourse. The truth is therefore always produced subsequently by a discourse that has already reversed it.

‘But can there not also be a direct saying? Saying what there is...’ (10a; 453). This transmission of a knowing adequate to the object finds its paradigm in the medical discourse (which is *not* a scientific discourse). The formation of the medical candidate is transmitted and is preserved in the *salle de garde*, where ‘one is always on one’s guard not to annoy the bosses’ (who remain in the class struggle and the master discourse).

Because the doctor ‘makes declarations’ and wants to be adequate to the real: in his diagnosis, he says what there is; in his prognosis, he says what will be, in his therapeutics, he says what has to be done. The doctor by having been able to say what there is wants to conjure away the illness by the efficacy of his word as a ‘sacred function’. In a master discourse, he thus takes up again the principle of magic, where the signifier is master; the signifier sees itself as having a direct hold on reality and claims to have a therapeutic effectiveness, the ideal term of its discourse. The first signifier thus placed in the position of agent wants to impose itself as an effective cause. But we are no longer in societies centred on magical practices and the product of medical discourse proves to be powerless to rejoin (76) its truth. Despite the enormous progress of medicine, the doctor finds himself before a ‘void’ (10ab; 454), faced with the radical powerlessness at the heart of medicine in grinding opposition to his omnipotence, which is declared ‘in every age and over the whole surface of the globe’.

‘History has reduced this sacred function’; medicine is no longer a sacred function articulated in the culture of our time, it is reduced to an isolated discourse. ‘I understand your malaise’ which is due to the powerlessness of the master medical discourse. How can the doctor rediscover his truth? Starting from the discourse of the master, the doctor cannot rejoin the truth, he can only ‘play the philosopher’ (10b; 454) [c.f. medical bioethics which plays at philosophy to find the truth of medicine]. Jean Fernel (1497-1559), the doctor of Diane of Poitiers, of Henry II and of Catherine de Médicis on the contrary rapidly abandoned his chair of philosophy; astronomer, mathematician and doctor, he did not remain confined to the master discourse alone, but opened himself, already before Galileo, to scientific discourse and academic knowledge by classifying methodically and clearly what medicine knew (*Universa Medecina*).

Lacan addresses himself to doctors: ‘Know!’ (10c; 454), plunge yourselves into knowledge rather than playing the philosopher or wanting to take up the position of truth! Plunge yourself into knowledge (as Dr Fernel, Dr Freud and Dr Lacan did) and through this into the academic discourse placed under the patronage of knowledge in the position of semblance. Starting from the experience of knowledge, starting from the powerlessness of academic discourse, psychoanalysis ‘tempts you’, ‘it can be understood’.

Lacan testifies to the *o*-object in the position of semblance, namely, to the discourse of the analyst. According to Lacan, Freud was not able to elaborate explicitly the psychoanalytic discourse (in its difference to master discourse and academic discourse). For failing to have conceived the discourse of the analyst, Freud was indeed constrained to mummify what he said (c.f. Poe's *Case of Mr Valdemar*, quoted in E 486); hoping to conserve his saying intact, he (77) constructed a rigid society, the IPA or the *International Psychoanalytic Association*, an institution functioning according to the academic mode. A pyramidal structure of this kind very quickly reveals its powerlessness to transmit psychoanalysis (*The situation of psychoanalysis and the formation of the psychoanalyst in 1956*, E 459). The *dandys* as Lacan calls them, took advantage of his teaching to create a Lacanian style which does not allow 'the slightest access to Freud's saying'; these aesthetes have been very careful not to switch over into the analytic discourse themselves so they have chosen some analyst who is entangled in the academic discourse even though in academic discourse, it is not possible to form an analyst. If Freud's saying is repressed by academic discourse, there is no return of this repressed starting from this discourse alone.

'The fact is that there is no formation of the analyst' outside the maintenance of Freud's saying which corresponds to the discourse of the analyst. Having failed to conceive the discourse of the analyst, Freud had to forge a social link for analysts from the three other discourses (master, academic, hysterical): the societies of psychoanalysis constructed themselves starting from these other discourses which 'necessarily bar Freud's saying' (S10cd). By *The proposal of 1967* which immediately followed on the publication of the *Ecrits*, Lacan tried to forge a society of psychoanalysis on the discourse of the analyst. Did he succeed? We will respond to this question in the second loop of *L'Étourdit*, Chapter 2.

To restore Freud's saying presupposes 'the logic which takes as its source the said by the unconscious' (10d; 454). This logic which is none other than the roundabout of discourses turns around the absence of the sexual relationship.

CHAPTER 3: THERE IS NO SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

(79) Chapter 1 was centred on the said as it operates in the master and academic discourses. Chapter 2 demonstrated saying in the scientific and psychoanalytic discourses. *Ab-sense* separates these two chapters. On the one hand, saying ex-sists with respect to the said, does not belong to the *dit-mension* of truth and on the other hand the said is always only half-said, has no hold whatsoever on saying; impossible in the *dit-mension*, saying is demonstrated from the impossibility of the said. The rupture between the first and second chapters or the impossibility between said and saying will be put to work in the third chapter: there is no sexual relationship.

We will grasp in these pages the passage from relationship to non- relationship, from the possible to the impossible, from the discourse of the master to the discourse of the analyst. This passage is accompanied by a displacement of Lacanian theory: the theory of discourses has as matrix the discourse of the master; it is built on the meaning-relationship and on the possibilities offered by the signifier. In this sense, it is centred on the symbolic and the practice which flows from it turns around the signifying word and its deciphering. In opposition to the theory of discourses, the theory of the formulae of sexualisation has as nexus the absence of sexual relationship; it is built on the phallic function which here supplies for it. In this sense it is centred on the real and the practice which flows from it turns around enjoyment and interpretation.

Nevertheless these two theories (of the four discourses and of the phallic function) remain articulated: the theory of discourses pre-supposes the impossible, which itself is the condition of access to the real. At the same time, interpretation first takes up the thread of the signifier and therefore of the symbolic. Also in a first phase the absence of sexual relationship will be approached by the symbolic (1); (80) from there, it will be illustrated from the imaginary side (2); then, it will be presented as real (3). The absence of sexual relationship will open out onto the phallic function which supplies for it (4).

1. The absence of sexual relationship and the two ex-sistences.

(10d; 454-455)

‘Freud’s saying is inferred from the logic which takes as source the said by the unconscious’. The analyst’s saying is inferred from the productions of the unconscious furnished especially in free association. This inference is neither the induction nor the deduction by which one would pass from one truth to another judged true by reason of its link to the first. For Freud’s saying is not directly inferred from the said by the unconscious or from its truth but from the logic of what is heard, which depends on the grammar of the signifier: a signifier is differentiated into another signifier (S_1 S_2). What is then this particular logic which can be reduced to neither deduction nor induction? →

‘It is in as far as Freud discovered this said (of the unconscious) that it (Freud’s saying) ex-sists’ (10de). Freud discovers the unconscious through the symptom as compromise between a tendency and a defence against this tendency: the unconscious is the motor for the oscillation between these two positions of the symptom. This elementary oscillation animates the switching of discourses and is necessary for the constitution of the four discourses: each discourse is constituted by the switch that generated it and for the switch that will reverse it. The analyst’s saying highlights the roundabout of the discourses, from the said by the dynamic unconscious, motor of the switches. ‘The experience’ in which discourse in general ‘is proved to exist’ (10e) is not centred on the said, but on the dialectical development of a saying; it is the psychoanalytic discourse, which comprehends the dialectic of the four discourses. Constructed from switches, this saying is never fixed, is the passage from one position to another and is thus never true: ‘This saying cannot be expressed in terms of truth.’

(81) The said of the unconscious is not given in its entirety, it is always only half-said (the dimension of the truth) but how hear this half-said? What is this S_2 ? This half-said must be properly cut: namely, it must not be cut by another half-said (one half-said plus another half-said does not give an entire ‘the said’: analytic treatments ceaselessly demonstrate it). The properly cut half-said is cut off from saying, which appears as ex-sisting with respect to the said. The badly cut half-said, cut by another half-said, remains the affair of ‘clear half-saids’ (*midits nets*), of *midinettes* (as the contradictions of the discourse of the hysteric show). Properly cut off from saying, the half-said is conjugated by going back in the order of the persons of the conjugation: *il midit* (third person, he

half-says), *tu médites* (second person, you meditate) *je médis* (first person, I speak badly of). By this conjugation, the *midit* (half-said) is inscribed respectively in the hysterical, master and academic discourses: the half-said (of the third person) is the product of the hysterical discourse: the ‘you’ (of the second person) is the Other questioned in the master discourse (what are you speaking ill of, you as unconscious knowledge?): finally, ‘I’ (in the first person) is the knowledge that is said, and is badly said, as semblance of the academic discourse (I speak ill). This bizarre conjugation follows the journey of knowledge⁶ in the places of the discourse: from the product (he) to the Other (you) then to the agent (I). I anticipate and say: this saying properly cut from the said is interpretation; Lacan’s sentence is interpreted by following the order of three ‘equivocations’ (c.f. 48-49), 1) homophonous (*midit, médit, and médi*)⁷, 2) grammatical (he, you, I), and 3) logical (as explained in my text).

(82) The sense of what is unconsciously said should not be sought solely in what it becomes when it is conjugated, but in what made it possible: the analyst’s saying. It is the putting in place of transference, without which there is no discovery of the unconscious. We note here that saying which made the hysteric speak is not at all the semblance of the hysterical discourse; it goes back to the preceding discourse, to the discourse of the analyst: this saying of the analyst ex-sists radically with respect to the said by the hysteric). Between the two, there is a properly made cut which pre-supposes and activates the disparity of transference (a disparity which comes from the impossible of the discourse of the analyst: $\circ \rightarrow \$$). Transference is not the displacement of a particular affect onto another person; it is rather the activation of the unconscious inasmuch as this activation presupposes the switching mechanism proper to the change of discourse.

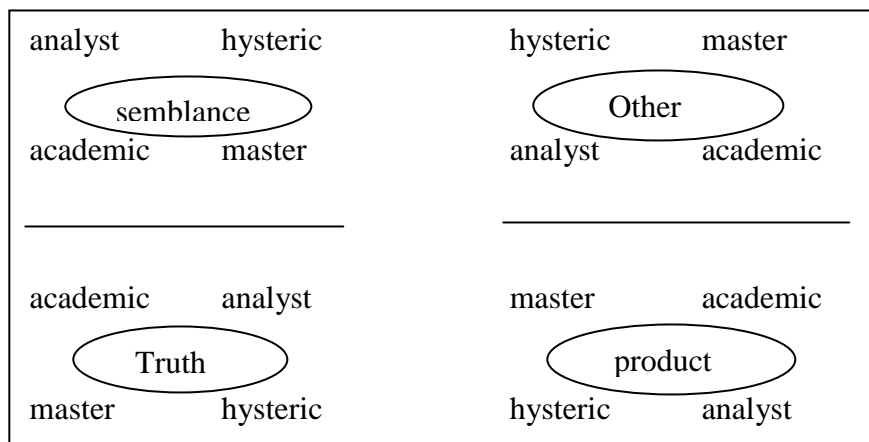
The saying of the analyst is not for all that the first of the discourses: ‘This saying is not free’. It relays the acts of saying of other discourses in the same way as it is prolonged

⁶ S₂ that we can call according to Kantian terminology (*Methodology of the Critique of pure reason*): *opinion* in the hysterical production, *faith* in the master Other and *knowledge* as academic semblance. There remains of course *ignorance* – not thematised by Kant – for psychoanalytic truth!

⁷ More precisely, one could call this equivocation *paronymous* since the phonemes can be closely related (*midit-médis*) and not strictly identical. With Lacan we will keep the term homophonous; not being able by definition to be resolved simply by phonemes, the homophonous equivocation necessarily leads to the letter (*gramma*), to grammatical equivocation.

into the hysterical discourse. The roundabout of discourses ‘is closed in analysis’ (11a, c.f. also *Radiophonie*, pp.96-98).

This closed roundabout of discourses is at the same time ‘what situates the places’ of each discourse and defines them as truth, semblance, Other or product; in effect, these real places are only situated from the moment when something returns to this same place; for this identity to be ‘demonstrated’, it is of course necessary that a revolution should take place, that the place in question should have been occupied by each of the four terms, which can only be done in the roundabout of the four discourses. Thus the truth would only be defined when it has been occupied successively by the hysterical **o**-object, the master subject, the academic signifier and psychoanalytic knowledge. Thus the locus of the semblance will only be situated when it has been occupied successively by the master signifier, by academic knowledge, by the psychoanalytic **o**-object, and by the hysterical barred subject. The same for the other two places. Freud’s saying (or the discourse of the analyst) can only be circled by these places which themselves are defined by the occupants that the roundabout of discourses made succeed there. Thus the general structure of discourse can be depicted thus:



To encircle the discourse of the analyst, we must henceforth comprehend the history of these four places:

Thus the analyst or the **o**-object in the place of semblance presupposes the whole sequence of semblances that have preceded it: the hysterical barred subject, the master signifier, academic knowledge. That is the programme to become an analyst.

Thus the analyser or the barred subject in the place of the Other in the discourse of the analyst carries the whole history of the Others: the hysterical signifier, master faith, the scopic object of the academic. This is the history of the analyser in the treatment.

Thus the signifier will only take on its place as product of analysis in the succession of products: the hysterical knowledge-opinion, the (84) master anal object, the academic barred subject. This is the sequence of results of analysis.

Thus knowledge-ignorance will only function as truth of the analyst if this place of truth is illuminated by the hysterical oral object, the master barred subject, the academic signifier. This is an ignorance that presupposes a whole knowledge.

The discourse of the analyst implies the real of the four places defined by the history of what has happened in them: the four places circle the discourse of the analyst from the impossible which animates the roundabout of the four discourses.

How make this impossibility function so that the places 'circle' saying as real? 'It is only by pushing the impossible back into its defences that powerlessness takes on the power of making the patient turn into an agent' (*Radiophonie*, p.98), powerlessness takes on the power of dislodging the occupant of the place of the Other (the patient) towards the place of the semblance (the agent). The impossible is not what operates, but what does not operate between these the two places of the semblance and the Other; to push the impossible back into its defences, it is to set in motion the discourse in order to show its powerlessness. The impossible *qua* non-relationship between the semblance and the Other is pushed to its limits according to the truth proper to the discourse in question; this movement makes the powerlessness of the product of discourse to grasp its truth appear and provokes the switch towards another discourse.

Sexuality in the speaking being (namely, in the discourses) is the impossibility of a relationship between the semblance and the Other of each discourse: 'there is no sexual relationship' (11ab; 455).

Is there then no man/woman relationship, no sexual relationship? Each time that Freud attempts to define precisely sexual difference, he admits his powerlessness and displaces the question onto the active/passive opposition (or again un-castrated/castrated). No doubt the sexes are interdependent and the behaviour of the child which becomes male is oriented towards the girl and reciprocally; a sexual relationship is properly established in

the dimension of display: (85) animal sexual behaviour, in which man participates, unfolds with an 'exquisite animal courtesy', according to well regulated tropisms (Seminar XVIII, 20 January 1971). But for Lacan (and it was already true for Freud), the sexuality of the speaking being is 'strictly consubstantial with the dimension of the unconscious' (Seminar XI, p.133), it depends on the unconscious and on transference as an activation of the unconscious, especially in the switches of discourses.

'There is no sexual relationship' implies the roundabout of discourses. The impossibility of the sexual relationship is at stake in the marvellous flowering of the forms of the impossible, which provoke the triggering of the discourses. Now the impossible cannot be apprehended except by a negating movement: 'there is no, *pas de*' is its general formula: a discourse has no the author (the author is only a semblance); a discourse has no fixed sense (*ab-sens*); there is no sexual relationship. This Lacanian flowering of 'there is no', in its movement of subtraction, guarantees the mobility of saying and of the discourses. By thus suspending the substantial reference points (predetermined sexual conduct, an agent which leads the discourse, all truth, sexual relationship), the 'there is no' provokes a labilty of discourse which leads to the fact that in it we understand its aporia, its powerlessness, its stopping point and its reversal into another discourse. Such is the logic proper to the discourse of the analyst and it determines all action: 'The discourse of the analyst is nothing other than the logic of action' (Seminar XVIII, 17 February 1971).

But how does the impossible 'announce itself' (11a) precisely as sexual? Following Freud, psychoanalysis referred the sexes to the phallus, positively or negatively (a question debated at length during the thirties); now, the sexes are going to find their reference in the phallic function, which, from the impossible, shakes up the roundabout of the four discourses. Or again, they will be defined by their discursive way of supplying for the impossible, for the absence of sexual relationship.

To say 'there is no sexual relationship', we must start from relationship ('in general') and relationship is always of meaning: (86) 'relationship is nothing but what is enunciated' (11ab). This relationship in general was studied in the relationship proper to the signifier (6-7). At the level of this meaning-relationship, the real is assured and is

confirmed ‘from the limit which is demonstrated from the logical consequences of the statement’: the two sentences enunciated at the beginning of *L’étourdit* demonstrate the sense from their meaning-relationship, one referring on to the other, which creates a first sketch of the real from the logic of grammatical meaning.

‘Here there is an immediate limit’ (11b) since the specific powerlessness of the psychoanalytic discourse is the ab-sens of meaning (S_1 and S_2 being inscribed respectively at the places of the product and of the truth). This limit is directly the absence of the philosophical page (7e-8a), or the absence of sense flowing from the cut between S_1 and S_2 , it is ab-sense. In the same way, we do not find meanings (of the two sexes) to put into relationship, we have no statements which would define the boy and the girl. This absence is such that it leaves the ‘there is no, *n’y a*’ (‘there is no sexual relationship’) without a grammatical subject and without a possessor who might have the sex. This effacing of the grammatical subject and having suggests the enigma of sex, of the Dark Continent.

From this enigmatic fact of sex without a subject and without having, there is enunciated ‘no logical consequence which is not de’nia’ble (*‘nia’ble*)’, since the logical consequence would suppose two statements, two locatable things that are said. This absence of logical sequence proper to ab-sense, not being an statement, cannot be denied; neither is it negation of a primordial sense or suppression of a presence. We are not situated in the said, but only in saying that; *‘nya’*. Since the absence of sexual relationship is neither preceded (*‘nia’*) nor accompanied (*‘nya’*) by a negation, one might think – too quickly – that this absence corresponds to a positive primal ‘there is’, on the model of a Heideggerian *‘Es gibt’* anterior to being and to truth, or on the model of an epoch-making¹ primal *Bejahung*¹. One would thus positivise the absence of sexual relationship in one form or another. No! Saying has nothing positive about it, it appears simply empty of sense, of logic, of relationship and is expressed by the three-lettered (*‘nya’*) to which no commentary, or no relationship is to be made. But what to do with this saying which is neither negated, nor positivised? What can we say about it? Nothing from the side of deciphering. Something from the side of interpretation. Lending itself to pass between two writings (for identical phonemes), interpretation

¹ See Chapter 4 of my *Logic of the Unconscious*.

develops a grammatical then a logical equivocation: ‘Namely, *c’est-à-dire*’, a saying is the development of the homophonous equivocation which is only unfolded by grammar, then logic. Lacan introduces just the homophonous equivocation ‘*nya*’/‘*nia*’ (which Lacan will call later ‘*nyania*’ (22ab), the first ‘*nya*’ is ab-sense, the second ‘*nia*’ opens up a grammatical equivocation to interpret. ‘*Nia*’ is the simple past tense of the verb to deny (*nier*): in the past, an ex-sistence was able to deny the universal by being able to pose it (as we have seen from the first chapter). But ‘*nia*’ is equivocal and ‘*nya*’ goes further: currently’ there is no trace of ex-istence. Now, from the ab-sense, proper to the discourse of the analyst, comes ‘saying that: there is no (‘*nya*’), that ‘there is no a trace’ of any present where such an ex-sistence (denying the universal) would be incarnated in reality.

‘But what is at stake’ (11c) in this homophony ‘*nyania*’? This equivocation replaces the sexual relationship, the relationship between the man and the woman. By this homophony, could the man and the woman ‘make an statement of this relationship’? On the side of the man, things are the said in the past perfect: he formerly denied the universal by ex-sistence (this is the existence of man always confined to the past perfect, later called the second phallic formula of sexualisation: he denied, *nia*, phi of x); on a woman’s side, things are said in the present: there is no trace (‘*nya*’ - this is the existence of a woman, later called the third phallic formula of sexualisation: there is no x not phi of x). This relationship between the man and a woman by their respective ex-sistence is impossible since it operates in incompatible tenses (past perfect/present).

(88) These two formulae of a masculine ‘*nia*’ and of a feminine ‘*nya*’ are both stable and labile. Is it the absence of this relationship that pushes and exiles men and women into the habitation of language and more precisely into this stabilised habitat (‘*stabitat*’)? Language would be the consequence of the absence of the sexual relationship and would offer a way of supplying for it in a stable fashion. Or on the contrary does ‘lability, *labilité*’ (‘*d’labiter*’, 11c) inherent to language (the signifier is always labile and always other) induce the fact that there is no sexual relationship? The question of the sexual relationship (conceived from the signifier) will remain crouched between the lines of the said: ‘this relationship can only be inter-dicted, *inter-dit*’ (11d). *De labiter* (inhabiting language) would involve the inter-diction of the sexual relationship.

‘*Stabitate*’ of language from a first absence of sexual relationship, constitutive of the speaking being? Or *l’abiter*, lability of a sexual relationship constituted from the primary distortion of language? This dichotomy ‘is not the question’ (11cd). Each term of the dichotomy is a question and at the same time the response to the other term. The question: ‘Is it language that gives this stability to the absent sex?’ (*le sens absexé*) is answered by lability, by the practice of ab-sense (*le sexe absens*, 8b). Inversely to the question of ‘whether it is the fact of inhabiting language that renders the sexual relationship inter-dicted’, the response is that the stability of language structures sex. Each question supports and stimulates the other. In this articulation, the positions of *stabilité* of language and of *labile* language are far from being symmetrical: *labiter* of language provokes discourses and switches of a labile subject, appearing/disappearing (which will be presented in the second turn of *L’étourdit* as the Moebius strip); but this structure of the essentially labile saying ought to be stabilised by the eccentric axis of the roundabout of discourses, by the **o**-object (which would be presented as the little disc that supplements the Moebius strip to make of it a cross-cap). The barred subject comes therefore from the *labiter* and the **o**-object from *stabilité*.

(89) ‘Let us admit’ the real: ‘where it is-there’ (11d), there or ‘being- there’, the new Lacanian *Dasein* named **o**-object, is already articulated. In other words: the lability of the barred subject necessitates the stability of the **o**-object, of the being-there. ‘Nothing to be expected from going back to the flood’: the real is not found in the past: ‘*nia*’ marks that in the past ‘*nya la trace*’ of any present of existence and of saying. The flood (or the past, the masculine ‘*nia*’) does not give the key to the real, but the past recounts itself (from the present, from the ‘*nya*’) rather as a tribute to be paid to an enigmatic question: how does the woman come to rely on angels, on these enigmatic beings that are beyond masculine sexuality? We are already approaching the final phallic formula, the notall (*pastout*).

2. The absence of sexual relationship and the two universals. (11d-12c; 455-456)

‘The absence of sexual relationship’ is the real circled by the symbolic journey; this real responds to questions concerning the ex-sistence which denied the universal (‘*nia*’) and the absence of a trace of this ex-sistence (‘*nya*’). Lacan is going to illustrate this response

(there is no sexual relationship) by an apologue, by a brief story which teaches how to pass from the imaginary of the psychologist to the discourse of the analyst. Let us start from the academic discourse of the psychologist: the semblance is knowledge ('its inventions'): the Other is the soul (as *o*-object); the truth (S_1) which sustains the inventions of the psychologist is theology, namely, the study of God who is supposed to explain everything; finally, the product elaborated by psychology is the subject divided between his faculties, passions, perceptions, sensations, etc. (this heteroclite multiplicity will suppress the psychologist's sector because it cannot rediscover God, the truth of the psychologist). The situation of the psychologist is therefore despairing: a hunted animal surrounded and petrified by the baying of dogs close-by, the psycho-logist remains immobile, trapped and without an escape route before his interlocutor, the soul, before his *o*-(90) object, the voice. This voice, this soul, is a bark, *aboi*, (the voice, '*l'a-voix*, as everyone knows, barks', *The knowledge of the psychoanalyst*, 4 May 1972); the 'logue' therefore has 'his back to the wall, *aux abois*', the voice or the bark sounds the death knell (*l'hallali*) of the discourse of the psychologist, for in producing the barred subject it produces the powerlessness of the psychological discourse which will be reversed in favour of the discourse of the analyst. The voice will take the position of semblance in it.

The psychologist is caught up in the torment of heteroclite and changing things while his truth remains unchangeable theology. It is the 'unhappiness' (11e) of the psychologist, Hegel's 'unhappy consciousness'. Since he is sustained by an eternal and unchangeable God, 'he wants the psychical' to be normal. Far from obeying unalterable norms, the functioning of the soul produces on the contrary the change and heteroclicity of the barred subject. The psychologist who wants the psychical to be normal falls back then on the zoological schema of an inner world, *Innenwelt*, called on to adapt itself to the cosmological or surrounding world, *Umwelt*¹. The stimulus-response couple (12a; 545) which is supposed to regulate this adaptation is only a fiction of the experimenter who maintains the organism in a state of passivity (Lacan, *Psychoanalysis in its relationships with reality*, *Scilicet* no.1, p. 56). Contrary to this psychology of adaptation

¹ The German terms *Innenwelt* and *Umwelt* are those of the German biologist Jakob von Uexküll (*Animal worlds and human worlds*, 1934): to understand a being (animal or human), we must understand the environment in which it evolves.

founded on the norms guaranteed by God, Freud's saying was nevertheless centred from the start on the primary processes, defined as abnormal processes.

Instead of studying man in his normalisation and his adaptation to the *Umwelt*, to the surrounding world, the psychologist 'would do better to pay attention to the volte-man who constitutes the labyrinth from which man cannot get out', with the man dancing like a horse in the roundabout of discourses (11e; 455). The homophonous equivocation between *Umwelt* and volte-man (*homme-volte*) is thus illuminated by the grammar of the signifier which passes from *Umwelt* (91) to volte man, then by the logic of this volte which is none other than 'the labyrinth from which man cannot get out' or the roundabout of discourses. But our friend Theseus only follows the thread of the four discourses by supporting himself on the resistance of the labyrinth, on the wall of the impossible: the volte-man is thus at the same time a psychical unit of resistance metaphorised by the unit of electric resistance *l'ohm-volt*. Since *Studies on hysteria*, Freud indicated clearly that analysis ought to follow the wall of resistance rather than wanting to force it.

In the normative schema, the response (to the stimulus) is supposed to allow the individual to keep himself alive. This schema 'leads to the avowal of his inventions' (12a; 455). For the response to the stimulus 'ends up quickly and badly' with death, which puts in question the inventions of the psychologist. This response opens up the question: it no longer forms a couple with the stimulus, but with a question. The response that man gives to the surrounding world is not a response adjusted to stimulation, but a response that stimulates a change, a creative modification, the prerogative of the speaker who cannot be reduced to the biological.

The response as stimulating the question opens the space for a repeated question: the question 'is re-peated' (12a; 455), it keeps on asking again and again. This response is in perpetual flight, it remains enigmatic; from question to response and from response to question the enigma is sustained and developed into a buckle (*boucle*). The static unconscious, first perceived as original cause, henceforth makes way for the dynamic unconscious which stimulates the question by its enigma. Ever since, the unconscious is not knowledge or the said, but the motor of this buckling movement; or again it 'it is only concerned in the dynamic that precipitates the switch from one of these discourses into the other' (*Radiophonie*, p.88; AE 435). The unconscious in act is nothing other than the

response which stimulates the question and thus reproduces life. This reproduction of life is not a biological mechanism, but a pursuit of saying in the switching of different discourses.

(92) ‘Tis is also why, *Ct...aussi en quoi...*’ (12b), echoing the *st*-imulus, ‘the psychologist re-enters the *homme-volt* of repetition’: the psychologist is inscribed in the resistance and in the path that gets around this resistance. We will have recognised in these two moments of the unconscious (resistance and the dynamic of getting round the resistance) the two hypotheses – topical and dynamic – by which Freud tries to circle the unconscious (*The unconscious*, 1915). The unconscious produces and reproduces its response-question buckle for all, including the psychologist.

‘Life no doubt reproduces’ (12b; 456). The reasons for biological reproduction and for adaptation to the surrounding world can be left to God, the general organiser of the world: ‘God knows what and why.’ The response only gives rise to a question when there is no sexual relationship to sustain the reproduction of life. The life to be reproduced is no longer simple biological life, but the life of response and question or the roundabout of discourses determined by the dynamic of the unconscious.

The absence of relationship initiates therefore the response-question that the unconscious formulates: ‘How is man reproduced?’ When *L’étourdit*, from its first page, evokes the meaning-relationship, it already establishes what supplies for the sexual relationship. One ought to read in a single sentence: ‘there is no relationship to support the reproduction of life, except to what the unconscious formulates: “how is man reproduced?”’

Let us now examine how the relationship of the question-response couple supports the reproduction of life at the level of the unconscious. The question is formulated: ‘How is man reproduced?’ The response states: ‘By reproducing the question’ (12c). The response sets en route a buckle: the response refers back to the question and the question to the response. This buckle, of the same form as that of the signifying relationship, subsists by the response which makes a quotation of the question and which continues to be an enigma. We have thus responded to the ‘what?’ of reproduction in the case of man (what is reproduced is the question-response buckle). But (93) why? ‘To make you speak’. ‘To make you speak’ is another way of saying ‘To reproduce the question’: it is

‘in other words, *autrement-dit*’¹. It is from the ‘in other words’, from the ‘the said’ repeated and distorted (the Freudian *Einstellung*) that the dynamic saying of the unconscious can be inferred. The unconscious ex-sists with respect to the ‘in other words’ so as to circle it, to appropriate it to itself and to dynamise it.

‘It is from there that we must get two universals’ (12c; 456). For Freud, anatomy is destiny, the sexual relationship determines the sexual destiny of the human being. For Lacan, the solution is quite different: the sexuation of the speaking being develops from the absence of sexual relationship and this absence stimulates the response-question couple (of interpretation): given the absence of sexual relationship, we must start from the ex-sistence of the unconscious, which alone gives the key to human destiny. The phallic function which supplies for the sexual relationship will logically determine ‘two universals’ (which are in fact the first and the fourth formulae ‘for all x’ and ‘notall x’, as we will see in the next chapter). The term sexuation will henceforth be reserved for this logical development of sexual destiny from language (14-25; 458-469).

From the circuit involved by the unconscious, two universals are separated out (the two ‘sexes’) which separate in speaking beings, not two types of being, not two genus’ or two species, but two logics or better, two parts of logic independent of biological sex. But what are these two universals? A sufficiently consistent system (namely, avoiding contradiction) ought to permit us to clearly separate ‘men’ and ‘women’ into two universals [they had already been separated into two existences, heterogeneous and without relationship, in the ‘*nia*’/‘*nya*’ (‘*nia*’ masculine existence / ‘*nya*’ feminine non-existence)]. These universals (for all and notall) are heterogeneous and without relationship since the second ‘universal’ (*pastout*) escapes from the ‘construction of the universal’ (while *pourtout* was constructed as a universal. How can these ‘alls’ be ‘sufficiently (94) consistent to separate’ (S 12c)? This consistency is not the one which will oppose the defined class of men to the defined class of women. Speakers are on the contrary indefinite (*des*) even if in being (indefinite), they ‘believe themselves to be beings’, defined beings (12c; 456). The consistency of two universals presupposes a logical journey (which will be the object of the next chapter) and involves the division of

¹ The editor of *Autres Ecrits* (AE 456) unfortunately suppresses the hyphen that characterises *l’autrement-dit* as a property of the unconscious.

each speaking being into two moieties. Lacan takes his authority in effect from the Latin *se parere*, to be engendered (Seminar XI, 194), to understand the separation of the sexes as the self-engendering of two ‘moieties’: the barred subject and the **o**-object. These two moieties are not explained at this point in *L’étourdit* and the reader first of all comprehends the ‘man-moiety’ and the ‘woman-moiety’. Nevertheless if a man and a woman ‘are not too entangled’ in their coitus, it is thanks to their own separation into barred subject and **o**-object: each of these partners will play for the other the role of **o**-object, each one will be then for the other its other half. Coitus is then ‘co-iteration’: repetition, iteration of the said which allows there to be unveiled saying in which the barred subject and the **o**-object are separated again and again.

3. *The absence of sexual relationship and the phallus.* (12d-13d; 456-457)

This paragraph poses the question: how does the absence of sexual relationship take on a real effect for the speaker? How does non-relationship condition the sexual life of speakers? Undoubtedly thanks to the deputising of the phallic function. ‘Moiety (*moitié*) in French means that it has something to do with the ego’: speakers believe themselves to be egos’, beings, (objective...and imaginary) from the moment they are separated and engendered. But this engendering of a moiety¹ does not occur without the division of the subject, namely, without the loss of the other moiety, of the object moiety. ‘The body (95) of speakers is thus subject to being divided from its organs’ (12d), to be cut off from the breast, from faeces, from the look and from the voice. The preceding paragraph examined how the body is caught up in the concatenation of responses and questions. But the body does not exist without the separation from the **o**-object. In Descartes’ time, the body was only extension and as such ‘profoundly misunderstood’ (Lacan, *On psychoanalysis in its relationships with reality, Scilicet* No.1, p.57; AE 357), it only develops with the (Lacanian) ‘surgery’ that separates the organ from the body. The cutting of speaking beings into two moieties (11d-12c) separates two radically disparate terrains, as the littoral separates the land from the sea (*Lituraterre*): symbolic and real are heterogeneous and do not allow themselves to

¹ Lacan’s first reading book contains the story by Jean Macé, *La Moitié de poulet* (re-edited in the Review *Quarto*, No. 54, June 94)

be reduced to two imaginary moieties (the two moieties are not the two sexes, masculine and feminine, opposed to one another).

Thus, separated from the subjective half, the organ can acquire a new objective 'function'. Nevertheless the apparition of this new function may be delayed (12b; 456). In effect, the new function is only 'delegated' to the organ from a discourse. Thus circumcision gives to the prepuce a symbolic value from a discourse; it is a rite of initiation (and Lacan clearly wants to initiate his reader more explicitly into the absence of sexual relationship and to the phallic function in the speaking being). Despite ancient phallic representations, the phallic function, as signifier (S_1), will only be produced by psychoanalytic discourse.

Why articulate this passage of the organ phallus to the phallic function? Why start from the phallus to metaphorise this function produced by psychoanalytic discourse? 'In corporeal reality', the phallus is bait (*appât*) in which there are mixed *apparaître* and *appâter*, to appear and to lure, (two sub-functions of the phallic function). On the side of the first phallic sub-function, on the side of 'to appear', the phallus is *phanère*, phanere, (from the Greek *phaneros*, conspicuous). Ranked in the series of conspicuous epidermic productions, hair, feathers, scales, claws, nails, teeth, etc, the phanere is destined to become a corporeal waste product, which is cut off or (96) worn away: an **o**-object. At the same time, 'its aspect of mobile adjunct which is accentuated by its erectility' authorises its role as semblance: the phallic signifier evokes the place of semblance at stake in every discourse. The **o**-object is in the place of the semblance in the discourse of the analyst.

The phallus is a snare 'in the different catches (*pêches*) that form the discourse of voracity by which the inexistence of the sexual relationship is plugged' (12e-13a; 456): the absence of sexual relationship leaves an acid taste which allows itself plugged by the voracities, the greed to satisfy needs, a demand or a desire. The phallus, as organ, contributes to each one of these voracities. As a function (Latin *functio*), the phallic function must acquit itself (Latin *fungi*) of its task which is to plug the absence of sexual relationship in the exercise of voracities or of partial drives (oral, anal, scopic, vocal). Each of these partial drives is only articulated by the function of the **o**-object in a discourse, the discourse which makes the organic object pass over to the function of **o**-

object (oral object for the hysterical discourse, anal object for the master discourse, scopic object for the academic discourse, vocal object for the psychoanalytic discourse). The speaker can only supply for the absence of sexual relationship by the phallic function, which articulates all the partial drives, which articulate pre-genital sexuality, extra-genital sexuality or Freud's polymorphously perverse sexuality 'by means of the roundabout of four discourses.

The role of the organ which has gone on to being an **o**-object, is defined by the real place that it takes in the discourse. In the field of hysterical discourse, it will be the truth of the lost breast (and of need); in the field of the master discourse it will be the turd produced through the mediation of the Other (and of its demand); in the field of the academic discourse it will be look presentifying the Other (and his desire); in the field of psychoanalytic discourse, it will be the voice of the semblance (and of enjoyment).

This sub-function of *snare* evacuates, disposes of, the absence of sexual relationship by 'diverse catches'; instead of the absence of (97) sexual relationship one will be satisfied with a substitutive satisfaction in the order of different **o**-objects. The organ credited to ('*à l'actif*') the male (13a; 456), this accountable asset which he can exercise, is well designed to supply for the non-relationship in the the said of copulation with its diverse instinctual functioning (oral, anal, scopic, vocal). Having the organ (and its activity as organ), the male assumes, in an unwarranted way¹, the privilege of activity at the level of language, of the verb where copulation will speak of itself (*se dira*). The organ (phallus), attributed to the male, must nevertheless be cut from the body to find its phallic function which, for its part, is feminine.

Despite these considerations on the gender of the organ, one should not be mistaken (13ad): the phallus only receives its function in the discourse and from the discourse by becoming a signifier. 'A signifier can be used for many things just like an organ, but not for the same' (13b; 456-457). The functioning of the organ (how can the organ be used in a fixed organism?) is to be distinguished from that of the signifier: the signifier always serves to signify something quite other than what it says. This distinction between

¹ For Freud, the activity-passivity opposition would give a first texture to the phallic-castrated and masculine-feminine oppositions. Lacan refuses this sexual relationship: femininity is not essentially masochistic and activity is not the privilege of the male. Hence the quotation marks of '*à l'actif*': Lacan does not accept for his own part the assimilation of active to male.

signifier and organ is necessary just as much for castration (organic versus symbolic), as for the function of bait. In symbolic castration, the phallic signifier is of use in that it subjects every subject to the signifier (general happiness:) and that does not have the same consequences as if it were an organic castration that was in question. The phallic organic bait is the hook for fishing out different objects (breast, faeces, look, voice). Nevertheless these different (pregenital) voracities do not have their origin in the organic; they are *d'origyne* namely, they originate in the oral object (*ori-*) inasmuch as this oral comes from the gynaecium or from the ab-sense proper to the feminine (*gyne*); it is (98) only as depending from this *origyne* that the sequence of *o*-objects can begin. The signifier is the fish who swims in a lively way, because it has gulped down (*englouti*) 'what is necessary for discourses to maintain themselves' (13c; 457), because he has gulped down the organ by giving it a new and different sense.

'This organ, having passed to the state of signifier hollows out the place from which there takes effect for the speaker...the inexistence of the sexual relationship' (13c; 457). The inexistence of the sexual relationship (or the impossibility of a discourse) takes effect from the powerlessness of this discourse. In the psychoanalytic discourse, the inexistence of the sexual relationship takes effect from its product, the phallic signifier (S_1) which cannot make a meaning-relationship with S_2 : it is ab-sense. The psychoanalytic discourse connects the absence of sexual relationship with ab-sense or the practice of non-sense. The phallic signifier produced in the powerlessness of the psychoanalytic discourse puts into gear a switch of discourse: let us follow it. This phallic signifier (S_1) switches first of all into the place of the Other; as Other, it 'thinks' in the hysterical discourse. Subsequently, pursuing its journey, this phallic signifier switches into the place of the semblance: it is 'being' or '*m'être*-signifier' of the master discourse. 'Think': 'be', this new formulation of the Cartesian *cogito*, invites us to follow, to go along a path, because the thinking and the being are separated by the two points of a see-saw: 'I think where I am not' and 'I am where I do not think'. Then, the phallic signifier will be the truth of the academic discourse.

The present state of the discourses which are fed by these speaking beings is only situated from the absence of sexual relationship produced by this phallic signifier. Freud's saying has thus led us to the phallic function present in all the discourses as what

supplies for the sexual relationship. In every discourse, the impossibility of relationship between the semblance and the Other can be pushed as far as the switch towards another discourse, a switch that constitutes a saying. This impossible, 'squeezed by all the things said', squeezed (99) by the things said in each discourse, 'shows itself to be the real' in the roundabout of discourses.

Inventory (Conclusion of the memorial to Henri-Rousselle).

'Freud's saying' (13cd; 457) was posed from what he said. But the said can only generate a saying if it is in a movement. Thus when the said preconsciously (by Freud and every analyser) is invested by the unconscious (which always escapes us), it follows the abnormal processes of transformation, primary processes. Saying proper to the transformations of preconscious thoughts can only be posed from these thoughts, from the said, even if saying is not of the *dit-mension*, even if the primary processes are not the contents of thoughts. [Interpretation does not consist in divining or deducing an unconscious in the dimension of the said or of a thought. On the contrary it is a matter of following the movement of saying in the primary processes (Freud) or in the roundabout of discourses (Lacan). Thus for Freud, interpretation is in no way reduced to passing from a manifest content to a latent content, it is on the contrary a work of the same nature as primary processes, it is the process of the transformation of content, it is a saying].

From this saying what Lacan puts forward 'is proved': there is no sexual relationship. This absence of sexual relationship is at once the impossibility of each one of four discourses and the real of these roundabout of discourses that results from it [in the discourse of the analyst, there is no sexual relationship between *o* and *\$*: this is the disparity of transference].

Lacan declares stagnant of any practice that does not respect this saying (a practice which, forgetting the work of the primary processes, is content to tick off contents that are falsely described as unconscious). In excluding saying, this practice and its underlying theory engenders 'a stagnation of the analytic experience' visible in the psychoanalytic societies built on a discourse other than the analytic discourse.

(100) Freud's saying can only develop through 'what falls under the jurisdiction of analytic discourse', by making the analytic discourse appear in greater relief, by making

it stand out. Lacan makes this his business: 'this falls under my jurisdiction'. Why is that? It is the resource of the analyst which ought to make his discourse stand out: it is a matter of setting the 'philosophical' page to one side in order to be open to ab-sense, to non-sense and to the roundabout of discourses.

To make the analytic discourse stand out, is to show it in relief with respect to each of the four discourses:

1⁰ – saying is justified by the said: the said in a contradictory way in the hysterical discourse poses the question of saying (and of its correctness);

2⁰ – subsequently, the absence of the sexual relationship (between S₁ and S₂) is proved in the master discourse:

3⁰ – then, saying is confirmed, *a contrario*, from the stagnation of analytic experience in an academic discourse;

4⁰ – finally, saying will develop by the springiness and the elasticity of psychoanalytic discourse.

Lacan takes up the thread again from the stagnation of analytic experience. The latter should be illuminated by the absence of sexual relationship and by the phallic function.

4 From Freud to the phallic function. (13de-14e; 457-458)

Freud grafted onto his saying' a 'parasitical organism' in order 'to guarantee the maintenance of his thought in its completeness, when he himself would no longer be there to defend it' (*Situation of psychoanalysis in 1956*, E 473). This organism posed from the 'organ' phallus and not from the phallic 'function' (12d-13c) can only be a parasite on Freud's saying. The organisation in question, the I.P.A. or the *International Psychoanalytic Association*, grafts its own propositions (*dits*), coming from an academic discourse, onto Freud's saying. A cat would no longer be able to find its kittens in the question of feminine sex: what Freud said is drowned in what psychology said.

(101) This 'muddle is insurmountable' (13e; 457) if one is content to appeal 1) to castration, 2) to love, 3) to the function of the father, or 4) to the myth of Oedipus:

1) Under the term 'castration' there is sometimes intended an imaginary threat for the boy, sometimes a real lack in the girl, while symbolic castration, which is neither one nor the other, ought to be illuminated logically;

2) 'love' remains a confused notion inasmuch as it is traced out on the model of the love of the child for its parents, inasmuch as it is sustained by the defiles 'of incest';

3) 'the function of the father' remains entangled as long as the real, the imaginary and the symbolic are not distinguished and articulated;

4) finally, the Oedipus myth reduplicated confusedly by the Freudian myth of the father of the primal horde (*Totem and taboo*) should be analysed. The 'father' of the primal horde is to the oedipal father what the phallus is to the phallic function; for the first does not speak either of the mother, nor of the little boy, nor of the histories of all three of them. His enjoyment, like that of the orang-utan, is purely animal. If he speaks, he only does so with an unwarranted pretension; *Père-Orang*, he speechifies (*pèrore*). Instead of entering into the signifier and the phallic function – with its reversals already partially visible in the story of the Oedipus complex as we are going to see – , he is content to play out the comedy and to exhibit the male organ.

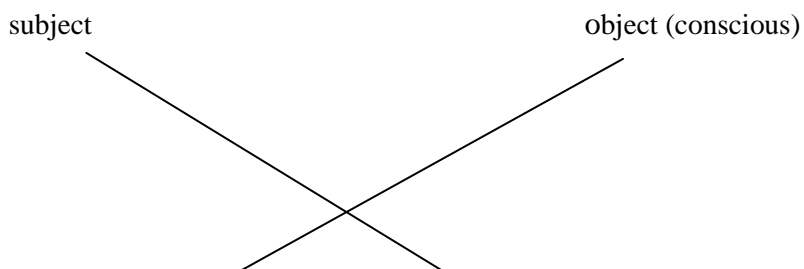
How overcome this muddle? How cleanse these stables of Augias? The graphs of the *Ecrits* are aimed at restoring Freud's saying from what he has said; through them, Lacan wanted to make a French garden as Le Nôtre had done at Versailles: let us make our own (*nôtre*) the return to Freud. Freud's 'first drawing' (14a), the schema of the first Freudian topology articulates the primary processes from the normal psychical apparatus:

perception → perception-sign → unconscious → preconscious → conscious
(102)

(c.f. Letter 52, *The origins of psychoanalysis*, 6.12.96) This schema is taken up again *mutatis mutandis* in *The interpretation of dreams*, Ch 7 B)

perception → memory → unconscious → preconscious → conscious

According to Lacan, these paths are 'twisted' because the unconscious irrupts into the lacunae of consciousness. The twisting of these paths must be presented more clearly than is done by Freud: conscious and unconscious intersect one another. This intersection is exposed as the intersection of an imaginary axis and a symbolic axis in Lacan's schema L:



ego (conscious)

Other (unconscious)

The imaginary axis of conscious language associates the ego and its objects. Freud analysed the dreams, slips, symptoms and other phenomena which irrupt into the lacunae of everyday consciousness, which for the most part allows itself to be reduced to the imaginary axis: the symbolic axis insinuates itself into the gaps (*failles*) of consciousness in order to allow the Other to speak there and to modulate a subject that is dependent on the signifier, represented by a signifier for another signifier. It can be heard that the question of such a subject only really appears with Freud (Lacan, *On the subject finally in question*, E 229ff).

Schema R finds imaginary supports to support the four corners of schema L.

(103) In a later drawing (the graph of desire, E 817), the explanation of schema L will appear as insufficient, for the unconscious and the big Other supposedly responsible for the symbolic have no substance, and this indeed is the reason why the Other of each of the four discourses is never more than a place. This place (without determined substance) manifests nevertheless a will, an enigmatic intention, which gives rise to a question: 'what does he want?' (*Che vuoi?* E 815). The question is without a conclusive response, since no substantial response is able to stop this questioning. The journey of this indefinitely re-launched question hugs the wall of the impossible and circles the real. These paths discovered by Freud are twisted as is explicitly shown by his article *The Unconscious* (1915) where the topographical and dynamic hypotheses are articulated in accordance with the topology of the Moebius strip (Lacan). The two apparently possible inscriptions (conscious and unconscious), the two apparent faces of the Moebius strip (topographical hypothesis of double inscription) are in effect in continuity with one another provided that the dynamism of saying passes through them in the roundabout of

discourses (the dynamic hypothesis of the unconscious: the unconscious is the motor of switching) [see 'topology' 26b; 469ff].

These paths, where Freud's saying does not explain the primary processes, were nevertheless locatable from all time 'for anyone who wanted to clear his head about what supplies for the sexual relationship'. For interpretation is not a decrypting, but a fact of discourse which always supposes the absence of sexual relationship, the impossibility proper to each discourse.

The phallic function at stake in the roundabout of discourses is only perceptible with the distinction between the symbolic the imaginary and the real which allows the absence of sexual relationship to be tackled: 1⁰ a symbolic approach from the half-said which is conjugated to open the door to Freud's saying (1 of this chapter), 2⁰ an imaginary approach which allows two moieties in speaking beings to be separated (2 of this chapter), 3⁰ a real approach, finally, which (104) hollows out the (real) place from which the inexistence of the sexual relationship takes on its effect for the speaking being (3 of this chapter).

'The imaginary identification to the man-moiety and the woman-moiety' (which depends on 2⁰) should not be confused with a sexual relationship; because 'both the business of the ego and the business of the phallus....are articulated in language' (14ab). Plunged into a symbolic discourse, man and woman are the semblance and the Other of a discourse (whichever it may be); they are in an impossible relationship: there is no real sexual relationship. Since 1953, the article on *The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis* (E 237ff) determined speech as function and language as field of psychoanalysis. Every distancing from this field provokes the stagnation of psychoanalytic experience as Lacan affirms ever since *Situation of psychoanalysis and the formation of the psychoanalyst in 1956* (E 459). 'The year 1956' is also the year of the seminar on the psychoses. Freud stated the deviations of Jung through his study of Schreber; Lacan exposes, in its turn, the reasons for the stagnation of analytic experience from the angle of psychoses and he presents the symbolic as indispensable preliminary for any psychoanalytic treatment (c.f. *A question preliminary to any treatment of psychosis*).

‘All of this might have been taken as acquired’ from 1956 on ‘because it is in the *question preliminary*...(14c; 458) that the phallic is articulated from the symbolic. It is the forgetting of this articulation that Lacan exposes in *On a question preliminary*...(E 531ff). Far from being a foreclosure of the symbolic, psychosis can only be tackled in the symbolic register: Schreber’s hallucinations show it (I. *Towards Freud*) and the structure of schema I demonstrates it (IV ‘*On Schreber’s side*’). If the preliminary question is the question of the symbolic, it is at the same time the question of the absence of sexual relationship; How does man reproduce himself? We remember that this question was already central for President Schreber. This resumption of the question-response couple opens new perspectives (105) on psychosis. The question in psychosis is ‘the response given by the perceived’ (14c): hallucinations or delusions are the responses that come to support the question (which is at the same time the *preliminary question* to any treatment and How does man reproduce himself?) We know that ‘the response given by the perceived’ is a topological distortion of the field of reality (which we will explain in chapter 4. 4, on the third and fourth formulae of sexuation). It is in this framework that the Name-of-the-Father is introduced, not without a quite particular verbal aspect of Lacan’s text: ‘I introduce (*j’introduis*) the Name-of-the-Father’ is a present, while the reader might have expected the compound past ‘I introduced’. Does Lacan mean that he again and again introduces the Name-of-the-Father or that this introduction is eternal or supra- temporal? What is the sense of such an introduction of what had already been introduced? Perhaps we can read this form *j’introduis* as the affirmation of an act that he does not succeed in renouncing even though it has been overtaken by the advances of his own theorisation: he insists again and again on the function of introducing (‘of introducing to the symbolic’, for example). ‘This *écrit*’ (‘*On a question preliminary*...’ had been put into a graph in schema I (as we will see later: Chapter 4. 4). There the power of the Name-of-the-Father will be measured by the phallic function. But can one not ‘organise psychosis itself’ in the fields of the graph of the *Ecrits*, namely, in the graph of desire (E 805-817)? The Name-of-the-Father is absent at the time of introducing the graph, Lacan declaring that he will no longer allow ‘any more frolicking around the aforesaid question’ of the Father E 813)! Even without a Name-of-the-Father the graph ‘allows psychosis itself to be organised’. Psychosis is organised in function of the

signifier: Lacan had explained in Schreber two different types of hallucination that he characterised as the message of code and the code of message (E 537 and 807): on the one hand hallucinations giving a message about the code of the ‘fundamental tongue’ (Schreber’s delusional tongue), on (106) the other hand hallucinations in the form of sentences stopping directly after the shifters, after the words of the code that refer to the message (I, you, here, now...): ‘now I am going to...’. Code and message are precisely the two intersecting points of two lines of graph I (E 805). It was easy from then on to organise the phenomena of psychosis on the graph, according to the indication given by Lacan (E 807)¹. But why does Lacan say that the Name-of-the-Father allows psychosis to be organized (14c)? If Lacan evokes the Name-of-the-Father here, it is as the first staking out of the introduction of the phallic function (the metaphor of the Name-of-the-Father produces the meaning of the phallus). In *L’étourdit*, the phallic function is introduced in a different way: through the half- said and saying turning around the absence of sexual relationship (10-11). Lacan’s point of view – in 1956 as in 1972 – is very clearly that the preliminary question of psychosis is that of the phallic function (introduced or not by the Name-of-the-Father).

The phallic function is supposed to be articulated differently for the man and for the woman. For Lacan, the man is the one who is not without having the phallus (*n’est pas sans avoir*) while the woman is the one who is not without being it (*n’est pas sans l’être*). These formulations are litotes: insistence is brought to bear on the non-being of the man as well as the woman: the man is not..., the woman is not...; from this absence of being, there cannot be a sexual relationship and the phallic function in its two forms (to have it or to be it) cannot be founded on the subject (the man versus the woman). With regard to what the experience of analysis gives us, there is nothing excessive, there is nothing that exceeds the phallic function. It supplies for the sexual relationship in every case (it presents itself as

(107) being or having under a single heading: the phallic function in its non-being, is presented as being or as having. Lacan’s *Bedeutung* (*The meaning of the phallus*, *Die bedeutung des Phallus*, E 685) presents how the phallus is illuminated by its function:

¹ But does psychosis deserve to be classified in this triply reductive way: the reduction of psychotic phenomena to Schreber’s hallucinations, the reduction of the graph of desire to its first outline, the reduction of language to two double structures code/message and message/code?

‘The phallus... is the signifier destined to designate signified effects as a whole, inasmuch as the signifier conditions them by its presence as signifier’ (E 690). From the beginning of *L’écrit*, Lacan had spoken about meaning (‘meaning-relationship’); why use here the corresponding German *Bedeutung*? No doubt one finds there the radical of the Freudian *Traum-deutung*, the *Interpretation of dreams*; but the German term also quotes Frege’s *Bedeutung* mentioned five lines below (14d; 458). In *Sinn und Bedeutung* (1892) Frege opposes sense (*Sinn*) to meaning or reference (*Bedeutung*). Meaning alone is not enough to determine the truth or falseness of a proposition: ‘Peter knows that Venus is the morning star’ does not allow us to know whether he knows that Venus is the evening star, even if morning star and evening star have the same meaning, namely, – for Frege – the same reference: Venus; to decide on this, one has to consider the sense, namely, the way in which the reference is indicated (perhaps Peter does not know that the evening star refers to Venus). Lacan’s *Bedeutung* is not Frege’s reference. It is first of all the significance (*significance*) proper to the signifier ($S_1 \rightarrow S_2$), the relationship of two sentences, or the relationship internal to the signifier): there is no meaning which is a simple reference to reality! Every meaning refers to another meaning and the discourses follow one another and are reversed without ever finding the final reference. For every signifier, the phallic significance is to be applied ($\forall x. \Phi x$: the first formula of the phallic function): the meaning of every signifier is that it refers on to something else. Every meaning (everything that can be said in analysis) passes then by way of the phallic reference. Frege’s *Bedeutung*, the reference leaves open the question of the sense, the how of the reference. Lacan’s *Bedeutung*, the phallic function leaves open the question of how one is inscribed in the phallic function; this (108) question will be treated in the phallic formulae or the formulae of sexuation.

The phallic function is the centre of gravity of the *Écrits*; it is written because it ‘supplies for the sexual relationship’. The relationship between the semblance and the Other does not exist; this absence of relationship leads to the powerlessness of each discourse and to the possibility of a switch of discourse. ‘Hence a possible inscription.... of this function as ’ (14d). This inscription is possible, ‘in this meaning where the possible is foundational’, foundational especially for switches of discourse. The Lacanian *Bedeutung* is here said to be Leibnizien. Following Leibniz, the Lacanian

possible is as broad as possible, the switch of discourse involves all the modalities, as much the possible of the realised event (and of all its ‘co-possibles’) as the radically impossible (the unrealised ‘incom-possibles’); the possible is the journey of the modalities (necessary, contingent, possible and impossible). Drawing on this broad possible the psychoanalyst will be interested in the impossible that grounds the roundabout of discourses and the activation of the unconscious. Like the God of Leibniz, the phallic function contains all the possibles (including the impossibles) and it is only from there that ‘beings are going to respond to it by their mode of arguing with it’: they will be what the function is applied to (see the formulae of sexuation). The phallic function relays ‘the function of speech’ of 1953 (*Function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis*): in its movement a signifier is substituted for (metaphor) or/and is connected to (metonymy) another. Substitution (metaphor) will function to produce a meaning (or a signified), connection (metonymy) will function without ending up with a meaning (which is noted respectively as +s and –s, E 515). The phallic function here articulates metaphor and metonymy: every signifier generates a meaning-relationship (metaphor, + s) and every signifier abstains from the meaning-relationship (metonymy, – s). In other words, every metaphor signifies the phallus (every metaphor is (109) paternal) and metonymy is ab-sense and therefore a phallic function (every signifier is subject to the phallic function: $\forall \mathbf{x}.\Phi \mathbf{x}$).

The logical universality opened up by the possible of the phallic function adequate for all arguments does not come therefore from the male organ which leads sometimes to some imaginary and comical pre-eminence of the masculine sex organ over the feminine sex organ! It is only from this symbolic possible of the phallic function that speakers can make use of it and believe themselves to be imaginary ‘beings’: by basing themselves on the broadest founding possible, they slip as arguments under the phallic function, or as (grammatical) subjects under the predicate ‘possible’ (including the impossible).

They proceed from the pre-personal function (‘*vas*’) and slip in there as persons (‘beings’); these speakers see the function appearing only as a counterpart of their person. Nevertheless a proposition - whether one understands it as a grammatical proposition or as what life proposes to us – is already en route before the function or the persons appear. The function, for Frege, is constructed by the de-saturation of the proposition, by the

subtraction of arguments (by putting the subjects and complements of the proposition in parenthesis): the function is thus the invariant element the unsaturated expression waiting to be completed by arguments. For psychoanalysis, the function (described as phallic) is the invariant: at the level of the possible, it is for all. It is therefore the (possible) universal. The function acquits itself of a task, it accepts all the arguments as much in their spatial variety as in their temporal diversification; in other words: all the arguments as well as all the stages of each one of the arguments. This function of the universal can take on any content whatsoever: natural law moral or again immoral law ('everything must respond to the law of castration', 'thou shalt not kill', 'thou shalt not sleep with thy mother', or again 'everyone has the right to (110) enjoyment to the detriment of the other'). From the first pages of *L'Étourdit* (6-7; 450-451) it was already a matter of this universality open to any possible content (encompassing all the modes): 'There is therefore no universal which is not reduced to the possible'. Lacan brings a complement to this possible universal (14d; 458); this complement is nevertheless not an argument like any other since it is a response to the universal. As we have seen, this complement is not in the *dit-mension* of the said; it is ex-sistence which ought to deny the universal in order to pose it (from outside). For that it is necessary that this existence 'should dispute the validity of the phallic function. We have thus inscribed a function in a first formula that is universal and possible in the broadest sense and in a second formula of this function which, in posing the first formula 'lays claims to existence' (14e). This existential pretension does not abolish the universal of the function, since precisely it posits it; it will be rediscovered in the father of the law, but also in any authority whatsoever which proclaims a universal, in any autonomous subject who is authorised by himself.

'It is indeed with this logic' – articulated and defined by this relationship between the universal and the existence that poses it – 'that there is summarised everything involved in the Oedipus complex' (masculine or feminine): the one authorised by himself is situated (as ex-sistence) outside (the law) in order to proclaim the (universal and possible) law.

The phallic function functions first of all according to these two formulae (metaphorically called masculine): and . We will see how this phallic

function is extended beyond these two formulae into two other formulae (metaphorically called feminine).

The phallic function, articulated as logic of the Oedipus complex (the two masculine formulae, 14e) is not enough to explain 'psychoanalytic experience', hence the necessity of passing to the other aspect, to the feminine formulae.

CHAPTER 4: THE PHALLIC FUNCTION AND THE FORMULAE OF SEXUATION

(111) Let us take phallic functioning up again starting from the Oedipus complex summarised in the first two formulae of the phallic function. What obliges us to go beyond the Freudian Oedipus complex formulated in that way?

Free association and the equally floating listening open up the path of ab-sense and of an saying freed from the search for a relationship between meanings. The experience of analysis demonstrates the ab-sense of sexual relationship: there is no relationship between the existences ('masculine' and 'feminine': *nia* and *nya*) and there is no relationship between the two universals (masculine and feminine). The masculine Oedipus complex cannot define 'femininity'.

Psychoanalytic discourse gives the means to go beyond the Oedipus complex: it produces the phallic signifier which will mean something quite different than the phallus. The phallus is reputed to be the sexual copula between the man and a woman; further, its meaning is supposed to condense every meaning among speaking beings. In opposition and as a contrast to this conception proper to the phallus, the phallic signifier will not be a sexual copula, nor will it be the condensation of every meaning. But what will the phallic signifier mean positively? Starting from the ab-sense of the sexual relationship, the phallic function opens up a sexual bond between speakers which is based neither on an anatomical relationship, nor on a chromosomatic relationship, nor on a cultural relationship: the phallic function supplies for the ab-sense of the sexual relationship by its own functioning, which is unfolded in the four phallic formulae. These four formulae are called formulae of sexuation because they construct what is sexed in the speaking being (the first two formulae will be called 'masculine', the following two 'feminine').

Contrary to (112) sexuality, which is valid as an already established given, sexuation is always under construction, in process, in function. How is that? The production of the phallic signifier in psychoanalytic discourse presupposes the putting in parenthesis of any meaning in order to keep only the grammar (S_1 S_2) of the signifier and the logic that flows from it. Not being able to take on its sense in terms of meaning, the phallic

function finds it in its journeying and its functioning: the four formulae are designed to be interconnected from the first to the fourth and beyond the fourth towards a second turn.

The phallus had its maximum weight in the domain of meaning. By passing to the signifier, the maximum of weight becomes the minimum of meaning: the phallic function is emptied of all meaning except for its grammar and its logic; it is the signifier from which there is cut away all semantics, it is the asemanic signifier which is only valid from its grammar.

Later, the phallic function as asemanic signifier, will be developed as a topology which does not produce meaning properly speaking, namely, as a topology which is not metaphorical. This topology will respond to the ab-sense proper to psychoanalysis. It alone allows access to structure. Then to interpretation.

1. *The first two formulae and the Oedipus complex.* (14e-17b; 458-460)

The Oedipus complex is summarised and developed as ‘the logical correlation between two formulae’: and .

‘For all x, is satisfied’. Since the phallic function is not limited by any meaning, it is satisfied for all x, for any argument whatsoever. How can we say what it is and what it means? After putting meaning in parenthesis, there still remains saying, its grammar and its logic. To define the phallic function, it will be enough to (113) follow its logical journey and to see how it is satisfied by logical arguments (‘for all’, ‘there exists one’, ‘no’ [*ne pas*]); such is the development of the formulae of the phallic function or of sexuation. At the end of the journey the enigmatic Sphinx will be able to say: ‘You have satisfied me, littlecutman’ (25a).

First formula.

From a formal point of view, one could imagine as the equivalent of the universal ‘all x is phi’, the function (phi) replacing the verb and the argument (x) replacing the subject. Nevertheless between the two, the copula ‘is’ has disappeared. This ‘modification’ already indicates to us that our universal () does not function by relying on a ‘being’ which would establish a meaning-relationship between the subject and the attribute. On the contrary, it is by functioning that the function can set up

secondarily the possibility of a being. The function is there first of all in non-being, in the gap of its ab-sense; it is from there that different arguments can take their place. A first argument, ‘all x’, will give the first formula . This formula admits two translations of this ‘for all x’, one at the level of the said, the other at the level of saying. The fact that there are two possible translations already announces a split which will generate the other formulae. The first, all meaning refers to another meaning, is the *dimension* of truth. We find there the meaning-relationships, which lead reason to pose the ego, the world and God vs. man, the unconscious and the Oedipus complex. At the level of this first, the subject is represented by a signifier for another signifier (the subject is the truth of the master discourse). The second translation implies saying: every subject is inscribed in the phallic function to ward off the ab-sense of the sexual relationship (15a; 458). As the Other of psychoanalytic discourse, the subject is the problematic stake in analysis; irreducible to a meaning-relationship, it will be grasped from the ab-sense and the impossibility proper to this discourse. ‘The practice of making sense’ begins not through the meaning-relationship (6-7), but through ab-sense – the nonsense of the witticism for (114) example – which suspends every said in order to make saying appear (‘the practice of making sense, is precisely to refer oneself to this ab-sense’ 15ab; 458). This ab-sense is not simply a suspension of sense, of the meaning-relationship; it is the ‘reference’ or the *Bedeutung* of the phallic signifier (in other words, the phallic function and its development). The practice of making sense from ab-sense is not determined by a will, but comes from the function [the quotation marks of ‘*veut dire*’ ironises on the *veut* while pin-pointing the *dire*].

Second formula.

‘There is by exception the case...where there exists an x for which , the function, is not satisfied...’ (15ab). The exception of the second formula operates from the first formula on, especially as saying. Saying ex-sists, poses itself as outside the all of the phallic function, in order to be able to pose the first formula (the all); in other words, its ex-sistence is inherent to phallic functioning. In that way saying as exception appears to be inherent (from) and outside (not), intimate and ‘extimate’ with respect to the phallic function. How explain this apparent contradiction? The ‘case’, what falls outside

the phallic function starting from the phallic function, is first of all explained by mathematics. The fractional function¹ '1/x' has no sense if $x = 0$; in effect, by definition, the divisor or the denominator of a fraction is not null (otherwise the fraction, not responding to its grammar, would have no sense). To say $1/x$ implies – among other things – that x is not equal to 0 or again that for x equals 0, the function does not function. This exception confirms the rule in that it goes outside the rule to mark the limit of its definition. It is ex-sistence.

These two formulae are going to be combined, amalgamated: one is the reason for the other. But this combination, in accordance with (115) what was said above, is brought about 'by going back' (10e); starting from the third person of *midit* (the first translation of the first formula: every meaning always has something of the moiety-said) it goes back towards the *tu* (second translation of the first formula: *tu médites* [you meditate] towed by the signifier), then towards the *je* (second formula: by posing myself as an exception, I speak ill of, *je médis*); it is only from the said that a saying appears. It is in this way that 'for all x ' modifies 'the all of the universal' (15b; 459). 'For all' is submitted to the modes of saying (*modi-fié*), the discourse is no longer constructed from outside by an agent that is supposed to organise a subject, a predicate and a copula; but the phallic function makes the combining of different formulae appear by its very functioning. By introducing the mode (*qu'on dise...*), the 'quantifier' ('forall') modifies the classic universal and makes it appear as possible, depending on saying. The 'all' of the classical universal was composed from a sum of examples, of grains of sand, of innumerable 'quanta'. But just like light that is both quantic or discontinuous (made up of particles, of quanta), and wave-like or continuous (made like a wave), the phallic theory articulates in its first formula a discontinuous said and a continuous saying. The topology of the second turn will show us this articulation in the opposition of the cut to the surface.

To the quantic universal saying is paired; onto the universal there is grafted 'a particular saying'. In function of its particularity, this saying may only appear quantic ('there exists one') but it is quite different to Aristotle's particular proposition. For Aristotle the particular affirmative is 1^0 contradictory to the universal negative proposition and 2^0

¹ The text says 'exponential function' (15b). The exponential function with a base of a (positive real) is written and is read ' a exponent x '; in its place Lacan writes $1/khi$ which is of course a fractional function and not an exponential (moreover it does not matter whether one writes x or khi)

implied by the universal affirmative proposition; it is encased in the universal, simply adding to it true and verified existence for the ‘some’ of which it speaks. On the contrary, in the practice of saying, the particular affirmative implies the particular (116) negative: if I say that some women are phallic, I also mean that some – and even the majority – are not so. The particular therefore is not something said which would be encased in a more universal ‘said’, but it presupposes a complex saying; it exceeds the universal. The exception at stake in the second formula (‘there exists one’) only exists moreover ‘by being formulated as an saying no’ (‘not phi of x’); it ‘does not belong to the *dit-mension* of truth’. While the first formula can be said to be true (15a), the second is correct [*juste*] (15e). This correctness of the existence of the exception is ‘to set a limit to the forall’ of the universal by constituting it or confirming it: ‘which a proverb already opposes to Aristotle’s contradictory’. For Aristotle, $\forall x \phi(x)$ and $\exists x \neg \phi(x)$ are in effect two strictly contradictory propositions. Nevertheless, ‘the exception proves the rule’, says the proverb. The existence of a saying excepting itself poses and confirms the rule of the universal said. The Aristotelian construction centred on the contradiction of the said by the universal affirmative and the particular negative collapses in favour of the dynamic of saying.

We find the reason for this combination of saying and the said in the subject: ‘the analytic discourse concerns the subject, which as an meaning-effect is a response of the real’. How is this subject concerned by analytic discourse? As a meaning-effect, it represents a signifier for another signifier, it is the truth of the master discourse; but the discourse of the master is powerless to grasp this subject: the ‘response of the real’ prevents the subject from being apprehended outside the roundabout of discourses. The subject can only be defined by the different places that it may take: semblance (of the hysteric), truth (of the master), product (of the academic), Other concerned (by the analyst). This journey can only be begun after the putting in parenthesis of the meaning which riveted us to the master and academic discourses. We will start then from the grammar ‘of the asemantic signifier’ (15c; 459). The ‘quotation about the non-semantic signifier’ is drawn from the seminar of 11 April 1956 (Seminar III) and recalled later (40; 483): *Ad usum autem orationis, (117) incredibile est, nisi diligenter attenderis, quanta opera macinata natura sit*: ‘nature has contrived a great number of works for the use of

the word; one cannot believe it unless one pays careful attention to them'. The sentence quoted – independent of any meaning – insists on the machinery proper to the signifier, on its syntax or on its grammar. By ab-sense, there is introduced a new subject: 'The subjective is not on the side of the one who speaks, it is something that we encounter in the real' (Seminar III, p.211). Faced with the subject concerned in the psychoanalytic discourse as Other, the analyst is 'called to a function of waste product' (15c; 459): as o-object, as waste product, turd and reject, he takes the place of semblance.

The opening up of the subject (*Du sujet enfin en question*, E 229) is impossible to hear for anyone who situates himself in the 'academic discourse', 'which, from its structure, has a horror of psychoanalysis' (*Radiophonie*, p.64). The academic does indeed produce the subject; but it is a matter here of putting him in question inasmuch as he is in the position of the Other, which implies the putting in parenthesis of meaning (proper to the master and to the academic). The putting in question of the subject ought to be opposed to the inflation of meaning, 'to this hermeneutic, indeed semiologising dripping ...streaming as it now is from all sides' (15d; 459). If the academic discourse is 'now coming from every angle', it is because analysis has not 'fixed its deontology'. It is up to analysis to indicate how the academic discourse ought to be, namely, how it ought to separate itself out from being (*l'être*), in order that the phallic function may appear. The subject is in effect put in question when the product of the academic discourse comes up against its powerlessness. The academic discourse then switches into the psychoanalytic discourse not without involving a de-construction of being, 'the de-ontology' of that which, as being, prevented the question of the subject.

Beyond the 'subject' as meaning-effect, namely represented by (118) a signifier for another signifier, the existence of a subject is posed as 'saying no to the propositional function —'. This saying, which is not a contradictory said of the universal, is posed outside the dit-mension of truth (true or false), it has 'no value that can be noted as truth, which means none of error either' (15e): at the precise point of existence (—), the phallic function is neither true nor false (the ex-sistence posed is in no way the recognition of a 'truth'). The false just as much as the true implies saying. Instead of being the contrary of the true in the *dit-mension* of truth, the 'false' falls, it is the fall or the fallen, the Latin *falsus* (past participle of *fallere*, 'to make fall') that makes saying

appear. Let us take up again the example of the fractional function $1/x$: a ‘case’ ($x = 0$) fallen, collapsed outside the domain of the function makes saying of the function appear. The ‘case’ (from the Latin *casus*, the fall but also the past participle of *cadere*, to collapse) goes along with the false (*falsus*). In the putting in question of the subject, interpretation ought then to plead the false, as required passage of the phallic function, as the second formula necessary for the movement of saying, to make the position of the ‘ex-sistence of the truth’ (6c; 450) appear and the time required (*‘la faux du temps’ Radiophonie*, p.81) to go over the different positions of the roundabout of the four discourses. One position (a first discourse, a first formula) brings about a new position that denies it and corrects it: the bud disappears when the flower comes out, the flower withers when the fruit matures, the fruit falls to the ground in order that the plant may be reborn; these figures (c.f. Hegel) or formulae incompatible with one another are supplanted in the functioning of the plant, which only exists by these necessary forms which are nevertheless contradictory among themselves.

‘It is therefore correct to write... —’ (15e), the ‘case’ ‘falls’ just right to limit the universal. Saying is then sup-posed to the said and the ‘subject’ is ‘sup-posed from the fact that the phallic function is forfeited by it’ (from *foris*, outside): ‘the existence of the subject’ is sup-posed...outside the phallic function. The two formulae are (119) fundamentally disparate: the one (the universal) is said as ‘truth’, on condition of perceiving that this truth is only posed, is only possible; the other (the particular) is a saying that is ‘just right’, without any truth value, it belongs to the domain of the necessary, of saying necessary for there to be the said. From these two formulae, the universal is valid for all and cannot be used to specify one sex or the other. The particular would seem more adequate for the definition of the masculine subject: the masculine subject could then be defined by the transgression of the law, the daring to pose its existence, the opposition of ‘saying no’ (the *nia*) to the phallic function. Might this be a ‘mode of access’ ‘to the sexual relationship’? Might the woman be castrated, subject to the phallic function? And is the un-castrated man supposed to partially escape the phallic function? This mode of access is ‘hopeless’ (16a; 459), for the exception (—) or the affirmation of existence does not concern reality, but the appearance or the semblance, a pure construction made in haste or precipitation, in the ‘*s’emblant*’

(*emblem* from classical Latin *involare*, to fly on, or to precipitate oneself onto; we rediscover the term in the adverbial locution *d'emblée*). 'The syncope of the function' (the ex-sistence) 'is only supported...by pretending (*sembler*)', only by precipitating oneself, while all the time remaining in phallic functioning; despite 'saying no', man does not escape from the phallic function. Far from inaugurating a sexual relationship, ex-sistence appears as 'what does not cease to be written', the necessary present in the phallic function. The exception 'completes' the consistency of the phallic function (for all x), 'fixing the limit', by restricting the universal as pure possible posed by saying. This saying *s'emblant* in precipitation is therefore nothing other than the necessary that is appropriate, the '*dé-cence*' limiting the universal; in convening the universal, it can only pose itself from the sense (of the universal): 'the semblance is no longer anything but *dé-sens*' (16ab) and already calls for the more radical ab-sense.

'The ab-sense of the relationship *would seem to be* plugged at the suspension point of the function' (16b, my italics), the position of (120) exception would deaden the shocks of the absence of the sexual relationship. In fact, this quite hypothetical and fictitious plug is a 'trick', a means elaborated to deceive the absence of sexual relationship. This deception is therefore a 'signifying equivocation' (16ab; 459) since it plays on sense in order to distance itself from it.

The *dé-sens* (the exception), far from being a means of escaping castration, limits its universality. This *dé-sens*, this exception of saying is in no way a reality; attributed to castration, it is denoted as 'symbolic' (16b). For there to be symbolic castration, there must be an exception that traces its limits ('the agent' of castration...)¹. We can now better comprehend castration as symbolic lack of an imaginary object provoked by a 'real' agent. The imaginary object is the imaginary phallus taken from the imaginary body and put to death to become a signifier, the phallic function. The universality of the phallic function ought to be correlated to saying of the mother, of the father or of whoever might ex-sist. Castration (for the man as for the woman) is then reduced to the

¹ Castration as symbolic lack was distinguished from frustration as imaginary lack and from privation as real lack, as is indicated at the start of the academic year of 1956, at the start of Seminar IV, *Object relations*, p.36-39. In 1972, the date of *L'étourdit*, this seminar was only published in the form of a report by J.B. Pontalis.

articulation of the two masculine formulae of sexualisation. It presupposes the notion of subject inasmuch as the said is put into perspective by saying.

‘The subject – implied by symbolic castration – was already sup-posed’ in the very context of the psychoses (Seminar III). The articulation of the psychosis (of Schreber) presupposes this symbolic structure: not alone do the hallucinations have the structure of the said (the hallucinations are essentially verbal), but in addition the language of psychosis presupposes an saying, presupposes the Other and its four-termed structure (schema L): the schema I – a schema made up of multiple deformations – maintains absolutely the structure of schema (121) L on which it is constructed. There is no psychosis without this dimension of saying, without the dimension of castration, without at least the double dimension of the masculine formulae of sexualisation. The reading of Schreber’s *Memoirs of my nervous illness* accompanied by the Freudian interpretation (*President Schreber*) furnishes Lacan with the opportunity for ‘the exhaustion of psychosis’. In what does this exhaustion consist? In the draining, indeed in the drying up of psychosis and in more and more precise approximations of the *subject* of the subject, as is explained in *A question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis* (E 531): 1) psychosis is first of all seen here from the hallucination as a voice, as signifier, 2) then it is situated with respect to the big Other and therefore to saying, 3) finally the subject supposedly specific to psychosis is defined in schema I which is only a distortion of schema L as condition of the subject whatever it may be. The preliminary question is the question of the subject: ‘the condition of the subject S (neurosis or psychosis) depends on what is happening in O’ (E 549).

There ‘where the subject found itself already sup-posed’, ‘there where the Name-of-the-Father showed itself responsible (in 1956) according to tradition’ (16c, my parenthesis), there opens up a beach-head (*plage*) of saying. How determine this beach-head? Or again how circumscribe this beach-head in such a way that it becomes a ‘locus’, that it becomes determined (as locus of rendezvous, geometrical locus or locus of work)? In 1956, Lacan responded to this question by making an appeal to tradition and to the ‘Name-of-the-Father’. Now, in 1972, ‘the real of this beach-head...’ where ‘the semblance lands’ realises, demonstrates the passage from the beach-head to the locus by the four discourses. How is that? The powerlessness of a discourse expels the term

which occupies the beach-head of the Other in this discourse and this term lands on the beach-head of the semblance in the following discourse. The real beach-head of saying is in that way occupied by the semblance which was the Other in the preceding discourse. The beach-head of saying becomes a real locus when it has been successively occupied by the *o*-object analyst who comes from the Other of the academic, by the barred hysterical subject which comes from the Other of the analyst, (122) by the master signifier which comes from the Other of the hysteric, by academic knowledge which comes from the Other of the master. This procession of terms to the locus of the semblance is conditioned by the absence of sexual relationship: it depends on the powerlessness of each discourse developed from the absence of the sexual relationship; this procession of terms is a supplement: it supplies for the absence of sexual relationship. In the apparition of the locus, the Name-of-the-Father is henceforth replaced by the succession of terms which come to occupy the locus of the semblance in the roundabout of discourses. In this fashion, the semblance ‘supports our reality’ from the roundabout of discourses, just like the phantasy¹. The support of our reality by the phantasy is nothing other than the ‘realisation’ attributed to the phantastical scenario as a universal ‘said’ is limited by saying which excepts itself from it. This saying presupposed for Freud a series of phases (*A child is being beaten*, 1919) or the passage from one discourse to another.

In this journey of discourse, saying does not determine simply a locus (the semblance), but ‘loci’ [the foursome of loci being opposed to the foursome of terms (*S*₁, *S*₂, *o* and \$)]. Thus we can differentiate ‘in each discourse’ the universal of the said (perceptible in the terms *S*₁, and *S*₂) and the loci of saying (the real). Through this distinction between the said and saying, ‘each discourse is connoted in terms of virility’ (16cd), each discourse is linked to the two masculine formulae (and). These two formulae are valid for all men, whatever may be the discourse in which it is inscribed: for all men (*pour tout homme*) condenses the *pour tout* of the phallic function () and the *thomme*² of ‘saying no’ (). Saying nevertheless cannot be said; the ‘*thomme*’ is what follows from (123) ‘saying no’ at the level of the said rather than saying itself. The

¹ Already in the *Ecrits* (1966) it is the structure of the phantasy which supports the field of reality (as the note of page 526 shows in connection with schema R).

² ‘*thomme*’ (16d) refers to ‘man’, but also to the Greek: *tome* cut, *tomos* cutting, etc.

thomme is a fragment of the said that has cut itself off from the phallic function, the ‘not phi of x’; it can henceforth be comprehended in two different existences, two different ‘*thommages*’ as we will later see (16e-17b; 460): $\frac{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ and $\frac{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$. If the articulation of saying and the said was attributed – according to tradition – to the Name- of-the-Father, castration relays now ‘that which in every discourse is connoted as virility’, especially by the first two phallic formulae. This connotation of virility will be rediscovered in each of the discourses: each discourse articulates the foursome of terms (saims) and the foursome of loci (saying).

The psychoanalytic discourse has a particularity: in proceeding from the second formula ($\frac{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$), from what is necessary in saying, it accepts right away the dwindling of sense. ‘It doesn’t matter whether it makes sense or not, just say it’. Like every discourse, the psychoanalytic discourse is connoted by virility; but it is the only one to proceed from the second formula straight away to be inspired by the fact of Freud’s saying, to put sense in suspense, to take its start from these semblances. Decency, respects for what touches on propriety, especially in sexual matters (there is no sexual relationship), ‘takes its start from these – ‘: decency is the respect of loci (without consideration of the term that will come to be lodged there). Let us note that the term ‘men’ or ‘beings’, that might come to occupy the place of the semblance, is not used. These ‘ – ‘ only realise the relationship as impossible: they are not therefore particular beings but logical loci, even if ‘the biological heritage bestows the largesse of the semblance’, of the phallus to some who seem to escape castration by being identified to the exception. ‘Chance does not seem to deserve to be reduced right away to this apportioning’: despite the apparent advantage procured by this biological largesse, there are always *grosso modo* as many women as men; the two sexes are always divided (124) according to the proportion, the sex ratio $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$: moiety/moiety (18c; 462). Unluckily, ‘*mâle heur* for me’ (16e; 460), chance, luck, a random product, for the male (moiety) ego (indeed for the male named Lacan) is going to be turned into bad luck by remaining at these two masculine formulae.

‘The loci of this *thommage*’ (16e), the loci determined as real by saying are located, *se re-pèrent* (*re-père*, a new formulation of the father) by what goes through this locus. In that way the locus of the semblance can only be located (*repérer*) by the succession of

semblances which pursue one another, the locus of truth only by the reiteration of ‘there is no sexual relationship’, the locus of the Other by what supplies for this absence of relationship, likewise for the fourth locus, the locus of the ‘product of their complex’, which depends on the interweaving of the three other places (the semblance, the truth and enjoyment).

If the ‘privilege’ of the particular (of the exception) is to locate the loci (from which each discourse is situated), ‘these elegant pathways, *allées*.(17a) – which recall the *vas* of the Sphynx – have the elegance to gather together (*legare*) the whole from a position of exception (*e-legare*). Could not these elegant pathways redistribute what must be divided, the ‘dividend’, namely the ‘speakers’, in a more reasoned way, according to the ratio of the strongest? Would it not be appropriate then to divide these ‘—’ otherwise than according to the measure of the sex ratio: one man for one woman? The gain would be for the masculine exception who has the phallus. In agreement moreover with a sexual theory constructed on a masculine model, a naïve psychoanalysis might in that way believe that it would be appropriate to go as far as saying: ‘Be the exception’, ‘Authorise yourself’, etc. This position of exception nevertheless only exists in its articulation with the universal: ‘this *thommage* foralls itself (— is articulated with). The phallic function inasmuch as it is universal would aggravate the aspect of collapse, of failure and of the running aground of this *falsus*, of this ‘case’: the exception would be sanctioned by the universal law.

(125) The ‘semblance of luck’ for the masculine moiety, announced by the ex-sistence outside the phallic function (—) is reversed into bad luck in the phallic function (). This reversal is readable in the articulation of the Oedipus complex: the obedience to the phallic law promises the male that he will become like the exceptional father (recompense); but to pose oneself as exception in order to find the semblance of luck promises nothing other than a return to the phallic law (punishment).

This reversal is proved ‘by the fact that the organ itself suffers from it’ (17b; 460): a male who wants to escape from the phallic function (from castration) falls into impotence

(the organ detached from the phallic function no longer functions) and reciprocally, this male is healed of his impotence by the putting into function of the phallic function¹.

This '*thommage*' (—), this position of exception makes a subject appear in saying of the parents (17b): in that way a priori, in the discourse of the parent, the child represents a signifier of the parents for another signifier. This *thommage* is a priori a prejudice for the child who finds himself enslaved by saying of his parents. The prejudice does not result from the imagining of the phallophore, but from the fixity of an a priori affirmation which believes it is announcing a truth, while it is only a *modification* from the phallic function of the parents. For the daughter a similar prejudice is played out; but it could be worse, because her *thommage*, is that — — (third formula, more complex, as we shall see). These two *thommages* are explained a priori from saying of the parents, but this psychogenetic conception remains fixated on the past: 'that is why (126) your daughter is mute' (or again 'that is why your map is mute' 40e). The fact of remaining at the first two phallic formulae (namely at the Oedipus complex) is a prejudice not alone from the genetic point of view ('a priori', from the parents) but also from the structural point of view ('a posteriori', from the discourses).

2. *The prejudice of the first two formulae* (17b-18b; 461-462).

Escaping from the law, from the phallic function, being the exception entails a certain 'prejudice'; a priori prejudice where the exception feeds the narcissism of parents, but especially a posteriori prejudice in the measure that this *thommage* is 'caught up' in a specific discourse and its promises of 'happiness' ('happiness' and its 'American way', E 591). 'Caught up' in this way, the phallic function is reduced to the phallic organ, which is asked 'to carry out the business' of a rigid discourse, dispensed from any switching towards another discourse.

Caught up in the hysterical discourse, 'people put it down to it being emotional' to reinforce the truth which ought to be the *o*-object; caught up in the master discourse, could it not have been better trained, the better to erect the product of this discourse; caught up in the academic discourse would it not have been better to 'educate it' to make

¹ See the case of the obsessional in *Ecrits* woken from his impotence and replaced into the phallic function by the dream his mistress recounts to him (*The direction of the treatment*, E 631)

of it the Other of the academic. 'For that you will have another think coming': for the phallic signifier continues nonetheless to run through the roundabout of discourses.

'It is only because it is not pleased with what it is made say, that it comes up against an obstacle'. The Lacanian '*Satyricon*' (sic)¹ carries the Dionysian phallic mystery; in order that the phallic function should not be reduced to the organ, Lacanian satire attacks the use of (127) the phallus in the three discourses that attempt – 'to command' the 'emotional organ' (hysterical discourse), - 'to train' it and to implore it (master discourse), - to educate and 'to control' it and 'to put it *in vitro*' (academic discourse). Why would the phallus not accept these roles? It is because the organ phallus has always already made room for the phallic signifier with the switches and the moods of the phallic function.

As opposed to these diverse discourses capturing the phallus in their fixedness, Lacan proposes 'to tame it' quite differently: the topology of the phallic function – namely, of the cross-cap or of the 'mitre'¹ – ought to account for 'its virtues' and its power of movement.

This topology (Chapter 1 of the second turn) is characterised by its dismantling: its structure will only be noticed by showing how it can be untied, because this 'surface' does not separate two regions of space: it is what is untied by a 'circular cut' (17de; 461, see later 26a; 469).

The topology of the cross-cap is the structure of the phallic function: 'It is a matter of structure, in other words of what is not learned from practice'. Practice situated from a discourse only confirms and repeats this discourse; in that way the 'clinic' can only confirm the discourse on which it depends. Far from playing this 'forced card of the clinic' (E 800), psychoanalytic practice is learned not from clinical experience, but from

¹ The title of the novel *Satyricon*, attributed to Petronius, signifies pot-pourri (*satura*), 'a medley of stories'; with the variant *Satyricon*, Lacan draws it into the phallic roundabout of Dionysian satyrs. As a realistic epicurean novel, the *Satyricon* describes especially the wanderings of the young libertine Encolpe under Nero. He has offended the god Priapus, the phallic god, and suffers his malediction. The satire of *L'étourdit* is directed at the human activity that offends the phallic function by capturing it to the advantage of a particular discourse.

¹ The mitre, the 'texture' (*trame*), the 'stuff' constructed during his Seminar IX, *Identification* (1961-62), shows how identification is only woven from the phantasy (\$ Δ o). 'The conspiracy (*trame*) designed to make Lacan shut up' in his dealings with the I.P.A. has same structure. In that way there is nothing astonishing in the fact that the 'bishops' of the I.P.A. *s'en chappotent*: are capped by it, quibble over it, and are capsized by it (*s'en coiffent*, *s'en chipotent* and *s'en capotent*) [Since *capote* is a condom, 'capsized' though accurate acquires a new nuance.]

ab-sense, from the discourse of the analyst, from the structure, which will allow one or other practice to be situated and illuminated in the roundabout of discourses. For the psychoanalyst, ‘those who know’, it becomes explicable that we have only come to (128) know recently this discursive structure of the phallic function, which is only unveiled by the discourse of the analyst. ‘Yes, but how’ explain this structure otherwise than from the practice? We will see explicitly later that the experience of psychoanalytic discourse presupposes the topology of the cross-cap (29; 472). Before that: but how (*mais comment*) explain the structure if not as *mécomment*, as miscognition? The miscognition is double: a miscognition proper to the fixation of one discourse (where the structure is not illuminated by the practice) and a miscognition proper to ab-sense (in which the practice is illuminated from the structure). It is clearly a matter in *L’étourdit* of following the path of this second miscognition proper to ab-sense, to the structure determined by the absence of sexual relationship, to the phallic function on its discursive journey (which will be extended into the second turn: topology, discourse of the analyst, structure and interpretation).

The ‘organo-dynamics’ of Henry Ey, a classmate Lacan’s *salle de garde*, is a mixture of ‘the organic’ and ‘the dynamic’, of the phallus as organ and of the phallic function. The ‘bastardy’ of ‘organodynamics’ explodes precisely when it mixes up the use of the organ and use of the function. Lacan pointed it out ironically: ‘Can it be believed that it is by the organ itself that the Eternal feminine draws you on high’ ...that the phallic function must employ the tool to develop its feminine formulae? Inversely, do we believe ‘that it works better (or worse) because the marrow frees it from signifying’? Do we believe that an organ determined by medullar mechanisms alone, on a purely reflex model, would function better organically?

Ey allows himself to ‘get lost’ by his ‘organo-dynamics’; the *salle de garde* admits that its rowdiness is not of the order of an (organic) reality but of a (dynamic) reputation linked to the songs of medics, to the symbolic of their words perhaps, but especially to their ‘yelping’, puppy-like cries, to the *o*-object that is summoned there.

(129) A reputation made from the fiction and songs of medics: ‘fiction and song, *fiction et champ*’ (18a; 461) were already in *Function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis* (1953 E 237). The dimension of fiction and of song given to speech in its

functioning allows former to be freed from established discourses and to make its way right through the structure. From this dimension of speech, the junior psychiatrists (of Henry Ey), ‘boys and girls’, might have been able, against the Permissive Father Masters (*Permaîtres*), ‘permitted themselves’ to follow Lacan by situating themselves in the position of exception (—). In fact these juniors had already taken on the style of their *Père Maître*, of their father-master in the novitiate of religion-psychiatry; they were assigned to remain in another discourse than that of the analyst and none had gone to Saint-Anne to attend the teaching that the I.P.A. had ‘interdicted’.

‘After all who knows?’ (18a; 461). The structure of the phallic function and its knowledge are also at work in those who allow themselves to get lost. The ‘rabble’ (c.f. *The knowledge of the psychoanalyst*, 1 June 1972) – the faithful dogs of their master – who have not dared ‘to permit themselves against their *Permaîtres*’ can surely not become engaged in analysis except from the point of view of a different discourse. This stupidity, remaining nevertheless always in the phallic function, ‘has its impenetrable ways’ since it wants to know nothing about it. This stupid psychoanalysis still propagates the psychoanalytic discourse, even despite itself; ‘the result is more good than bad’.

‘Let us conclude that there is a misdeal (*maldonne*) somewhere’ (18c; 462) this *mâle donne* inherent to the phallic function is the deal of the male which is cantoned to the two masculine formulae. Do we believe that the Oedipus complex would be able to account for the integrality of phallic functioning? Nothing of the kind, ‘the Oedipus complex is not what is believed’, it is limited to the first two formulae of the phallic function, which is developed in four formulae.

Remark: the discourses, their racism. (18c-19d; 462-463).

(130) The phallus, inasmuch as it is comprehended indifferently as organ and/or as function (‘organo-dynamism’), only grounds its universality on the position of exception (that the organ assures).

Comprehending the phallic function no longer from the absence of sexual relationship, but from the presence of the organ derives from a ‘slippage’ that Freud was not able to avoid: this slippage ‘implies’ the ‘significance’ of the phallus as ‘organ’ in all human sexuality (‘the universality of the intermingling in the species that speaks, *où ça parle*’),

for instance, among others, in the 'fruitful' heterosexual relation, that reproduces life and maintains the 'sex ratio' (18c; 462). Such a slippage of the function towards the organ claims to explain the whole of sexuality in function of the 'bearers' of the organ.

Freud's insistence on an exclusively masculine reference is all the more curious that, from the time of his emotional correspondence with W. Fliess, he had 'strongly emphasised the bisexuality of somatic organs' (18d), namely the presence of all the organs relating to the *soma* in the two sexes, even if only in the embryonic state. This remark alone might have led him to cover this fundamental bisexuality by a unique function, the phallic function. Why did Freud not arrive at this discovery of the phallic function (detached from the organ) when he was so close to it?

This slippage of Freud reducing human sexuality to the phallic organ 'acknowledges its truth' in *Totem and taboo*, where Freud creates a myth distinct from the Oedipal myth: the latter is dictated by the structure, while the myth of the Father of the primal horde is dictated by Freud's own impasses, especially in relationship to his exceptional father (Seminar XVIII, *On a discourse which might not be a semblance*, 9 June 1971). This myth is 'less sure than that of the Bible', - where Eve is born from Adam's phallic rib - not alone (131) because it results from Freud's neurosis, but again because it does not include any trace 'of the little boy, of the mother, of the tragic nature of the transition' (ibid.), elements nevertheless essential for phallic functioning. This 'truth' of Freud, in a master discourse, his divided position with respect to his patriarchal father, highlights the barred subject implied in the Freudian myth (divided between obedience to the law and the sharing of enjoyment). Freud could not reach his truth by remaining in a master discourse; he had to borrow the twisted paths of a neurosis and more broadly the torsion of the phallic function in general, from which there 'proceeds, where it speaks, *où ça parle*, the sexual act' (18de; 462) inasmuch as the sexual act implies the different formulae of the phallic function. Freud's 'allmanity' (*touthommie*) avows its truth: it is not of a biological order, it is not a function of the organ; it comes from the ex-sistence that has created it, 'from the myth that Freud created in *Totem and taboo*', of the ex-sistence of the father of the primal horde. Has this ex-sistence left a 'biological heritage' (16de), a 'biological trace', a purely organic t-race?

No! Every trace and every race comes from an existential position depending on a discourse. Every race is '*d'race à se thommer*' (18e), in posing itself as an exception; it has nothing to do with the universal of the phallic function, 'zilch with foralling itself' (*qu'dale à se pourtouter*). The universality of the phallus (confusing the function and the organ) depends on —, on the race and has no longer anything to do with the universal of the phallic function.

Racism articulated in this way (in the confusion of the organ and of the function) does not depend on organic characteristics and has nothing to do with the races of a physical anthropology (etymologically natural) which observe the human as a skin colour or as a skull. No racism is effectively constructed on these kinds of physical criteria: racism only takes support from 'physical' characteristics in order to justify a position of exception as a 'Reich called third' (19a; 462) shows us. Beyond the third Reich, the (132) confusion of the phallic function and the organ which is boasted about, is illustrated by another Reich: Wilhelm, the founder of 'bioenergetics'.¹

Race 'is constituted by the mode in which symbolic places are transmitted by the order of a discourse' (19a); each race derives directly from a symbolic place transmitted by a singular discourse, whether from the place of the semblance, or from the place of the Other. In that way in the order of the master discourse, the place of the semblance symbolically occupied by S_1 will define the race of 'masters', while the place of the Other symbolically occupied by S_2 will determine the race of 'slaves'. In that way in the order of academic discourse the place of the semblance symbolically occupied by S_2 (knowledge) will define the race of 'pedants' (pedagogues)⁸ while the place of the Other occupied by the ϕ -object will determine the race of *pédés* (fags). In that way in the order of the hysterical discourse, the place of semblance occupied by $\$$ will define the race of '*scients*', (shits, the agent of production of hysterical knowledge) while the place of the Other symbolically by S_1 will determine the race of '*sciés*' (bored). There will be essentially three times two types of races corresponding to the semblance and to the Other of each of the first three discourses.

¹ The strange condensation between the third Reich and W. Reich whose writings were burned by the Nazis is justified from the functioning of an 'allmanity' centred on the organ. Reich's *The function of the orgasm* (1942) tries to demonstrate that psychical health depends on the orgasmic power or on the organ.

⁸ In that way the pedantry of psychological objectification (E 418-419). The pedant is indeed a pedant from his academic knowledge.

Race is not deduced from the brain or from the brain-pan, as if the serf or the slave possessed a less evolved brain: 'I will completely skip over then the time of *cervage* (brain/servitude)' (19b). Servitude, the condition of the serf or the slave depends on the rope around the neck (from *cervage*, from the Latin *cervix*, poll, neck) which links him to the master in a single discourse. Race does not flow historically from the opposition of Greek civilisation to what was supposed to be outside (the Barbarians). Nor is it a more distant cultural heritage, a (133) survival of a tribal division inherent in the '*Elementary structures*'.¹ Without going back in time, as in archaeological anthropology, as in the history of civilisation ('the Greeks and the Barbarians'), without either moving around in present day space on the side of 'primitives' or of elementary structures, every racism, seen from a general point of view, is justified by a discourse inasmuch as this discourse is rigid, without switching towards another discourse².

These six discursive positions that produce 'racism' are each exceptional: each race is an exception of, to and in the phallic function (—). Why not add to it the race of analysers and that of analysts (who would correspond to the discourse of the analyst)? The discourse of the analyst is precisely the one that makes the organ pass over to the phallic function: in psychoanalytic discourse, every exception to the phallic function finds itself immediately and automatically reversed into the phallic function: . A pre- and anti- analytic slope draws its privilege from saying in order to definitively distribute the roles: in that way by an established master discourse, the race of masters could be opposed to the race of slaves; in that way in an established hysterical discourse, the race of hysterics could be opposed to the race of their victims; in that way in an established academic discourse, the race of pedagogues could be opposed to the race of students. Each time we see the constitution of a (134) race from the privilege of a discourse which is maintained at the same time as it refuses to switch towards another discourse.

¹ Levi Strauss' *The elementary structures of kinship*, 1947, describes the positive laws of preferential marriage: these structures require the individual to choose his partner within a precise class different from his own. It presupposes then a difference of classes. Races are not explained by this class difference.

² The races created and maintained in the vegetable and animal world, as phenomena of man's discourse, highlight the properly discursive dimension of racism in general; these variations within a botanical or zoological species depend in effect on culture (horticulture), 'on art, therefore on discourse': these races of men, created in the house of man, are then *d'hommetique* (domestic) and live from our domesticity (19bc; 463)

The discourse of the analyst follows a completely different slope, a ‘counter-slope’ (19c; 463) which prevents any apparition of race, since it reverses the acquired position for new discourses, for new switches. While racism is constructed on the exception, —, psychoanalysis goes through all the positions; the analytic discourse ‘closes the real’ by the roundabout of discourses. The — appears as a complex position that implies going through the whole of the phallic function: in a first phase, the formula constituted a simple universal, in a second phase it implied saying, in a third phase it means that the phallic function operates at every point and at each point of the development of the phallic function.

This journeying of the phallic function in each one is expressed by the career, ‘in which the analyst must first of all be analysed’; the term analyser precisely describes this journey. The analyst’s discourse is only constituted from the roundabout of discourses and, in this way, it dislodges every race depending on the stagnation of a discourse (master, slave, pedants, fags, shits, bores). In that way the analyser can enter into analysis by way of the discourse of the hysteric, of the master, of the academic; as analyser, he can allow himself to go beyond each one of them. The ‘*cervix*’ (19d; 463) bowing the neck (*cervix*) under the yoke of an established discourse, must be straightened in order to go through the roundabout of discourses and enter into the discourse of the analyst.

3. *Feminine sexuality*. (19d – 21e; 463-465).

For Freud, ‘the sexual function is stated from a forall’: the two sexes seem to traverse in the same way the first stages of the libido, both are supposed to have the phallic organ. With the Oedipus complex (which can be articulated in two formulae — and —), Freud (135) remains at the male ‘moiety’ of speakers. He uses the same Oedipal scale to take the measure of the other moiety: ‘every human being sees the task of mastering the Oedipus complex imposed on him’ (*Three essays on the theory of sexuality*. SE VII, 226, n1). Serving in that way as a standard, the two masculine formulae are for all; henceforth, the difference between masculine sexuality and feminine sexuality is reduced to the ‘anatomical difference between the sexes’ (*On some psychical consequences of the anatomical difference between the sexes*, 1925).

‘This carryover’ of the two ‘masculine’ formulae onto the feminine moiety ‘sufficiently demonstrates what is involved in the ab-sense of the sexual relationship’ (19e; 463). Making a *tabula rasa* of femininity, this carryover is nevertheless operative: it gives rise to a response of the shepherdess to the shepherd, which is going to reproduce the question and in that way lead to a new development.

The acceptance of the Oedipus complex for all is a ‘scandal’, a stumbling stone which ought to re-launch psychoanalytic discourse. In the I.P.A., the Society preserving what Freud said, the scandal in question was ‘stifled, as one might say at birth’; the saying of the unconscious was strangled there in favour of a psychologising depending on the academic discourse.

The ab-sense, which allows saying to develop, was nevertheless at work in the ‘now defunct debate of the 30’s’ (20a; 463) where the phallic phase of the girl was the object of lively controversies especially on the part of women analysts. ‘Karen Horney, Helen Deutsch, indeed Ernest Jones and still others’ (20a) confronted Freud to contest the primary universality of the phallic phase: for Karen Horney, the little girl was supposed to have vaginal drives before any phallic phase; for Jones, the fear of aphanisis or the disappearance of desire was supposed to be the condition of the later apparition of the phallic phase (deutero-phallic).

The ‘lid’ (20a) stifling the phallic question in the 30’s ‘says a lot’ about the containment, the immobility imposed on Freud’s saying by (136) master and academic discourses. ‘In his pessimism’, Freud was uneasy ‘about the securing the maintenance of his thought in its completeness, when he himself would no longer be there to defend it’ (E 473); to perpetuate his work, he had put in place a ‘parasitic organism’ charged with faithfully transmitting what he said after his death. This organisation, I.P.A., comprehending nothing about it, did not take the risk of watering down what he said (13de). But the said is not saying. To entrust the transmission of the said analytically to other discourses was to ‘lose’ its saying. In order to rediscover it, it was necessary then to bring about ‘a return to Freud’, which allowed the debate to be re-framed. Lacan’s symbolic, centred on saying, displaced the phallic question towards the signifier (1958: *The meaning of the phallus, To the memory of Ernest Jones, Directive proposals for a*

congress on feminine sexuality); from then on the adjective phallic no longer qualified in the first place an organ, but a function, whose importance we are going to see.

Let us start again from the 1930's.

Karen Horney, Helen Deutsch, 'appealed' (20b; 463) to 'the voice of the body' against the Freudian judgement promulgating the universality of the Oedipus complex. In this way, Karen Honey wants to give its voice again to the vagina. Now 'precisely', the body only takes on a 'voice' – the fourth *o*-object – from the unconscious which is the very dynamic of the switching of discourses, without which the voice cannot appear as such. To have recourse to the voice of the organic body as a superior agency to judge the unconscious is quite frivolous if the voice is not articulated with the dynamic of the unconscious which phallic functioning presupposes. The authority of these women 'in the analytic discourse', which is not unrelated to the third and the fourth formulae contrasts curiously with the triviality of the proposed solutions – the appeal to the organic is in effect quite frivolous to account for an affair dealing with 'voice' and 'signifier'.

Their 'charming finger-stall' as it 'contributes to dating', to a rendezvous with the masculine sex, brings grist (*de l'eau*) to their mill (137) for sure; it waters 'the flowers' of their remarks. These are 'rhetorical' flowers (20c; 464): it is indeed from discourses and their rhetoric that we may expect a relationship between the sexes..., 'even if it were only from the said', even if saying is forgotten.

The theory of Jones, whose servility with regard to Freud was scarcely compatible with the discourse of the analyst, takes on the symptomatic form of compromise: he says 'exactly the contrary of Freud... while at the same time giving the impression of saying the same thing' (20d; 464). According to Jones, sexuality is supposed to be organised at first in terms of the fear of the abolition of sexuality (aphanisis) and would only be secondarily phallic ('*deuterothallicity*'). In the girl, the fear of aphanisis would appear first of all as the fear of being abandoned, then secondarily there would appear the envy of a penis (especially the paternal one); from this secondary stage, the girl could then chose: either to remain faithful to her sex and re-state her (paternal) object or re-state her sex and enter into a phallic and paternal organisation. The first case (normal femininity) corresponds to the supposed primary nature of the fear of aphanisis (which says the

contrary of Freud), while the second case (which links her pathologically to her father: the penis complex) corresponds to secondary phallicity.

To transmit his work, 'Freud was sure of nothing' with the Jews, because they would have worked over what he had said and would have distorted it. He chose 'the best of the goyim', Jones his future biographer. In that way Jones transmitted intact what Freud said, with the logical subtlety of putting it back to back with something that was exactly the contrary. Jones' 'logical subtlety' does not rule out, nevertheless, his 'mental debility'. This insulting remark with respect to the one who had interrupted Lacan during his account of the mirror stage at the Congress of Marienbad in 1936 is aimed at the lack of logical vigour in deuterophallicity. 'A woman of my school' (Françoise Dolto) clearly demonstrates that mental debility can be the consequence of the 'parental saying'; in that way Jones debility is presented as a symptom of his neurosis.

(138) 'There is no sexual relationship does not imply that there is no relationship to sex' (20e; 464): the absence of sexual relationship affirms that there is no relationship between the two sexes, but implies on the contrary the relationship to the feminine sex precisely at stake in the ab-sense. 'Here indeed is the very thing that castration demonstrates': it initiates by the two formulae of sexuation a relationship to the feminine sex and to ab-sense, distinct for 'each moiety' (21; 464) - as we have presented it above in the *nia/nya*.

This distribution into two moieties is not done by the organ: the masculine moiety is not defined as that which would have the 'organ' and the feminine is determined neither as the one which is not supposed to have it, nor as the one which would have another organ. The organ is a 'veil' of the phallic function, which is where Karen Horney, Helen Deutsch, 'went astray'. 'May God receive their souls if He has not already done so.' Their singular soul gathered up by God at their death is not important (Karen Horney died in 1952, Helen Deutsch in 1982 after Lacan). But may heaven grant that the structure (God) may take their souls, in the plural, as **o**-objects, as '*abois*' (desperate straits), as 'voices of the body', to be put in the place of the semblance in the analyst's discourse. May God, in as much as he determines the structure, restore the **o**-object to its correct place in the structure. Now, in this structure, 'what is important is that this does not start

from the tickling', that the 'ignored' vagina or the 'little darlings (*mignons*)'¹ feel, titillations that should be referred to the *moi-haut* (high-ego), to consciousness, in lifting a supposed repression relative to the vagina. A woman is lifted above the first Oedipal formulae not from the 'lower' moiety of organs, but from the 'upper' moiety of the signifier which should 'make its entrance as an empress' (21b; 464). She enters it through the master discourse in which she is inscribed in the position of semblance as *signifiant-m'être*: a woman 'is not without being it'. But what being if not the one that is eager, as (139) an 'empress', right away (*s'empresse, en emperesse, en s'emblant*) in the precipitation that animates the phallic function and which is only a phase in the journey. The phallic function is organised 'in a quite unified way' ('there in effect Freud was right'): for the man and for the woman, it supplements the absence of sexual relationship in supplying for it. This single function for the two sexes () draws its signifying material no doubt from 'a single phanere' (21b and 12-13); in subverting the 'organ', it is nevertheless 'organised' as a 'logic' which 'revises', which examines anew Aristotle's '*Organon*' in order to revise and modify it.

For men, Freud was inscribed in an Aristotelian logic by articulating the Oedipus complex from a universal and a particular; but 'for women nothing guided him', especially not 'the hysterics who play the man' (21b; 464); to play the man and to support his desire as unsatisfied, the hysterics again take their side in the opposition of an exception to the universality of desire. The *Studies in hysteria* could not then lead Freud onto the path of 'a woman'. Over against Freud, Lacan does not remain with these two formulae: 'I will not impose on women the obligation of measuring by the yardstick of castration the charming sheath that they do not even raise to the level of the signifier', (21c; 465). 'The obligation to measure', the obligation stated by Freud to measure feminine sexuality by the 'yardstick' of castration, must be gone beyond: 'the charming sheath' like the 'charming fingerstall' cannot measure the heritage, measure the heir of masculine sexuality. The 'charming sheath' remains an organ, it is not raised to the level of signifier (despite the metaphor), and it, contrary to the phallus with a 'yardstick' that passes to the signifier (to the phallic function); this

¹ A name for the *chat* (pussy) which designates the sex of the woman (Pierre Guiraud, *Dictionnaire érotique*).

does not prevent the feminine organ from finding its joy (*pied*). ‘That a shoehorn is recommended here, subsequently follows’ (21cd).

Women participate in this shoe-fitting (*chaussure*), a sure thing (*chose sûr*), which consists in finding one’s footing (*pied*) especially in the universality proper to the masculine. But a woman is not (140) reduced to this universality; Lacan ‘repudiates’ the generality, ‘*the woman*’, or the universal ‘*the women*’: a woman worthy of the name is a singular woman. ‘Men are hard of hearing on this subject; (21cd; 465): like Freud, they are ready to reduce her to the first two formulae. ‘On occasion’, feminine enjoyment passes by way of coitus, but it is foreseeable that a feminine enjoyment may be able to do without it. This forecast does not depend on a contingent and momentary testimony like that of the Movement for the liberation of women (*M.L.F.*). Feminine enjoyment outside the masculine type of enjoyment depends on the contrary on the structure, on the absence of sexual relationship and on the phallic function that supplies for it.

‘The Freudian lucubration of the Oedipus complex’ (21de; 455) presupposes that the woman is by nature ‘castrated’: she is supposed to be in castration like a ‘fish in water’, she would then be all in function of the phallus, which could be written . This so-called co-naturality of the woman and castration ‘woefully contrasts with the fact of the devastation in women, for the most part, in their relationship to their mother’. The devastating effect of a mother on her daughter could no doubt be explained by the disappointment of not having received from the mother the phallic organ that is so desired; but she expects from her mother ‘more subsistence’ than from her father. What is this subsistence that makes her woman?

Lacan then lays on the table his ‘cards’, which unveil this feminine subsistence; he poses the ‘quantic mode’ of the third and fourth formulae: $\frac{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ and $\frac{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ (22a; 465). Why speak here about ‘quantic’? The phallic function – far from any specified meaning – is essentially developed by these logical operators: negation and quantifiers (for all, there exists). What is more, these operators imply a discontinuity (metaphorised by Planck’s quantum theory). In other words each ‘feminine’ formula responds to a masculine formula by a break in continuity, by a discontinuity, by a modal leap. In these leaps (141) of the phallic function, the subject is always divided and never appears except as a moiety: for one ‘moiety’ it is man (the first two formulae) and for the other moiety

‘woman’ (third and fourth formulae). It thus always pre-supposes the four formulae of sexuation.

4. *The third and fourth formulae of sexuation* (22a; 465)

The four formulae of sexuation could be naively ascribed to the four propositions of the logical square: the first two formulae would correspond to the universal affirmative and to the particular negative; the third and fourth formulae would correspond to the universal negative and to the particular affirmative. Such a comprehension – which is quite false – only leads to a caricature of feminine sexuality opposed to a masculine sexuality. The formulae of sexuation are not scientific formulae of two distinct sexual entities in a relationship of similarity or opposition.

Let us rather say that these formulae are ‘modes’. In the first two formulae, the subject can ‘be expressed (*dit*)’ according to an Oedipal mode. Here (22a; 465), it can be expressed in accordance with the third and fourth formulae whose quantifiers deny the quantifiers of the second and first formulae. The third and the fourth formulae are therefore identically the first two *modulo* the mode of saying explained by the denying: — — and — — . ‘Their inscription is not used in mathematics.’ ‘To deny that there exists one is not done’ (the exception denied is equivalent to the universal affirmative); nor does one say either ‘that forall is fornottalled, *que pourtout se pourpastoute*’, (the universal affirmative denied is equivalent to the particular negative).

‘It is there nevertheless that the sense of saying is delivered’: in the passage from one formula to another (as we have already seen in connection with ‘*nia/nya*’ 11bc or the ‘combination’ (10e). This transition, which is the phallic function in practice, ‘supplies for the (142) absence of sexual relationship’: the *nya* is primordial there (there is no sexual relationship). Therefore ‘*nyania*’ combines the negation perceptible at the level of the said (‘*nia*’) in the perspective that ‘there was not a sexual relationship (*nyait*)’. This ‘*nyania*’ – or the two ex-sistential modes of the woman and the man – produces sound-effects when the sexes are ‘in company’: the one affirms itself as exception because of his past in order that the other should respond that there is no trace in the present.

If two negations suppressed one another, the third formula would be reduced to the first formula and the fourth formula to the second: — — would bear witness to the existence

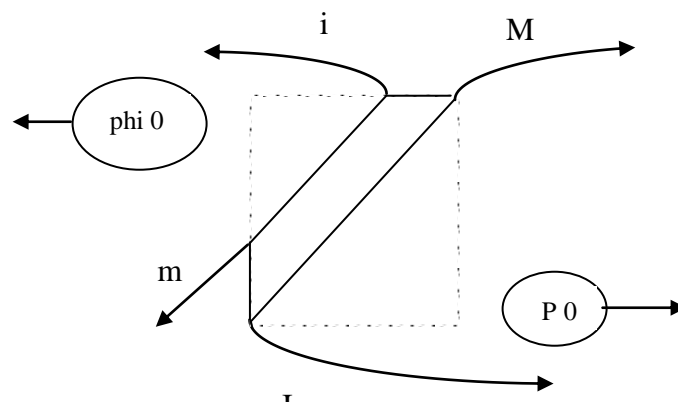
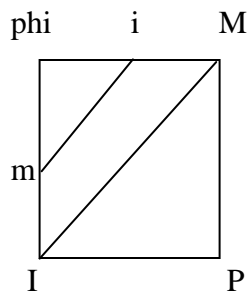
‘of a subject to say no to the phallic function’. This would be to suppose the subject starting from ‘the contrariety expressed in the two particulars’ (22bc): the subject would be supposed sometimes to be $\forall x \phi(x)$, sometimes not to be so (there are some that..., there are some that are not...). This ‘reading in terms of Aristotle’ leaves no place for the sense of saying, for the dynamic of reversals of one formula into another. In this ‘Aristotelian’ reading, there is no place for either the third formula of sexuation, nor for the fourth (the ‘notall’¹). But the first two formulae already went beyond ‘the reading according to Aristotle’: ‘the all of the universal is modified in the forall of the quantifier’ (15b) and the second formula is reversed into $\exists x \neg \phi(x)$, in the ‘sense of saying’ or of the journeying of the phallic function that is ‘inscribed from these quantifiers’.

‘To introduce as moiety those to be called (*à dire*) women’ (22c; 466), the subject reverses the necessary ex-sistence (second formula which restricted the possible universal (first formula): ‘The subject is determined by the fact that not existing from the suspension of the phallic function, all can be said about it...’; this ‘all’ is this time no longer restricted, limited or contained in the ex-sistence that gave it its ‘reason’ (7-15); thus this ‘all’ is an ‘all outside-universe’, a ‘notall’. Far from being restrained with respect to the all, the notall is at the (143) same time the limited all and the beyond of limits; it goes beyond the limit of reason (22c; 466). This ‘without reason’ alleviates the law (7d) and inaugurates the ab-sense proper to psychoanalysis and to the feminine sex.

The feminine ‘moiety’ is determined by the third and the fourth formulae whose quantifiers are denied: ‘from the fact that nothing existent creates a limit to the function’ (third formula: $\forall x \neg \phi(x)$), ‘would not be able to guarantee anything at all about a universe’ (fourth formula: $\exists x \phi(x)$). These last two formulae can be rendered respectively by ‘none makes up the all’ (there does not exist an x which makes the all) and ‘they’ are notall, *elles sont pastoutes* (‘not for all x phi of x’). Why these quotation marks “they, *elles*”? The two feminine formulae concern not only women, but the second moiety of every subject, of every speaking being (him or her), provided it is not reduced to the Oedipal articulation. This is what we are going to see in connection with Schreber.

¹ Tracking down his *pastout* Lacan is supposed to have encountered it in Aristotle (*mè pantes*) c.f. *The sinthome*, 18 November 1975. This quotation could not be located by Pierre-Christophe Cathelineau (*Lacan lecteur d’Aristote*, p.198).

The introduction of feminine sexuality can be developed from the angle of Schreber's psychosis (22d; 466). In the *Question preliminary to any treatment of psychosis*, Lacan schematised Schreber's psychosis by a double gulf: - the field of the Other does not have the support of the signifier of the Name- of-the-Father, - as a result of which, the field of the subject loses phallic support. These two holes are fundamental for our remarks: the absence of the Name-of-the-father is the absence of the position of exception (— is denied) and the absence of the phallus makes the universality of the phallic function disappear (— is denied). These two gulfs, which announce the two formulae with denied quantifiers, involve schema L (see my *Logique de l'inconscient*): schema R is in that way transformed into schema I, which is 'the inscription that I made by a hyperbolic function' (22d; 466). This schema I is a new inscription of (144) the phallic function: when the Name-of-the-Father (—) no longer comes to limit the possible (—), that is the Other, then the Other heads off towards the unlimited, to the infinite, drawing along with it into the hyperbola the two other primordial signifiers: I, the ego ideal and M, the signifier of the primordial object. On the other hand, when the phallus is missing, the unsupported subject also heads off to infinity, drawing with it into the hyperbola the ego and the ego ideal. From which there flows schema I properly so called (E 571). The two gulfs ($\phi = 0$ and $P = 0$) deny the quantifiers proper to the two masculine formulae: now (in 1972) the lack of the Name-of-the- Father can be written: — — , and the default of the phallus: — . Read in this way, the third and fourth formulae demonstrate the



(145) double ‘effect of the push-to-the-woman, *pousse-à-la-femme*’ proper to psychosis¹ (22d; 466). This double effect is first of all specified from the first quantifier (namely, starting from the third formula). How is that? It is ‘the irruption of A-father (*Un-père*) as without reason’ which unleashes the psychosis and its ‘effect of push-toward-the-woman’. Ordinarily a father arises with reason, this reason is precisely to create a limit to the forall (15c). For Lacan the unleashing of the psychosis depends on the contingent and dateable irruption of a father insofar as it appears as without reason (7d-22c), namely, without posing or limiting an all of the universe, a forall. This A-father is real not in the sense of a factual reality, but in the sense initiated by ab-sense, as without reason. It is from this A-Father provoking the third formula that there is precipitated here the effect experienced as ‘forcing’, the effect of ab-sense and of non-sense. This effect experienced as forcing operates in the field of an Other which henceforth is not limited and ‘thinks itself most foreign to all sense’. In that way is posed the question of ab-sense which is referred back to notall.

‘To carry the function to its extreme logical power would lead away from the right path’ (22e); for this function pushed to extremes, pushed as far as the hyperbolic would be the equivalent of radically and definitively rejecting (to foreclose) the phase of existence which sets the limit to the universality of the phallic function. Now, psychosis is the response (given by the perceived in psychosis 14c) and the response takes up the question again. To the extreme logical power (proper to the hyperbolic function) there is opposed the logical power of the notall (23a; 466) already readable in the without reason (7d-22c-22e): the logical power of the notall, far from confusing us about the functioning indicates its path to us. Laplanche in his *Hölderlin ou la question du Père* (1961) attempted to apply the theory (146) of foreclosure with an extreme logic; a waste of effort (22a) responding to the effort of the philosopher seeking sense in meaning (7e). This

¹ The double effect is sardonic: it is both laughter and madness; the *herba sardonia*, the *ranunculus* from Sardina was supposed to provoke laughter; it is unleashed here by the perturbation of the phallic function.

goodwill – entrenched in the first two formulae – causes the thread of the other formulae to be lost.

The third formula introduces and determines the feminine moiety not without a certain malaise, since it contradicts the second formula. How much more easy is it not (22e; 466) to remain with the third formula but to already look towards the fourth formula

— and to attribute to the other quantifier, the singularity of a confine (23a; 466). This is only possible if the extreme logical power (which was the radical foreclosure of the second formula) is replaced by the logical power of the notall (fourth formula); the singular of a confine is not the simple negation of the second formula, it denies the existence that poses the limit which because it carries with it the narrow minded (*borné*) beyond the boundaries and the boundary (*borne*) itself (confine: *cum fine*, with the boundary); the singular of a confine (*confins* is a noun that is always plural) does not need moreover to do away with all the boundaries, it is enough that a single one should be swept away for the enclosure of the universal to be opened up to the beyond of the universal, onto the notall. By this confine, the logical power of notall begins to be inhabited (*s'habiter*), to be furnished with the other formula, with the retreat of enjoyment that femininity conceals; from the third formula on, femininity conceals, steals the enjoyment of — and is provided by retreating (*recés*¹), by withdrawing itself from this position that plays 'thomme'. A veritable *Aufhebung*, which suppresses and preserves at the same time, the third formula denies and raises up again the existence of the second. Femininity in that way allows the combination of two existential formulae: the second (masculine) and the third (feminine), in other words the conjugation of *nyania*.

(147) This confine, enunciated here in terms of the logic of the notall which comprises the all and the beyond of the limit is depicted by Ovid in the myth of Tiresias (*Métamorphoses*, III, 320ff). Ovid 'shelters' behind the figure of the 'myth': it is the myth that is going to speak and not the author Ovid. The very story of Tiresias explains by its content the transition from one moiety to another: seeing two serpents in the process of coupling, Tiresias separated them (*vs* wounded them, *vs*, killed the female); following this intervention, he was transformed into a woman. Seven years later, by the

¹ From the Latin *recessus*, the action of distancing oneself, retreat, of folding back which supposes that the place to which one withdraws is preserved.

repetition of the same intervention, Tiresias becomes a man again. His passage through the two sexes made of him an impartial judge of relationships to sex. In that way Zeus and Hera appealed to his arbitration: does the man or the woman have the greatest enjoyment? Tiresias is supposed to have responded by a sexual 'ratio' (*'rapport'*): the two enjoyments would be in the proportion of one for the masculine enjoyment and nine for feminine enjoyment. 'To say that a woman is notall' (23ab; 466) is to say that her enjoyment starts from masculine enjoyment and overtakes it.

A woman wants to be recognised: in the theory of 1953, a woman is recognised by her own message which comes back to her in an inverted form through the mouth of her partner: 'You are my woman'. She is in that way recognised as one person of the couple and by the meaning-relationship ('You are my woman – You are my man'). 'We only know it too well' (it is the scandal that situates her in function of the first two formulae). But 'it is as the only one that she wants to be recognised by the other part': a woman remains alone beyond the masculine enjoyment that she shares with her man (if her partner does not have access to a feminine *jouissance*). 'She wants to be recognised as the only one': her solitude, which is not the absence of a rival, concerns her properly feminine enjoyment. Which deserves to be recognised.

'That a woman should want to be recognised as the only one' teaches us that 'the enjoyment that one has of a woman divides her' (23b; 466) between on the one hand the masculine enjoyment shared with her partner and on the other hand the properly feminine (148) enjoyment inaccessible to the man of the first two formulae. For this other moiety of enjoyment 'there is no partner': 'union remains on the threshold'.

The man would do well to serve this feminine enjoyment which goes beyond and extends his own in the sense of saying and of the sequence of the formulae of the phallic function. 'To what would a man avow himself to serve better' than 'to recreate' (23c; 466), than to raise up anew, than to inflame again this feminine enjoyment that goes beyond him. The enjoyment 'that is got from coitus' is then no more than an eventual means to fan 'feminine enjoyment'.

5. *The notall or the Heteros* (23c-24c; 467-468)

‘Sex’ in the singular, ‘the singular of a confine’, includes solitude. ‘What one calls sex...is...the *Heteros*’ (23c; 467). The feminine sex ‘is the Other’, but not the Other of the Lacan of 1953; it is not in a meaning-relationships, it is not the one from which one receives one’s own message in an inverted form (‘You are my woman’ – ‘You are my man’); not situating itself from the first two formula, it ‘cannot be staunched by the universe’. ‘An all outside universe’ (22c), it is defined by the absence of border, of limit, of ‘definition’; it does not accept the articulation of the definite article that sets a limit to a universal and makes it impervious: ‘the’ woman does not exist. The other sex is supported by the fourth formula ‘—’ and falls outside the reckoning of ‘forall’; it is foolish to count it as the second sex (*The second sex*, 1949, Simone de Beauvoir) because it does not enter into the reckoning that is proper to the ‘first’.

‘Let us call heterosexual by definition, one who loves women, whatever may be his/her own sex’ (23c; 467). To love ‘women’, is to be turned towards femininity (explained in the two feminine formulae). The usual homosexual-heterosexual classification would presuppose the relationship between the partners (‘You are my woman – You are my man’). The heterosexual, defined as turned towards the (149) *Heteros*, presupposes ‘ab-sense’ (which designates ‘sex’).

‘To love’ women does not signify ‘being engaged’ (passive) to them starting ‘from a relationship that is not there’ (23d; 467), starting from ‘You are my woman - You are my man’; it is on the contrary ‘to engage oneself’ (active) (22e) to arouse properly feminine enjoyment. This overflowing of feminine enjoyment as compared to the masculine, this non-relationship ‘implies the insatiability of love’: love will never have done enough to fill up this ab-sense. Love is explained by this premise of non-relationship and not from a sexual relationship.

‘It is not in every discourse that a saying comes to ex-sist’ (23d; 467): saying only comes about as ex-sistence by ‘saying no’, by the switching of discourses. It is especially in the discourse of the analyst that an saying comes to ex-sist, for this discourse always presupposes the roundabout of discourses. Its proper structure is not being able to be ‘established’. The question of saying ex-sisting with respect to the said ‘was tossed around’ throughout centuries of philosophy up to the Cartesian ‘intuition of the subject’: *Cogito ergo sum* The subject is ‘very capable of seeing it’ (23de; 467), to see this saying

‘without it ever having been taken seriously’. In what does this lack of ‘seriousness’ consist? The subject of the *Cogito* only exists through the moment of doubt: the *Cogito* must start from doubt for the *sum* to appear with clarity and conspicuousness. Now ‘there where I am, I do not think’ and ‘there where I think I am not’. The subject is separated from its thoughts, this *sum* is separated from the *Cogito* (like the second formula — is separated from the first,). The subject therefore (*ergo*) follows thought. This subject consecutive to thought can become in its turn an object of second thought, I can doubt it and this second doubt implies a new subject, which itself will be able to be the object of new thoughts and of a third doubt and so on in series (Seminar IX, *Identification*, 10 January 1962). To take the *Cogito* seriously, is to enter into a series which goes from one thought to a new subject and from a thought subject to a new thought always (150) unfathomed. In a parallel way, the intuition in the second formula — — does not suffice to guarantee the existence of the subject of saying: it only appears in the series of formulae between the first that makes it necessary and the third that says it is impossible. From where should this series start?

‘It is the logic of the *Heteros* that must be got going’ (23e; 467); we must ‘understand’ that the logic should start from the *Heteros*. The question posed by the notall is that of an ‘all outside universe’ or of an all ‘that cannot be staunched by a universe’. Can all be one, a ‘universe’? ‘Yes’ said Parmenides ‘both thought and being is a same’ (French translation by Barbara Cassin). But the question, taken up again in Plato’s *Parmenides*, opens out onto another response on ‘the incompatibility of the One with Being’ and on the question of notall. This dialogue, an enigmatic text commented on a thousand and one times in the history of philosophy, had been abundantly quoted in the seminar *...ou pire* (1971-1972). Lacan acknowledges here the insufficiency of his commentary: “how give a commentary on this text in front of seven hundred people?”

How situate this dialogue?

Returning from his second voyage to Sicily, Plato finds an open rebellion at the heart of his Academy: Aristotle had in effect published his *Peri Philosophias*, a well-ordered attack against his master’s theory of Ideas and Platonism in general (Kojève, *Essai d’une histoire raisonnée de la philosophie païenne* II, p.353-369). Plato responds with a set of

seven dialogues (to which no doubt the ‘seven hundred people’ make an illusion to, 23e). *Parmenides* is the first of these seven dialogues.

The first part of *Parmenides* converges on a dialogue between the old Parmenides and the very young Socrates; the latter affirms the identity of ideas to themselves: the similar is similar, one is one, etc. Old Parmenides criticises Socrates scholastic presentation; in addition, some objects can manifestly not correspond to an Idea: hair, mud, filth. All these very human waste products, in which the psychoanalyst will hear the *o*-object, do not enter into the topology of (151) Ideas identical to themselves. The world of Ideas (the One) and the human world here below are radically separated: one knows nothing about the other, the One knows nothing about men and men know nothing about the One. Still the One is nonetheless thinkable. How? Old Parmenides suggests the dyadic method: let us suppose that the One is (and let us see the logical consequences of this), then let us suppose that the One is not (and let us see the logical consequences of that). To think the One is to successively make the first then the second supposition: 1⁰ if the One is, a) what is the result for itself ? b) what is the result for the others, for what is not one?; 2⁰ if the One is not, a) what is the result for itself? b) what is the result for the others? Which gives us four questions: (1) if the One is, what is the result for itself? (2) if the One is, what is the result for the others? (3) if the One is not, what is the result for itself? (4) if the One is not, what is the result for the others? Each of these four questions is nevertheless reduplicated in two different formulations or hypotheses and the first question is even presented in three different hypotheses: which makes nine hypotheses.

We will content ourselves here with showing how the ‘incompatibility’ of the One with Being appears starting from this first question (if the One is, what is the result for itself?) sub-divided in three hypotheses following the three ways of conceiving the One: 1) the One which is truly one (if the One is one), 2) the One which is and contains heterogeneity in itself (if the One is), 3) the One which goes from the One which is one to the One which is. [Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists in general retained these three hypotheses to define their three ‘hypostases’: the one, being and the soul.]

First hypothesis of the first question: ‘If the One is truly one, what can we conclude about it for itself?’. We conclude that such a one is not. In effect a ‘One’ which is truly one does not admit of any alterity and will not be able to be inscribed in any dichotomy;

if it were the case, opposed to the other term of the dichotomy, it would no longer be the One: thus it is neither limited or unlimited, neither moved nor (152) immobile, neither identical nor different, neither similar nor dissimilar, neither equal nor unequal, neither past nor present nor future; now all that shares in being is inscribed in the past, present or future tense; therefore the One which is one is not. *The One which is one is incompatible with Being.*

The 'One' – which constitutes a universe - nevertheless appears and leads us to pose the first question differently:

Second hypothesis of the first question. 'If the One is (without always being one) what is the result for itself?' To be one, it must be inscribed in the two terms of dichotomies; if this were not the case, it would only be a part of the dichotomy and would therefore not be the One: thus it is limited and unlimited, moved and immobile, identical and different, similar and dissimilar, equal and unequal, past and present and future. The One which is can only be by including in itself the heterogeneous, the Other, the *Heteros*.

This *Heteros* presupposes a transition between the two terms of each dichotomy.

Third hypothesis of the first question. The transition between the two terms of each dichotomy (second hypothesis) pre-supposes a point which is neither of the two terms, neither limited nor unlimited, neither moved nor immobile, neither identical nor different, etc. Thus the change (inherent in the second hypothesis) presupposes a transition point between the two opposites of each dichotomy, an instantaneous (*exaiphnes*), which is neither the one nor the other of the two opposites and which, as neither- nor, returns to the first hypothesis. Being and the One are incompatible and must nevertheless be articulated.

The articulation of Being and of the fundamentally heterogeneous One, *Heteros*, 'Other', presupposes therefore the transition from one saying (first hypothesis) to another (second hypothesis) and their articulation (third hypothesis). This circuit is expanded again by the other hypotheses of *Parmenides* that we will not deal with here.

The point of departure of the notall – the *Heteros* or the incompatibility of the One and of Being – was available for centuries, (153) since Plato's *Parmenides*. Why did the question of saying and of the notall have to wait for the analytic discourse to be developed? Response in the form of a question: "how give a commentary on such an

enigmatic text in front of such a numerous audience at my seminar?” The paronomasis indicates to us the ritornelle of the commentary, which is plunged into the ‘*mécomment*’ and miscognition (*méconnaissance*) (17e): the *mé*-commentaries of centuries of the history of philosophy were not able to open out into ‘proper logic’ starting from *Heteros* because they lacked the ‘arena’, the free rein of the roundabout of discourses which is only constructed by the analytic discourse. The putting into parenthesis of the whole history of philosophy (starting with the *Parmenides*) introduces the absence of the philosophical page, which is the everyday resource of the analyst (7e -8a).

With psychoanalysis, we leave the philosophical commentaries of the *Parmenides* to follow the ‘practice’ of ‘absence’, “the arena always open to the equivocation of the signifier” (23e; 467). The signifier is going to take up again the question of the *Heteros*. The equivocation of the signifier is illustrated by three examples where a homophone (same sound) corresponds to two different writings and words (different grammar and logic): 1⁰ the equivocation of the *Heteros* (‘the *Heteros* being declined into the *Hetera*, is etherised, indeed hetaerised...’, 23e): 2⁰ the equivocation of the *deux* (‘The prop of the *deux* to make *d’eux*...’, 24a): 3⁰ the equivocation of *semble* (*s’emble*,..., *s’emblave*, and *le semblable*). These three equivocations do not remain at simply homophony but are analysed in terms of ‘writing’ or of ‘grammar’, then of logic.

The first of these three equivocations – ‘the *Heteros*, by being declined as the *Hetera*, is etherised and hetaerised...’ – is a grammatical declension: the *Hetera* (feminine which will pose the enigmatic question of the notall as ‘*pastoute*’); the sequence of the equivocation ‘is etherised, indeed hetaerised ...’ confirms it: ‘ether’ the purest air and the celestial space animating the entire world, is ‘hetaerised’, is feminised into ‘hetaera’, companion, mistress, (154) courtesan of the highest rank in ancient Greece. The equivocation of the *Heteros* remains here at grammar (without yet going on to the logic that Lacan keeps in suspense).

The second of the three equivocations: the equivocation of *deux/d’eux* is articulated like the equivocation of the *Heteros*. ‘*Eux*’ are ungraspable and inaccessible. The *Heteros*, ‘this notall’ lends us a support to reduce these *eux* to *deux*. Let us see how: it is on the *Heteros* that there is constructed the Greek comparative suffix (*makros*, big: *makroteros*, bigger, or *makro-heteros*, big other) which allows the elements of a set

(*d'eux*) to be compared two by two. Thus 'bigger' (particularly big) will allow us to rank them by order of size. The *Heteros* or notall (or the beyond of a boundary) is thus a *deux* (bigger, smaller or on this side of or beyond a boundary) on which *eux* will be supported to be ordered and counted. 'This support of the *deux*' nevertheless 'creates an illusion' (24a; 467), for the multiplicity of the notall is inaccessible and is not enumerable like the ordered whole numbers (ordinals). Why can '*eux*' not be ordered by the *deux* of the comparison? Why can we not order speaking beings according to some sexual criterion? Because there is no sexual relationship between two speaking beings; in other words, because they will always keep an irreducible hetero-geneity between one another. If the *Heteros* provides a ('particularly big') trick to order the individuals, it is also installed as irreducibility between them. Repetition - *Beyond the pleasure principle* - is not reduced to a temporarily ordered sequence of symptoms, but reveals itself as a new dimension which goes beyond the numerable. It is 'transfinite'. It is a matter of an (155) inaccessible starting from which' one could enumerate or count the repeated events, but at the price of a reduction 'of them'. If one can order the events of a sexual life it is because it is already reduced. Repetition testifies to the infinite research of a fundamental inaccessible, which can be restrained to an enumerable multiplicity. In that way Don Juan, to escape from the inaccessible 'notall' ('the solitude' of a woman), orients his search towards the enumeration of women (the preceding one then the next one). By this method of taking them one after the other, the enumerable is 'sure', but the 'reduction also becomes so'. [In this equivocation, homophony was pursued in its grammar and in its logic].

The third of the equivocations treated here, the equivocation of the 'semblance' is articulated on the illusion of the enumerable. 'They' cannot enter into the things to be counted⁹ unless they are similar among themselves. Thanks to this levelling off, they can

² Cantor introduced the 'transfinites' as infinities not reducible to the infinite sequence of integers or to the denumerable (D). This latter infinite is the 'cardinal' or the 'number' of integers, but also the number of even numbers, of algebraic integers, or of fractional numbers: these sets can be ranked in strict biunivocal correspondence with the series of integers (1 2 3 4 5...). But there exist transfinite sets which can not be put into biunivocal correspondence with the denumerable (D). Thus the 'power of the continuous' (C) equivalent to the set of real numbers of a segment of a straight line included between 0 to 1. It can be proved (par absurdum) that C is irreducible to D. *Let us suppose* that C is reducible to D and that all its real numbers A1 A2 A3...An...are ranked according to the order of integers (the decimals of A1...An...are written with the lower case a, b, etc.):

A1 = 0, a1 b1 c1... = for example 0.439...(a1=4, b1=3, c1=9, etc.

resemble (156) one another and gather themselves together (first formula) on condition that there is one which '*s'emble*' (24a), which precipitates itself to limit (second formula) this sequence of semblables [like the prisoner of *logical time* who 'precipitates himself to affirm himself as man for fear of being convinced by the others that he is not a man' (E 213)]. Thanks to this operation the semblance 'is sown', is seeded with wheat (*blé*), in that way creating for itself its own semblables (on the model of the 'mirror stage'). '*L'homosexué*' (23ab) sexed in the mode of the man or of the same, of the semblable, precipitates itself into these first two formulae, articulated according to the 'all semblable' and the precipitation of the 'semblance'.

Having gone through the ordered sequence of these three homophonic equivocations, Lacan takes up again the first (the question of the *Heteros*) which had not yet been articulated in its logical dimension: to complete the universal and to limit it, the semblable only precipitates itself (*s'emble*) by excepting itself, 'by discord' (24b; 467) with the universal. 'It is the *Heteros*...that raises up man in his status which is that of the *hommosexuel*': 'all semblable' (*hommo*-) only holds up because there is the affirmation of discord. Now this discord shows that the Other, the 'notall' is already at work in the passage from the first to the second formula. The 'status... of the *hommosexuel*, 'the erection' of the man, namely, the articulation of the first two formulae depends on the Other, on the 'notall'. Freud himself showed it, the Oedipus complex implies that the phallic 'appendix' is rendered to man, not simply as an erectile 'appendix', but above all as an appendix becoming a phallic function thanks to the discourse of the analyst.

This precipitation where man 'plunges' into the second formula is only produced if saying is already well advanced, thanks to the 'notall'. Before this, 'what is striking at first' is the masculine statement (*dit*), the *hommodit*, the said of 'allmanity' (18d), the

A2=0, a2 b2 c2...

.....

An=0, an bn cn dn

.....

One can construct a number X (0, x1 x2 x3 x4 ...) contained between 0 and 1 such that its first decimal (x1) is not the first decimal a1 of the first number A1, its second decimal (x2) is not the second decimal b2 of the second number (A2) and so on... This number X is not a number An of the ordered series since by definition its nth decimal ought to be different to the nth decimal An. We have therefore demonstrated that X is not ranked in the denumerable transfinite. The power of the continuous (the cardinal of all the real points included between 0 and 1) is therefore denumerable.

‘run-of the-mill of the unconscious’ (24c; 467), namely, the unconscious inasmuch as it comes first of all in the mode of ‘all’ (first formula) and of the man of the said (*l’homme dit*). Now Lacan correctly states the (157) unconscious otherwise than in the mode of all: it is ‘structured like a language’, in which the particularising ‘a’ contradicts the all and the said. As compared to the (particular) saying, the said ‘is not weighty’: ‘it causes/speaks [*cause*]... but that is all it knows how to do’. ‘I have been so little comprehended, so much the better’: the incomprehension will induce the reversal of positions or discourses and in that way it will serve the purpose ‘that one day people will make objections to me’ (24c; 468) no doubt for a new reversal.

‘In short, we float from the islet phallus’: in a masculine mode, ‘the islet phallus’ emerges from the sea of saids. But the phallic function implies the development of the third and fourth formulae. If this ‘feminine’ side ‘is cut back from it’, there remain only the first two formulae. But why withdraw oneself in this way from the ‘feminine’ side? It is a matter of a defence, a protection, a retrenching before the enigma of the ‘not all’: ‘one’, namely, ‘the *homosexuel*’, ‘the man’ ‘entrenches himself’ in the fortress of the first two phallic formulae.

The congruence of the phallic function.

‘Thus history’ (24d; 468) concerns the semblances which correspond to the first and second formulae, the semblances that float from ‘the islet phallus’. These ‘boats form a ballet’ of ‘naval manoeuvres’ with ‘a limited number of figures’. This limitation depends on the first two formulae in which the not all has been reduced in order to become enumerable and sure.

But when ‘women do not disdain to take up the running in it’ in these masculine naval manoeuvres – think of Jeanne d’Arc, Catherine de Médicis or Madame de Maintenon – then there flourishes dance whose steps are enumerable (one step and then another step), the dance of history which is a masculine affair. But what is contributed by these women who engage themselves, not all (*pastoutes*), in the dance of history? This dance ‘flourishes when the discourses hold sway...for the congruent signifier’; the discourses only hold sway by (158) the phallic signifier. Each discourse supposes in effect the articulation of the phallic function starting from the first two formulae; each discourse

presupposes a said and a saying that is excepted from it. By phallic functioning, there is established then a 'congruence', namely, a relation of equivalence, of reflexivity, of symmetry and of transitiveness between the different discourses in the roundabout of the discourses. Congruence is nevertheless only assured thanks to the fourth formula: the logic of discourses starts from the *Heteros*, from the notall which implies their switches (such is the 'plus' that 'women' can contribute). In this history, 'those who know the steps', those who lead the dance, those who direct the enumerable sequence of actions, are those 'who have it in them' to pass to the phallic signifier.

FROM ONE TURN TO THE OTHER

(161) The starting point of psychoanalytic logic is the *Heteros*, the ‘notall’. If Plato’s *Parmenides* opens out onto the *Heteros*, we must nevertheless await the coming of the practice of ab-sense or psychoanalysis to set en route the logic of the *Heteros*; for it is only in ‘the equivocation of the signifier’ that the logic of the ‘notall’ appears as logic of the impossible or logic of the reversal proper to the roundabout of discourses. Already at work in the first two phallic formulae, especially in these naval manoeuvres and these dances with which history is woven, the ‘notall’ must be explained in a second turn.

The riddle of the notall (24e; 468)

How conceive the riddle of the notall?

To the riddle posed by the Sphynx – ‘what is the animal that walks on four paws in the morning, two paws at midday, and three paws in the evening?’ – Oedipus responded: ‘man’.

Far from repeating the riddle of the Sphynx and Oedipus’ interpretation, Lacan asks himself the question: ‘What is a woman?’ And he responds by the count of four, two, three: - by the quadruped of the four places of the discourses (chapter 2), - by the bipod of the sexes that remain without a relationship (chapter 3) and – by the tripod formed by the two sexes and the phallic function (chapter 4).

Thus Lacan is doubly different to Oedipus: 1^o Oedipus is confronted with the human (on the masculine model); Lacan questions himself about the feminine (which concerns every speaker); 2^o for Oedipus, the question is enunciated ‘what is the count of four, two, three’ (and the response is man); for Lacan, the journey of ‘four, two, three’ serves as a response (and the question bears on the feminine).

This circle of response–question, which successively goes through the human, the masculine and the feminine in counting four two three, is animated by the ‘notall’ which re-launches a new turn.

(162) Let us first of all come back to the count four, two, three:

1^o the *quadruped*, or the morning of interpretation, appears like the real framework on which there is constructed discourse in general (and the four discourses in particular): the four places of truth and of semblance, of the Other and the product. These four real loci were presented above in the optic of a master discourse (the Other was defined there as

‘enjoyment’ and the product as ‘product of the complex’, as a supplement to enjoyment, as a ‘*plus-de-jouir*’, a surplus enjoying, 16e). In the discourse of the analyst the product is the signifier S_1 which took the place of the *plus-de-jouir*: directly confronted with its powerlessness, it protects itself against this *plus-de-jouir*, it elides the ‘*jouir*’ from it: ‘*un plus de-*’ well designed to make the phallic function appear. This ‘*plus-de-*’ protects itself from enjoyment; it never ceased to defend itself from it, this defence has never been gone back on. And in doing this, it makes its way into the journey through the discourses.

2° ‘the *bipod* whose separation shows the ab-sense of relationship’ or the noon (*midi*) of interpretation: if the two sexes (Adam and Eve, man and woman, father and mother) serve as a bipod for humanity, Lacan was able to show its extreme separation in the ab-sense, the absence of sexual relationship, which grounds psychoanalysis.

3° ‘then the *tripod* which is restored’ by the addition ‘of the sublime phallus’ to the preceding bipod: in the evening of the ‘Henri-Rousselle memorial’, the tripod is restored thanks to the phallus inasmuch as it is raised to the function of signifier (‘the sublime phallus’). This ‘re-entry of the phallus’ does not stop at the simple enunciation of the phallic function: implicating the notall, it is implicitly metaphorised by a woman (*pastoute*), by Antigone, who guides her father Oedipus to Colonus towards the place of his burial. The function of the phallus is to guide ‘man towards his true bed’ (25a; 468) and this phallic functioning is presented in the four formulae (14-24). This phallus, inasmuch as it passes to the signifying function, is ‘sublime’: it is lifted into an atmosphere well above that of the phallophore, of the (163) man who loses his way (25a) when he is reduced to the first two formulae.



Lacan unfolds the riddle of the ‘notall’ by the count of four, two, three which takes up again the very terms of the Sphinx. She responds with a speech of gratitude conjugated in the compound past tense (‘You have satisfied me....You have comprehended...’ 25a) and by a word of promise conjugated in the future simple (‘Thanks to the hand which will respond to you...You will even know...’). The past of the first turn of *L’étourdit* is articulated to the future of the second turn by means of a present: ‘On (you) go, there is not too much *étourdit* – *deux-tours-dits* (two-turns-said)’. In my introduction, I have given a commentary on this paragraph as the central articulation of *L’étourdit*.

How continue towards the second turn? The first turn of the text was the work of the ‘littlecutman’; everything was centred on the dimension of *thommage* (—) and even when it was a matter of the ‘notall’, we fell very quickly into the ‘masculine’ position retrenched on ‘the islet phallus’ (24c). This first turn was ‘what was required (*ce qu’il fallait*)’, but it was destined for a fall (*falsus* 15e).

This fall is the achievement of the *étourdit*: the said, *étourdit*, free association, is not too much for a saying to appear, just as the linear turns can make the surface which carries them appear. Saying is announced and discovered by the half-saying; the transfinite is announced and demonstrated by the denumerable; the continuous is announced and deduced by the discontinuous; we will see in the following chapter that the surface is announced and dissected by the cut. If it is necessary to make saying, or the transfinite, or the continuous, or the surface appear, it will only ever be in a second phase, in a second turn, since this saying, this transfinite, this continuous, this surface are constituted by going through the said, the enumerable, the cut or the discontinuous. *L’étourdit* is the repetition of cuts to make the surface appear.

At the end of the first turn, the ‘notall’ had appeared to us. How (164) is this notall going to be extended into a second turn and why? The response is given to us by the myth: Oedipus, learning that he is the murderer of his father (—), plucks out his eyes and becomes at the same time victim of his own law (universal: —): banished from the city of Thebes, he is accompanied by his daughter Antigone (— —) who guides him towards his tomb, towards his true bed. Antigone is also a reference for the ethics of psychoanalysis (‘between two deaths’ 44d) [see Seminar VII, pg...ff]. But the feminine hand of Antigone, which is at the same time the hand of the Sphinx, can devour and tear apart the passers-by incapable of resolving the riddle of the notall. It is in this tearing apart that there is revealed her true nature: it is in the closed cut that the a-spherical structure of saying will be revealed. The notall is both the surface that carries the said and the said which reveals the surface, the hand which guides and the hand which can tear apart, the a-spherical surface and the cut that will reveal the a-spherical structure of the surface. In short, topology is what is at stake for the discourse of the analyst.

‘You will even be able towards evening to make yourself the equal of Tiresias’: thanks to the third foot, thanks to the phallic function, like Tiresias¹⁰, ‘you will be able’ to go through the two sexes and their enjoyment (in the roundabout of discourses), to know its structure and ‘divine’ what the notall has said. This ‘divining’ does not become a ‘theory’, ‘speculation’ or visual observation, for the diviner is blind: he is no longer the eye that sees but the silent voice, which hears (165) because he keeps silent. This second turn goes from the hand (of Antigone) to what the hand teaches, namely, from topology to interpretation.

Here there opens up a new ethic, a new ‘*surmoitié*’ (25b; 468): for two different ‘superego’s’ respond to the two ‘moieties’ which are the two sexes, but also to the two turns of *L’étourdit*: the masculine *surmoitié* of universal conscience (‘’ and ‘’) and the feminine super-moiety of the ‘notall’ (which is going to be developed from topology); Creon and Antigone in a certain way.

The said by the notall ‘cannot be completed, be refuted, be inconsistent, be undemonstrable, be undecidable’ (25b; 468); this sequence already quoted as a ‘marvellous efflorescence’ of the impossible (8e) is envisaged from the topology of saying. What was ‘incomplete’ at the beginning of the text (8e) is replaced here by the ‘complete’. In effect, the ‘notall’, as it is going to be presented in the second turn starting from topology, aims at completing the trajectory of the four formulae of sexuation: the masculine formulae are extended into the feminine formulae.

***A logic for the analyst* (25c; 468-469).**

‘The relationship to sex’ is not relationship between the sexes, but relationship to the feminine sex, to ab-sense, to the notall. Our relationship to the (feminine) sex goes astray when it wants to reduce the paths of the feminine to the masculine moiety.

¹⁰ Tiresias who knows the Oedipal drama, before Oedipus discover its truth, had accidentally seen the goddess Pallas completely naked, the truth without a veil. He was blinded by it in the proper sense of the word. To compensate him, Pallas granted him his talent as sooth-sayer (we can recognise here the passage of the scopic *o*-object to the vocal *o*-object). According to another version: Hera struck Teresias with blindness because he had unveiled the importance of feminine enjoyment and revealed the great secret of her sex (23a). Seus, as compensation, granted him the gift of prophecy and the privilege of living for a very long time. In any case, the notall, far from being the immediate scopic revelation of a completely naked truth, can only be *divined* in a long period of maturation.

Why this straying? Masculine sexuation is developed in the same defined direction by the first two formulae; this straight line is followed by a brusque shift, tangible in the absence that constitutes the analyst's practice. The absence of the sexual relationship breaks all continuity between the masculine formulae and the feminine formulae: the two moieties, which are not an extension, of one another in that way form a sig-sag, a 'logical chicane' articulated from the notall. By wanting to extend one moiety along the line of the other, one risks going astray, of leaving the logical path sketched by this (166) chicane. In that way in the sexual life of couples, whose partners believed themselves made for one another, difficulties flourish which are there as symptomatic acts of saying about the absence of sexual relationship. Where would the analyst find the way of 'correcting' this except by taking his source in the Other of the graph, namely in the barred Other or the notall, which determines 'good logic'.

The straying of the relationship to the feminine sex is illustrated by three situations:

1° A woman who would make use of the fact that a man ceases to love another situates herself right away in the 'one after the other', in a masculine perspective. That she does not succeed in doing so will be held against her; she does not inscribe herself in this man system. But to manage to do so, namely, to evict the preceding woman is scarcely better: 'it is indeed by succeeding in doing so, that she fails to do so', because she can be replaced by a third and in that way enter into the series of women who, 'one by one', depend on the masculine universe.

2° 'The awkward one', namely, the man who does not manage 'to re-surrect' feminine enjoyment in a woman is not very different to the first situation: he avoids the same logical chicane and ignores the notall. He 'imagines that to have two of them makes her whole', but the question is not to make her whole, when it should have been to discover her as notall, namely 'to re-surrect' her, to encourage her to break through the logical chicane which goes from masculine enjoyment towards feminine enjoyment; his plan to substitute the 'all' for the 'notall' confirms his own masculine logic reduced to ' $\forall x. \Phi x$ ' and to him who poses it.

3° That the woman is relegated outside knowledge, in another class, 'that the woman should be called the boss among the common people, that elsewhere the man wants her to

know nothing – ‘*sois belle et tais-toi*’ - is again a way of excluding her, of preventing her from going through the logical chicane which leads to the feminine formulae.

From where will the analyst ‘be able to find his bearings in these sweet nothings’ (25d; 469) which praise and appreciate the woman as object of a masculine logic? How will the analyst be able to find his bearings in this telescoping of feminine sexuation, except by not (167) forgetting this notall already at work in the first two formulae.

This notall is both the discontinuity that breaks the continuity between the two logics (masculine and feminine) and the continuity between them (since this notall also animates the masculine formulae). The notall ought therefore to be both surface and cut of the surface, continuity and break of continuity (solution of continuity). This will be illuminated by aspherical topology where we will show that the Moebius strip is at the same time the (‘median’) cut which makes the unilateral surface and the unilateral surface which allows the cut disappear. The first chapter of the second turn is therefore ‘topological’. By this demonstration of the paradoxical notall (in the cut and in the surface), all the chapters of the first turn are going to make a new turn: the signifier and its logic will depend on topology (chapter 1); saying is going to be renewed in the discourse of the analyst (chapter 2); the absence of sexual relationship will determine the structure (chapter 3); phallic functioning will be actualised in interpretation (chapter 4).

**SECOND TURN:
THE DISCOURSE OF THE ANALYST
AND INTERPRETATION**

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

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

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

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

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

¹ Should we see in this 'etiology'? Aristotle's world is treated, according to Kojève, in terms of a biological model, 'by operating exclusively with causal categories' (*Essai d'une histoire raisonnée de la philosophie païenne*, T.II, p.325), namely in terms of a universal that is repeated identical to the past according to the mechanism of causality or etiology.

sentence within the universal. If Aristotle had taken better account of the notall, Alexander would have understood that the all ($\forall x.\Phi x$) is limited by the ex-sistence that is excepted from the universal (—); but above all, he would have known that his position of exception was denied (—) and he would have been open, beyond the boundaries of his empire, to the notall (—). In promulgating the ex-sistence of his master as the exception who bounds the universe, he would have replaced the existence of ‘Aristotelian’ logic by masculine ex-sistence (second formula: ‘*nia*’) reversing itself into ‘ab-sense as-not-one’ or into feminine existence (third formula: ‘*nya*’), to finally open up onto the notall (fourth formula). Or again the universe was denied by an exception; but this exception (represented by Alexander) is only an alleged exception and the universe can only be denied from an ‘ab-sense as-not-one’ (‘*il nya*’ not-an x not ϕ of x). The notall of course exists, it is at work in the second formula which denies the universal: or again Alexander clearly had a presentiment that his universe was not all, since he Alexander was there, outside the universe to limit it. Already at work in —, the notall ‘shies away’ if it does not overcome the obstacle that leads it to —. By failing to make the leap which goes from the second to the third formula (*nia* to *nya*), logic is reduced to the first two formulae: like a horse before an obstacle, the (173) phallic function jibs and refuses to go through the logical chicane which ought to lead it to the feminine sexual formulae. If Alexander had been warned that his position as exception depended on the notall, he would have relativised his particular position and would have laughed at it: he would have opened himself up to the complete development of the phallic function. Alexander ‘he would have been the very first to laugh, there is a case for saying, at his plan to ‘empire’ over the universe’ at his plan to found an empire, which is the worst (*pire*) as compared to the notall; Alexander, in this laughter, would have been ‘the very first’ to displace himself as first signifier, master-signifier, S_1 in the master discourse; it is from this place of semblance that he would have displaced himself towards the place of truth (of the academic discourse) before ending up in the place of the product (of the discourse of the analyst): turning away from his master-plan, he would have gone on to the truth of ‘the universe’ (of the academic), then to the product of analysis, to the phallic function; correlatively to this phallic function, Alexander’s object, his empire, would have played the role of o -object, ‘...ou *pire*’ of the discourse of the analyst: ‘he would have laughed...at his plan to empire the universe’.

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

‘It is precisely there’, in the discourse of mastery into which

Alexander the Great had thrown himself without being able to get out of it, ‘that notsofoolish the philosopher plays all the better the air of the half-said in that he can do so with a good conscience.’ (26a; 469). For if the philosopher holds the role of fool by being the truth of the master discourse (9 note), he always remains at the half-said (the truth is never more than half-said); a fool therefore, but *notsofoolish* (c.f. Althusser), the philosopher

knows well that he does not say the whole truth. Notsofoolish and notall, he can with a good conscience content himself with this half-said and manage a way out for himself 'on condition that he does not suture (*Sutor...*) beyond his soleness.' '*Sutor ne supra crepidam*', 'the cobbler should stick to his last'. The Latin proverb already quoted in *The seminar on 'the purloined letter'* (E 38) is addressed to the police looking for the purloined letter: by assembling meaning-relationships, the police miss out on the question 'of what there remains of the signifier when there is no longer a meaning' (E 39). Likewise, clouded by the conquest of countries significant for his (174) universe, Alexander misses the question of the ab-sense that opens up the feminine formulae. If the philosopher generalises the meaning-relationships to pose universality (of God, of the world, of the ego; of the Oedipus complex, of the unconscious, of the subject), he has not yet got to the ab-sense which is the resource of the analyst. Let him 'not suture beyond his soleness': the logic that assembles the all in a universal (*forall*) limited by ex-sistence can be sewn all at once (Latin *semel*), provided the philosopher (the police or Alexander) does not claim to include in his discourse what escapes him: the asemantic signifier, the phallic function, femininity or the analytic discourse.

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

Why all these warnings about the suture?

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

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

to re-start from the beginning, in a re-presentation different to the first presentation.

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

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

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

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

How are this ab-sense (first turn) and this cut (second turn) justified? In the first turn, the psychoanalytic discourse affirms without justification: our resource is to listen to non-sense and ab-sense. In the second turn, we are already aware of the notall; no doubt the meaning-relationship is not all, but the logic set on route by the notall was not able to spring to life with the philosophical discourse, even if the notall was foreshadowed in Plato's *Parmenides*. How can the discourse of the analyst go beyond the discourse of the philosopher?

(176) First attempt at a response: it ought to be possible to divine what is said by the notall or the Sphynx beyond the response in masculine terms, beyond a spherical topology of a circumscribed universe, beyond the philosophical response. Thus it would be a matter of playing the Other like Tiresias and of divining not the answer to the riddle, but the very structure of the question presented in the riddle (25a).

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

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

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

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

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

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

(177) In the *second turn*, a *first chapter* presents the aspherical topology of the cut which will serve as 'reference' for the psychoanalytic discourse. The first reference could only start, in the first turn, from meaning (and from the philosophical discourse) and was only able to lead us

in a second phase to the phallic function (the '*Bedeutung*'). In the second turn, the reference already starts from ab-sense and from the psychoanalytic discourse; it is explained in aspherical topology (Lacan's 'reference' 'contributing to the analytic discourse' 28b). Thus the signifier will no longer be seen from the angle of its meaning, but as a grammatical and logical element (in as much as it already opens onto saying, the absence of sexual relationship and the phallic function); it is plunged into the topology of surfaces (chapter 1).

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

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

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

CHAPTER 1: THE TEACHING OF TOPOLOGY

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

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

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

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

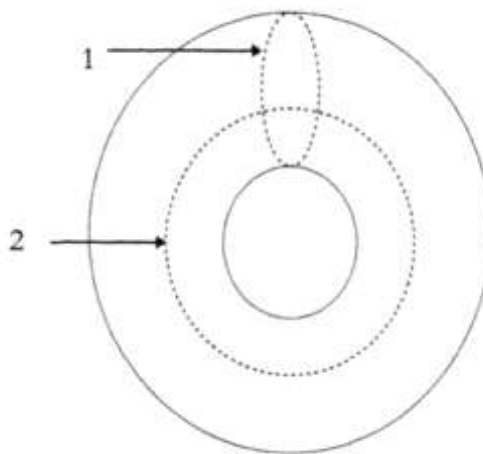


Figure 1

(180) The topology of the torus illustrates imaginarily how the neurotic articulates his demands to desire; since demand (1) turns around the core of the torus but does not strictly return to its point of departure, the arrival point of a first demand can serve as a point of departure for a second demand out of synch with the first:

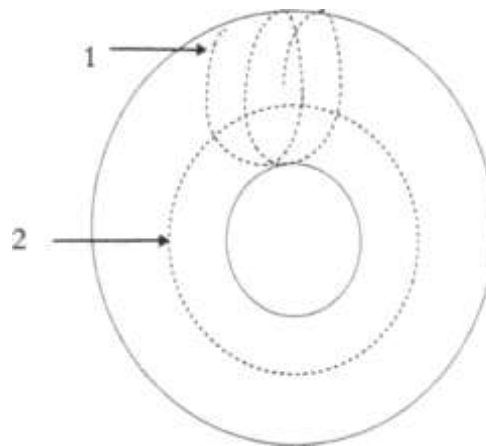
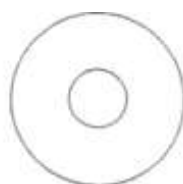


Figure 2

The demands repeated in this way are coiled around the core of the torus like the whorls of an electric dynamo realizing a complete turn of the axis of the torus (2): the repetition of demands (1) carries out a turn around desire (2). This journey of the demands is not the interpretation at stake in analysis: interpretation does not consist in remarking that the demands turn around an axis (oral, anal, for example), that would only be a neurotic commentary on the functioning of the neurosis, which we have already said constituted a delusional interpretation (c.f. p.33).

To go beyond the neurosis, the (neurotic) torus must be 'emptied' (*évider*) and made lose its inflation. This operation of 'emptying' or of deflation, made possible by the supple and elastic structure of the torus, does not involve any break in continuity: the topological structure of (181) the torus remains unchanged. This manipulation prepares a succession of operations – of cuts and of sutures – which will not respect the continuity of the torus. Contrary to the emptying out which respects the structure of the torus, these operations will progress by leaps, by reversals of structure and they will tear the torus from the grasp of spherical topology, namely from the topology of surfaces that have two faces (the front and the back) or again from the topology of 'bi-lateral' surfaces. Emptying or single deflation reduces the volume of the torus; there remains a flat tire, a 'bilateral' surface: Figure 3



Pictured in this way, the deflation or the flattening of the torus produces two folds represented by the two circumferences limiting the torus. For our purposes, the deflation ought to operate in terms of a different folding: it must produce a single fold which goes through two turns of the core of the torus before coming back to its starting point: in this way we obtain something *like* a Moebius strip:

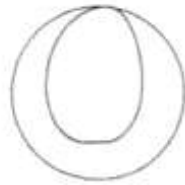
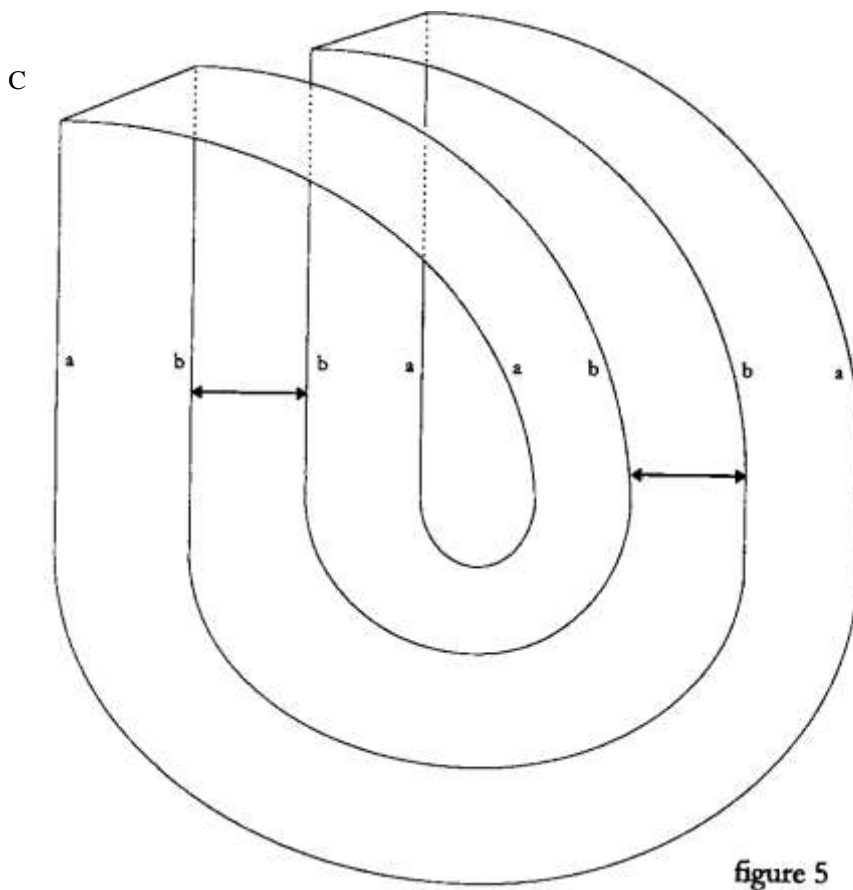


Figure 4

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

From the emptying folded in this way, it appears that torus and Moebius strip are contiguous. This evident fact (*évidence*) ‘is worth demonstrating in a less crude fashion’ (26bc). ‘Let us start from a cut following the edge of the strip that has been obtained’: this cut separates the ‘two’ laminas, the two thicknesses of the toric surface which by sticking together formed something like a Moebius strip:



(183) The 'two' laminas of figure 5 remain in continuity; just as 'one' face of the Moebius strip is continued onto the 'other' face and with it constitutes a single lamina (with two turns and two edges): if you follow the left edge of a first turn of the lamina, you arrive at the right edge of the other turn and reciprocally. Each of the two edges is travelled along by a double turn of the bilateral strip.

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

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

always the constitution of a true Moebius strip (in both cases: path 1 of the *Table of transformations* p.184).

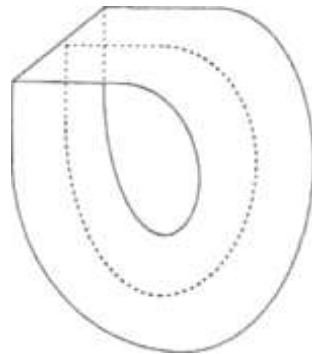
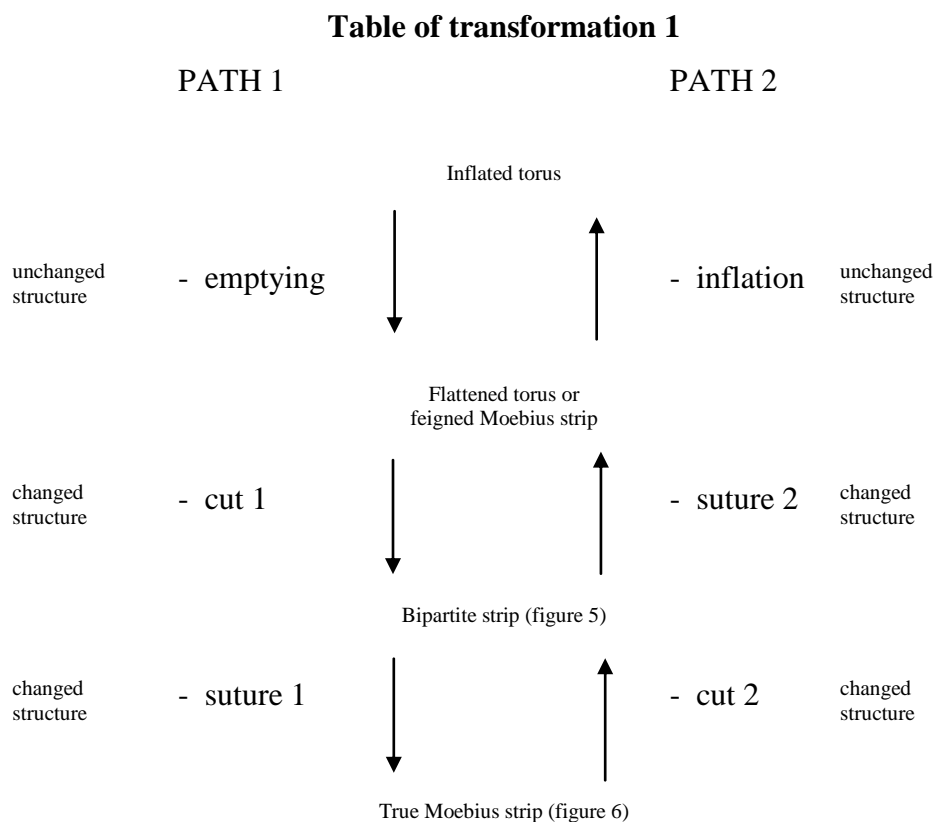


Figure 6

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



The bipartite strip created by cut 1 of the torus can be produced by cut 2 carried out starting from the true Moebius strip (c.f. figure 6): ‘the strip obtained from the torus is revealed to be the bipartite Moebius strip – not from a double-turned cut, but closed by a single one (let us make it median in order to grasp it...imaginarily)’ (26e).

‘But with that what appears, is that the Moebius strip is nothing other than this very cut, the one by which its surface disappears’ (26e-27a): if from a Moebius strip, one trims a little strip that follows its single edge (therefore by following its double turn), we will get two strips: the small strip which follows the edge (and which is a bi-faced and bi-edged bipartite strip) and, stuck in the middle, the Moebius strip trimmed or (doubly) (185) narrowed. If we now increases the width of the trimming up to half the width of the Moebius strip, the Moebius strip will be reduced to the cut and the double turn of the edge of the Moebius strip will then only form a single one: the Moebius strip is narrowed to a single cut (cut 2).

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

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

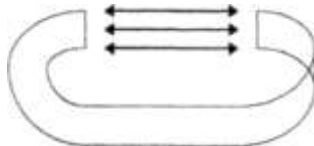


Figure 7

‘It is not from the ideal cross-section by which a strip is twisted by a half-turn that the Moebius strip is to be imagined’ (27a): this cross-section is *ideal* because it is unique and privileged in this construction. Lacan proposes here a construction that is more ‘*real*’, the one that ‘all along its length’ follows ‘the wall of the impossible’ (8e), namely the one that is present at all points of the Moebius strip: ‘There is not one of these points’ where the front and the back ‘are not united’. No point is privileged. We have seen above that the quintessence of the Moebius strip is the ‘median’ cut (‘cut’ 2) equivalent to suture 1 (figure 6). Nevertheless this cut is ‘any one whatever’: for every Moebius strip, an infinity of lines can be buckled

longitudinally in a single turn, provided they keep the property of stitching front and back and, by that very fact, transform a bilateral surface into a (186) unilateral surface. These lines are called ‘lines without points’. This ‘series of lines without points’ constitutes in a way the essence of the Moebius strip (the remainder being only a lateral trimming). Such a line is said to be ‘without points’: it is not composed of a set of points; it is the act of suturing and/or of cutting the front and the back. The points situated on either side of the line are ‘out-of-line points’ (27e) of which we will speak later.

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

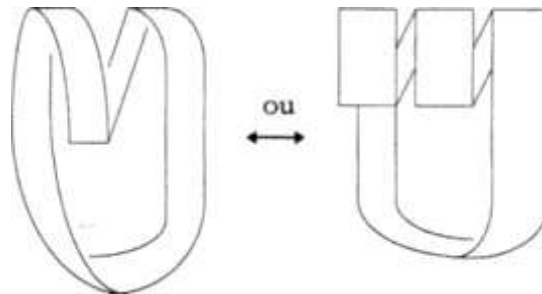


Figure 8 (equivalent to figure 5)

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

strip': it is, at the innermost part of the Moebius strip, what separates the bipartite strip.

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

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

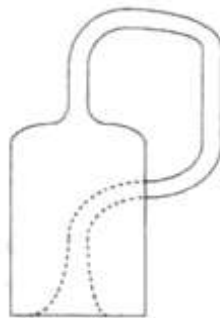


Figure 9

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

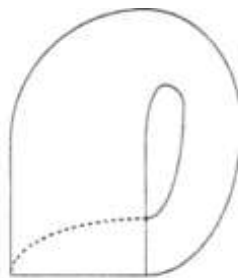


Figure 9bis

Such a drawing of the Klein bottle thus represents each of the two Moebius strips that are stitched together to form the Klein bottle. Or again each of the two strips can be projected onto our sheet of paper in one and the same representation.

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

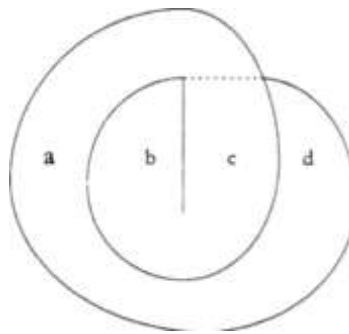


Figure 10

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

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

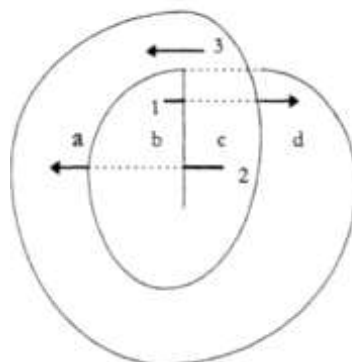


Figure 10bis

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

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

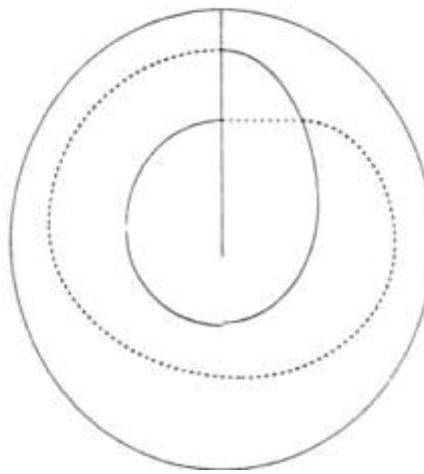


Figure 11

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

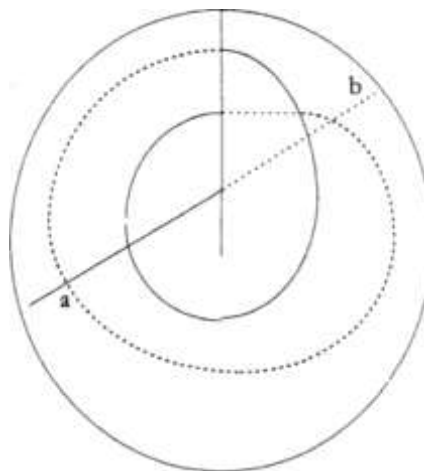
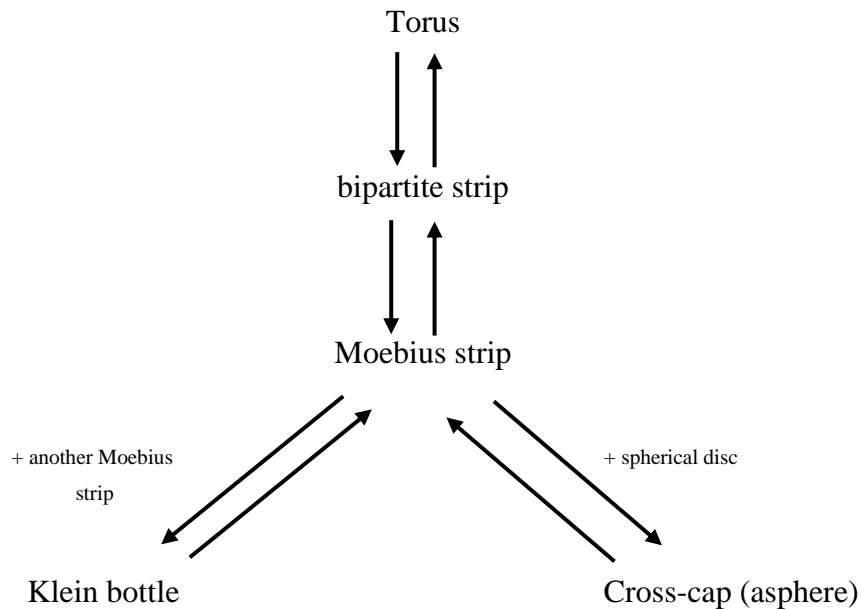


Figure 12

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

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

Table of transformations 2

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

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

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

The first turn of *L’étourdit* had brought us to the notall which animated the four phallic formulae and the four discourses. The second turn will be charged with showing the evidence of the notall at each point and at

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

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

No. Topology is not metaphor.

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

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

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

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

³ In opposition to the metaphorical structure which produces meaning, the metonymical structure adjourns, indeed 'elides' (E 515) meaning.

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

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

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

Topology, a mathematics of space, teaches us the questioning of being: 'is it not this non-space to which mathematical discourse leads us'? The pure matheme is presented as homophonic equivocation (*n'est-ce pas ce - ?/n'espace*); it is developed by grammar which opposes an interrogative, negative, asemanitic protasis (*n'est-ce pas ce - ?*, is it not this..?) to a verb conjugating topological space (*n'space*); it converges on a logic that questions being.

This questioning of being with the goal of making a saying appear was already present in chapter 2 of the first turn. It necessitates a revision of the starting point of all knowledge, notably of the starting point of the *Critique of pure reason*, of Kant's aesthetics (28d); according to Kant, all (195) knowing would presuppose receptivity, thanks to which objects are given to us in the senses by sensation; mathematics itself would imply the imaginary support of a figure: one would have to be helped 'with the fingers of the hand as intuition' (*Critique of pure reason*, p.770). Revising Kant's aesthetics aims at resituating it in logical dependence on saying.

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

'No other stuff to give it than this language of pure matheme'. Just as the phoneme is a distinctive atom of three sounds in a tongue, the matheme is a distinctive atom of mathematical language. This latter 'is the science without consciousness' (9b): it is a barred subject as semblance supported by the truth of the **o**-object. At a topological level, the aspherical Moebius strip (barred subject) only maintains its stability thanks to the supplementary spherical disc (the **o**-object). That the matheme gathers together \$ and **o** might lead us to define the matheme by the phantasy. Nevertheless the matheme is specified by the fact of being a distinctive atom: one matheme is not an other. The phantasy (\$ \leftrightarrow **o**) can only be grasped with respect to several phantasies and the matheme is diffracted into several mathemes characterised by their differences (just as a phoneme is (196) defined by its difference to an other). We can grasp the phantasy

($\$ \diamond \mathbf{o}$) in terms of four modalities which correspond to the four discourses and to the four formulae of sexuation. By that, a new theory of teaching or of transmission is announced. Teaching by the language of pure matheme (which presupposes the exclusion of the meaning-relationship) will be played out in difference, in the logical passage from one discourse to another, from one formula to another, from one form of phantasy to another. The teaching proper to the matheme will do without any recourse to ‘some experience’, which being always founded on *one* discourse, only establishes, stabilises and confirms this discourse. The experience founded on a single discourse (radically opposed to the experience of the discourse of the analyst) encloses its discourse and stabilises it; it withdraws it from a switch to another discourse. These isolated and stabilised discourses are not suitable for teaching or for the matheme.

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

\mathbf{o}	$\$$
S_2	S_1

‘What authorizes me in my case to refer myself to this pure matheme?’ (28de; 472). The authorization of the analyst – ‘he is authorized by himself’ – is to be plunged into the reference, into the *Bedeutung*, into the phallic function that articulate the four discourses, into (197) the topology which articulates the matheme as the passage from a spherical topology to an aspherical topology (or reciprocally). The purity of the matheme and of the discourse of the analyst is not constituted by the exclusion of other discourses, but by their roundabout.

How can this matheme ‘be enriched’? No hope of enriching in the order of metaphor or in the order of sense. The only possible enriching is situated in the ab-sense particularly privileged in mathematical discourse (8e). The ‘recreation’ of the pure matheme diverts us from meaning to open up the field of ab-sense, proper at once to the language of mathematics and to the language of the unconscious (8e-9a). What ab-sense teaches us is at the heart of the experience of analysis: the unconscious is nothing other than the dynamic of ab-sense present inside a discourse in order to make it switch. Such is the ‘reference’ of the ‘present discourse’, of the discourse of the analyst, which cuts the meaning-relationship $S_1//S_2$. Every meaning refers back to another meaning.

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

‘Which amounts to saying that we must say it from the outset’: one must first ‘say it’ before driving into an experience which is supposed to be looking for meaning, one must say it before the datum of the clinic or of

sensibility. That is why Kant's aesthetic necessitates a revision: sensibility no longer takes its starting point in relation to a said which would constitute the inventory of the 'datum', but in the primordial dynamic of a saying, in ab-sense.

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

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

'In our aspheres, the cut, the closed cut, is the said' (29b). The said, a closed cut, is founded on a meaning-relationship $S_1 - S_2$ which comes back to its starting point, of which the two opening sentences are a notorious example. In the asphere (or in the cross-cap), two species of closed cut are distinguished: those which divide the asphere into two parts (figure 13: a and a') and those 'which do not make two parts of this asphere' (figure 13: b)

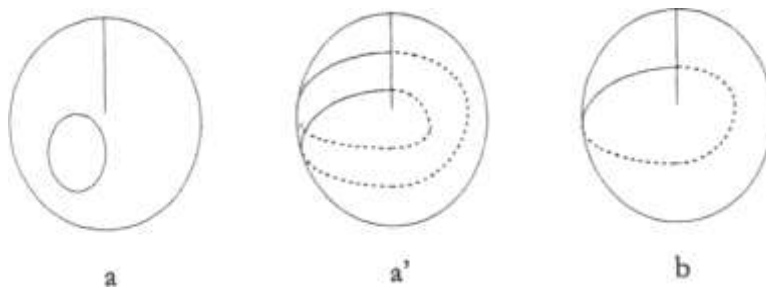


Figure 13

(199) The closed cut ‘makes subject: whatever it circles’: 1) in a’, the barred subject as a Moebius strip between the two turns of the cut; 2) in b, the subject, like the Moebius strip, is reduced to the ‘median’ cut (the two turns are condensed in a single one) and disappears; 3) in a, the closed cut can be manipulated topologically to slip into the position a’. The unilateral surface (the Moebius strip) is ‘subject’, clearly visible in the position a’.

To introduce saying, let us now examine another effect of the said. The closed cut circumscribes a concept ‘notably’ (29b; 472): besides the subject-effect (the Moebius strip), the closed cut circles again a portion of the bilateral sphere: the remainder of the cross-cap. Let us examine this remainder, presented here as concept. Every concept possesses a comprehension that defines it and an extension which delimits its field of application. Every concept allows us to say if one or other element is included in the concept or not: ‘as is depicted by Popilius’ injunction’¹. (200) Each element must respond ‘by yes or by no’ (29b) to the question ‘does it come under the extension of the concept’? These elements have no reality in themselves; the concept does not define any real thing, but simply ‘the being’ as essence of the possible thing. ‘The being’ of which Lacan speaks here is the one that defines specifically such and such a ‘being’, namely such and such an *étant (ens)* whether it exists or not; it is the essence of the ontology of Suarez or of Wolff (and of those who follow this path like Descartes and Spinoza). The being of metaphysics (of Suarez, of Wolff, of Descartes, of Spinoza, etc.), ‘being’ in general is shared out in multiple essences (the world, man, God, but also the philosopher’s stone, the monkey, the unicorn, etc.) and cuts the universe into multiple regions (cosmology, psychology, theology) which are always situated with respect to being in general, to the ‘with-respect-to-all’ of the essence (of ontology).

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

¹ In 168BC, the Seleucide King Antiochos IV Epiphan marched on Alexandria with his troops. The Roman senator Gaius Popilius Laenas goes to meet him and enjoins him to leave Egypt. With his stick, he traces around Antiochos a circle in the sand, ‘a closed cut’: ‘You will not get out of this circle, as long as you have not responded by yes or no to my injunction to leave Egypt’. The episode ends with the retreat of Antiochos.

itself any kind of sense'. In order to give it sense, there must be the intervention of an elsewhere, which will insert it into a saying, into a discourse, for example the philosophical discourse. This is not simply the discourse of the master: 'the philosopher is inscribed...in the discourse of the master' (9 note). If the philosopher holds the specific place of truth in the discourse of the master, this truth is given by the discourse of which \$ is the semblance: in order to be the truth of the discourse of the master, the philosopher is inscribed at first as semblance in the hysterical discourse. To hold this role of the truth of the master, the philosopher at the outset played the 'role of the fool' or the hysteric. Thus Socrates addressed himself to being, 'to the *m'être*-signifier' to put it to work as Other of the hysterical discourse: Socrates' hysteria takes any '*m'être*' whatever in order to demonstrate its inconsistency. In a second phase, the philosopher is at the service of the master-signifier, in other words, he plays the role of the truth (201) in the master discourse; there the master-signifier 'can be brilliant, or be beautiful' (29c; 473). The psychoanalyst knows that the brilliant like the beautiful hides the horror of castration¹ and already announces something quite different. The philosopher is therefore at the service of the signifier, as a pure subject-point (*sum*) that the signifier (*cogito*) represents for another signifier (*Cogito ergo sum*): he is '*m'être* subject' that can be 'redoubled to infinity': 'I think therefore I am' and think that I think, etc. Ever since pre-Socratic interrogation, the philosophical discourse already constituted a series and a passage through several discourses.

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

¹ The '*brilliant/shine* (German: *Glanz*) on the nose' is the exemplary fetish of the glance (French: *regard*) masking the castration of the mother (Freud, *Fetichism*, 1927). Beauty is 'the final dam against access to the last thing, the mortal thing,...' (Seminar VIII, *Transference*, 6.11.1960)

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

¹ According Ernout and Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, 1939, p.302, 'the present participle of *sum* would be *sens*, which is moreover preserved in composites such as *ab-sens*, *prae-sens*, *con-sentes*, etc.' (Etienne Gilson, *L'être et l'essence*, p.335).

question of essence and existence problematic, the Thomist philosopher makes the philosophical discourse function starting from \$ (from the cut, from the Moebius strip) in such a way that he produces the **o**-object for the pleasure of the master, for ‘surplus enjoying’.

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

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

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

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

The change brought about by these cuts can be ‘denominated topologically’ (30a) by the result of these cuts: torus, cylinder, bipartite strip, Moebius strip (see the *Table of transformations* 2, p.191). In what way is the analytic discourse implicated in these topological manipulations and figures? We can only respond to this question by interrogating ‘the relationship of saying to said’. The first turn worked on resurrecting the saying forgotten behind the said: saying ex-sists every discourse.

Nevertheless ‘it is not in every discourse that a saying comes to exist’ (23d), (204) since saying presupposes a change of discourse. It is a matter of specifying with the help of topology the saying proper to the discourse that implies the change of discourse.

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

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

Free association implies that ‘saids’ are ‘not all’ reducible to demand. Far from being the monopoly of women, the notall is first of all a logical function where psychoanalytic interpretation will be put into operation, without being reduced to an explanation of ‘saids’ or of some analysis or other of demand. How is that possible? Topology in its function as matheme or of teaching shows that on the hither side of the torus (where we inscribe demand) and on the hither side of the sphere (where we inscribe (205) the concept and the essence), there is the asphere that conditions them.

‘Interpretation, as I formulated it once, is brought to bear on the cause of desire’. The differentiation between demand and desire at stake in interpretation goes back to Seminar VI, *Desire and its interpretation* (1958-59). Desire can only appear as ‘metonymy of the lack of being’ (E 640): as metonymy, it functions without production of meaning (in the ‘resistance of meaning’ E 515); as ‘lack of being’, it presupposes the putting in question of being (‘is it not this -?’). The ‘cause of desire’ implies here what is missing or elided in being, as we have seen in the preceding paragraph: the **o**-object cause of desire in as much as it radically escapes desire and thus justifies its impossible chase. ‘This’ – namely the revelation of the cause of desire by interpretation – can nevertheless only be done by starting ‘from demand which by its modal envelopes the totality of saids’. But the (modal) envelope of demand must be cut so that interpretation can reveal the **o**-object.

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

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

The **o**-object (or the cause of desire) corresponds to a ‘spherical topology’ (30c; 474) and ‘is projected onto the other of the, *heterogeneous*, composite’, onto the Moebius strip (or the modal of the demand). The **o**-object only appears as **o**-object by its projection onto the heterogeneous, namely only if the modal of demand (represented by the Moebius strip) and the apophantic of the cause of desire (the being put in question, represented

by the ‘supplementary disc’) are heterogeneous to one another (‘the logic of the *Heteros*...is to be constructed...starting from the incompatibility of the One to Being’ 23e).

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

‘Nothing is more of a nature to take itself to be spherical (30d).

Nevertheless, ‘however thinly one reduces its torso part by a half-turn’, the Moebius strip, defined as ‘single-turn cut’ or as ‘line without points’ introduces the heterogeneous: not everything is spherical, the cut of the cross-cap maintains the aspherical. The (totalized) universe includes the impossible, since it is necessarily supported by the modal of demand. The analytic discourse ‘touches on the real by encountering it as impossible’: analytic interpretation presupposes that the real of the **o**-object should be articulated from the impossible and as heterogeneous to the demand; the notall of the demand opens up the place of the **o**-object. The notall present in demand is not reducible to demand: it is the *Heteros* of the two parts of the cross-cap, of the saying of demand and of the object of desire.

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

it as impossible and the real of the passage from the spherical to the aspherical follows.

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

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

It is the psychoanalytic discourse that produces the phallic function.

CHAPTER 2: THE DISCOURSE OF THE ANALYST

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

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

As for every discourse, there is no sexual relationship in the psychoanalytic discourse: the relationship between the semblance (the **o**-object, in other words the analyst) and the Other (the barred subject, in other words, the analyser) is impossible. Analyst and analyser are fundamentally disparate. How ground the ‘status’ (31a; 474) of the psychoanalytic discourse? To say ‘status’ is to say ‘stability’ or ‘*stabilitat*’. In the other discourses, the status of the discourse can be given by the meaning: thus the stability of the hysterical discourse is given by the Other, S_1 , who works at producing a knowledge; thus the stability of the master discourse is provided by the slave put to work by the master; thus the stability of the academic discourse is assured by knowledge as semblance. For its part, the discourse of the analyst is founded on the powerlessness which is proper to it, the absence of the meaning-relationship ($S_1//S_2$); now the bodies ($\$$ and **o**) (210) can only be stabilised by meaning: they ‘*labitent*’ this discourse; their place is labile, without any stability. The stable status of the psychoanalytic discourse is impossible.

From this constitutive lability, Lacan concludes that it is ‘impossible that psychoanalysts should form a group’ (31a). Nevertheless, groupings of psychoanalysts are attested. What then is meant by group? The group is a

fundamental mathematical structure associating to a set a law of internal associative composition, possessing a neutral element, and such that every element admits of a symmetrical one for this law. One can associate the protagonists of the three non-analytic discourses to form groups, namely pairs (master-slave, academic-student, hysteric-signifier) or races (the race of masters, of slaves, of pedants, of fags, of bores, of shits); each of these individuals remains stable (there is therefore a neutral element that stabilises each of the protagonists); and every element is presented as symmetrical to another.

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

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

The group-effect adds 'imaginary obscenity to the discourse-effect': sexual representations overlap the social bond woven from the 'lability'

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

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

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

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

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

Beyond this temptation of the group, beyond the fact that those who install themselves in the same discourse can with difficulty 'live otherwise than in a group' (31de; 475), there remains the question of the social expression of the psychoanalytic discourse; it is impossible to make a group in it or to install oneself in it. One 'inhabits it' (*'labite'*) in a labile way, for

it is supported by the heterogeneity that animates the roundabout of discourses: the analytic discourse implies its own reversal; it calls on other discourses and 'their group-rampart' (31e).

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

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

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

'We live under the reign of scientific discourse' which has the same matrix as the hysterical discourse (see 'Science and truth' and *Télévision* p.36; AE 523). That 'man is mortal' indicates that the universal is only possible since it is the product of the hysterico-scientific discourse. This discourse produces a knowledge (S_2) by means of the Other (S_1), man. Its product, 'all men are mortal', can be expressed by its contradictory 'life-insurance'. The semblance of this discourse is the barred hysterical subject (213) or the foreclosed scientific subject. The truth of this discourse is the 'calculation of probabilities' (32b):

Barred or foreclosed subject	Man
Calculation of probabilities	'all men are mortal' vs life-insurance

'There are nevertheless, in our day', people who do not situate themselves in the scientific discourse: 'they want from death a different truth that other discourses assure'. Death is a place of truth for different

discourses: death as probability for the hysteric and the scientist, 'death taken as a risk' for the master, death as 'eternal memory' of the master S_1 in academic knowledge.

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

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

'The love-hate' (32d), produced by the hysterical discourse, demonstrates that all love is ambivalent, since love and hate necessarily extend into one another and thus compose 'the single face of a Moebius strip'. The comic proper to the analyst – the *Comédie* – is the reversal of his own discourse: if the analyst's discourse goes beyond the others, it

nevertheless remains that it is in its turn dislodged by the discourse of the hysteric who puts it in question again. Wanting to talk about love, 'in his group-life', the analyst is drawn into the roundabout of discourses; his truth is reversed and 'he never denominates anything of it but hate'. This resurgence of hate clearly indicates that his knowledge of love is above all ignorance.

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

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

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

The psychoanalytic group can nevertheless have a quite different function than those of miscognising and of 'how to silence'. It is in so far as the psychoanalytic group wants to be the specific saying of the discourse of the analyst that it is 'impossible' (31ab) and it is as such that it is the real of

this very discourse. A psychoanalytic group demonstrates the impossibility of the analyst's saying: at best, the impossible transferential bond, structured as a phantasy (\$ ◇ o) operates there.

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

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

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

Impossibility is first of all the 'absence of sexual relationship', for which an organ-relationship is going to supply. 'The organ-relationship of language to the speaking being, is metaphor' (33a). The phallic function is essentially non-metaphorical; nevertheless, it is necessarily plugged by the relationships to the different organs at stake in the pre-genital drives. In a first phase (1958) Lacan introduced the phallus imaginarily by the (paternal) metaphor: 'The meaning of the phallus...should be evoked in the imaginary of the subject by the paternal metaphor' (E 557). This metaphor, recalled in *L'Etourdit* (14bd), was to be overtaken by the formulae of sexuation which,

as mathemes, do not depend on metaphor (28bd). The metaphorical relationship constituting the phallus is '*stabitat*', it stabilises the speaking being. But to inhabit it, is to engage with the phallic function and go through a series of reversals. By thus going on to the phallic function, the speaking being is '*labitant*', always labile. By this fact, the phallic function (217) 'carries the impact of a real' for the speaking being (33ab): it is not a well established 'being', but it goes through the different positions explicitated in the four phallic formulae.

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

'The analyst might be saved' (33b; 476) from the world-view proper to analysis because he is himself rejected from the analytic discourse, in so far as he is the 'reject' pushed aside from the goal of language in (218) general by his very ab-sense, inasmuch as he is the **o**-object in the position

of semblance. This position of the 'reject of language' results from the continual displacement of the discourses: the rejection is opposed to the correction of the discourse (9c) and implies the mechanism for passing to another discourse.

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

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

(219) But in what way can the experience of analysis share the other experiences of our day if not by knowledge? Knowledge, in the position of truth in the discourse of the analyst, remains beyond reach: knowledge is put in question by analysis. In order to question his own knowledge, the

knowledge of the unconscious, it would be better that the analyst 'should know something' about the knowledge proper to other experiences, to other discourses. The knowledge of the discourse of analysis is thus 'supposed' by means of through the knowledge of the other discourses. The supposed knowledge, in which transference consists, is nothing other than the setting in motion of this knowledge drawn along in a cycle of questioning responses by the work of the roundabout of the discourses or of the primary processes. In other words, the questioning of knowledge by analysis presupposes the opinion produced by the hysteric, the faith that the master puts in the Other, the knowledge in the semblance position of the academic.

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

'It remains that science took off, cleanly, from the fact of letting go of natural supposition' (33d). Natural supposition 'implies that the body's connections with nature' is natural, namely that the relationship uniting the word to the outside object designated by this word is direct, in as much as it is supposed to be simply natural. By the signifier, where S_1 is used for something other than natural supposition, psychoanalysis upsets this naive relationship of the word to the thing, renders it impossible. Science takes off precisely at the moment when Galileo lets go of the natural supposition that a heavy body would fall more quickly than a light body; by his experimentation on top of the Tower of Pisa, he 'falsifies' (c.f. K. Popper) this erroneous supposition that was supposed to be natural. The supposition (S_1), no longer being natural, can be put to work and produce a knowledge (S_2) responding to natural supposition. The work of the signifier is set en route not because of the fall of a body, but thanks to the fall of the natural (220) supposition. The supposition 'is invented', is revealed to be false, which 'involves an idea of the real (33e), built on the work of the signifier in as much as it produces a new knowledge: all bodies (heavy or light) fall with an acceleration of 9.81m/s^2 . This idea of the real, found by the 'falsification' of S_1 , may 'well be true'; but this word 'true' is not appropriate to the real, since the latter is formed by the logic of the impossible, which makes the hypothesis or the natural supposition collapse: it is a matter of

'proving' that 'the idea' is false, that it involves a reversal, a collapse that goes from S_1 towards S_2 , in the case of scientific discourse. But this S_2 'slips from the arms of the discourse that embraces it'. 'The idea of the real', in science, is again going to be demonstrated as 'fallen', as '*falsa*' (feminine past participle of the Latin *fallere* to make slip; or feminine of the supposed, simulated, invented, false, *falsus*). 'The idea of the real' drawn from the experience of analysis goes a step further: it presupposes not alone the reversal of an S_1 into an S_2 , but again the reversal of one discourse in favour of another discourse.

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

'Realising the topology' (34a) of saying, consists in giving to saying the place of real (in aspherical topology); saying demonstrates itself as real from the impossible of the universe (of spherical topology). By this real of topology, we do not get out of phantasy, since phantasy is this topology; it is the cut on the cross-cap which has an 'effect of topological subversion' (29e-30c), it articulates a Moebius strip (\$) with the supplementary disc (o): (\$ \diamond o). But this 'realisation' (in quotes in the text) is aimed not simply at the real (the diamond) but also the realisation of this real, in other words the

apparition of this real in reality (made up of the imaginary and the symbolic): it is precisely phantasy as such that 'supports our reality' (16c). We do not get out of phantasy 'even by becoming aware of it', since any realisation occurs starting from the aspherical structure of phantasy. Lacan has picked the 'flower' of 'this topology' in mathematical discourse, 'the most emptied of sense that there is'; this discourse, which does not start 'from any reality', but from figures or letters which signify nothing in themselves, 'is renewed' only by saying; since it does not produce meaning – it 'does without any metaphor' – , it is in the journey of saying which is renewed by every confrontation with the impossible; it is in retreat from sense, it is 'metonymically of ab-sense'. The 'reality of phantasy', the realised phantasy 'is founded' on the analytic discourse whose semblance and Other correspond precisely to the two terms of the phantasy (\$ and \mathfrak{o}). This reality of the two terms only inscribes the 'real of the phantasy' (written as a diamond: \diamond), namely the process of the structure.

Why would the real of the phantasy underlying its realisation 'not be number' (34b) at stake notably in repetition? And even number 'quite crudely', independent of the perceived object as well as of the thinking (222) subject, number *qua* pure arithmetical entity? Number is a mathematical object apparently 'simpler' than topology; it is comprehended by every language and is central to the vernacular. The 'simplicity' of number 'is not so simple': it is not 'formed from a single element' (*simplex*), the One. The One is incompatible with Being (c.f. Plato's *Parmenides*) and this 'incompatibility' triggers the logic of the *Heteros* (23e) and of saying: 'there is a case for saying': the 'case', the 'collapse', is precisely what engages with saying. Number is a 'case', namely a 'collapse' in mathematical discourse: number and the enumerable are only a reduction with respect to the notall which remains inaccessible from numeration. [Lacan 'is always quick to conjure up the case' by saying that 'it is the case', for example, for Alexander the Great (25e). By saying (that it is the case), he already highlights the notall that underlies it and in this way removes the danger of reducing everything to the case of the first two formulae of sexualisation.]

‘Cantor’s saying’ (34c), introducing the power of the continuous beyond the enumerable infinite, situates ‘the transfinite’ (24a; c.f. my note p.154-155): the infinity of ‘the sequence of numbers’ is only a schematised and reductive ‘representation’ of the power of the continuous which is much more complex: number is only a cut in the power of the continuous, just as the Moebius strip is reduced to a cut on the cross-cap. The cut is the birth of the two; it is simplification by ‘*deux*’; it is prior to the enumeration ‘*d’eux*’ (of ‘the enumerable to infinity’ or of the demand).

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

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

‘My topology’ (34cd; 478) is not a thinking substance which would pose beyond the practice a theory that would justify this practice. The topology of saying (or the cross-cap) is on the contrary the practice of the

reversals of discourse; psychoanalytic discourse opens up in each discourse a gap that pushes it towards its own reversal.

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

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

normalisation into pedantic, academic knowledge which deviates still more from the modification-structure proper to psychoanalytic discourse.

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

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

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

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

‘For we must *say it*’ (35ab, my italics). The unconscious is the motor of saying which goes from one discourse to the other. ‘The unconscious is a fact insofar as it is supported by the very discourse that establishes it’, by the psychoanalytic discourse. Analysts may ‘reject the burden’ of supporting the unconscious, namely of making it function; the

unconscious only functions in the psychoanalytic discourse in so far as the place of semblance is occupied by the **o**-object; and the **o**-object in the semblance-position is unstable, it is a 'promise of rejection'. In this uncomfortable position, the analyst destined for rejection, does not reduce himself to waste, to the anal object; he is rather the 'voice' which 'will have had an effect on it', this silent 'voice' by which the discourse of the analyst (226) is effective. It is only later that we will know that 'it will have had an effect' (in the future perfect), provided it keeps silent instead of responding or that its response only re-launches the question.

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

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

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

Anatomical sexuality is raised up by logical sexuation (an *Aufhebung*). 'The most common approaches' to sexuation respond to a drift of the phallic formulae according to the so-called 'pre-genital' (oral, anal), in fact 'extra-genital' (oral, anal, scopic, vocal) stages, since it is not a matter of (227) psychogenesis but of structure: sexuality is not determined as metaphor of the genital, but in the metonymical sequence of **o**-objects: oral, anal, scopic, vocal. Interpretation will accompany this metonymical sequence, will link the oral to the voice by the 'oracular' sexual displacement in the order of the **o**-objects, (oral, ass, ocular, oracular) (37b). By this displacement of genital metaphor towards extra-genital metonymy, the analyst 'plays the role of revealing the torsion in knowing': knowing (*co-naissance*) presupposed the co-naturality of the thing and of the said; the fall of the 'natural' supposition had inaugurated science; going beyond the latter, analysis reveals the metonymical structure of desire and the reversals of saying which, like a Moebius strip, twist discourse. 'The no/step of the real (*le pas du réel*)', the step by which one gets to the real is the absence of sexual relationship; 'an absence perfectly locatable' in each of the discourses, it is the absence of relationship between the semblance and the Other, proved when the product of this very discourse is revealed as powerless to touch its truth. No mathematisation, none of the four formulae, none of the four mathemes allows us to find a sexual relationship in any of the four discourses. Hence their roundabout.

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

The first matheme ($\forall x. \Phi x$), 'Worldliness', was placed under the sign of possibility ('no universal which is not reducible to the possible', 7c). How can we get out of this first matheme, this first Worldliness? By having recourse to the 'impasses of logic', notably to the notall (fourth formula) and to the *hommoinsun*, atleastoneman (at least one: --- , second

formula). These impasses 'show the issue outside the fictions of (228) Worldliness' (35d): the signifier in as much as it aims by the symbolic to give images of the real (language aiming at depicting reality, at putting words on things) is fiction: it feigns a world and hopes thereby to be able to fix the real. Mathematics and psychoanalysis do not aim at the real by a fiction of meaning and of Worldliness; they fix it on the contrary by hugging 'the wall of the impossible' (8e), by the 'impasses of logic'. Each discourse is coiled around the real, each discourse is a stage in the roundabout of discourses which turn around the real. To rediscover the real in each discourse allows us 'to dispense with the myths by which each discourse is ordinarily supplied' since each myth depends on a very limited logic, where the epic form sets aside the question of logical structure¹. The *fixion* around which each discourse is coiled is the *o*-object, 'disc' (30c) with which the Moebius strip is supplemented to fix the structure of the cross-cap.

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

¹ See Seminar XVIII, 9 June 1971 and *Télévision*, p.51

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

Lacan's 'worry' is precisely to present this **o**-object in several layers. It is being, circled by the real, which is the **o**-object. The aphorisms – 'being is nothing' or 'being is unsayable' – were not explained by Lacan: (230) they are simply presented 'in the bud', not for the pleasure of an unwarranted obscurantism, but in order that they 'may make the burial pits of metaphysics re-flower': the 'layers' which support the noumenon are thus

bud, flower, fruit and seed, the oral then anal object before being scopical and finally vocal. The noumenon is a 'trifle': starting from the 'foolishness' that presented being as unsayable, it is possible for us to speak sweet nothings, and this trifling allows the *o*-object to subsist in the futility of the different layers by which it is articulated. These different layers are fitted together in the 'marvelous efflorescence' (8de) of the impossible: they are layers of the impossible. The 'burial pits of metaphysics' (the superimpositions of the noumenon) 'will prove to be surplus-nonsense, funnier, to say the word, than what thus leads us...' (36b). The *o*-object, as surplus-enjoying, is defined from the layers of the impossible, from the 'surplus-nonsense', from the non-sense¹ proper to the witticism: the technique of the witticism by nonsense uses a stupidity, to make obvious, to highlight, another stupidity, another absurdity, c.f. Freud, *Jokes and their relationship to the unconscious*, SE VIII 58]. This foolishness or non-sense of the 'noumenon' or of the 'second sex' (23c) may well serve us to indicate the path of absence, of non-sense, of topology without meaning.

The noumenon leads us '...to what?' (36b). Here Lacan feigns surprise at the homophony that he has produced and that leads him, by way of the noumenon that leads us and which he seems not to have seen immediately⁴. The homophonic equivocation (*nous mène/noumène*) only (231) appears in effect after the event in the loop that develops it into a grammatical equivocation and a logical equivocation (see 48-49): the noumenon (as noun) *nous mène* (as verb) for whoever understands it 'in proper logic'; the 'first truths', the 're-flowerings of the burial pits of metaphysics' are only ever 'half-said, well cut...conjugated by going back: you meditate, I speak badly of (*tu médites, je médis*)' (10e). These truths must also follow the logical path of the impossible: 'are indeed the very text from which there are formulated the symptoms of the major neuroses, the two' (36b): 'Desire must be taken to the letter' (title of the 5th section of

¹ In Seminar VI (21 January 1959), Lacan refers to English 'nonsense', especially to Lewis Carroll, *The adventures of Alice in wonderland*, and to Edward Lear, *Book of Nonsense* (1846), *Poèmes sans sens*, Paris, 1968.

⁴ It is not the first time, in Lacan, that there is a play on...the 'noumenon, by only being able...to make a sign to the *nous* (Greek,[and French])' and the '... *nous mène*': 'How far does Sade 'lead us' in the experience of this enjoyment, or simply of his truth' (*Kant avec Sade*, E 786).

The direction of the treatment, E 620). From the letter that leads us, the hysterical neurosis appears as ‘desire to have an unsatisfied desire’ (E 621) and obsessional neurosis as the maintenance of ‘desire in the impossible’ (E 632). These neurotic forms of the impossible are taken up again in the two masculine formulae of sexuation: the unsatisfied desire of the hysteric is taken up again in $\forall x.\Phi x$, the impossible desire installs the obsessional in the exception $\neg \Phi a$. Just by themselves, these two thus constitute the male norm, *norme mâle* (the canonical formulae of masculinity). To respond to the norm, by articulating oneself around the ‘Oedipus complex’ (14e), is ‘nor-mal’ (36b).

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

CHAPTER 3: SENSE AND STRUCTURE

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

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

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

The noumenon has led us in the preceding paragraph to the *o*-object; again it is philosophy that traces out a path for us towards sense. What is ‘sense’? To tackle it with Heidegger’s ‘leaden-footed’ method means giving its weight to each word: *What is called thinking?* gives weight to some words of Parmenides: ‘It is necessary to say and to think that the individual being (*l’étant*) is’; this sentence condenses, for Heidegger, the whole history of philosophy. We already glimpse that Lacan’s sense with its winged feet will take flight far from Heidegger’s leaden-footed sense. With the latter, we are ‘brought down to earth’, to the matter-of-fact-ness of *l’étant*, which translates at once two Latin forms: *ens*, present participle of *esse*, and *sens*, present participle of *sum*. The leaden-footed sense is therefore quite simply *étant*, being (as essence). This first condensation is reduplicated by another which, for its part, is attributed to Kant (36cd; 480). Let us examine first of all the composition of *The critique of pure reason* (1781-1787), and more precisely of its first section (the *transcendental theory of elements*): 1⁰ *the transcendental aesthetic* poses the (234) spatio-temporal frame of every phenomenon (sensibility), 2⁰ *the transcendental analytic* articulates the categories of every object conceived (understanding), 3⁰ *the transcendental dialectic* analyses the reasonings that extend judgments beyond their competence, towards the *transcendental* (and illusory) ideas of a soul, a world and a transcendent God (reason). For Kant, *The critique of pure reason* is purely ‘transcendental’; logically first, it is the

condition of possible experience: for an object of knowledge to exist, it must appear in the aesthetic of space-time, in the analytic of judgment and in the deceptive dialectic or reasoning. According to Lacan, this 'topology' of pure reason is reckoned to be 'inept' because it only 're-enforced' the 'bourgeois' Kant's own 'argumentation'. The bourgeois claims to be treated as a Master while refusing to risk his life (this is the definition of the bourgeois according to Lacan's 'master', Kojève; c.f. his *Kant*, p.97); thus, Kant finds himself out of his depth in dealing with sense from an outside, transcendent point of view. Hence there results his inaptitude to grasp his 'ineptness'. Lacan's judgment is due only to an error of Lacan: he imputes *transcendence* to Kant where the latter specifies clearly that it is a matter of the *transcendental*. Kant very clearly distinguishes 'transcendental' and 'transcendent': the transcendental is the condition of experience (preliminary and inherent in every experience, this condition is for all), the transcendent is on the contrary what is situated outside all experience (the 'unsayable', the bourgeois takes advantage of). Lacan is wrong here about Kant's transcendental approach and understands it as transcendence (Kant had already responded in his life-time to a similar lack of comprehension formulated by Schulze); Kantian aesthetics and dialectic are supposed to remain transcendent, namely outside Kant. In opposition to this transcendence erroneously attributed to Kant, Lacan situates the aesthetic and the dialectic in the immanence of the discourse of the analyst, namely in a transcendental approach (in the Kantian sense): the topological aesthetic operates in the (235) articulation of saying and the dialectic presupposes the structure (41e), endorsed in the phantasy (35a). After the Heideggerian condensation of the whole history of thought into a few words of Parmenides, after the so-called Kantian condensation of thought into transcendence, there comes a third 'enormous' condensation: the one by which Heidegger condenses his own project with that of Kant (*Kant and the problem of metaphysics*): 'Heidegger's thesis, which he is going to try to justify by the texts, is that the imbrication of sensibility and understanding, of intuition and of thought, of time and the categories is so perfect that their unity (namely that of knowing) is not posterior to their existence as elements, but anterior and original; to the point that it is only starting from

this very unification that the elements are susceptible to being distinguished and defined separately' (*Introduction* by A. de Waelhens and W. Biemel, p.24). These condensations are supposed to go to the ultimate meaning of thought insofar as it is supposed to unite in itself all the elements of the latter. Riveted to the earth by such considerations, Heidegger and Kant could only think with 'leaden feet' and have congealed the movement of thought and the reversals of discourse.

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

What is the sense of the 'enormous condensation' of philosophy? Where is sense if, for Heidegger, the elements that composed the history of philosophy are imbecilic with respect to Parmenides? And where is sense, if the Kant of *The critique of practical reason* sets his face unflinchingly against any subjective particularity that might upset the universality of the moral law? What sense would there be in remaining insensitive to the 'pathetic' element, proper to sensibility, which might trouble the purity of

the moral law¹? Has this transcendence unjustly attributed to Kant, this imbecility, has it a sense, has it the sense of structure? Kant perceived this sense in his study of Swedenborg (*Dreams of a visionary explained by metaphysical dreams*, 1766); in effect, the sense of the life of Swedenborg (1688-1772) – who, from being the brilliant empirical scientist that he was, went beyond the limits of reason in order to become a theosophist and the founder of a sect – , prefigures the composition of *The critique of pure reason* (1781-1787); the first (aesthetic and analytic) part of the *Critique*: how is knowledge possible? (first scientific part of Swedenborg's life). The second (dialectical) part of the *Critique*: toward what illusions is reason necessarily drawn? (second theosophical part of the same life).

‘Sense is never produced except by the translation of one discourse into another’ (36e), which the two condensations already indicated to us: thought is the translation of Parmenides (for Heidegger), the topology (of thought) translates the life of Swedenborg (for Kant). This fact can be touched in the movement of translation which, by changing (237) discourse, leads to sense.

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

¹ The insult is the prime example of the ‘pathetic’ element that may subjectively justify an action (vengeance, for example); it is a matter here of a purely *subjective* maxim and not of a *universal* moral law (*Critique of practical reason*, p.628)

Critique of judgment. Kant insists on many occasions on the systematic and complete character of his critique. ‘That some faint sense may have emerged by a tangential illumination’ from these *Critiques*, their meanings are effaced and transformed into punctuations in the journey of sense. It is like the way analytic discourse illuminates the other discourses by a tangential light (9c). The very term ‘Critique’ is put in question by Lacan: not having known either the phenomena of the unconscious and its reversals, nor the developments of mathematical logic (which introduced the ‘marvelous efflorescence’ of the impossible and subvert classical logic), Kant seems to have failed in his critical project: ‘despite the well-known title of his works, (...) he only bears witness to being the plaything of his unconscious, which because of not thinking could neither judge nor calculate in the work that it blindly produces’ (*Television*, p.59, c.f. Freud *The interpretation of dreams*, p. XXX).

(238) *Kant avec Sade*, which Lacan wrote in 1963 (E 765), had ‘shown the playfulness’ of the *Critique of natural reason* (1788): the universality of the Kantian moral law (implying the sacrifice of sensibility or the Kantian ‘pathetic’) is translated into the universality of a Sadian right to enjoyment (implying another’s sacrifice): the subject of (‘pathetic’) pleasure barred by the moral law in the Kantian discourse becomes victim, subject barred (\$) by the tormentor’s right to enjoyment (o-object) in Sadian discourse. Illuminated in this way by Sade, the *Critique of practical reason* seems to reveal itself as ‘playful’ in accordance with the structure of the phantasy (\$ ◇ o). Unveiling the logic of the phantasy, Sade is indeed ‘logical’ (37a), but ‘not any funnier’ than Kant for all that: in effect he lacks the operation of the phallic function which would go beyond this masculine logic of universality⁵.

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

⁵ Kant ‘for a nothing, would make us lose our seriousness, except that he has not the slightest sense of the comic...But someone who, for his part, absolutely lacks it...is Sade’ (E 783). Let us not forget that Kant, for his part, has the sense of the particular judgement, not reducible to the universal (*Critique of pure reason*, p.881-882).

By advancing into sense, we are therefore reduced to losing meaning. The only thing that enlightens us is the 'little light' of sense. 'There is no lack of sense in the so-called pre-Socratic vaticinations' (37a; 480): Heidegger's return to Parmenides is valid as a way of getting sense to move on; for us it opens out onto Plato's *Parmenides* and the logic of the *Heteros* or of the notall (23ce). As 'vaticinations', the pre-Socratics maxims foretell the future and open up sense; 'impossible to say which', since sense is developed precisely from the impossible which alone can encircle saying. Let us therefore write '*çasysent*' as a (239) holophrase not yet articulating the logic of sense, since this sense does not have the recourse of meaning. Freud 'licks his chops' at these vaticinations not only when he equals 'the pre-Socratics' (E 585) in the sentence *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*, but again when he borrows the true originating drives (*Eros* and *Thanatos*) from Empedocles' two fundamental principles: love and hate (*Analysis terminable and interminable*, 1937). This reference is 'not the best of them' since love and hate are 'ambivalence, in other words the single face of the Moebius strip' (32d). It does not matter moreover since Freud knows how to keep 'his sense of direction' (S 37b), to make use of the death drive to orientate himself towards sense. That is enough to 'see that interpretation is of sense and goes against meaning': interpretation, as 'oracle', as will of the Other, is not the pinning down of a meaning; it neither hides nor reveals but opens up the sense which disqualifies meanings in favour of 'sexual displacement'. The sexual in effect is not riveted to the genitility of a sexual relationship, but to the 'extra-genital' journey of what supplies for the absence of the sexual relationship, to the *o*-object which again takes up into itself the imperative sense of the 'four' *o*-objects inscribed in '*oraculaire*': oral, ass, ocular and oracular (*oral, cul, oculaire et oraculaire*). Here it is not a matter here of taking up again the common meaning-traits of objects, but of outlining the required passage of sense from the one to the other.

'It is the misery of historians' to have to rely 'on meaning-documents'; the historian does not go beyond the meaning of his sources, a meaning that he actively seeks without ever hoping to arrive at the indubitable truth which only serves him as an illusory motive. In translating

these meanings, the historian does indeed read a sense: the past is read in perspective. But anyone who wants 'to hang the enormity of the condensation' on a theory and on an added sense, utilizes history and goes beyond his competence; for example, the 'historical materialism' of Marxists reduces the sense of history to the a-temporal meaning of (240) the class-struggle and to the materiality of production. 'Alas!' The sense of history disappears in the meaning of materialism. Marx's doctrine is 'historical': as a theory of history it is inscribed in history to the point of becoming 'irremediably' (37c) historical, dated.

'Luckily analysis is there to breathe life into the little stories' (37c): psychoanalysis taking up again the question of sense mistreated by the theories of history, can only do so in the framework of analytic treatment, where its discourse is effective and 'it leaves us with our tongues hanging out as regards what is not of our own time'. It changes nothing in the embarrassment of the honest historian who refuses to have recourse to 'transcendence' to explain history by some all-encompassing meaning. From his meaning-documents, the historian can only have the presentiment of an un-articulatable, even though already articulated sense: '*çasyment*'. But how recognize this sense, this '*çasyment*'? By translating the meaning-documents. The scenting of '*çasyment*' is developed then into a search for sense through translation, into '*sacysent*'. The homophonic equivocation '*çasyment/sacysent*' illuminates the way of writing by the grammatical equivocation which displaces a word-sentence (*çasyment*) towards translation, notably that of the Jansenist of Port-Royal, Lemaistre de Sacy. His translation of the Bible from the vulgate of St Jerome is a translation of a translation and is thus inscribed within the drift of a sense (*Sacy-sens*) escaping from any transcendent sense. Here indeed is the 'embarrassment': being caught up in a sense that escapes, without being able to get out of it by some transcendent meaning (as historical materialism had tried to do). The historian is 'charged with the science of embarrassment' (36cd). This science of embarrassment which history is, contributes something to science; if the expert knows what he is doing in his own particular domain, he 'does not know what, in the effects of science interests everybody' (E 794). If history enumerates the meanings of different scientific discoveries,

it poses at the same time the question of the sense of science (for ‘humanity’). This question has no definitive response and ‘this just by itself would merit us speaking about (241) a subject of science’ (E 794). This subject of science is defined by his embarrassment.

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

The matheme which situates the relationship of saying to said ‘is uttered’ from ‘the only real recognized from the outset in language: namely, number’. Number (one, two, three...) in effect only exists starting from the contradictory concept which determines the primordial zero (Frege): it presupposes a first ‘impossible’ (the contradictory concept) which begins to circle the real; all numeration flows from this first impossible. ‘Nevertheless’ beyond or on this hither side of number (and of the numerable of demand), the real at stake in saying (saying cannot be expressed, 10e, it is demonstrated, 9b) ‘can be extended to intuition’ (to the power of the continuity of desire, which is no longer articulateable because already articulated). Which presupposes that ‘this term [of intuition] is as castrated as can be of its metaphorical use’ (37e): castration no longer has the Freudian meaning, but the sense which aims at the cut and its topology.

‘Here therefore is a field’ which is not developed from meanings which can be added up, condensed and generalized (in a numeration obeying the first two formulae). The ‘field of speech and of language in psychoanalysis’ is developed by a ‘topological reshaping’, explicitated in the evident–emptying operation and in the cut ‘of topological subversion’. These operations retroact on their own foundation: the numerable (of demand) is now situated with respect to the continuous of desire, the spherical is situated with respect to the a-spherical. Thus every closed cut can be made equal, by a topological transformation, to the (242) supplementary disc. Mathematical discourse functions following a similar

retroaction: 1⁰ at the level of a particular reasoning, it effaces a first saying which has led to a said being absurd, but also 2⁰ a new mathematical theory encompasses and effaces those which historically preceded it: the matheme wipes history clean of the meanings which had carried it in favour of sense and saying.

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

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

‘The achievement of the undecidable’ (38a) is something quite different than ‘making being a state’ congealed in essence. The matheme is formulated through the impasses of the impossible which circle the real (35d), in other words, starting from ‘the marvellous efflorescence’ of the impossible. Starting ‘from the only real recognized from the outset in language: namely number’, we are confronted from the outset with number depending on the zero, on the contradictory concept (first form of the impossible: the contradiction which concerns the said by number); but this said of number depends on ‘the real of saying number’ (38ab) which is not constructed from objects to be counted (like fingers or the balls of an (243) abacus), but from saying which poses the contradictory concept. This saying ‘is not verifiable’: it is not based on a reality. Saying number is not demonstrated (second form of the impossible the undemonstrable). But the impossible of saying goes still further: its own undemonstrability is itself

undemonstrable (third form of the impossible: the undecidable), notably from the premises that number presupposes (the contradictory concept, the 'zero' and the 'ordinal'): there is 'an inherent contradiction' in presupposing that saying is demonstrable (38d). Saying escapes from the logic of the demonstrable and the contradictory: one can scarcely follow it on its own journey described above (9bc). Which is not without a teaching effect.

How question 'what constitutes the teachable' (38b; 481)? Lacan's answer is clear: the teachable or the *matheme* ('that which alone can be taught', 28d), is the journey of the different forms of the impossible (the roundabout of discourses). This presupposes that one can teach not simply starting from number (as in science and physics in particular), but starting from the saying of number and even from the always particular undecidable saying. Plato's *Meno* gives a first trace of this 'teachable' starting from the particular: 'virtue' is not transmitted like universal science, but like true opinion (*orthè doxa*), always particular. The great statesmen, the divines, prophets and others inspired by the gods only tell the truth (as opinion and not as science) through a particular divine favour. In this way true opinion opens in this way a teachable which goes beyond the universal. The *Meno* prefigures the question of the *matheme* constructed not on the universal alone (first formula of sexuation) but on the impasses of what can be mathematized or teachable, in other words on the four formulae of sexuation (35cd). Nevertheless 'it cannot be denied that there is progress' from *Meno* to Lacan. In what way is the Lacanian *matheme* a 'progress' as compared to *Meno*? 'It is to be (244) sure the last thing to say that between the two there is a world' (38bc): far from circling a world, an imaginary, these two discourses come up against the impossible and thus share in the same symbolic logic which circles the real. For Lacan as Plato, 'to teach' is to come up against a real, of which the world 'is only the derisory fall' (38c); inscribed in meaning (an illusory condition of everything that is conditioned for the Kant of the *Critique of pure reason*), the world is an (imaginary) product of (symbolic) fiction (c.f. the world of Alexander, 25e); it is only the imaginary-symbolic myth that supplies for and supplants the *matheme* (35ce).

‘The progress’ accomplished between the discourse of the *Meno* and Lacan’s (matheme) discourse is limited to indicating the ‘derisory fall’, namely the *o*-object, at stake in the teachable. In the *Meno*, Plato ‘makes sense’ of true opinion (it traces the transmission of virtue); for Lacan, true opinion no longer makes sense, it is ‘ab-sense of meaning’ (38c). This loss of meaning in favour of sense can engender a ‘regret’ which responds to the ‘progress’ accomplished by the Lacanian matheme. This regret ‘is confirmed’ if one refers the ‘ab-sense of meaning’ (and non-metaphorical topology) to the opinion of ‘our right-thinking lot’ (38c), of our psychoanalysts clinging to meaning to the detriment of sense and the reversals of discourse.

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

Such a matheme is not an addition to true opinion; the Moebius strip ought not to be constructed by ‘the ideal cross-section around which a strip is twisted by a half-turn’. This is why Lacan carefully avoids ‘supporting our Moebius strip by the image’ (38d). On the contrary, the matheme is there in the journey of true opinion and ‘it is along its whole length that the Moebius strip manages to make only one of its front and its back’ (27b). To imagine the matheme as a simple supplement to opinion or to imagine the Moebius strip by its ideal (245) cross-section does not articulate the said with the *Heteros*; the said does not become other and the notall is reduced to a purely local particularity. The reader of *L’étourdit* is not questioned by such a presentation. By the two turns of *L’étourdit*, corresponding to the double-turned cut of the cross-cap, the reader becomes other: in the representation, he is an effect of the double-turned cut as a putting into question of the subject in phantasy. For masculine logic which stops at the second formula, saying is to be taken ‘as ex-sisting the said’ and the real exists as what is outside saying; by the said, the real is verifiable (true or false). Such a real plunged in meanings does not lead to the matheme, since it forgets the notall, phallic functioning, a-spherical topology. Is the true opinion of ‘our right-thinking people’ who wish to remain in meaning the

truth, from which saying will remain barred by a verifiable real? Do they simply lack the saying forgotten behind the said and hidden in what could be understood? Or, on the contrary, can it be shown how the matheme carries true opinion right along its length, without it knowing so?

‘I would test it by the correction that I am going to make in it’ (38e). This reprise topology is at the same time the eternal reprise of desire which does not cease to stitch the front and the back at every point. Such is the proof or the test of the structure.

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

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

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

‘But since...one can say’ that this Moebian surface ‘is made up of lines without points’ all along which the front is stitched to the back, in the same way ‘the supplementary point (the out-of-line point)...can be fixed everywhere in a cross-cap’ (39b). In other words, every fragment of the sphere can be seen as **o**-object inasmuch as its cut is redoubled to make the

edge of the Moebius strip appear. Thus, for example, the ‘noumenon’ is developed into an **o**-object, into ‘surplus-nonsense’ which ‘leads us’ further than spherical topology (36ab).

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

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

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

‘The unteachable’ becomes a matheme ‘by the fixion of true opinion’ (39d; 463): teaching fixes the **o**-object around which there can be played out the movement of the modifying saying, which circles the real and fixes it by the impossible (35d). This ‘fixion’ of the **o**-object is ‘not without the resources of equivocation’: it opens up the world of ‘fiction’. The equivocation fixion/fiction is the equivocation proper to the matheme which, basing itself on the fixion of the real by coming up against the

impossible, at the same time makes the symbolic work in order that it should also produce fictions, meanings, whose equivocation refers to sense.

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

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

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

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

Sense opens out onto topology or onto the matheme. Might the goal of topology be to guide us into structure? No, structure *is* topology, inasmuch as topology is the ‘retroaction of the chain-like order in which language consists’ (40b; 483). What is this ‘chain-like order’? Language is articulated in tongue and speech. To speak is to use words, it is to dip into a

possible, into the reservoir of signifiers that the tongue constitutes; the tongue itself survives on words previously spoken. Language consists in the concatenation of speech/tongue/speech/ etc.: from speech the tongue is born, from which speech is born, from which the tongue is re-born, etc. This chain-like order is also the order of the discourses: if a first discourse can give way to a new tongue, the discourse that will be elaborated from this (249) new tongue will be irreducible to the first discourse; and so on. As a result ‘the analyst must first of all be analysed, since, as we know, this is indeed the order on which his career is traced out’ (19c): he must in effect pass through the discourses of the hysteric, the master and the academic, before ending at the discourse of the analyst. All repetition is repetition organized from a displacement of discourse. This chain-like order is given in the discourse of the analyst; structure is thus the ‘retroaction’ of the discourse of the analyst onto each of the elements of the chain that have preceded it: for example we can only speak about the structure of the discourse of the hysteric inasmuch as it has been illuminated by the discourse of the analyst.

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

The ‘sub-sentence’ (40bc) ‘inasmuch as a subject-effect grasps it’, articulates a subordinate conjunction (*inasmuch as*), a subject group (*a subject-effect*) and a verbal group (*grasps it*): the subject group refers back directly to the ungraspable barred subject, the verbal group represents the **o**-object or the means of grasping the subject, the conjunction marries aspherical topology (the principal proposition) to the phantasy, \$ \diamond **o** (the subordinate proposition). Verb and grammatical subject are articulated in the structure; a ‘false sense-effect’ is produced when one attempts to give priority to one of the two: to a ‘subject effect’ (to its asphere-like whirlpool,

\$) or to ‘grasps it’ (the object supposed to ‘reflect’ the subject in an imaginary fashion, the **o**-object). By taking either the spherical fragment or the Moebian part of the cross-cap, one is precipitated into the imaginary resonance of topology.

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

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

‘Naturally there are saids’ that predicative logic attempts to classify under an always greater universal major; this ‘universalizing supposition’ is the necessary and illusory work described in Kant’s transcendental dialectic; it corresponds to spherical topology ‘where it is the word that decides’; it corresponds to ‘the sphere’ where the article (‘the’) is defined and where the noun (‘sphere’) is all-encompassing (one is inside or outside of it). Now the sphere is only a supplement to the structure: it is in a sphere-fragment that the Moebius strip finds what allows it to become a cross-cap. This supplement is ‘fiction’. It feigns the true to plug the hole of the real, a fixion point around which the roundabout of discourses can turn.

(251) ‘One could *say*’ (41a) that the sphere ‘does without topology’, since it seems to exist before and independently of aspherical topology. The closed cut cuts out a sphere-fragment that has a delimited extension: ‘the cut...cuts out ... the concept’, a concept that can be defined in its comprehension or its extension. ‘The language-fair, the principle of exchange, of value’ (41a) develop a logic of classes, of overlappings by genera and species on which the discourse of the capitalist depends. This capitalist fair presupposes that one concedes that everything is constructed from the universal ($\forall \mathbf{x}.\Phi \mathbf{x}$). This ‘universal concession’ of a piece of the cemetery for what is already dead can be nothing but ‘matter’. Thus ‘matter’ is to be ‘conceded’ for ‘dialectic’: even though what is at stake is only dead matter (subordinated by concession), we necessarily pursue our illusory search for the universal and ultimate principle (according to Kant’s *Transcendental dialectic*). ‘It is very difficult to support’ in its purity the spherical *dit-mension* where the concept is cut out in a logic of the universal constructed on the said: it is no doubt everywhere...but, for whoever wants to see it, it always blends in with the structure ‘as retroaction’ (40b) of the discourse of the analyst onto the other discourses or again as retroaction of the notall onto the other formulae of sexuation. In other words, spherical logic also implies the discourse of the analyst and the unconscious at stake in the roundabout of discourses. The sphere is ‘the surface-fiction with which the structure is clothed’: the aspherical surface is dressed up from a spherical fragment, from the supplementary disc. The line without points (the Moebius strip of saying) ‘is filled out’ by the out-of-line point (the \mathbf{o} -object).

(Aspherical) sense is ‘foreign’ (41b) to the reduced logic of the sphere. Thus *man is good* and *man is bad* respond to the same spherical logic, and thus say strictly nothing that has a sense. ‘We may quite rightly be astonished’ that no one has taken advantage of this (252) remark to make a ‘structural reference’, namely to say that this spherical logic is only a dressing-up of structure and of sense. ‘The evident refers back to being as emptying’: what is evident in the structure, which articulates the spherical fragment with the cut constituted by the Moebius strip, refers to being

inasmuch as it is not an essence, but the emptying of essence, the emptying of the concept, the emptying of being,...‘no more *nonsense*’. There is no cut that modifies the structure of the sphere: whether a cut is closed or open, it makes a hole on the sphere and the bilateral surface remains bilateral: ‘the cut when all is said and done does not ex-sist from the sphere’ (41bc). The hole in the sphere is ‘evident to be sure’, but it reduces what it circles to a universal which is only possible. This ‘some possible or other’ universal is therefore ‘empty’. The framework of this logic based on the universal is the proposition. This proposition can be analysed in terms of subject, copula and predicate, or better in terms of propositional function and argument: ‘substance is only a correlate’ of the (universal) propositional function; it has issued from the predicate of the proposition (like Socrates who might be defined by the universality of man: Socrates is a man); a priori, ‘it is co-possible or not’ with the universal on which it depends. The articulation of the proposition into function and arguments allows the question of sense in the four formulae which conjugate the phallic function to be set in motion. In opposition to this articulation, the overlapping in the predicate of essences or co-possible substances (‘yes or no’) with the predicate allows ‘all the faux-pas that we amuse ourselves with’ at the level of a spherical logic. The hole in spherical logic starts from the possible, even though the evident-emptying of the aspherical topological operation starts from the impossible which animates the modification, the subversion of meanings and makes the sense plainly appear.

‘Homosexuality’ (41cd) depends on this masculine logic, articulated according to the first two formulae in a spherical topology. Without the expansion of this logic to two (253) homosexual or masculine formulae (Greek antiquity, the Arab expansion from the VIIth century on, the Christian Middle Ages and the Eucharist as actualization of universal salvation by the Church), the structure ‘would have much earlier necessitated an Other recourse’, the recourse of the ‘notall’ or the ‘Other’, a recourse which was kept waiting on account of the ‘great epochs’ evoked. At the heart of these great epochs, ‘religion alone when all was said and done’ was able ‘to constitute true opinion’ relaying Plato’s ‘*orthé doxa*’; now this true opinion fills out the aspherical, gives to the matheme ‘the



funds with which found itself invested', and keeps the door open for the two 'heterosexual' or 'feminine' formulae. 'There will always remain something' of this fund which is true opinion, famously at stake in the Church. 'Biblical studies' (AE 485) are content to aim at the meaning of the Bible; they have 'never yet saved anybody', because they do not dispense something of the search for sense, for true opinion and for faith.


'To work in structure' (41e) presupposes the retroaction of the order of discourses on each one of them; to work in structure presupposes the sense which 'never happens except in the translation from one discourse into another' (36e); for such a sense, the 'plug' of meaning, which plugs the gap of the sexual relationship, source of sense – a plug operating especially in Biblical studies – 'is of no interest'. The translation of the Bible ('*sacysent*', 37cd) only makes sense from the moment when 'meaning-documents' give way to the search for sense, notably to theology considered in its logical dimension¹.

3. The modification of the structure

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

¹ 'Theology' begins with Aristotle, with whom logic 'is extraordinarily enjoyable' (...*ou pire*, 15 December 1971). This theo-logy is the part of philosophy which studies necessary, eternal and unchangeable causes (very far from 'Biblical studies'). The -logy (already the 'good logic' of the impossible) here 'dominates the theo- which (nevertheless) always remains quite solid, in its stupidity' (ibid.).

‘Thus’ (42a), the cut passing one single time through the line of intersection of the cross-cap (see fig.13 b, p.199) transforms the whole asphere into a ‘stable spherical flap’, into a ‘supplementary disc’, into an **o**-object, into an out-of-line point, into *orthé doxa*. On the contrary, the cut passing twice through the line of intersection of the cross-cap (a’ of fig.13), ‘the double looping’, ‘obtains’ the ‘fall of the cause of desire’. The cause of desire is also a spherical flap, but it is torn from another fragment of the surface, from a Moebius strip (which is not reduced to the cut). This latter (unilateral) surface is the barred subject: it is only ‘demonstrated’ as ex-sistence by the ‘fall’ of the supplementary disc, of the cause of desire. This strip is ex-sistence () with respect to the **o**-object, to the spherical flap (which, in the case of the single cut, takes the form of being all: ).

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

The vanishing of the subject (or of the Moebius strip) is a ‘nodal-point’ (42b), circumscribed by a single turn. As knot (trivial knot or simple round), the single turn transforms the asphere into a ‘stable spherical flap’ which has the same structure as the out-of-line point. This nodal-point is a ‘case’ in the sense of the fall of the said in spherical logic. But it can be taken up again in interpretation (and its double turn) and opens ‘the case for saying’ namely, the ex-sistence outside the universal, ‘saying’ as opposed to

‘said’. In this double turn of interpretation, the Moebius strip only survives as pure cut or as ‘hole’ (fading of the subject). With the vanishing of the unilateral surface, sense vanishes and is reduced to the (imagined or machinated) meaning of the hole: the hole is ‘machinated in it’ as imaginary and symbolic fiction.

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

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

‘The hole is not justified by a wink, nor by a mnemonic syncope, nor by a cry’. The slit in the eyelids, the hole in the memory or the glottis are

not 'justified' by a 'Quiet!' (*motus*), by a movement of the soul, of the memory or of the spirit supposedly 'expressed' by the 'hole'. All these images depend on a spherical topology where the word – 'Quiet!' and a buttoned lip – decides and closes.

'A torus has a hole only for someone who looks at it as an object' (42d; 485-486): the torus as bilateral surface, belongs to spherical topology. The imaginary, as such, has no hole. The 'circular' hole of the torus, that of demand, and the 'central hole', that of desire, are only 'holes' for whoever looks at them from the outside. The little ant travelling along the torus would never encounter a hole. There is only a subject of the torus starting the topological modification which transforms the torus into a Moebius strip (evident-emptying operation, 26). 'A precise number of turns of saying' is necessary for 'this torus to be made...Moebius (257) strip' (42de). The first stage of the transformation of the torus into Moebius strip implies that the single cut of the torus turns twice around the central hole of desire and once around the circular hole of demand. This first stage of the transformation ends up with the 'bipartite strip' which has two edges and is twisted twice. This double twist is the necessary condition for it 'to be made ... Moebius strip' by suturing one of its edges to itself (26-27). If desire is looped in two turns, the turns of demand on the contrary 'should be an odd number' (43c) to transform the torus into a Moebius strip: it is right along its length that the front of demand is sewn to its back ('a torus is better than a cross section'NB). The neurotic walks on the torus, going along both the turns of demand and the turns of desire in it; the topological modification into a bipartite strip then into a 'contraband' (Moebius strip, *bande*) can only be established from an odd demand articulated on the two turns of desire. Thus Lacan's analyser (*The direction of the treatment..* E 631) makes a demand one his mistress: that she should sleep with another man; and the mistress responds to him by a dream in which his desire is implicated twice: 'she has a phallus and a vagina and the desire that this phallus should enter it'. The response of the mistress manifestly brings about a topological modification: the neurotic torus to which the analyser was chained as much with respect to his mistress as to Lacan is 'modi-fied' into a phallic function (topologically: into a cross-cap).

As Lacan has attempted to demonstrate to the IPA traffickers who ‘badly want to silt him up with their own contraband’, importing analysis in a fraudulent fashion into the academic discourse, ‘a torus... is the structure of neurosis’ (42e). This structure is the entwining of two tori: turning around the axis of the one involves turning around the core of the other and reciprocally. Turning around the desire of the one involves turning around the demand of the other and reciprocally (Seminar IX, *Identification*, 1961-62, in connection (258) with the torus). The ‘contra-banding of the subject’ (43a), the modification of the torus into a Moebius strip, appears from the ‘indefinitely enumerable re-petition of demand’ inasmuch as ‘two turns’ of desire are looped at the same time as an odd number of demands. Thanks to this reading of desire, there may appear in a second phase the structure of saying, explained in the cross-cap; transference should be understood as the activation of this structure. Finally, the double looping on the cross-cap articulates the matheme or interpretation. Interpretation can only be carried out in the correct sequence: desire taken to the letter, transference, then interpretation; this is the very articulation of *The direction of the treatment* (E 585).

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

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

‘I insist: the turn in itself’ – namely the turn of the whorl seen from outside – ‘is not countable’ (43ab) by the one who is plunged into topology. The demands which are repeated for topology imagined from the outside, do not close, for the closing can only be established in the act of cutting, in the

surface. A turn of itself, a demand, 'is neither said nor to say': it is not 'the said' for it is not in the cut, and not belonging to the domain of the said, but of the imagined, it does not open up the question of saying. It is not a 'proposition'. Nevertheless (259) demand always presupposes the modal of a saying which sustains it. A turn of itself depends therefore on a 'logic, which remains to be constructed from modal logic'. This logic is currently being constructed in *L'étourdit*: starting from the imagined topology of the neurotic torus (where we count desire and demands from an outside point of view), it is a matter at first of making the modal logic of the Moebius strip appear; then the spherical flap (o-object) demonstrates the aspherical structure (the barred subject) in the double-turned cut which makes the o-object fall. Interpretation is neither the explanation of a more or less obscure declarative proposition, nor the commentary of the modal demand: interpretation is necessarily the 'cut' as making the structure evident.

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

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

The demand-turns are countable only by whoever finds himself in the surface and its cut: because of this, the 'transfinite' of desire on the basis of which the demands are counted (260) is 'a requisite' (43c). The number of turns goes beyond the countable, the enumerable and touches on the

power of the continuous. Nevertheless, the number of demand-turns must be odd for the cut to be closed in an adequate manner. *Yes*, no, yes, no,...,*no*: demand can pass through all the reversals, it must end up at its back (*envers*) before being looped in the double desire-turn, at the level of saying; thus love must end up at hate, whatever the number of oscillations of ambivalence, for there to be a saying. God congratulates himself on this transfinite in which the neurotic articulation of demand and of desire on the torus is modified by the structure, since God is the structure: trinity, three persons in one single God (as the transfinite number of demands is in one single cut).

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

'Repetition...is not left to itself', but is conditioned by 'our practice of saying', namely, by the discourse of the analyst, which produced it as phallic function (S_1); and this function inspires the reversal of the meanings of demand. The same remark was already valid for the unconscious: the unconscious is nothing other than the dynamic of switching from one discourse into another and this dynamic of switching depends on the discourse of the analyst.

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

equivocation of the letter). This conditioning implies the injunction to be odd in order to articulate desire and get 'to the end of the analysis of the neurotic torus'.

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

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

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

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

'The odd transfinite of demand' is only 'resolved', is only dissolved, is only analysed by 'the double turn of interpretation', by 'the double loop of desire' (43a). The psychoanalyst took on the function (44a) of situating this saying, which is interpretation in a double loop: the analyst acts as the

‘semblance’ of the **o**-object; he provides the object of interpretation, ‘the supplementary disc with which the Moebius strip is closed’ (30c).

‘The analyser only ends’ his analysis if ‘the representation of his analyst’ is modified. This representation of the analyst is not simple because it is in the changeability of the signifier: the subject is what is represented by a signifier for another signifier. But who is going to be the ‘representative’ of this movement of representation? In a first phase of the analytic treatment, the representative of the representation the subject can be the analyst, the analyser or both. The ‘representative of representation’¹ is thus, in Lacanian theory, the barred subject of desire (E 554, note of 1966). The interpretation or the modification of the structure (by aspherical topology) brings about a change of representative of representation. In effect, with the double cut carried out on the cross-cap, it is the fall of the spherical disc (or of the **o**-object) that makes the structure appear: this fall becomes the ‘representative of representation’. Representation (namely the movement of the signifier or free association) is no longer represented by the ‘subject’, but by the ‘**o**-object’ (as indicated in E 814). The subjective process of the torus in which are entwined the demand and the desire (of the neurotic and of his Other) is modified by topology into a Moebius strip which only supports (263) its own reversals if the **o**-object falls from the cross-cap through the double- turned cut of interpretation. Since one does not find an **o**-object in the torus, except by an ‘imaginary misuse’ which would situate it in the central hole of the torus, analysis cannot begin its last topological operation, its end-work, in which the analyst will become the **o**-object for the analyser. A work of mourning since what is at stake is the fall of the **o**-object, this operation loses its depressive colouring when the fall of the **o**-object is compensated by maniacal reactions according to the Freudian theorization of *Mourning and melancholy*.

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

¹ The representative of representation (*Vorstellungsrepräsentanz*) is diverted by Lacan from its Freudian sense. For Freud, the drive, mythical and unknowable as such, can only be represented (*repräsentiert*) in the psychical and that in two different modes: the representation (*Vorstellung*) which is of the topical order of thoughts and the affect which is of the economic order of discharges.

be to take the state of exultation 'amiss'. To identify the demand of the analyser to the desire of the analyst is to withdraw oneself into the topology of the neurotic torus where the demand of the one is entwined with the desire of the other. The work of modification of the structure is forgotten there and the **o**-object as 'central hole of the torus' is only examined from an outside and imaginary point of view. 'Therapeutic success' may find a motive in this imaginary misuse that pins down identification to the **o**-object (including the form of a '*passe*' or a hierarchical promotion). This motive will only be called 'substantial' from the moment it gives a (metaphorical, sensual) substance to a (topological, non-metaphorical, sensed) structure. Beyond this manic state, the mourning must be completed.

'After the end of analysis, 'there remains the stability of the flattening out of the phallus, or of the strip' (44c); the identification to the analyst and the **o**-object have collapsed. This collapse has only 'stabilized' the flattening out of the strip: the Moebius strip can no longer disappear in the cut. Thus, the end of analysis establishes the supposed subject, the subject of the always appearing/disappearing signifier. How assure such an ephemeral subject? By knowledge. The subject-supposed-to-know implied in the transference is explained by this: it is no longer the analyst, but the journey of the four phallic formulae (264) which are twisted into a Moebius strip. The subject, supposed to be what the signifier represents for another signifier, is assured in the structure by the knowledge of the phallic function. Thanks to the process of the treatment, the subject-supposed-to-know now makes way for knowledge which gives the certainty of the supposed subject, which is situated in the 'three *dit-mensions* of impossibility': 'in sex, in sense and in meaning' (44d). The triple s of the subject-supposed-to-know (*Sujet-Supposé-Savoir*, SSS) of the transference and of the treatment is 'analysed' as triple S of the '*dit-mensions* of the impossible': sex, sense, *signification*. The explanations of these three *dit-mensions*¹ are introduced respectively by the three triple points:

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

¹ The three *dit-mensions* of the impossible take up respectively the three Hegelian figures of the spiritual work of art, tragedy (sex), comedy (meaning), the epic (sense).

relationship; the absence of sexual relationship is played out at first between the semblance and the Other of each discourse, but is extended into the powerlessness of each discourse to reach its truth. The absence of sexual relationship provokes the switching of each discourse. For each discourse, the dialogue between one sex and another is impossible; there results from this some 'inconvenience' (44c), to be heard first etymologically as impossibility of 'coming together', of agreeing: the semblance and the Other are always disparate. Starting from this in-con-venience, the subject will come, with the roundabout of the discourses, to sense.

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

3) *The dit-mension of impossibility in meaning* ('...and then that insult', 44cd). The insult – the attack – is the first and last word of the

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

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

‘If he is sensitive to the beautiful’ (44de; 488), which stabilizes things just before saying, desire or the horror of castration, he will situate this beautiful in the ‘between-two-deaths’, in this field situated between physical death and the putting to death of all parasitical ideas, in the ethics of Antigone (Seminar VII). The ethic of the beautiful (or of Antigone) remains midway in the work of the riddle proposed by the Sphynx just as much as at mid-course in the double--looped journey proposed by *L’étourdit*. Antigone does indeed hold out the hand of topology to Oedipus...but it must still follow this trajectory of topology in a double turn and not remain with the ‘single turn’ proper to doxa (42a). ‘One of these truths’ (one of the three dimension of the impossible) can *parêtre* to the analyser at the end of analysis, can appear inasmuch as it turns around being which is the *o*-object according to ‘proper logic’ which consists in ‘understanding’ the impossible (6cd): ‘it *parest* to him worthy of being understood’. If he is ‘sensitive to beauty’, if he stops halfway, ‘he will only entrust himself to the half-saying of the single turn’. But this half-saying

does not loop the ‘double turn of interpretation’; nothing obliges the analyser to terminate his analysis with the beautiful (based on the single turn); he can again be supported by a second saying or by the ‘double turn of interpretation’.

Let us therefore now come to interpretation.

CHAPTER 4: INTERPRETATION

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

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

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

‘Of this *parêtre*’ which is the Moebius strip, ‘I do not have to expose the status otherwise than by my own journey’. The barred subject has no

established status, since it is drift, reversal and switch. It is exposed only in the course of the experience proper to saying and to the discourse of the analyst, which dispenses it from any other justification. This experience is pure matheme: ‘What authorises me in my case to refer myself to this pure matheme’ (28)? Response: his experience ‘that not just anything at all can be said. And the saying is necessary it’ (29). The barred subject is justified not by the *o*-object, but by the experience, by the journey of the roundabout of discourses which separates the barred subject and the *o*-object.

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

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

(269) ‘The unconscious is structured *like* a language’ (45b) and not by a language. Lacan nevertheless affirms some lines later: ‘it is through language [*le langage*] that I account for the unconscious’ (45d). ‘To render an account’ is not ‘to structure’. The relationship between the unconscious and language can operate in two different ways: ‘to render an account of the unconscious by language’ or ‘to structure the unconscious like a language’. The account rendered presupposes an available knowledge, the knowledge of the academic discourse; at that level, language can serve as an agent ‘to render an account’ of the unconscious. Structure on the contrary

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

unconscious in its peculiar functioning, like *a* language. This is what must now be explained.

‘Nothing is of any use’, when one is caught on the ‘mental horns’ of the academic discourse (45d; 488). Why is that? The real presents itself as single before any generalisation: *one* signifier can represent *one* subject for *one* other signifier and *one* switch can take place starting from *one* discourse. It is indeed starting from a ‘one’ (S_1) that it can serve to make a series: one is dispatched to another (S_2). Now the academic discourse is caught in the mental horns of the universal and of the exception. The universal bestrides the real in logical definition: the first member of the defining proposition represents the real and the second member is composed of the knowledge supposed to determine this real. This function of definition is that of the ‘definite article’ defined by a movement which goes from the particular to the universal¹. The ‘defined (271) definite’ article is part of discourse (45d; 489) not alone because it is a word among others entering into the composition of speech, but above all because the function of defining or universalising forms part of discourse (‘in general’); this function, a first horn to stick into the real, is phallic: it corresponds to meanings as well as to the first phallic formulae ($\forall x.\Phi x$).

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

¹ c.f. Gustave Guillaume *Particularisation et généralisation dans le système des articles Français* (1944) in *Langue et science du langage*. The definite article is a transversal cut in a kinetics which goes from the particular to the universal. When I say: ‘The French soldier knows how to resist fatigue’, thought is distanced from the particular in order to formulate a general proposition. The indefinite depends on the contrary on a kinetic which goes from the universal to the particular; when I say: ‘A French soldier knows how to resist fatigue’, I want for example to encourage a particular soldier to resist fatigue.

unconscious is structured *like a language*: it works on one discourse and can produce another one from it; there is thus justified the only possible approach of the unconscious from the 'one' of free association, dreams, slips, blunders, jokes always new and particular. As structure, the unconscious is in the 'sense' of structure which does not admit a globalising definition. 'Languages fall under the influence of *notall* in the surest way since structure has no other sense there', as Lacan has specified throughout *L'Étourdit* by the saying, by the journey of the phallic function, by 'topological recreation' (46a).

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

'Psychoanalysis' only approaches the structure of the unconscious 'by the coming into operation of an Other *dit-mension*' (46ab), a dimension which inscribes the said in the *notall*, in the Other as logic of the *Heteros*, that by which a saying comes to exist. This Other *dit-mension* is only opened up by the discourse of the analyst. Like every discourse, the discourse of the analyst is animated by a semblance. The specific

semblance of the discourse of the analyst is the **o**-object [*l'objet a*]; the discourse of the analyst 'is (a)nimated...' (46b) thanks to the **o**-object (the analyst). This a-nimation is interpretation which goes further than the 'half-saying of the single turn': the double-turned cut makes the barred subject, disjoined/conjoined to the **o**-object in the phantasy, appear.

'The analyst pays for having to represent the fall of a discourse' (46b; 489). Re-presentation presupposes the displacement of the signifier and the fall of one discourse for a new discourse. At the end of the analysis, the process of representation is itself represented by the **o**-object (44a). The analyst then represents the **o**-object, as the (273) supplementary disc which allows the journey of the Moebius strip as being what leads us into the journey of the *parêtre*. The **o**-object, represented by the analyst, allows sense to be tightened 'around this fall'. It is the 'fall of desire whence there is produced the Moebian strip of the subject, this fall demonstrating it to be only ex-sistence to the double looped cut from which it results (42ab). Linguists may be 'disappointed' by the fact that the psychoanalyst does not contribute material to their universal science. 'Disappointment...without any issue for them (46c), since the linguist remains imprisoned in the function of the definite article, while the discourse of the analyst is defined by the structure of switching. This journey of the phallic function is the explanation or the dis-entangling of this structure, or again interpretation.

From the point of view of structure, 'the analyst, since Freud, is much further on in this than the linguist'. Saussure's contribution, though recognised in the *Agency of the letter* (E 494), seems here to be 'disqualified': the Saussurian signifier-signified 'algorithm' is only a translation of St Augustine's¹ *signans-signatum*, itself a translation of the Stoics' *semainon-semainomenon*. It is in this series that Freud seems to have preceded Saussure, by translating the signifier as *Wahrnehmungszeichen*, perceptual sign (c.f. Seminar XVIII, 12 May 1971). Why is this primacy of Freud over the linguists significant, if both are largely anticipated by the Stoics' signifier? In the comparison between linguistics and psychoanalysis, we will distinguish the dawn of linguistics

¹ The reference to the *De magistro* of St Augustine had been the subject of a commentary by Louis Beirnaert during Seminar I, *Freud's technical writings*, pp.273-286.

which comes with the signifier (Saussure) and its zenith when there radiates the light of metaphor and metonymy (Jakobson) (E 799).

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

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

From the point of view of this lead psychoanalysis traces out a new route for linguistics. On the contrary, 'linguistics does not open up anything for analysis' (46de; 490); enclosed in the academic discourse, defined by the function of the definite article, it does not open up a new way for psychoanalysis: the functioning of linguistics obeys at the outset the first formula of the phallic function and is inscribed in one established discourse and its inverse (the academic and scientific discourse). But did not the support that Lacan received from Jakobson, metaphor and metonymy, constitute an opening up by linguistics for psychoanalysis? Let us rather say that it is psychoanalysis which, in its own field, here uses metaphor and metonymy (S_1) in order to make something else of it (S_2), especially starting from the dream work (c.f. *The interpretation of dreams*). There is nothing 'of the order of after-the-event' for linguistics; the latter has in no way been modified by Lacan, it has not revisited its history: its previous theorisations remain unchanged¹. Instead of such an after-the-event effect, there is manifested a 'backlash'; congealed in its academic discourse which wants to

¹ Contrary to linguistics, mathematical discourse does not proceed by generalisation, but by reshaping; in it a recent theory wipes out previous attempts; rereading Euclid is of no use for today's mathematician (c.f. 37e).

ignore the journey inherent in the (275) discourse of the analyst, linguistics is content to take its 'benefit' and to forget the second saying (46e) by which 'it is supported' without knowing it.

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

The double turn of saying 'fixes the desire' (47a) at work in the demands. For the desire to be fixed, the surface of the neurotic torus must be transformed into a cross-cap; (276) or again, the indefinite sequence of demands must allow to appear its contradiction, its incompleteness, its undemonstrability, its undecidability, in other words what is impossible in desire. This is only done by the double turn on the cross-cap which makes

fall the **o**-object (whose nature it is to fall), and thus fixes the desire itself as Moebius strip. While waiting for this double-looped cut to close, the demands are indefinitely repeated, 'they are maintained as unclosed.

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

'This saying' (47b; 490) which is interpretation proceeds only from the \neg (277) unconscious. The unconscious is not a universal and necessary 'structure', but a particular and contingent one ('like a'), it is therefore 'structured *like a* language', namely the *lalangue* that it inhabits. The neographism *lalangue* incorporates the definite article (and its universalisation) as a particular moment of a particular and contingent tongue: from this point of view, universalisation is only a phase of the phallic function (inasmuch as it is gone through by someone particular). *Lalangue*, essentially variable, is distinguished therefore by the equivocation which permits the unconscious to inhabit it in a labile way, *de*

labiter, namely to be the dynamic of transformation starting from this ephemeral tongue. ‘One tongue among others is nothing more than the integral of the equivocations that its history has allowed to persist in it’: it is only the point of passage towards other tongues, other states of the tongue. These equivocations are the vein, the seam from which there processes the issue of the analytic discourse: by coming up against ‘the real that there is no sexual relationship’, the analytic discourse sets in motion the only issue of analysis which is the roundabout of discourses. A tongue is the ‘depository’ of such a journey ‘throughout the ages’, the ages of French no doubt, but also the ages of a particular family and the ages of *lalangue* which depend on the history of one or other particular speaker. ‘This in the species’ of speakers: the real (that there is no sexual relationship) introduces us in effect ‘to the one’, to the phallic function which supplies for the absence of the sexual relationship. Starting from the single (phallic) libido, a ‘single’ sexuality is organised in which each one participates in the four formulae of sexuation. A single organ (the phallus) is disconnected from the body of speakers in order to make the phallic function appear. Phallic functioning (according to the double cut) makes ‘organs quartered by a disjunction’ appear, the different partial objects (only partially representing the phallic function that produces them, E 817). They are disconnected from the barred subject (E 634) by the operation of the double cut. After this phallic structuring of the phantasy, ‘other reals come’ within reach of this structure *like a language*, always on ‘the quadruple path of these approaches’, quadruple (278) o-object (oral, anal, scopic, vocal) present in the four discourses (of the hysteric, of the master, of the academic and of the analyst respectively) and structured by the four formulae and the four modes (possible, necessary, impossible, contingent). The quadruple path of approaching the real (notably in the phallic function and the double turn of saying) presupposes much more than the denumerable infinity of demands: ‘it is only infinitised from the fact that the ‘real number’ is produced from it’: for as we have seen in the demonstration of the power of the continuous (note p.154-155), the real number is constructed by the displacement between its n^{th} decimal and the n^{th} decimal of any number A^n , whatever it may be; it is by a continual displacement that the ‘real number’ is

demonstrated, the surface that bears the cut, the desire underlying the repetition of demands. Thus the listening of the analyst brings about a continual displacement, to each decimal of each demand, in order to be able to read desire in it.

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

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

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

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

so-called, it goes outside the double-turned furrow of interpretation which separates the barred subject from the **o**-object by articulating the phantasy. Let us follow the thread of equivocations, which is nothing other than the modification of the structure.

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

(280) Beyond the contingent demands of each speaker, interpretation also necessitates the ‘presence of the odd’ (48a): every interpretation must use the three equivocations that succeed one another as three demands in order to be completed in desire or the forgotten saying. ‘The order in which we are going to present them is maintained there’ (48a-49d; 491-491): it is the order homophony-grammar-logic-homophony-etc.: grammar is required starting from homophony in order to distinguish its two senses; logic demonstrates its impossible to grammar; homophony, far from being a risky play on words, always depends already on logic (all the homophonies of *L’étourdit* directly concern the question of structure and of its logic). This order is maintained ‘by a double loop rather than by a single turn’ since each equivocation (homophonous, grammatical or logical) will be justified only with the explanation of the two others, namely by a new presentation of itself, by a re-presentation.

1) '*I begin with homophony*' (48ab). All the examples of homophony quoted in *L'étourdit* depend on the logical equivocation between the asphere and the sphere which is elucidated by the double-looped cut dividing the cross-cap into a Moebius strip (\$ and the supplementary disc (o). Thus: 1° the transfinite *d'eux* (the oddness of demands) is looped in two turns of desire. And this 'keeps the trace of this soul-game' where the object (the soul) is clipped to the barred subject. To love, 'to make of them two together, *faire d'eux deux-ensemble*' finds a limit in effect in the '*faire deux*' *d'eux*, namely in the two-turned cut which only gives place to desire by the fall of the o-object (42). 2° The *semblance* of communication takes its start in the *embleé* of the real. 3° The *paraître* of appearance is situated as *parêtre* of the Moebius strip alongside the being of the o-object. Up-side of homophony, there is logic; down-side there will be grammar (30a-40c-45d), indeed the 'graph', *grammatical* as its name indicates.

(281) 'I insist that there are no holds (*coups*) barred here' (48b) since, arising from the forgotten saying, these homophonies play with us rather than we playing with them: we are the effect of saying. Only the poets calculate these 'effects, *coups*'¹ and the psychoanalyst makes use of them 'when it suits', namely in interpretation which is not without this saying.

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

¹ In *Radiophonie*, Lacan presented quite differently the poet 'eaten by verses (*vers*) which find their arrangement without being worried whether the poet knows about it or not' (p.57).

annuls, breaks, ‘rescinds’ the subject, it is also necessary ‘to renew the application which is represented of it on the torus.’

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

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

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

² Freud notes: ‘Hans says very clearly in his own way that it was a phantasy’.

system' (48e), namely the functioning of the psychical apparatus of the first topography, which corresponds precisely to a grammar and a logic (see my book *Logique de l'inconscient*).

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

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

'This of course is what linguists set themselves as an ideal' (49a): the subject group can comprehend a whole proposition (in Chomsky's

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

Grammar has the function of responding to homophonous equivocation. In what way? ‘I am not making you *say* it’ (49a). ‘Saying’ is ‘the minimum of interpretative intervention’. But what is important in this formula is not its univocal sense (‘I am not making you say it’) but the double turn that the formula allows: a turn centred on the you, ‘You have said it’ and a turn centred on the I, ‘I take it all the less as my responsibility in that I did not in any way make you say such a thing’. The ‘minimum of interpretative intervention’ comprises therefore this switching of the I and the you already operating in On [you] go (*Vas*), there is not too much *étourdit* for it to return to you after being half-said (*l’après midit*). ‘On [you] go (*Vas*), there is not too much *étourdit* for it to return to you after being half-said (*l’après midit*)’ (25a). This switch is presented in every grammatical equivocation: saying is from the outset specified by the modal demand which presupposes the equivocal apparition of persons (c.f. my book *Logique de l’inconscient*, chapter 6). Even the ‘definite definite’ article’ (45de) depends on a movement, from a ‘*vas*’ to the universal and generalisation; interpretation ought at least bring into play grammar and its movements of transformations and reversals. If formal logic wants to restrict itself to pure formal languages and to allow natural tongues their *polysemy* (Frege) or if it claims to show how natural tongues all the same obey a well-formulated formal logic (Russell), psychoanalysis on the contrary takes advantage of ‘the amorphology of a language’ which allows the grammatical equivocation of the ‘*vas*’, of the ‘you’ and the ‘I’ of *lalangue* inhabited (47b-49b).

3) '*Figure 3 now: this is logic without which interpretation would be imbecilic*' (49b). Imbecility resides in the fact of imagining that sense is condensed into a transcendence, namely into an unchangeable and eternal thing, anterior and exterior to (285) logic (36cd). Thus any interpretation which, to resolve and plug the riddle of the unconscious, would appeal to a reality outside equivocal language, could only produce imbecilic interpretations, which would efface access to impossibility and to the encounter with the real. But 'is there a sense of imbecility?' (36e). Without any doubt, since it is translated (especially in the quotation); in other words, since it is in the translation, interpretation cannot remain in imbecility: hence 'interpretation would be (unreal mode) imbecilic' if it could do without proper logic. The first people to make use of logic made a pretext of the fact that the Freudian unconscious is supposed to be 'insensible to contradiction' – 'there is no contradiction in the unconscious' ('The unconscious', in SE XIV 187) – in order 'to transcendentalise its existence'; as we have seen above (p.234), it would have been better to say 'in order to situate its existence in transcendence', namely to place the unconscious outside language.

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

Freud recognised grammatical and logical equivocation: just think of the logic of the paranoiac which allows the transformation of the proposition 'I a man love him a man'. There promptly responded to him the 'clouds of darkness' (from Jung to Abraham) and the obscurantism of a transcendent 'unconscious', situated outside the logic of language and of its formalisation. Are we going to reproach Freud for this 'obscurantist-effect' (49c) when we know that the saying of the analyst also triggers the (286) other discourses (and their own obscurantism)? Far from reproaching some

obscurity in Freud's saying, Lacan recognises 'some responsibilities' of his own on this front, by '*l'envers* of psychoanalysis', by the other discourses (hysterical, master and academic) which share in the discourse of the analyst and in which he had necessarily taken part. Equivocation or obscurity forms an integral part of such discourses.

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

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

First question. During the year 1971-72, the ancient matheme, the Platonic question of what can be taught (Meno) 'rediscovered its grip and its vigour' in a 'Fountain of Youth' (49de) thanks to the seminar...*ou pire* and to the cycle of lectures entitled *The knowledge of the psychoanalyst*. How learn what one already knows? And how comprehend if one knows nothing about what it is a matter of learning? Whether one knows it or one does not know it, there is no possible apprenticeship for it. In a (287) similar fashion what can one learn from the one who says 'I am lying'? This question is 'refreshed by having been promoted in new terms by someone like Russell' (in the form of the set of all the sets which do not contain themselves, or the catalogue of all the catalogues...). The new term – 'sets' – comes from 'the saying of Cantor' (and others). This saying is a journey. Does one get to the

end of the journey? To the QED? No! It is always a matter of failing ('who will I have failed...?'), of coming up against the impossible in order to re-launch the question. The matheme is the circle of saying gone through by the coming up against the impossible, a vicious circle since it justifies homophonous equivocation by grammatical equivocation then by logical equivocation which can be justified in its turn by homophonous equivocation. 'The more vicious a circle, the funnier it is, especially if one can bring out of it something like this little bird which is called the non-enumerable' (1 June 1972, *The knowledge of the psychoanalyst*). This circle makes there appear the structure that articulates the non-denumerable with the denumerable, the surface of desire with the cut of demand.

Second question. The paradox of the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves allows us 'to speak about the genital drive' (49e; 493) in a logical way. Freud's text, *Drives and their vicissitudes*, comprises two parts: the first articulates the partial drives according to the grammatical model of the active and passive opposition (to see/to be seen; to look/to be looked at); the second part concerns love, which is not articulated by the simple opposition of the active and the passive (to love/to be loved), but also by two other oppositions (to love/to be indifferent; to love/to hate). Starting from this triple opposition proper to the verb to love (*lieben*), Freud considers 'to love' as 'the expression of the *whole* sexual current' '*Ausdruck der ganzen Sexualstrebung*' (G.W.X p.225-6; S.E.XIV 133). While the first part of the Freudian text tackled the drive as grammatical equivocation (to see/to be seen), the second part goes into logical equivocation, that Lacan compares to Russell's paradox. Is the totalising of (288) partial drives (like 'love' or like the 'genital drive' taking up all the others except itself) possible? Is the totalising of the catalogues (as the catalogue of all the catalogues which do not contain themselves) possible? The 'genital drive' is not articulated in any way like the other drives. The 'pre-genital drives' are not arranged in the genital drive (there is no meaning-relationship between the two), they are adjusted and constructed 'elsewhere': in 'grammar' (to see/to be seen). In grammar, is there not a relationship between the pre-genital drives (to see/to be seen) and the genital drive (to love/to be loved)? Russell's logical paradox shows

us that the 'genital drive' as a catalogue that would assemble all the pre-genital drives except itself is contradictory. This is not enough to exclude the genital drive from our logic (which denies itself the foundation of non-contradiction): it must therefore be fashioned in the field of the Other. How can 'genitality', namely 'to love', 'approach' this Other? The Other 'takes the helm' (49e; 493) over genitality: the Other 'takes the helm (governs) and dominates ('*a barre*') genitality (50a), but the domination of the Other over genitality only happens because the Other 'takes the helm': the Other is the barred Other ('S of barred O: notall (*pastoute*)', 25bc). This 'division' of the barred Other 'is brought about in it by its passage to the major signifier, the phallus': by its passage to the phallic function and the journey of the four formulae, there appears the notall, which presupposes the 'S of barred O'. But at the same time, in the same journey of the phallic function, there is realised the impossibility of the sexual relationship, in other words the impossibility of the relationship between the semblance and the Other of each discourse, in other words the impossibility of love or of genitality. 'Genitality', thus equivalent to the sexual non-relationship, 'cata-logue', categorises the pre-genital drives: it gives them the brand and organises them by the verb ('logue') which comes from on high ('cata-'), through the double cut of saying. It is the barred Other (and its equivocal double turn) which forms (289) the methodical list of *o*-objects (and of 'extra-genital' drives, 35c). Thus the fourth formula catalogues all phallic functioning.

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

‘This is only a selection’ (50a) of what comes from ‘the very mouths of analysers’. Not only a selection of the benefits of analysis (‘the end of the analysis of the neurotic torus’), but also a selection of the ‘second-saying’ of interpretations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

‘There is thus explained this half-saying that we are coming to the end of’ (50d; 493): the half-saying of the single turn is explained by the

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

CONCLUSION

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

Starting from the Greek negation, from the *meden* (no...not one, *ne...pas un*), the Greek philosopher splits it into *me* and *den* to give us the structure. Everything is well and truly made of atoms (*den*) and emptiness (*me*), of 'something' (*den*) and of 'not...at all, *ne...pas*' (*me*). Starting also for his part from 'nothing, *rien*', from the nothing of ab-sense, from the nothing of the absence of the sexual relationship, Lacan in his turn separates out from it two syllables (*rien* = *rie* + *en*) and inverts them (*en* + *rie*) so that 'let us laugh at it'⁶ - But what happens in this joke, if not the extraction of the little something which gives is place to negation? And what is done by this cut of the cross-cap which allows a portion of spherical surface – in which we have recognised the **o**-object – to fall, if not demonstrate the Moebius strip and to give its place to the barred subject? Like Democritus, Lacan does not inscribe himself in ontology: they do not start from the being that is essence; starting from the nothing, they extract from it the being of the **o**-object and a *parêtre* of the barred subject, which are respectively the atom and emptiness.

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

⁶ This splitting of *rien*, nothing, into 'laugh' and 'at it', and the wordplay between Greek and French does not translate into English. [Translator]

indeed the clandestine passenger'. The **o**-object was indeed there, 'in secret' (Latin: *clam*) accompanying our destiny along the path of equivocation (*me-den*, no-thing, clan-destiny, *me-den*, *ri-en*, *clan-destin*): it is the '*den*', it is the '*en*', it is 'the *clam*', by which negation is articulated, by which laughter is articulated, by which our destiny is articulated. 'The clandestine passenger' (the cross-cap) is unveiled by being split into 'clam' (the **o**-object) and 'destiny' (the Moebius strip): 'the clam now shapes our destiny', the **o**-object makes our barred subject; or again the clam, a small edible shellfish named scientifically *venus mercenaire*, shapes the destiny of the barred subject thanks to the diamond of the phantasy.

Democritus – reputed 'materialistic' because he excludes the gods from his universe – is 'no more materialistic than anyone sensible' (51a): by his 'joke' based on the 'nothing', he establishes in effect a sense which would arise rather alongside meaning, indeed without meaning, whilst materialism refers to 'matter' as a transcendent principle (37ac). This whirlwind of sense around *den* (Democritus), around surplus-value (Marx), around the **o**-object (Lacan), is less evident in Freud. Where did he get the 'seed'? From his native land, Moravia⁷: the Freudian witticism (*Der Wits und seine Beziehung zum Unbewusste*, 1905) is inspired by 'words ravished' from the Kabala. But through the Kabala, has not the Freudian *Witz* 'run to seed', the seed of transcendence borrowed from the Torah and transposed – improperly - into the unconscious and into his matter?

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

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

⁷ C. Fierens has pointed out the French homophonies : Moravia=*Moravie*=*mot ravis*=*mort à vie*!

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

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

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

‘Evidently my discourse does not always have such fortunate offshoots, *rejets*’ (51d): the rejection (by the analyser) of Lacan’s discourse is a rejection of the *o*-object; it opens up saying, which sprouts as a shoot on the stump that remains, on the stump of the (296) old felled theory. Lacan’s offspring ‘from the angle of the “influence” dear to academic theses’ are less fortunate: Lacan’s discourse seems to have been the fore-runner of ‘a whirlwind of semantophilia’ (51de). To endorse Lacan’s discourse by the pure operation of the signifier, to endorse it simply by portmanteau words (*mot-valise*) and homophonous equivocation, is to forget the structure of saying and interpretation: ‘For some time now we have been *movalise*-ing

out of sight', 'not alas! without owing some of it to me'; these portmanteau words are, alas, only too little the invention of those who content themselves with carrying off what Lacan has said in the valise of academic discourse.

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

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

What is 'the challenge' (52a), to which the analyst owes his existence? It is the question from the Other and to the Other, *Che vuoi?*, which engages desire as 'absolute condition' (E 814); this desire is made explicit by the double-looped cut of the cross-cap. The absolute has 'haunted' knowledge and power – the 'absolute knowledge' of a Hegel and the absolute power of a Louis XIV – 'derisively'. This absolute, a hope proper to desire, is represented elsewhere by the saints: 'the saints are the administrators of the approach to desire' (Seminar VII, *The ethics of psychoanalysis*, p...). The challenge (297) proposed to the analyst is indeed a provocative declaration... 'the tone must be lowered'; 'the analyst is pulling out.' He is incapable of the absolute, just as, in reality, (297) the philosopher and the monarch also are. Lacan 'denotes' the challenge 'as abjection', by *abjectio* (Latin), by the action of letting go, by renunciation. The analyst abandons any pretension to omniscience and omnipotence: he renounces knowing and doing in the place of the analyser; and it is by this renunciation that, precisely, he does not file off. By creating the 'absence' of the philosophical position, he manages to hold the place of semblance, as

o-object without either filing away from it or laying claim to the absolute of desire.

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

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

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

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

The chateau of Beloeil, chateau of the *princes de Ligne*, contains a painting of Charles I of England (1600-1649), who by his political and religious absolutism, alienated himself from public opinion and ended up on the scaffold. Are we to think that the absolute was missed by Lacan? ‘Not at all’, Lacan, prince of the cut rather than prince of *Ligne*, is not in the line of descent of the absolute.

Cockadoodledoo! 14 July French national holiday! What does France bring us? 'Let it be known'! The tricoloured flag of knowledge turns around homophony, grammar and logic. Neighbour of the absolute, it circles the *o*-object under the form of look and of voice.

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

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

As parrot, it is already the *voice*.

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