

THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN

BOOK XX

Encore

1972-1973

**Translated by Cormac Gallagher from unedited
French manuscripts**

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Translator's note

An official French edition of this seminar already exists and it formed the basis for the official English translation which has been available for some years.

The present unofficial translation is based on the 'pirate' versions of the seminar and on editions prepared by different psychoanalytic organisations for the use of their members.

These are in general closer to the actual words spoken by Lacan and have been subjected to much less editing and rewriting. They also include the contributions of those invited by Lacan to address the Seminar in his stead.

This translation is intended then to make available to English-speaking readers the kind of alternative version that has long been used by French students of Lacan and thus to supplement the official translation.

Dublin

August 2004

Seminar 13: Wednesday 26 June 1973

Thanks to someone who is willing to devote himself to brushing up what I tell you here – he is there in the front row – four or five days ago I received a nicely scrubbed truffle of my locutions – I am talking about those of this year. That was of interest to me, after all, because with this title *Encore*, I was not sure whether I was still in the field I have been clearing for twenty years since what that meant was that it could go on for a long time yet (*encore*).

Re-reading it I found that it was not so bad, especially given that, good God, it had started with something that seemed to me a little lightweight in the first of my seminars this year that *the enjoyment of the Other is not a sign of love*. It was a start. A start that I could perhaps come back to today in closing what I opened up then.

In effect I spoke a bit about love. But the pivotal point of what I put forward this year concerns what is involved in knowledge and I stressed that its exercise could only represent an enjoyment. This is the key, the turning point.

This is what I would like to contribute to today by a kind of reflection concerning what is done in a tentative manner in scientific discourse, with respect to what can be produced by way of knowledge.

(2) I am going straight to what is at stake: *knowledge is a riddle* (*une énigme*). It is a riddle made present to us by the unconscious as it was revealed by analytic discourse. It is stated more or less as follows: for the speaking being, knowledge is what is articulated. That could have been noticed a long time ago, because, in short, in tracing out the paths of knowledge, nothing was been done except articulating all kinds of things which were centred for a long time on being. And it is obvious that nothing is, except in the measure that it is said that it is.

I call that S₂. You have to know how to hear that. Is it really talking about them (*est-ce bien d'eux*)? Because after all, if we are starting from language it is generally stated that language serves to communicate. To communicate about what? You have to ask yourself. About which *eux*? Communication implies reference. Only one thing is clear – I am taking things from the angle of the scientific study of language – language is the effort made to account for something that has nothing to do with communication and which is what I call *lalangue*. *Lalangue* is used for completely different things than communication. That is what the experience of the unconscious has shown us in so far as it is made up of *lalangue* which as you know, I write as one word to designate what each of us deals with, with respect to what is for us *lalangue*, our so-called mother (*lalangue*), which is not called that for nothing.

If one wished to bring communication a little closer to what is effectively at work in the enjoyment of *lalangue* it would be because it implies something, namely, a reply, in other words dialogue. But as I said previously – not especially this year – as I previously articulated explicitly there is nothing less certain than that *lalangue* serves first and foremost to dialogue?

I was able to pick up like that in passing, because sometimes there come to hand things that I have been hearing about for a long time,

(3) so then, I just got my hands on the work, an important book by someone named Bateson about which people have been talking my hind legs off, enough for it to get on my nerves a bit. Because in truth it was by someone who had been touched by the grace of a certain text of mine and who had translated it – translated while adding some commentary - and who believed he had found in the Bateson in question something that went significantly further than what I thought I should state about the unconscious. *The unconscious*, I said, *structured like a language*.

This guy Bateson is pretty good! It's going to be translated soon, thank God. That will allow us to see, like that, the extent to which he is admirably inserted into what I say about the unconscious. The unconscious which the author, not realising that it is structured like a language, which the author proves to have only a rather mediocre conception of. But it must be said that there are things he has forged into some very nice artifices that he calls *metalogues*. They are not bad. They are not bad in so far as, as he says himself, these *metalogues* involve, if we take him at his word, some kind of internal, dialectical progress which would consist precisely in being produced only by examining the evolution of a the meaning of a term..

He realises the artifice, of course, since what has always been the case in everything that has been called a dialogue, the platonic dialogues among others, is to make the supposed interlocutor say everything that, in short, motivates the speaker's very question, namely, to incarnate in the other the answer that is already there. This indeed is why dialogues, classical dialogues – the finest examples of which are represented by the Platonic legacy – this indeed is why classical dialogues are shown not to be dialogues.

(4) If I said that language is what the unconscious is structured like, this indeed is because language, first of all, does not exist.

Language is what we try to get to know about the function of *lalangue*. This indeed is how scientific discourse tackles it, except that it is difficult for it to fully realise it. For the unconscious bears witness, bears witness to a knowledge that for the most part escapes the individual (*l'être*) who provides the occasion to realise just how far the effects of *lalangue* go.

In effect, it is true, in effect the individual realises from all sorts of affects that remain enigmatic what results from the presence of *lalangue* in so far as it articulates things about knowledge that go much further than what he himself supports by way of stated knowledge.

Language is no doubt made up of *lalangue*. It is the lucubration of knowledge itself about *lalangue*. But the unconscious is a knowledge, and a knowing-how-to act (*un savoir-faire*) with *lalangue*. What we know about acting with *lalangue*, in other words, goes well beyond what we can understand under the heading of language. But it raises the same question as is raised by the term language. It is on the same path, except that it already goes much further, it anticipates the function of language. *Lalangue* affects us first of all by everything it brings with it by way of effects that are affects. If we can say that the unconscious is structured like a language, it is very precisely in the sense that the effects of *lalangue*, already there *qua* knowledge, go well beyond anything the being, the being who speaks, is capable of stating as such. It is indeed in that regard that the unconscious, in so far as I support it on its deciphering, that the unconscious can only be structured like a language, a language that is always hypothetical with respect to what sustains it, namely, *lalangue*, namely, what allowed me, just now, to turn my S_2 into a question earlier and ask: is it indeed *d'eux*, in effect, that is at stake in language? In other words is language simply communication?

(5) The failure to recognise this fact which emerged thanks to analytic discourse, gave rise to what today I am going to make the pivot of my question about knowledge. It gave rise to the fact that a grimace has emerged in the lowest depths of science that consists in asking how being can know anything whatsoever.

It is comical to see how this question is supposedly answered. I will take the following as an example. Since the limit, as I first posited it, is constituted by the fact that there are beings who speak, people wonder what the knowledge of those who do not speak could be. They ask themselves about it. They do not know why they ask themselves about it. But they ask themselves about it all the same. So they build a little maze for rats, thanks to which, they hope to be on the right track about what is involved in knowledge. So what happens then? They hope they are on the right path because they hope a rat is going to show the capacity it has to learn to learn. To learn to do what? What interests it, of course. And they assume that what interests it, an assumption that is not absolutely groundless, must be, since they do not take the rat as a being but well and truly as a body which means that they view it as a unit. As a rat-unit. Now, they absolutely do not ask themselves what sustains the rat's being, even though from all time, people have always imagined that being, that being must contain a sort of plenitude that is proper to it. Since that is where people began in first approaching what was involved in a being. Namely, that being is a body. They lucubrated a whole hierarchy, a whole scale of bodies, and they began, good God, with the notion that each one should know what keeps it in being. In other words they went no further than the idea that it was maintained there by something and that had to be its good, what gives it pleasure.

But how does it happen, what change came about in discourse in order for people to suddenly question that being regarding the

means it might have to go beyond itself, that is, to learn more than it (6) needs to know in its being to survive as a body?

Thanks to the montage of the maze and to some accessories, namely, that the maze leads not only to nourishment but to a button or a valve that the supposed subject of this being must find the knack of in order to obtain nourishment. In other words, the question of knowledge is transformed here into a question of *learning*. Is a rat, no longer considered in its being but in its unity, for everything is going to end up in the pressure of a button, is it the same thing if it has to recognise a feature, a lit or coloured feature to which the being is capable of reacting. And it will be ascertained after a series of trials and errors – as you know it is called, this was left in English, given the people who carved out this approach to knowledge – we are going to see if the rate of trials and errors, by how much this rate is going to diminish, sufficiently for it to be recorded that the rat-unit is capable of learning something.

The question that is only secondarily raised – the one that interests me – is whether the rat-unit in question is going to learn how to learn. There lies the true mainspring of the experiment. Once it has undergone one of these tests, will a rat, faced with another test of the same order – we will see later what this order is – is he going to learn more quickly? That can be easily materialised by a decrease in the number of trials necessary for the rat to know how it must behave in such a montage – let us call the totality of the maze and the valves and buttons that function there a montage.

It is clear that the question has been so rarely raised - even though it has been, of course - that people have not even dreamt of investigating the difference. In other words what is left to one side is the following: it is whether what is proposed to the rat as a theme to prove its ability to learn comes from the same source or two different sources. For if we refer to the fact that the experimenter is

quite obviously the one in this business who *knows* something; it is even with what he knows that he invents the montage of the maze, of the buttons and the valves. If he were not someone for whom the relationship to knowledge is founded on a certain relationship – I have said it, why not repeat it – of habitation or of cohabitation with *lalangue*, it is clear that there would not be this montage and that all that the rat-unit learns on this occasion, is to give a sign, a sign of its presence as a unit. Whether this is a button or something else, the pressure of the paw on this sign, whether it is a button or indeed a valve, if the valve is recognised, it is only recognised by a sign, it is always by making a sign that the unit accedes to that on the basis of which one concludes that there is learning.

But this relationship which is in short external, external in such a way that nothing confirms that there may be a grasp of the mechanism which leads to the pressing of the button, how is it not grasped that the question is important, and of the highest importance, that it is the only one that counts. Namely, whether there is not, in these successive mechanisms in connection with which the experimenter can ascertain not simply whether he has found the knack, but whether he has – the only thing that counts – learned the way it is to be taken, that he has learned (*a-appris*) what is to be taken (*à-prendre*). It is clear that, I would say, the coherence, the symbiosis realised by such an experiment, if we take into account what is involved in unconscious knowledge, cannot fail to be examined starting from the fact that what must be known is how the rat unit responds to what has not been thought up from nothing by the experimenter. In other words, that one does not (8) invent just any old labyrinthine composition, that the fact that this comes from the same experimenter, or from two different experimenters, deserves to be examined. And nothing in what I have been able to hear up to the present in this literature implies that it is in this sense that the question has been put. But the interest of this example is not limited to the fact of examining which leaves

entirely intact and distinct what is involved in knowledge and what is involved in learning.

What is involved in knowledge raises questions, and specifically the following: how is it taught? It is quite clear that the question of: how it is this taught, namely, the notion of a science, entirely centred on the following: on knowledge which is transmitted, is integrally transmitted. This is what has produced in what is involved in knowledge this sifting thanks to which a discourse called scientific has been constituted. It has not at all been constituted without numerous misadventures.

If this year I recalled where it emerged from, it is certainly not without there having been feigned, *fingere, fingo*, said Newton, *non fingo*, he believed he could say, *hypotheses non fingo*: I presuppose nothing. And it is not by chance that this year I specified that on the contrary, it is indeed upon a hypothesis that everything turns. And the famous revolution which is not at all Copernician but Newtonian operated, operated on the fact of substituting for 'things turn', 'things fall'. This is the Newtonian hypothesis as such when he recognised in the astral 'things turn' the signs, he clearly marked that it is the same thing as to fall. But in order to notice that, and which once it had been noticed allows the hypothesis to be eliminated, it was of course necessary that first of all he should make this hypothesis.

The question of introducing a scientific discourse about knowledge, (9) is that of examining this knowledge where it is, and this knowledge where it is, means the unconscious in so far as it is in the den of *lalangue* that this knowledge reposes.

I would like to point out that I do not enter into the unconscious, any more than Newton, without a hypothesis. The hypothesis that the individual who is affected by it, by the unconscious, is the same

as the one who constitutes what I call the subject of a signifier:
which I state in the minimal formula that *a signifier represents a subject for another signifier*.

In other words I reduce the hypothesis according to the very formula that substantifies it, to the fact that the hypothesis is necessary for the functioning of *lalangue*. To say that there is a subject, is nothing else than to say that there is a hypothesis. The only proof that we have of it, is the fact that the subject is merged with this hypothesis, and that it is the individual, the speaking individual who supports it, is because the signifier becomes sign. The signifier *in itself* is something that is not definable except by a difference. A difference to another signifier. It is the introduction as such of difference into the field which allows what is involved in the signifier to be extracted from *lalangue*.

But starting from that, and because there is the unconscious, namely *lalangue* in so far as it is from its cohabitation with it that there is defined a being called the speaking being and the signifier can be called on to make a sign. And you can understand this sign as you wish. Either the word *signe*, or the English t.h.i.n.g, thing.

The 'signed signifier' [?] of a subject, *qua* signifier, constitutes the formal support, reaches something other in so far as it affects him. An other, an other than what he is quite crudely as signifier, an other made subject or at least passes for being so. It is in this respect that he is, and only for the speaking being, that he is found to be being as being (*qu'il se trouve être comme étant*). Namely, something whose being is always elsewhere, as the predicate shows. The subject is never anything but punctual and vanishing. It is only a subject by a signifier, and for another signifier.

It is here that we must return to the fact that after all, by a choice guided by we know not what, Aristotle made up his mind to give no

other definition of the individual than the body. The body as organism as what maintains itself as One, and not as what reproduces itself. It is striking to see that between the Platonic *Idea* and the Aristotelian definition of the individual as founding being, the difference is properly that around which we still are, namely the question which is posed to the biologist, namely, how a body reproduces itself. For this indeed is what is at stake in every attempt at what is called molecular chemistry, namely how it happens that in combining a certain number of things in a single pot, something is going to be precipitated which will ensure that a bacterium, for example, will be reproduced as such.

The body, what is it then? Is it or is it not the knowledge of the One?

The knowledge of the One is revealed as not coming from the body. The knowledge of the One, for the little that we can say about it, the knowledge of the One comes from the signifier One.

Does the signifier One come from the fact that the signifier as such is never anything but *one among others*, referred as such to these others, and as being the difference from these others? The question is so little resolved up to the present, that I devoted my whole seminar last year to examining, to putting the accent on this *there is something of the One* (*y a de l'Un*).

What is meant by *there is something of the one*? What is meant by *there is something of the one* is something that allows there to be located the signifying articulation that from *one among others* – and it is a matter of knowing if it is anyone whatsoever – there arises a S_1 , a swarm (*essaim*) of signifiers, a buzzing swarm linked to the fact that this One of each signifier with the question of: *is it of them* (*d'eux*) *that I speak*? This S_1 that I can first of all write in its relation with S_2 , well then this is the swarm. You can put here as

many of them as you wish. This is the swarm that I am talking about.

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The signifier as master, namely, in so far as it assures the unity, the unity of this copulation of the subject with knowledge, is the master signifier. And it is uniquely in *lalangue*, in so far as it is examined as language, that there is separated out – and not elsewhere – that there is separated out the existence of what, not by accident, the term *stoikeion*, element, arose from a primitive linguistics. It's not for nothing. The signifier One is not just any signifier, it is the signifying order in so far as it is established from the envelopment through which the whole chain subsists.

I recently read the work of someone who was questioning herself about what she took as a relation which is that S_1 with S_2 , namely, a relation of representation: the S_1 is supposed to be in relation with S_2 inasmuch as it represents a subject.

The question of whether this relation is asymmetrical anti-symmetrical, transitive or other, namely whether the subject is transferred from S_2 to an S_3 , and so on, is a question that is to be taken up again. To be taken up again from the schema of it that I am giving here. The One incarnated in *lalangue* is something which, precisely, indecisive between the phoneme, the word, the sentence, indeed all thought. It indeed is what is at stake in what I call the master signifier. It is the signifier One. And it is not for nothing that at the second last of our meetings, I brought along here the piece of string to illustrate it. The piece of string in so far as it makes this ring (*rond*), this ring whose possible knot with another I began to examine.

I will not go any further today because we have thanks to an (12) external question, the question of our being sheltered, here, because we have been deprived of one of these seminars; it is something that I will take up again eventually in what follows.

The important thing, to change tack, to turn the shutter here, the important thing in what psychoanalytic discourse has revealed consists in the following – something whose fibre we are astonished not to see everywhere – is that this knowledge that structures by a specific cohabitation what is involved in the being that speaks, this knowledge has the closest relationship with love, for what supports all love is very precisely the following: a certain relationship between two unconscious knowledges.

If I stated that it is the subject supposed to know that motivates the transference, this is only a quite particular, specific application point of what comes from our experience, and I would ask you to consult the text of what I stated here about the choice of love. It was in the middle of this year that I did it. If I spoke about something in this connection, it is in short of the recognition, the recognition by signs, which are always punctuated enigmatically, of the way in which the individual is affected *qua* subject of this unconscious knowledge.

If it is true that there is no sexual relationship because simply enjoyment, the enjoyment of the Other taken as body, that this enjoyment is always inadequate: perverse on one side in so far as the other is reduced to the small *o*-object, mad I would say on the other in so far as what is at stake, is the enigmatic way in which

there is posited this enjoyment of the Other as such. Is it not from affronting this impasse, this impossibility defining as such a real, that love is put to the test in so far as with respect to the partner it can only realise what I called, in a sort of poetry, to make myself heard, courage with respect to this fatal destiny? Is it indeed courage that is at stake, or the paths of a recognition, of a (13) recognition whose characteristic can be nothing other than the following: that this relationship described as sexual become here a subject to subject relationship, namely, of the subject in so far as he is only the effect of unconscious knowledge, of the way in which this subject to subject relationship ceases not to be written?

This *to cease not to be written*, as you see, is not a formula that I put forward by chance. If I took pleasure in the *necessary* as what does not cease not to be written on this occasion, I beg your pardon: which does not cease, does not cease to be written on this occasion – the necessary is not the real, it is what does not cease to be written. The displacement of this negation which in passing asks us the question of what is involved in negation, when it comes to take the place of an inexistence, if the sexual relationship corresponds to something of which I say that, not only does it not cease not to be written – it is indeed with that and with it that we are dealing on this occasion – that it does not cease not to be written, that there is here impossibility, it is moreover that something cannot *say* it either, namely, that there is no ex-sistence in the saying of this relationship.

But what does it mean to deny it? Is there any kind of legitimacy in substituting a negation for the experienced apprehension of inexistence? This is also a question that it is a matter of us opening up.

Does the word *interdiction* mean any more? Is it permitted any more? This is something which cannot be immediately settled either.

But the apprehension of contingency as I already incarnated it by this *ceases not to be written*, namely, by this something which, by the encounter, the encounter, it must indeed be said, of symptoms, of affects, of that which in each individual marks the trace of his exile, not as subject, but as speaking, of his exile from this relationship; is this not to say that it is simply by the affect that results from this gap, that something in every case where love occurs, that something that can vary infinitely as regards the level of this knowledge, that something is encountered which for an instant, can give the illusion of ceasing not to be written? Namely, that (14) something is not only articulated but is inscribed, is inscribed in the destiny of each one through which, for a time, a time of suspension, this something which would be the relationship, this something finds in the being who speaks, this something finds its mirage-like trace and path.

What would allow us, to strengthen (*conforter*) this implication? Assuredly something that the displacement of this negation, namely the passage to what earlier I missed so well by a slip that in itself is quite significant, namely the passage from negation to *does not cease to be written*, to the necessity substituted for this contingency, here indeed is the suspension point to which all love is attached. All love which only subsists by ceasing not to be written, tends to make this negation pass to *does not cease, does not cease, will not cease, to be written*.

And such in effect is the substitute which, by way of the existence not at all of the sexual relationship but of the unconscious which is different to it, which in this way makes the destiny and also the drama of love.

Given the time that we have got to, which is that at which normally I like to leave you, I will not push things any further here. I will not push things any further except to indicate that what I said about hatred is something that does not belong to the same plane on which there is articulated the hold of unconscious knowledge, but which, as regards what is involved in the subject, in the subject of which you will note, it cannot be that it does not desire not to know too much about what is involved in this eminently contingent encounter, that he know a little more than of this subject he is going to be, who is caught up there. The relationship of being, of being to being, very far from it being this relationship of harmony about which from all time, we do not really know why, we are manipulated, we are accommodated to by a tradition the convergence of which it is very curious to note. The convergence (15) with Aristotle who sees there only supreme enjoyment, with what Christian tradition reflects to us about this same tradition as beatitude, showing by this its entanglement in something which is truly only a mirage-like apprehension; the encounter of being as such – it is indeed what loves comes to tackle by way of the subject. When it tackles – I explicitly raised the question – is it not here that there arises what makes of being, precisely, something that is only sustained by being missed?

I spoke earlier about rats. This was what is at stake. It is not for nothing that rats were chosen! It is because rats can be rubbed out

(*ça se rature*). One can easily make a unit of it, and then from a certain angle, I saw that at one time, I had a concierge when I was living on rue de la Pompe, he for his part never missed a rat. He had for the rat a hatred equal to the being of the rat!

The approach to being, is it not there that there resides what in short proves to be the extreme, the extreme of love? True love? True love ends up with hatred. Assuredly it was not analytic experience that discovered that. The eternal modulation of themes about love sufficiently bear the reflection of it.

Voilà, I am leaving you.

Shall I say to you until next year?

You will notice that I never ever said that to you. That I am noting today, because this is what is at stake; I note today that I have never said that to you. More exactly I am bringing this remark to your notice, because for my part I have always deprived myself of doing so, for a very simple reason. The fact is that I have never known, for the 20 years that I have been articulating things for you, I have never known whether I would continue the next year. That, that forms part of my destiny as small **o**-object.

(16) So then, since after all I have completed the cycle of these 20 years, after 10 years, my right to speak was withdrawn from me and it happens that for reasons in which destiny played a part and also on my part a part of an inclination to please someone, I continued

for 10 years more (*encore*). Will I continue next year? Why not stop the *encore* right there?

What is admirable is that no one has ever doubted that I would still continue. The fact that I am making this remark nevertheless raises the question. It could happen that after all to this *encore* I could add *that's enough*.

Well then, faith, I am leaving it for you to wager on. Because, after all, there are many people who believe they know me and who think that I find in this an infinite narcissistic satisfaction! Alongside the trouble that it gives me, I must say that it seems a small thing to me.

Place your bets.

And then, what will be the result? Will that mean that those who have guessed right are the ones who love me? Well then this is precisely the meaning of what I have just stated for you today. The fact is that to know what the partner is going to do, is not a proof of love.

Seminar 1: Wednesday 21 November 1972

I happened not to publish *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*. At the time it was a form of politeness on my part – after you, be my guest, be my worst, please go ahead. [Playing on: *après-vous*, etc)

With time, I began to notice that I could, after all, say a little more about it, and then I realised that what my laborious journeying was about was something of the order of *I don't want to know anything about it*.

That is also no doubt why, with time, I am here again and that you also are here. I am always amazed at it. *Encore!*

What has favoured me for some time is that there is apparently also on your part, in the great mass of you who are here, the same *I don't want to know anything about it*. But that's the point. Is it the same one? Is the: *I don't want to know anything about it* regarding a certain knowledge that is transmitted to you drop by drop really what is at stake? I do not think so and it is precisely because you suppose that I start from elsewhere in this *I don't want to know anything about it* that this supposing binds you to me. So that while it is true when I say that with respect to you I can only be here in the position of an analysand of my *I don't want to know anything about it*, it will be quite some time before you reach the same [position].

And that indeed, that indeed is why it is only when your own seems sufficient to you that you are able, if inversely you are one of my analysands, you are normally able to detach yourself from your analysis.

Contrary to what has been said, there is no contradiction between my position as analyst and what I am doing here with respect to you.

(2) Last year I entitled what I thought I could say to you: *...ou pire* (*...or worse*), and then *ça s'oupire* - s apostrophe. That has nothing to do with 'I' or 'you' – I do not worse you, nor do you worse me. Our path, that of analytic discourse, only progresses within this narrow limit, on this knife-edge, which means that elsewhere things can only get worse.

It is this discourse that supports me and to begin it anew this year, I am first of all going to assume that you are in bed. A fully used bed - for two.

Here I have to apologise to someone – a jurist, to place him – who had been kind enough to enquire about my discourse. I felt I could, in order to make him sense what its foundation is, namely, that language is not the speaking being. I told him that I did not feel out of place having to speak in a law faculty, the one in which it is tangible, tangible by what is called the existence of codes, the civil code, the penal code and many others, that language holds good there, it is separate. And that speaking beings, what are called men, have to deal with that as it has been constituted throughout the ages. So then in beginning by supposing you to be in bed, of course, I must apologise to him. Nevertheless I will stick to it today. And if I apologise for it, it is in order to remind him, to remind him that at the basis of all rights there is what I am going to talk about, namely, enjoyment. The law speaks about that. The law does not even fail to recognise this starting point, this good old common law on which the usage of concubinage is based; this means sleeping together.

Obviously I am going to start from something else, from what remains veiled in the law, namely, what we do with it – embrace

one another. I start from the limit, from a limit with which one must indeed start if one is to be serious, which I have already commented on, to be able to establish the series, the series of what approaches it.

Usufruct – that is indeed a notion from law which brings together in one word what I already recalled in my seminar on ethics which I mentioned earlier, namely, the difference that there is between the useful, that there is between the useful and enjoyment.

(3) What purpose does the useful serve? That has never been well defined owing to the respect, the prodigious respect that thanks to language, speaking beings have for the mean. Usufruct means that you can enjoy your means but must not waste them. When you receive an inheritance you have the usufruct of it on condition that you do not use up too much of it. This indeed is the essence of law, to divide up, to distribute, to pay out what is involved in enjoyment.

But what is enjoyment? Here it is precisely what, for the moment, reduces itself for us by a negative example. Enjoyment is what is of no use. Only that does not tell us much more about it.

Here I am highlighting, I am highlighting the reserve that is implied by this field of law, as regards the right to enjoyment. Right is not duty. Nothing forces anyone to enjoy, except the superego. The superego is the imperative of enjoyment. Enjoy (*Jouis*)! It is the commandment that starts from where? This indeed is where we find the turning point analytic discourse interrogates.

It was indeed along this path, at a time, during the *after you* period of time that I let go by in order to show that if analysis allows us to advance towards a certain question, it is indeed because we cannot remain at what I started with, respectfully of course, at what I started with, namely, *The Ethics* of Aristotle to show what slippage

had occurred with time. A slippage which is not progress, a slippage which is a circuit, a slippage which, from a consideration in the proper sense of the term, from Aristotle's consideration of being, brought us to the time of Bentham's utilitarianism. To the time of the theory of fictions, to the time of what showed language to have the value of a tool, a use value. Which allows us finally to return to an examination of what is involved in this being, of this sovereign good posited there as object of contemplation and on which it was believed an ethic could be edified.

(4) I am leaving you then on this bed, to you own inspiration. I go out, and once again I will write on the door - so that as you go out you may perhaps take note of the dreams that you will have pursued on this bed - the following sentence: *the enjoyment of the Other*, of the Other with – it seems to me that given the time, huh, it ought to be enough for me to stop there, anyway I have sufficiently pounded your ears with this capital O that comes after, and since nowadays this O can be found everywhere, put before the other, more or less advisedly moreover! This is printed without rhyme or reason – *the enjoyment of the Other, of the body of the Other that symbolises it, is not the sign of love.*

I write that, and after it I do not write *the end*, nor *amen*, nor *so be it*. It is not the sign; it is nevertheless the only response. What complicates matters, is that the response, is already given at the level of love, and that because of this enjoyment remains a question. A question in that the response that it may constitute is not necessary at first. It is not like love. Love, for its part, constitutes a sign and, as I have been saying for a long time, is always reciprocal. I put that forward very gently in saying that feelings are always reciprocal. It was so that it should come back to me, huh!

- So then, so then, and love, and love, is it always reciprocal?
- But yes, but yes!

This is even why the unconscious was invented. It is so that we might see that the desire of man is the desire of the Other. And that love is a passion which may be the ignorance of this desire, but which nonetheless leaves it its full import. When it is looked at more closely we see its ravages.

So then, of course, this explains that the enjoyment of the body of the Other, for its part, is not a necessary response. This even goes (5) further. It is not a sufficient response either, because love for its part, demands love. It does not cease to demand it. It still demands it. *Encore* is the proper name for this gap from which in the Other the demand for love starts.

So then from where does there start, from where does there start, this something that is certainly capable, but in a non-necessary, non-sufficient way of responding through enjoyment, enjoyment of the body, of the body of the Other?

This indeed is what last year, inspired in some way by the chapel at Sainte-Anne which was getting on my nerves, I let myself go and called *l'amur*. *L'amur* is what appears in bizarre signs on the body and which comes from beyond, from outside, from this place that we believed, like that, that we could ogle with a microscope in the shape of the germ cell. And I would point out to you that one cannot say that this is life because moreover it carries death, the death of the body; that it reproduces it, that it repeats it, that it is from there that there comes the *encore* – *the en-corps*.

It is wrong to say: *separation of the soma and the germ*, since in bearing this germ, the body carries its traces. There are traces on *l'amur*. The being of the body is undoubtedly sexed, but it is secondary, as they say. And as experience shows, it is not from these traces that there depends the enjoyment of the body inasmuch

as it symbolises the Other. This is what is put forward after the simplest consideration of things.

What then is at stake in love?

As psychoanalysis puts forward with an audacity that is all the more unbelievable as its whole experience goes against it, that what it demonstrates is the contrary, love is to make One. It is true that people talk about nothing but that for a long time, about the One. Fusion, Eros, is supposed to be a tension towards the One.

There is something of the One. It is on this that I supported my discourse last year, and certainly not to contribute to this original confusion, that of desire which only leads to aiming at the gap in (6) which it can be shown that the One only stems from the essence of the signifier.

If I examined Frege at the start, it was to try to show the gap there is between this One and something which depends on being, and behind being, on enjoyment.

Love. I can all the same tell you through a little example, the example of a parakeet that was in love with Picasso. Well then, that could be seen from the way he nibbled on the collar of his shirt and the flaps of his jacket. This parakeet was in effect in love with what is essential to man, namely, his attire. This parakeet was like Descartes for whom men were clothes walking about (*en proménade*), if you will allow me. Naturally, it is *pro*, that promises the *maenad*, namely, when you take them off. But it is only a myth, a myth that has converged with the bed mentioned earlier. To enjoy a body when there are no more clothes is something that leaves intact the question of what constitutes the One, namely, of identification. The parakeet identified with the clothed Picasso.

It is the same for everything involved in love. In other words, the habit loves the monk because it is through it that they are all one. In other words, what is under the habit and what we call the body, is perhaps only in the whole affair this remainder that I call the little object. What holds the image together is a remainder. And what analysis shows is that love in its essence is narcissistic, that the yarns about the objectal is something whose substance it knows how to expose precisely in what is the remainder in desire, namely its cause, and what sustains it, in its dissatisfaction, indeed its impossibility.

The impotence of love, even though it is reciprocal, depends on this ignorance of being the desire to be One. And this leads us to the impossibility of establishing the relation between them (*la relation d'eux..*) the relation between them to what? The two (*deux*) sexes.

(7) Assuredly, as I have said, what appears on these bodies in these enigmatic forms of sexual characteristics – which are merely secondary – doubtless make sexed beings. But being is the enjoyment of the body as such; that is as a - put it where you wish – a-sexual. Because what is known as sexual enjoyment is marked and dominated by the impossibility of establishing as such anywhere in what can be stated, this sole One that interests us, the One of the relation sexual relationship. That is what analytic discourse demonstrates precisely as regards one of these beings *qua* sexed, the man in so far as he is endowed with the organ described as phallic – I said *described as* – the sex, the corporal sex, the sexual organ of the woman – I said *of the woman* whereas in fact there is no such thing, there is no such thing as *the woman*, the woman is not whole – woman's sexual organ is of no interest to him except via the enjoyment of the body.

What analytic discourse demonstrates – allow me to put it this way – is that the phallus is the conscientious objection made by one of the two sexed beings to the service to be rendered to the other.

And do not talk to me about the woman's secondary characteristics. Because until further notice it is those of the mother that take precedence in her. Nothing distinguishes the woman as a sexed being except precisely her sexual organ.

That everything turns around phallic enjoyment is very precisely what all analytic experience bears witness to, and bears witness to in the fact that the woman is defined by a position that I highlighted as not all (*pas-toute*) with respect to phallic enjoyment.

I will go a little further. Phallic enjoyment is the obstacle owing to which man does not manage, I would say, to enjoy the woman's body, precisely because what he enjoys is this enjoyment, that of the organ. And that is why the superego as I highlighted it earlier by Enjoy! is a correlate of castration which is the sign with which there is decked out the avowal that the enjoyment of the Other, of the body of the Other is only promoted from infinitude. I will say (8) which, that which neither more nor less is supported by the paradox of Zeno himself

Achilles and the tortoise, such is the schema of enjoyment for one side of the sexual being. When Achilles has taken his step – has got it off – with Briseis, she like the tortoise also advances a little, this because she is not whole, not wholly his. Something remains. And Achilles must take a second step, and as you know, so on and so forth. This is even why in our day, but only in our day, people have managed to define number, the true one, or to put it better the real. Because what Zeno had not seen, is that the tortoise is not preserved from the destiny of Achilles; the fact is that as its step gets shorter and shorter, it will never arrive at the limit either.

And this is how a number, whatever it may be, is defined, if it is real. A number has a limit and it is in that measure that it is infinite.

It is quite clear that Achilles can only overtake the tortoise, he cannot rejoin it. But he can only rejoin it in infinitude.

Only here is what can be said as regards enjoyment, in so far as it is sexual. Enjoyment is marked on the one side by this hole which only assures it of a path other than that of phallic enjoyment. On the other side, cannot something be reached which would tell us how what up to now is only a flaw, a gap in enjoyment, might be realised?

This is something that oddly, cannot be suggested by strange glimpses. *Etrange*, is a word that can be broken down. *L'être-ange* is indeed something against which we are warned of by the alternative of being just as stupid (*bête*) as the parakeet mentioned earlier. But nevertheless, let us examine closely what is suggested to us by the idea that in enjoyment, in the enjoyment of bodies, sexual enjoyment has this privilege of being able to be questioned as being specified at least by an impasse. This means taking in this space, the space of enjoyment, something limited, closed off; it is a (9) locus, and to speak about it is a topology. If we are guided by what, in something that you will see coming out as the high point of my discourse last year, I believe I demonstrated the strict equivalence between topology and structure, which distinguishes the anonymity of what is spoken about as enjoyment, namely, what is organised by law. A geometry precisely; the heterogeneity of the locus, the fact is that there is a locus of the Other, of this locus of the Other, of one sex as Other, as absolute Other. What does the most recent development of this topology allow us to put forward? I will put forward here the term *compactness*. There is nothing more compact than a flaw since it is quite clear that somewhere it is

given that the intersection of everything that is enclosed in it, being accepted as existent in a finite number of sets, what results - it is a hypothesis – what results is that the intersection exists in an infinite number. This is the very definition of compactness. And this intersection of which I speak is that which I put forward earlier as being what covers, what creates the obstacle to the supposed sexual relationship. Namely, to what I state: that the advance of analytic discourse depends precisely on the fact that what it demonstrates is that since its discourse is only sustained from the statement that there is not, that it is impossible to posit the sexual relationship, it is through this that it determines what is really also the status of all the other discourses.

This is how there is named the point that covers, that covers the impossibility of the sexual relationship as such. Enjoyment *qua* sexual is phallic. Namely, it is not referred to the Other as such.

Let us follow here the complement of this hypothesis of compactness.

A formula is given to us by what I described as the most recent topology. Namely, from a logic constructed, constructed precisely from the examination of number and of what it leads towards, from a restoration of a locus which is not that of a homogeneous space, (10) the complement of this hypothesis of compactness is the following. In the same limited, closed off, supposedly established space, the equivalent of what earlier I put forward about the intersection passing from the finite to the infinite is the following. It is that if we suppose this same limited, closed space covered by open sets, namely, of what is defined as excluding its limit, of what is defined as greater than one point smaller than another, but in no case equal either to the starting point nor to the arrival point – to give you a rapid image of it. The same space, then, being supposed covered by open spaces, it is equivalent – that can be proved – to

say that the totality of these open spaces always allows an undercovering of open spaces, all constituting a finitude. Namely, that the sequence of the aforesaid elements constitutes a finite sequence. You may note that I did not say that they are countable. And nevertheless this is what the term *finite* implies.

In order to be countable an order must be found in them, and we must pause a little before supposing that this order can be found.

But what is meant in any case by the provable finitude of these open spaces capable of covering this limited, closed space in this case of sexual enjoyment, what it implies, in any case, is that the aforesaid spaces – and since what is at stake is the other side, let us put them in the feminine – can be taken one by one or rather *une par une*.

Now this is what happens in this space of sexual enjoyment which thereby proves to be compact. These *not-all* women as they are isolated in their sexual being, which then does not pass by way of the body but through what results from a requirement in the word, from a logical requirement and this, very precisely in that logic, the coherence inscribed in the fact that language exists, that it is outside these bodies that are stirred by it, the Other, the Other with a capital O, who is now incarnated, as one might say, as sexual being, requires this *une par une*.

(11) And it is in this indeed that it is strange, that it is fascinating – make no mistake – a different fascination, a different *fascinum*, this requirement of the One, as Parmenides was able to make us foresee as already strangely One, it is from the Other that it emerges.

Where there is being, there is a requirement of infinitude.

I will comment on, I will come back to what is involved in this locus of the Other. But right away to give an image and because after all I may well suppose that something in what I am putting forward may be tiring you, I am going to illustrate it for you.

We know well enough how analysts have amused themselves with Don Juan of whom they have made everything possible, including - and this beats all - a homosexual. Have I not, in centring on what I have just imaged for you, with this space of sexual enjoyment, to be covered from the other side by open sets and culminating in this finitude, I have clearly marked that I have not said that it was number. And nevertheless of course that this happens, finally they are counted. What is essential in the feminine myth of Don Juan is indeed that, it is that he has them one by one, and that is what the other sex, the masculine is, as regards women.

This indeed is why the image of Don Juan is of capital importance. It is in what is indicated by the fact that after all he can make a list of them, and that once there are names, they can be counted. If there are *mille e tre*, it is indeed because they can be taken one by one and that is the essential.

As you can see, we have here something quite different to the One of universal fusion. If the woman were not *not-all*, if in her body it were not the *not-all* that she is as sexed being, none of all of that would hold up.

What does that mean?

That I have been able in order to image facts which are the facts of (12) discourse this discourse with which we solicit in analysis an exit in the name of what? Of letting go everything that is involved in other discourses, the apparition of something in which the subject manifests himself in his gap, in what causes his desire. If that were not the case, I could not make the joint, the seam, the junction which comes to us so much from elsewhere, a topology of which nevertheless we cannot say does not arise from the same source. Namely, from a different discourse, from a discourse that is so

much more pure, so much more manifest from the fact that there is no genesis except from discourse. Is not the fact that this converges on an experience to the degree that it allows us to articulate it, not also something designed to make us come back and justify at the same time that which in what I put forward, is supported, *se s'oupire*, by never having recourse to any substance, of never referring to any being. And by this fact breaking with anything whatsoever that is stated as a philosophy. And that it is not justified, I suggest – later I will take this further - I suggested from the fact that everything that is articulated about being, everything that, the fact of refusing the predicate – to say *man is* for example without saying what - that the indication is given to us by this that everything involved in being is closely bound up precisely to this sectioning of the predicate. And indicates that nothing in fact can be said, except by these dead-end detours, by these demonstrations of logical impossibility which means that no predicate is enough. And that what is involved in being, a being that would posit itself as absolute is never anything but the fracture, the break, the interruption of the formula *sexed being* in so far as the sexed being is involved in enjoyment.

Seminar 2: Wednesday 12 December 1972

Lacan it seems in his first seminar - as it is called - of the year spoke, you'll never guess, about love. The news has travelled. It

even came back to me from – not very far away, of course – a little town in Europe to which it had been sent as a message....

Since it is from my couch that it came back to me, I cannot believe that the person who told it to me truly believed it, given that she knows quite well that what I say about love is assuredly that one cannot speak about it. *Parlez-moi d'amour*, is for funny songs! I spoke about the love letter, about the declaration of love; this is not the same thing as the word of love.

Anyway, I think it is clear, even if you did not formulate it for yourselves, it is clear that in this first seminar I spoke about stupidity (*la bêtise*). Of what conditions what I gave as a title to my seminar this year - *Encore*. You see the risk. I am only telling you that to show you what gives its weight, its weight to my presence here. It is that you enjoy it. Simply my presence – at least I dare believe it – my sole presence in my discourse, my sole presence is my stupidity. I should know that I have better things to do than to be here. I don't give a damn! That is why I might prefer that it should not be guaranteed to you at all events.

Nevertheless, it is clear that I cannot withdraw and simply say *encore* and the fact that it goes on is stupidity because I myself obviously collaborate in it. I can only place myself in the field of this *encore* and perhaps, by re-ascending a certain discourse which is analytic discourse back to what conditions this discourse.

(2) Namely, this truth, the only one that can be incontestable because *it is not*, that there is no sexual relationship. This in no way allows us to make a judgement about what is or is not stupidity. And nevertheless! It cannot but be, given our experience, that something should be examined in connection with analytic discourse which is whether it does not depend essentially by being supported by this dimension of stupidity. And why not? Why not after all ask oneself what is the status of this dimension that

nevertheless is quite present? Because in any case there was no need for analytic discourse – this is the nuance – for it to be announced as truth that there is no sexual relationship.

You must not believe that I for my part am afraid to get my feet wet. This would not be my first time to talk about St Paul; I already did so. This is not something that frightens me, even if it means compromising myself with people whose status, whose lineage is not properly speaking one that I frequent. Nevertheless, the fact that men on the one side women on the other was the consequence of the message, is something that had some consequences throughout the ages. This has not prevented (*Lacan laughs*) people from reproducing themselves to the extent of your current numbers. In any case stupidity is going strong!

This is not quite how analytic discourse is established. I formulated it with the small \circ and from S_2 underneath and from what that questions on the side of the subject to produce what? It is quite obviously that this is set up within it, within stupidity, and why not? And this does not have this perspective that I did not take either of saying that if it continues, it is stupidity. In the name of what, I would say? How can one get out of stupidity?

It is nonetheless true that there is something, a status to be given to what is involved in this new discourse, to its approach to stupidity; there is something new about it. Surely it gets closer. For in the others, this indeed is what people flee from. Discourse always aims at the least stupidity, what is called *sublime stupidity*, because that is what sublime means: it is the highest point of what is below.

(3) Where in analytic discourse is the sublime of stupidity? This is why I am at the same time justified in putting to rest my participation in the stupidity in so far as it encompasses us here. And also to invoke whoever can on this point bring me the response

of that which, no doubt in other fields, but not altogether certainly, since it is a question of someone who listens to me here, and who by this very fact has been sufficiently introduced to analytic discourse. How this is, is what already at the end of last year I had the good fortune to hear from the mouth of someone who happens to be the same person. It is here that from the beginning of this year I intend that someone should contribute at his own risk and peril. The reply of what in a discourse, specifically the philosophical one, resolves, slants, goes its own way, opens it up from a certain status with regard to the slightest stupidity. Good! I give the floor to François Recanati whom you already know.

[Recanati's long intervention is translated simply to give a flavour of what Lacan considered to be a worthy response to his teaching]

Monsieur Recanati: I thank Dr Lacan for giving me the floor a second time, because this is going to introduce me directly to what I am going to talk about, in the sense that it is not unrelated to repetition. But on the other hand, I would also like to warn you that this repetition is an infinite repetition, but that what I am going to say will not be finite in the sense that I would absolutely not have the time to get to the end of what I have prepared. Namely, that here, in a way, that it is truly in the looping of a loop that the meaning ought to emerge of what I am going to bring forward in a preliminary way. Namely, that here I am going to be obliged, I believe, because of the time and unless I can take this up on another occasion, to stick to preliminaries, namely, properly speaking not to fully enter into this stupidity that Dr Lacan has been speaking about.

You remember that what I had tried to show you the last time is that (4) repetition only happens in the third phase which is the phase of the interpretant. That means that repetition is the repetition of an operation in this sense that in order for there to be a term to repeat, it is necessary that there should be an operation that produces this

term. Namely, that what must be repeated, must have been inscribed and the inscription of this object cannot be done of itself at the end of something which is of the order of a repetition.

The fact is that there is here something that resembles a logical circle and which in fact is a bit different, rather something of the order of a spiral, in this sense that the term of arrival and the term of departure, cannot be said to be the same thing. What is given, is that the starting term is the same as the arrival term, it is rather that the arrival terms is the same as the starting term, but the starting term itself is not already the same; it becomes the same, but only subsequently. There are then 2 repetitions to be envisaged, which are asymmetrical, the first which is the process by which there is given this object which ought to be repeated, and one could call this in a way the identification of the object in the sense that what is at stake is the decline of its identity. And one can see very well what that means, it is that when one declines this identity of the object, this identity declines just as quickly. And the initial tautology of *a is a* which you will remember that Wittgenstein says is something without meaning, is properly what establishes meaning, because something happens within it, namely that in the *a is a*, *a* presents itself first of all as the undifferentiated support which is completely potential of everything that can happen to it in terms of determination. But once an effective determination is given to it, once what is at stake is existence and not just any one at all of all the possible determinations, so then precisely there is a sort of transmission of power. Namely, that what ought to function as a support on this occasion of this indeterminate *a*, this potential *a*, is in a way marked by the fact that there is all of a sudden being that (5) interposes between it and itself. Namely, that it repeats itself, and it repeats itself in the form of a predicate. Namely, that there is a kind of diminishing, and this diminishing is symbolised by the fact that in *a is a*, the *a* which functioned as a support all, of a sudden finds itself supported by something of the order of being

that supports it, that surpasses it, that encompasses it, and is itself in this relation only what predicts the predication, in so far as the predication is what supports being. I will come back to this....

J Lacan – Besides everyone knows that *war is war* is not a tautology.

F Recanati – That's it.

J Lacan – Anymore than *a pound is a pound*.

F Recanati – Exactly. I am going to come back to that because it is more or less the core of the whole business and that I would like to speak – but this is what I am afraid I will not have the time to do – I would like to speak about the *Logic of Port-Royal*, because it is precisely a theory of substance, and because it was said the last time that we do not refer ourselves here to any substance. But I will come back to it later.

But you should simply realise that repetition effectively, the first one, repeats the initial indetermination of this object which is given as potential. But that in repeating this indetermination, well this indetermination finds itself not the object, but the indetermination suddenly finds itself determined in a certain way. Namely, that one might well posit that the repetition of the void or the repetition of the impossible, namely, that this type of repetition of something which is not given and which then must be produced in the time that one wishes to repeat it, one may well posit that it is impossible. And this is more or less what everyone says, but it is *sufficient* that it should be impossible for there to be something there that is assured, and that this assurance precisely allows of a repetition, it is moreover a second repetition.

Good, rather than going on about this, I quote a sentence of (6) Kierkegaard which says: *The only thing that is repeated, is the impossibility of repetition*. This allows us to see very clearly what is involved, and this makes the join with what I said last year about

the triad that supports all repetition, the *triad object-representamen-interpretant*. Namely, that between the object and the *representamen*, one changes space in a way, or at least if there is something like a whole which precisely constitutes the object of the *representamen* that is unapproachable in this relation. But this whole in so far as it insists, is what allows there to be established a true repetition. In this sense that in the next phase, there is something that is going to incarnate this hole which is the *interpretant*, and which can in a way repeat in 2 ways what was happening between the object and the *representamen*. On the one hand to inscribe it by saying: *there was a hole* and in permitting this impossibility in which this hole is repeated. But on the other hand it is going not simply to signify it but to repeat it. Because between the impossibility at the start which took place between the object and the *representamen* and its signifier which is the *interpretant*, there is the same impossible relationship that there was precisely between the object and the *representamen*. Namely, that a second *interpretant* is necessary to take charge of the repetition of this impossibility.

In the *interpretant* there is something like the carrying out of an impossibility that up to then was potential. And the impossibility inscribed by the *interpretant* is, let us say, the first term of this existence whose zero potential was the bearer, in the sense that in some way, the *all* leads to *it exists*. I will also come back to this.

What is important is that the impossibility of the relationship *object/representamen*, is given as such as the *interpretant*. The *interpretant* says: *that is impossible*, but to the degree that it set itself up as *interpretant* as such, once the *interpretant* itself is presented for another *interpretant*. It is then that this impossibility is truly a term, a foundational term of a series. Namely, that it allows a new *interpretant* to guarantee something solid, as if this

solidity was the first *interpretant* that grounded it starting from (7) something originally fluid.

What escaped in the *object/representamen* relationship, becomes imprisoned in the *interpretant*. But one can clearly see, and I already said it, that what is imprisoned in the *interpretant* and what escaped in the relationship *object/representamen*, is not exactly the same thing. Since precisely what escaped in the relationship *object/representamen* continues to escape in the relationship between this relationship and the *interpretant*. Namely, that in any case there is the same displacement, the same inadequation. And it is indeed the starting impossibility, the impossibility of the repetition which I am now going to stress a little, which produces what happens and that one can note, namely, the repetition of impossibility.

What establishes the displacement, this displacement from which repetition originates, is the impossibility for something to be at once this something and at the same time to inscribe it. Namely, that the existence of something can only be inscribed for something else and, subsequently, that is only inscribed when it is something else that is given. And if it is a fact that it is fleeting existence that is at stake, something is not inscribed, the existence of something is not inscribed until the moment that precisely it declines, at the moment when it is another existence that is in question.

This disjunction is more or less what happens between being and predicated being. And I hope to have the time to come to the *Logic of Port-Royal* which was theoretically the kernel of my presentation, but in fact it is doubtful.

What supports – you remember that the last time Lacan characterised being as being sectioning of the predicate, and it is properly speaking about that that there is question. And right away

I am going to give some reflections on this formula: *sectioning of the predicate* which makes one sense immediately the recurrence in (8) which there is constructed what is precisely supposed to support every predicate, namely being. Namely that being, what supports the predicates before, is presented after the predicates. And in a certain way, if there is a sectioning of predicate in order to find the being, that means that what supports the predicates, is what is not in the predicates. It is precisely what is absent from predicates. What is absent in predication.

It is then the absence of being in a certain way that bears the predicates, which also implies but in a fairly indirect way that the predicates are themselves only predicates of this absence.

That the predicate can be cut off, is as if, in a way, there was an elementary partition, as if a line was given in dots, a frontier, and that it is enough to cut it as in some sorts of packaging.

J Lacan – Articulate better the notion of *sectioning of predicate*, because this is what you have latched onto in what I left, and I just almost stumbled over it.

F Recannati – Yes, inasmuch *sectioning of predicate*, is properly what is at the core of my presentation. One could imagine that as a *vibration* [?], namely, that it is starting from a kind of halo that I am going to try, by going right around it, to circumscribe this kernel that is going to appear in all the examples that I will now give.

Sectioning of predicate is then as if that could be cut. I did not insist on it, except to say that it is obvious that it is not because one has cut the cut that one is going to find the indivisible. The frontier, once one has cut into it, insists all the more in that it manifests itself as a hole.

Let us say that the sectioning, to take the meanings that come, is also to make 2 of what was one. And if I point out this meaning which is not what is received here, it is because it is the one that Groddeck gives to one of his concepts which is precisely *sexion*. This *sexion*, with an x, namely, that it is not without involving sex, (9) in a certain way. And this is the way for Groddeck to refer to Plato. And when I say Plato I am not taking about *Parmenides* but the *Symposium*, where you remember that in the discourse of Aristophanes the problems raised of this myth of original androgyne which is supposed to have been cut in 2. That is what that was, *sexion* with an x.

Now what I would like to stress, is something that emerges very clearly from this *Symposium*. Not specifically from the discourse of Aristophanes but a little from all the discourses, even those that are supposed to be contradictory. And I am going to take just 2 very quick examples, which is the discourse of Diotima on the one hand and that of Aristophanes on the other. And the *Symposium* is concerned with love. Love, says Diotima, is that which, everywhere there is 2, acts as a frontier, a middle, an intermediary, namely an *interpretant*. When I say *interpretant*, it is because one could very well translate in that way the word that Plato uses, which is a word derived from *mantike* which means interpretation, and *mantike* comes Plato says, and this is what he says, from *manike* which for its part means delusion. This is what plays the role of *interpretant*. But the only interest of this formula – because after all no one in the gathering of the *Symposium* contests it – this is what allows there to survive the fact that love in any case cannot be beautiful because what poses itself as an object of love, what as a series falls under the influence of love, love being something like a mark which makes file past, which establishes a kind of corridor where a series of objects is going to pass, the object it has marked, love cannot be beautiful because its objects are beautiful. And it is said that in no case that the agent of a series, the very instance of the

series or the ultimate term of a series, what completes a series, cannot have the same characteristics as the objects that are in this series. Namely, that the objects of love are beautiful, love cannot be beautiful. And this is then properly speaking a characteristic of this instance of seriation, a character of the *interpretant* that no one among the polemicists present at the gathering of the *Symposium* puts in question.

(Izero) And one can see rather easily the relationship with Aristophanes, even if it appears a little distant, when he says that at the beginning, men had 4 legs, 4 arms, 2 faces, and 2 sexual organs. Well then they became a little too arrogant because they had nothing really to desire and they were not lacking anything; and so then it was decided, at least Zeus decided to cut them in 2 in order to humiliate them. But what Zeus said is that a cut does not count if there are not effects of cutting. Namely, that if the cut is punctual and afterwards it continues as before, it doesn't achieve anything. So then what he wanted is that it should remain, that it should have an effect. And to do that, he turned the faces, the faces which were then like the sexual organs at the back. And the front of the cut was properly the stomach because there was the navel which is the indication of the cut. He decided to turn the faces in the same direction as the navel, so that men would remember this cut; and then while he was at it he also turned the sexual organs so that they could try to stick themselves together again and that that would keep them busy.

But the important thing and the reason why I developed all of that, and in relationship with Diotima's discourse, is that the result of this whole operation which all the same is something, the result may appear derisory. It is simply that man has had his face turned, he can no longer look behind him, that now he can only see in front, he simply sees what goes before him. Can you see clearly that this is also precisely what Diotima says? Namely, that that is the end of

everything, namely, the end of all inasmuch as any series will lack the ultimate term of seriation, the point of view, the one from which seriation is constructed. In general...

J Lacan – Namely, what I was saying earlier; that he does not see the *encore*.

F Recanati – What I have isolated there starting from 2 discourses, we are going to rediscover as 2 points very closely connected as regards ordinals.

(11) What constitutes the ordinal, which has already been said, is something of the order of *a name of name*.

J Lacan – Write that out because otherwise...

F Recanati – Of course, but chalk, have you found a piece of chalk that works?

J Lacan – With time you will see it gets clearer.

F Recanati – And we are going to see more precisely what it comes back to, in this sense that the ordinal is a noun, but if it is a noun, the function of this noun is to name something which is not, precisely its own name. It is in a way the second name of what precedes, of the name which precedes and which, like the name itself, is indeed a name, but is of use only to name something which preceded it etc.... Namely, good, this is the relationship with Aristophanes and I won't go on about it.

There is a problem which is going to be posed right away, and I will try to approach it. Which is that the first ordinal, if one considers it, well it is not really a name of a name, because there is no name that precedes it, in so far as it is the first. That is why I wrote something alongside, here, which is the name of the name because that is the first ordinal. And I would even say if this is what happens at the beginning, it is because of that that afterwards there is a name of a name. Because precisely, once one has given a name to something that does not have one, it is in the identification something precisely like the decline of identity. In this sense that one says a little more

and that this more that one says it is necessary for it to be not so much resorbed as to be identified, to be given a name and, starting from there, we are dealing with an infinite displacement.

To name, in general, is to take stock of what goes before in the series. But the point, in so far as it itself functions as a name, also precedes something that is to come, and this something that is to come, if one considers it absolutely, what is always to come will be what one could call the *encore* which, for its part, precedes nothing that is not itself. Namely, does not hold onto a name, is unnameable by this very fact. One sees that from that point of view, what I am calling the *encore* is the index of the infinite.

(12) And on the other hand, one could say that the infinite is already there, it is given from the beginning in the homonymy of the name and of the *nom*. Namely, that the name, is something like the most radical *nom* which, before any nomination, or in the instant of any nomination, presents itself as something infinite. One sees then something detaching itself like 2 limits, the *non* – on the one hand and the *encore*, and ordination is what happens between the 2. Namely, that what is going to interest me – and one can see the relationship between this and the sectioning of the predicate, namely, with this expression and this recurrence – it is the relationship between the 2 which is perhaps interesting.

The system of nomination in general, you see more or less how it can be grasped. It is the covering over of an impossibility at the start, the covering over which precisely in this relationship to the impossible can only be sustained from the *encore* as an index of this transcendence of the impossible with respect to any covering over. And if the impossible is what says no – which is not obvious and I regret not having the time to develop that – if the impossible is what says no we must understand it more or less as a radical negation, in so far as negation, is something which is already infinite. Namely,

that, in so far as it is already infinite negation doesn't give a damn about what happens, in a way, behind it, what it supports. Namely, the whole operation of predication, the whole operation of predicative objectification which take negation, for example, in order to deny it, by saying no or by saying yes. Namely, that this never gives a yes. Negation for its part remains intact, with the little gains that take place on its body, one might say. And then, it is not even a tickle for the infinite of negation.

And this leads us to think – this is a brackets – that even if what I have called “the logical manipulation on the basis of infinity” becomes infinity in its turn. That does not mean that we are going to cure the infinite by means of the infinite and that this is going to give all of a sudden the finite or something like a yes. On the contrary it is going to become worse, in the sense that what in (13) nomination, may become infinite, is not the same thing as what is already there as infinite in what I call this “initial negation”. In this sense that what, in logical manipulation, arrives as infinite, is the nomination of the infinite, and that that which is already there as infinite negation, is what infinitises all nomination. It is the infinite of nomination. Which means that the nomination of the infinite will be a nomination like the others, which means that it will also be subject to this infinitisation which is already there, which starts from a source that is there at the beginning. Namely, that this is going to change nothing and that one can posit something like *omega*, the smallest infinite ordinal, it's not going to stop there, namely, that it continues in all the parts of *omega* in the *alephs*, etc....

Namely, that it is necessary to continue once the infinity is given in this position here, it is necessary that the infinite itself should be infinite, namely, that one continues these passages from infinite to infinite, etc..... That one still continues. As if what one wishes to reach in this business is precisely the *encore* itself.

Encore presents itself as the limit of the extension of this radical *non* of which I spoke. And I am going immediately now to speak about the relationship between the radical *no* and *encore*, because it is to this that I am going to be retroactively introduced to what I am going to come back to, namely, the sectioning of the predicate.

The sectioning of the predicate, one immediately sees, is at once what is after any predication. Namely, once one can say “there are no more predicates”. And it is moreover what supports it before any predication. But what must be understood, is that this before and this after is the same thing. Namely, that this is what constitutes, what sustains predication as the covering over of an impossibility, this impossibility that must be understood as the very (14) impossibility of predication. Namely, the impossibility of providing all the predicates, of putting them together, without at least one detaching itself as representing in impossibility, the existence of impossibility or if you wish *encore*.

More specifically as regards the ordinals, the ordinal names the name of the one that precedes it, it means 2 things very simply: that an ordinal does not name itself but is named by its successor. And that to each ordinal there belongs the mechanical summation of all of those who precede it, because an ordinal names its predecessor, its predecessor names its predecessor etc... Namely, that there is attached to each ordinal the series of all the ordinals which have preceded it.

Now already these 2 points imply an essential discordance between the name and the name of the name, and this is what I would call a crushing effect (*un effet d'écrasement*).

What comes to identify the zero, for example, in a definition of zero, as something like the unique element of the set identical to

zero, or for the empty set, I believe one can very well say: what is a unique element of the set of its parts, or simply this set of its parts of which it is the element that it has just properly identified, this presents itself as a predicate of zero. Now we clearly see that in this predicate, there is something in addition which is given, in addition to the empty set, in addition to the zero. And it is so tangible. The proof of it is that precisely the zero and the 1 which is supposed to be nothing other than the identification of the zero gives us 2, precisely.

You see that we are changing level, that this has no relationship, that this is not situated, there is a displacement, one passes from one level to an upper level. But what is remarkable, is that this zero and this 1 which have nothing to do with one another, which are not even situated on the same level, are put together as elements of this new set constituted by the ordinal 2. Namely, a zero and 1, gives 2 precisely in the sense that the zero and the 1 are in a way levelled down, put on the same plane, in the 2. And the 2 itself, the operation is going to be repeated in this passage of the 2 to (15) the 3 etc...

The *representamen* has no possible relationship here with the object and it is always this cursus of the *interpretant* that intervenes, namely, that it is incarnated by something. And in the measure that it is incarnated, that the something which escapes is bridled, it also re-emerges just after this incarnation.

One can take the formula of an ordinal to see more clearly what is in question.

J Lacan – Give Cantor some credit all the same!

Recanati – In this formula that one can consider as the formula of 4: what is happening?

We know that it is the last term of this series that counts. We see that in the 4, what is repeated, is the 3, and we see that the 3 itself repeats the 2 here, which for its part repeats the 1, which in its turn repeats the 0.

But what is important is that the 4 is not simply the putting in brackets, the nomination of the 3 which itself puts in brackets and names the 2 etc.... It is not simply the exposition even if it is repetitive, namely, with supplementary brackets, of what was already given in the 3. It is the putting into the same set of the 3 as crushing, of the putting into sets of heterogeneous terms, namely, the same thing as in the 2, the fact that there is the 0 and the 1 that are put absolutely on the same plane. In the 3, there is already a crushing of the 0, of the 1 and of the 2 namely that they are put into the same set. And the 4 is here precisely the putting into (16) relationship in the same set of 3 as being crushed, as this forced setting with the elements that the 3 has crushed, separated from the 3, outside the 3. Namely, that it is a repetition. We see that the part on the left and the part on the right, are the same thing, except for the fact that on the right there are supplementary brackets. It is here (between 2 and 3) that there is a bar of splitting, which allows it to be said that we can see in this formula that if the 3 is already the designation of what has happened, of a crushing passage, between the 0 and the 1, and of the 2 and of the 1 to the 2, if the 3 is already this crushing. Namely, a way of designating what happens from a previous rupture, from a rupture which is precisely the passage of the 0 to the 1, of a rupture. Namely, of an explosion of the parts of what already were presented as a set, we see that what is designated in the formula of 4, is precisely this very designation, in so far as

one can see exposed on the same plane on the one hand all the parts of what forms this 3, and on the other hand the 3 itself. Namely, that the crushing itself, the fact of putting in more brackets, is not a sufficient result to allow this passage of the zero to its crushing in the 1, of the 1 to its crushing in the 2 etc., the 2 or the 1 as result no longer express this passage. Then it is necessary that in the set constituted by the 4 there should be present at once the separated terms of different passages and the series of crushing passages, in order that the 4, as a summation of all these impossible but effective passages, should take charge in its own formula of the history of the progression that one sees here repeated. Namely, leaves open what is posited as a question, as lack of resolution in this movement. Namely, the insistence in this course of what, through these different successive limits which constitute in a way the opposition to the passage of the 0 to 1, of the 1 to 2 etc. the insistence through the successive limits of what presents itself as absolute limit and which would be *encore*.

And if the 4, as totalitarian crushing, namely, as a summation of everything that has happened before it, of all the impotent crushings (17) that are to be achieved, if the 4 leaves open this question it is indeed because itself, *qua* crushing, responding to this gap which calls for an impossible closure, it cannot in its turn do anything but crush again. Namely, reproduce the flaw, specifically in the new formula that includes it as element, namely, the 5, and which in order to do this confronts with all the elements that it contains, put alongside it, in order to give rise among all of these elements and their crushing in the 1 impossible identity.

It would be enough then to repeat everything that is here, and to put in the brackets again to obtain the 5.

The impossible identity, is what is repeated at each new crushing with the fact that in what follows, in the confrontation, within the 4,

of the constituted 3 and all its elements, it is already the crushings that still crush a little, while the paradigm of crushing, can be found at the beginning, in the passage from the 0 to the 1. And that this crushing must be understood in a quite concrete way like that of Icarus. Namely, that there is something that takes flight and which is miserably crushed and which is crushed not in the whole which ought to be flown over, which is crushed on the cliff of the other side in a way.

Namely, that one can consider that between one ordinal and another or rather between the nothing of the empty set and its inscription in the 1, there is something like a barrier, a frontier, or again a hole. But this hole, cannot be reached exactly in the sense in which, as Lacan recalled the last time, as in the case of Achilles, it can be overtaken, it can be overtaken but it cannot be reached. If once a crushing is given, it repeats itself, it is precisely because what is posited as frontier has not been reached. It is always there existent this frontier. One is never in the between the 2, the between the 2 ordinals, but always in the one or the other. The 1 being the set that takes charge but is not itself counted, and the other being what takes the first set but is still not counted itself.

(18) This means that the limit, the limit of which I speak and which is atomised and which is fragmented into a series of frontiers that one can never reach and which thus reproduce themselves, posit themselves as absolute limit, it is then the hole. The hole, namely, the something that sustains itself all by itself, that has no need of something else and which is for philosophy the substance, or again the substance of substances, namely, being.

J Lacan – What's that noise?

Recanati – It's the rain. It's raining up there.

This limit insists as always moreover and the passage which manifests it as hole between something and its support this passage cannot be grasped as a between the 2. It can be seen in what concerns the passage from the finite to the infinite for example because, as I said, one can posit the smallest infinite ordinal. Nevertheless, this does not present itself in a harmonious fashion as preceded precisely by the greatest finite or precedes from something finite, because this infinite would only then be finite plus 1. Between the 2 there is truly this hole which was not able to be reached and which is repeated from then on in the infinitisation of infinities.

That having been said, this insistence I speak about and which is manifest this insistence of the limit in so far as it is excluded, in so far as it exists more exactly, this only expresses that there is a gap between the zero and 1, but it is much more their crushing into the 2. It implies a certain failure of recognition of this gap, a real refusal, of something that resembles a denial, or a negation, namely, that participates in these unconscious procedures that defy formal logic in a certain way because they bring the infinite into play, and that bringing the infinite into play, really means disarming most logical procedures.

I quote an example that I read in a recent article on modern mathematics where they said that in a school class, when one asks for an example of an infinite set, the answer is never something like integers, people never respond numerically, but always by a finite (19) set, a large finite set like all the stones in the world or something like that. This clearly shows that as regards what is precisely number there is something that makes people believe that it can stop and at the same time this is very correct because this does not stop stopping. But if I say: 'this does not stop stopping', this indeed is it, namely, that it will never stop stopping.

The limit of which I am speaking, can be conceived as an analogy with death, with silence, and I regret not having much time to develop it, but in general it is that towards which discourse converges. Namely, that repetition is the *representamen* of death. And I would like to show, by taking a minimum number of examples, that in the dream for example, as has already been said, in the dream there is something that manifests itself as the equation of desire equals zero. But this equation of desire, is in addition, it is in retreat. It is the person who interprets the dream who says: it is the equation of desire, who has to work things out to make a zero. The dream itself, is in this zero, namely, that it balances itself.

At the same time the equation of desire equals zero, obviously does not stop there. It cannot stop there, because the dream, precisely, continues to produce the statements; it continues to speak. And of course, but for that it is necessary that it should be silent, which is not the case.

Now if the zero is inserted into this equation, the equation desire equals zero, that signifies that it is supported, that it is designated by the equation that produces it as what it culminates in.

Now the fact that it is designated, that it is supported, is properly the transformation already of this 0 into 1. The 0, when one puts brackets around it become something of the 1. Now this is precisely the task of interpretation, to make tangible in this 0 the 1 that it bears, the 1 which in so far as the 0 manifests itself, in so far as it is designated. That is when it is produced starting from 1. And we can understand how it happens that interpretation should be like a wagon that is added to an equation already given, the fact is (20) precisely that the dream itself is the ultimate term of the series; it is for example the 1. But when one is in the 1, the 1 carries entirely. It is focussed on this 0 that it inscribes, and if it itself makes 1, it is for a different reason, namely, for the arrival of

something else that comes in interpretation. What offers itself as resistance to interpretation of the dream in analysis, this kind of boredom in speaking about a dream, as if it were already not bad as it is, as if it were fine like that, and as if nothing should be added to it, this has something to do with the resisting bar to meaning which is supposed to separate the signifier from the signified.

By letting oneself be guided, in the measure in which it is a question of interpretation, by Peirce rather – if there is an opposition between them – than by Saussure, one must remember that the signified we are speaking about, is nothing other than the signifier, but in a series. In the sense precisely that there are functions in this series, roles that are exchanged, and that one can say that effectively there is a role of signified with respect to a role of signifier; but this signified is a signifier plunged into interpretation in the sense of Peirce, and which is found in a way crushed, minimised, diminished, singularised in the emergence of another signifier. The emergence of another that permits, through this confrontation which is the same that one sees here, to understand that one has to deal with units of a different set, with the elements of a larger set. And this crushing takes place without what which creates a hole between the two, in the emergence of this new signifier between two signifiers, is properly speaking produced. But it is in the repetition of this phenomenon, in its infinite character that something is given something like the limit of interpretation. And the limit of interpretation or of signification for Peirce, is the gap of potential. Namely, something that must be related to the subject. And provided one puts it in relationship with something else, one can equally well see whether it is linked with something that one can call the set of all the sets. Because the set of all the sets, is perhaps (21) precisely this infinitely silent potential that Peirce speaks about and which is found at the beginning and at the end of every series. To say that it does not exist, is also just as much to say that it exists as a limit of any inscription, and also like the grain of sand in

machinery of every equation that wants to be equal to zero. Because in the time of this equal to zero, the zero is produced with something different that one will take up in the equation that gives birth to it and that singularises it in another set that is more general in which it will figure under the heading of an element.

If I say that, it is because I heard not too long ago an analyst declaring that most of the time, future analysands come to see him for a preliminary conversation when something has happened. Namely, when a grain of sand, a little something that is nothing at all has come to jam, has come to make unsupportable an economy that up to then was very well tolerated. Now this grain of sand, is nothing other than this I spoke about. Namely, that it is constituted from the global taking into account of this equation, of this very satisfying economy in their extreme singularity which is not nothing. Namely, in opposition to something else, something that one can eventually take from inside this equation, and singularise it, namely, to posit as currently over against the whole equation.

It is enough that a single trait of the equation should be produced in isolation for it to break the equilibrium of the equation itself which was based on an equilibrium of folding back on oneself and for it to function as a grain of sand. It is enough for a slight slippage – I cannot quote examples here and this is a pity because it appears very clearly – from a slight slippage, from a change of level that is altogether derisory, namely, from a transport, from a transport of what is given as an equation into something else, where there are other elements that are in play, in order for this equation that is satisfactory in itself, this closed set, all of a sudden becomes something else. Namely, for one to take into account that it can moreover function as an element of another set, as a part of another set that can precisely be the set of its parts as one can see here. (22) Namely, as one element of a set in which the whole of the

preceding equation figures alongside of anything whatsoever, alongside any trait whatsoever and under the same heading as the empty set, for example.

There is no *all* that cannot be eroded, be exploded into the rank of elementary singularity in something that is presented as a larger set, namely, the set of its parts. And this singularity, once it is presented, in an instant of uncertainty precisely, this singularity can also be called the crushing, the levelling down into a new set which guarantees for its part this new singularity, a proper place, a function, something like a use.

The passage from a set to the set of its parts is therefore the abandoning of all of every all. But this abandonment takes on singular forms, since it only takes place, that the breaking down only takes place in order to be reformed into a new whole, and then be recrushed immediately into a new whole. Namely, that what is broken up is reconsolidated, but does not come back to the starting point but follows a progression. Is consolidated into something else which this time forms a compact set.

Perhaps definitively the victory is to the scattering in this sense that if the impossibility of repetition can be repeated, the impossibility of the totalisation cannot for its part be totalised. Because if one takes the set of all these wholes of which the totalisation is broken by their fractioning into the set of their parts if really this set is constituted by all the wholes as of its parts, then it undergoes the same destiny, namely, that itself may be fractioned. This implies that all of these wholes can never be totalised, if not into that which would be something else something other than the set of its parts, something other than what is known as a totalisation or a possible crushing.

We can see that the breakdowns of sets leads to the constitution of (23) new sets to crushing. And these new sets tend for their part also towards a breakdown; this allows us to say definitively – and I will not insist on this even though it is important – it is all a question of rhythm. At one level no matter how little it is general, the only system is that of breakdown. And I also regret not being able to develop this a little, but this was one of the errors of contemporary linguistics in postulating something like an intra-systematic regulation in a set, without positing it as a function of something which participates in an order, a function excluded from a limit. Something like the interpretation of Peirce was perceived in linguistics as simply a part of what for Peirce interpretation is, namely, the possibility for example in a system of passing from one signifier to another. While what the elementary operation is grounded on, is a semiotic work that is more essential – I am only mentioning it – which is precisely, for a same signifier or for a same set of signifiers, the passage system to another type of system. There is here something like a torsion, a crushing of the signifier and moreover it is enough to look at the dream in order to see what that may signify. Namely, that over-determination ought to be understood not simply as a semantic over-determination in a system, but more correctly as a semiotic over-determination, as the possibility of a passage for a same signifier from one system to another, as the crushing of the signifier.

The noting of such a process, linked to something else and that I am going to say, can be found in Bacon who, starting from his reflections on language, founded a cryptographic procedure.

This procedure consisted in passing from an inner letter to an outer letter and of carrying on the journey in both senses, namely in jumping over a frontier that this passage highlights. I am not going to insist in the way in which this constitutes a change of system for Bacon, but I am giving its example in order to see something which

(24) is properly what already insisted in this example here, something that is found at every crossroads. Which is specifically something like the omission of brackets and which permits precisely the passage of the frontier, something which has a relationship with the possibility of a substitution of two terms. Namely, that in the substitution of two terms, everything is the function of brackets. And if I have allowed myself to ignore these brackets or to change the place between the brackets, or the brackets, at that moment everything is possible. This moreover is what Frege reproached Leibniz with, what he reproached him for having done; and this is what one re-finds in Bacon in his cryptographic procedure which I have rapidly given you an example of.

I am telling you before writing it; to every letter of the alphabet – the Latin one as it happens namely 24 letters – one makes a correspondence with a group of 5 letters. A group of 5 letters corresponds to each letter and this group is uniquely formed from a and from b, in accordance with the 32 possible combinations. This is the first moment: it is a simple interpretation.

And in the second phase, it is the message that one is going to transform by means of this transposition. The message which is uniquely in a and in b that one is going to retransform into the Latin alphabet in accordance with another interpretation, in accordance with another law of transformation.

The first operation is then this. Now the essential phenomenon of the change of system, even though I am not highlighting that it is precisely a change of system, but what ensures that there is interpretation of interpretation, is that once one has a message uniquely formed in a and in b by transcription starting from each of

the letters on this board it is going to be retranscribed into the (25) original Latin alphabet by taking not each group of 5 a or of 5 b, because this would be to properly re-effectuate this cutting which it is a matter of masking. And we are going to take each letter each a and each b separately, and to each a and to each b since they are the only two letters from which the intermediary messages formed, the frontier message, there may correspond to each one an enormous number of letters of the Latin alphabet. Specifically if one takes a Latin alphabet complicated by capitals and italics each letter appears in a capital and a capital italic, a lower case and a lower case italic, one would have 4 times 24 letters and the a and the b would each have half of these letters as a possible translation. Namely, that the only thing that is going to count is going to be the order of letters of the message, in the measure that the interlocutor knows, the decoder knows that the message must be cut up in portions of 5.

For example, we give ourselves an ordered series in a very simple manner of a and of b, a-b-a-b-a-b-a-b, in the order, and we may correspond subsequently to the alphabet as I said to each a and to each b. This means that every time there is an a, one can put whatever one wishes that corresponds to it, and that every time one has a b it would be the same thing. The essential would be the position of the italics and the general order of letters.

Now, what has happened between the 2, is precisely that one has dropped the brackets, these brackets that regrouped the groups of 5. We have dropped them and that is the essential, having said this I regret not having the time to develop this point.

What permits the breakdown and the explosion of which I spoke is then the open structure of ordination. It is moreover this fact that the term or the agent of the series – this is what I said at the start is absent from the series that it operates that it will only be present (26) subsequently. From then on, from this absence there is born

the possibility of the displacement which is the re-objectification of the whole series.

It is quite tangible that in the story of a case such as that of the grain of sand that we have spoken about, that if there is a change of level, it is because what was properly the totalising agent of the preceding formation, namely, what was the final brackets, in a way, of the formation preceding the grain of sand, this becomes an element, this is counted in the series for a new totalising agent. Namely, that it is clear that the point of escape or the point of collapse of a formation in general, of an unconscious formation for example, this point is absent from the formation at the level of what is designated, at the level of what is designated, because of what it manifests and of what it produces. Namely, that what is in question starting from the designated, is to complete this climb back; to highlight these parentheses, in a way, which are there but which are absent.

Let us take a simple example which is that of the dream, where really this is self evident, commented on by Freud at the time when he was looking everywhere for the realisations of desire. And where precisely there is a patient who brings him on a clutter dreams where there is apparently no desire. One may torment oneself, one will not find a desire, one will not find the equation of desire, nor realisation of desire. But Freud who has very clearly understood this process, says precisely: “well then his desire is that there should not be a desire in the dream, namely, that I am wrong”. Which clearly shows that what is present in the dream, is the zero, the not of desire, the no equation etc...but all this zero, is encircled in the brackets it is inserted in the more general set, as a part of this set that represents desire in its generality. Namely, that it is supported by a desire and a desire, in so far as it has here the function of a support, is absent from what is designated. And it is up to interpretation to give rise to this 1 which was in a potential state in this zero.

There is something in this rupture that does not wish to be (27) completed, what I called the failure of recognition, and which leads to successive crushings. And the crushing for its part cannot be completed; it cannot be completed. But that towards which the process tends, - since I already spoke about it a bit – is crushing, the encircling of everything that can happen, namely, of all the ruptures, a complete crushing which would delimit and which would complete the totality of possible ruptures; the set of all the sets, is the set of all that can produce, by rupture, a new set. And if it is said that every set, through a rupture, gives rise to a new set, then the set of all the sets is defined as impossible.

Now precisely what is impossible, is to encircle a rupture, and to put it in a box. Because once a new set is produced from a rupture, it is there to reject, to displace the rupture which from the new set, is going to make still another one.

The rupture, for its part, is never in the set, even if the set only holds together by wanting to encircle the rupture; and the set of all the sets, the one that encompasses the rupture is impossible. And after these preliminaries, one can say that what is happening – because I am coming back to my starting point which was the question of the a is a – what happens between a subject and the operation that objectifies it, defines it or limits it in predication, is linked with the category of what sustains it.

Now, since what sustains something is only sustained by something else, as we have just seen, the category of what sustains itself, seems to be impossible. But if it is impossible, this very impossibility may have effects on predication, which is none other than an encirclement supported by what wants to be encircled. And this is self-evident by seeing that something supports its predicate

but at the same time it's going to encircle the predicate, to bind what supports it.

What is real in these effects could appear more or less anywhere. It would no doubt have been more attractive to see what appears of it for example in the work of Proust, but anyway I took the logic of (28) Port-Royal because precisely it is a theory of substance, a theory of what sustains itself. And such a theory can only function, I think, on what we have just seen, even if it is in order to reproduce ceaselessly a miscognition.

What led me to the logic of Port-Royal – where one finds an overlapping of interesting themes like the sign, predication, the substance and being - is what was said about a sectioning of the predicate characterising being; for in the logic of Port-Royal, the elementary predication: *man is*, is considered as the empty form of any predication. As if the predicate was on this occasion; no predicate, unpredicable.

There is in the logic of Port-Royal a series of objects which are predicated precisely as not being predicated; and that, participated at once in their Jansenist preoccupations and on the other hand their Cartesian ones.

I am developing this question of the predicate and the substance a little in order to show that if I push a little to the limit these concepts which happen to be a theory of substance, one obtains something which is more or less what I said previously. A predicate is something in the set that is supported by a thing, a substance, the substance being what sustains itself.

The substance is something that can be conceived as subsisting by itself and as the subject of everything that one conceives in it. The predicate, is that which, being conceived in the thing and as not

being able to subsist without it, determines it towards being in a certain way and causes it to be named as such.

These are two definitions that one finds at the start. Now already starting from there, there is something that is going to fail. There is going to be a stumbling point that is going to be in a way produced by every day language.

In the Logic, it is said that a name of substance, is quite naturally a substantive or absolute, while a name of a predicate, is an adjective (29) or connotative. So then the problem that is posed is that there are substantives that have nothing to do with substances, apparently, which are not things, substances like the earth, the sun, fire, the spirit which are the example given of substances in the logic of Port-Royal. Namely, that apart from these substantives that I have just spoken about, there are also names which express connotative qualities, namely names which participate in predication. For example roundness.

It is said on the one hand: “the idea that I have of roundness represents for me a way of being or a mode which I cannot conceive being able to exist naturally without the substance of which it is the mode”. And immediately afterwards they say: “the names that signify firstly and directly the modes because in that they have some relationship with substance, are also called substantive and absolute, like hardness, heat, justice, prudence”.

In other words, it is starting from a point of detail that is rather derisory that one can conceive – and this is unfolded in the logic of Port-Royal – that what was first mode, or predicate in discourse, after having been firstly and directly such it is enough for a certain shift in order for it to become in its turn substance; substance being what is sustained by itself.

Now this shifting, is something we are going to have to try to circumscribe, and you are going to see that this has a relationship with the set of the parts of a set. It is the passage for example in discourse of a predicate round to the substantive roundness. Now there participate in roundness all the objects, they say, all the objects which can be predicated round. Namely, that roundness, to use another expression, is the extension of the predicate round. And the extension of the predicate, is not a predicate, it is a substance. Which means that starting from an extension of the predicate, one obtains a substance – and I am going to go into this business – you see clearly that a substance like earth, sun etc. Namely, a collection of predicates, is an object to which there is referred a multiplicity of possible predications; while an extension of the predicate, is (30) properly a predicate which is sustained by being able to be referred to a series of possible objects which hence are in the position of predicated of the predicate. Which means that starting from an extension of the predicate one obtains substance. This is something to do with the set of the parts of a set, and specifically it is said in the logic of Port-Royal that abstraction is what consists in considering the parts independently of the all of which they are part. And it is said that this is the way in which one can conceive of the attribute, namely the predicate, independently of the singular substance which currently supports it.

One starts from a set, something like a set of predicates, to which there belong, but unessentially then these predicates. One separates the parts, the predicates, from the thing, and starting from there in a kind of magical way, one can consider a new substance which is that by which the singular predicates can have a relationship to unity, independently of any actual relation to a singular substance.

There is then a process which starting from fragmentation of a unity, leads to another unity.

It must be understood that what is given at the beginning as a substance, namely, as an object to which there can be referred a series of possible predicates, is the same thing as the first a of a is a. it is something potential. Namely, that it presents itself as the support of everything that can happen in terms of predication, potential support. Namely, that it functions at the level of the all, at the level of anything whatsoever, but once something is given, once a predicate exists, the potential support disappears in the smoke. Namely, that once an actual word is given, the support ceases to be the subject; it is referred to its actual predicate, as if it was only a pertinent object for this predicate that is setting itself up in extension of the predicate, namely, as an intrinsic value. And it is the predicate that becomes support, substance in the extension; namely, that there is an inversion in these roles.

(31) The extension of the predicate is a set of objects referred to a predicate. The objects predicate the predicate. While in the potential substance, it was all the possible predicates that were referred to the object.

Now what happens between these two types of substances, potential collection of predicates and extension of predicates, is of the order of what we have seen in connection with the ordinals. I would like this to appear all by itself. The potential substance is a set of predicates, and the extension of the predicate, is a set of objects. One makes emerge from the potential substance a predicate that it contains, that it is supposed to contain. And one puts the substance and this actual predicate in relationship, one face to the other, in a new set as there one put into relationship the 3 as a closure of the parts that are found just beside itself, all of this in the same set.

This actual predicate in a new set, placed next to the potential substance namely the designation of the designation that was carried

out in the first putting together, namely in the first substance, this is what gives the extension of the predicate.

Now, if the abstract predicates of the first subject manages to make a One all the same, it is thanks to the singularity of what emerges in terms of a new substance, of what takes up the relay, namely, the extension of predicate. If one pushes back a little more the difference that grounds the One, one may well question oneself, by considering the extensions independently of the predicates, about what sustains the extension? Namely, that if the extension is the *interpretant* that sustains the predicates in their current relationship of potential substance, what sustains the extensions, what is their *interpretant* of extensions, in their relationship to this relationship itself? One sees in the measure that in the passage from the potential collection of predicates to the extension of predicates there is an inversion of roles. From the formal point of view, the two (32) substances are the same thing, the fact is that there is something that supports and something which is supported, even if in one case it is the contrary of the other. But if one adds to this the properly historical and ordinal dimension, the one that I tried to highlight at the beginning, one obtains that in the constitution of a set, there is something like the substantification of a predicate which is correlative of the predication of a substance. And that is exactly what we have recognised as rupture – crushing in the interpretation.

Now it is possible that the interplay of the collection – or one can say comprehension – and the extension in the logical of Port-Royal, overlaps the dialectic of the rupture and of crushing. If this is the case, it is quite obviously in a very particular sense that we are going to have to understand this property of substance as supporting itself. Because this autonomy of substance, from then on, is altogether relative. Namely, that it depends on the dyadic relationship which opposes it to what predicates it, which opposes it

to its predicate. Namely, that one supports and the other is supported. But if the substance predicates itself and is substantified by the predicate, that signifies that one must envisage a triadic relationship in which there is established something like a reciprocity that is out of synch, a discordant reciprocity.

If from the predicate become substance to support in the extension of objects which, in the earlier phase, supported in the collection, of predicates, this merry-go-round can also continue for another little while. So that the extension in its turn is supported by something which, of which it is only the predicate. The relation substance-predicate is presented as that of multiple to singular, set, and it is the same thing in one sense and in the other.

After the collection and the extension there can be something of the order of a collection of extensions, namely a set whose elements are precisely these new substances that are extensions, but desubstantified, taken as predicates of a superior substance that (33) supports them. This is properly the category of supreme sets because in the logic of Port-Royal everything has an end, and here one touches on something which has to do with Being.

The extension of the predicate as substance, is what makes a subject and a predicate hold together in a current relationship; namely, that if, in the dyadic relationship, the subject supports the predicate, in the triadic relationship, it is the extension of the predicate that supports the dyadic relationship. The extension as substance has then the function of *interpretant*, as I have already said.

So then what is this new *interpretant* – I am repeating this question – that supports the dyadic relation between the first dyadic relation and the extension as *interpretant*? If it is a fact that the ultimate of a serial relation represents it entirely minus itself – and you have no doubt noted that people have not stopped working this hypothesis.

So then, just as the set of the object-predicate relations, namely, the extension, takes the place of and interprets these relations, it is the set of all the extensions that will be the *interpretant* of extension. Namely, that if one repeats the process, the substantialised extension of the predicate is going to be desubstantialised and be referred as predicate to what supports any extension: Being. Being is the only thing which is said to really support itself. Namely, that it is the predicate of nothing. Once Being has been produced at the end of a series, one can do, one can go back one can regress to substances such as extension and thinking, and ground them. It is including this starting from being that we are going perhaps to be able to grasp in a sharper way what predication represents because it has been seen that from one thing to another, it is finally on being that there is supported the predicative relationship.

As regards being, in the logic of Port-Royal, it is said that it forms part of these things that cannot in any case be predicated. For the obvious reason that, if it were predicatable, this predicate that one would give it, if one were to substantify it, would be something more vast than being, and being would itself be referred as a predicate to this new substance which will be the extension of this (34) predicate. Now being cannot be a predicate so then being has no predicate.

I am quoting the Logic in connection with being and thinking: “We must not be asked to explain these terms because they are of the number of those that are so well understood by everyone that one would make them more obscure by trying to explain them”. It is generally what is said once there is a question of things like that. To speak about being, is to reduce it to a lesser being, the same as speaking about thinking, since if thinking is the totality of everything that one can think and that everything that can be said about, it is necessarily something more than anything that can be said about it. At the same time from the fact that being cannot be

predicated and from this other one. That being is the support of all predication, there is something like a disjunction between this being that supports nothing because it cannot be separated from nothing, and this all which can only be conceived of as supported by being. But this is only a disjunction by considering in a first phase being on the one hand and predicates on the other, one is going to see that this conception is false. And if being is properly speaking this nothing in discourse, it is the set of all the discourses, namely, what escapes from discourse, what constitutes it.

What escapes discourse is discourse itself, from that point of view, because there is only a discourse when put together as a crushing, in order to catch onto what precisely escapes it.

So then being, must certainly be situated moreover at the beginning of the discourse, in the non-radical, that has its end in *encore*. Now the difference that we have isolated between the potential substance as possibility of a predication, and any actual predication that reduces the substance to the rank of a predicate that has become substance, this difference allows us to understand what being is.

It is nothing but a set as closed totality, for example the 3 over (35) there, is different to the set of what can be accounted for as parts of this set. The substance as support, collection of predicates, includes in a potential way the series of predicates that belong to it, but independently of any actualisation of the predicate. Because once one actualises a predicate, once there exists a predicate on the contrary, what is at stake is the expulsion of a predicate out of the substance, it is a rupture, the rupture which by dismembering, puts the substance in relationship with everything that it supports.

Now here is the knot of the affair, because if there is a difference between on the one hand the putting into relationship in the current predicative mode of the substance with the predicates that define it,

and on the other hand the substance itself in so far as it is supposed to be nothing other than its relationship to predicates, the fact of supporting them, then it must be concluded that the substance is something different than a support of predicate, something different to that to which the predicates are referred.

But nevertheless in a substance – I am trying to hurry but there is here a logical tissue of contradictory propositions – there is nothing else in substance than set predicates and that has been said. And nevertheless, if one puts into relationship substance as the set of predicates and these predicates of which it is the set, one finds oneself faced not with the simple redundancy but properly speaking a difference. And what is more in the substance, what makes this difference, the fact that the predicates are a set, is not a simple supplementary determination of the predicates. Because it is said in the Logic that the entire substance depends on this difference between the fact for the predicates of being a set or of not being so. Namely, that if one suppresses the possibility of this difference, there can no longer be a substance. Namely, that there remains a universe of predicates, an undifferentiated universe, what Peirce calls ‘a universe of perhaps’, which is also absolute nothingness, in the measure that it is said in the Logic that without the substance the (36) predicates don’t hold together. They are no longer anything. The substance is what makes something hold together, what allows relations, namely, what is in addition when the predicates are together.

Now at the same time, we have ceased noticing that this *more* depends on the fact that a set of predicates becomes a singular term, becomes One. And that this singular term does not constitute a part of what it is the set of at the moment that it designates that of which it is the set.

So that the substance is that which, when a set is given, constitutes it and is lacking to it, at the same time. In other words, what is lacking in a set, is what constitutes it: the substance.

Now, if one looks at what explicitly is lacking in the logic of Port-Royal – because it is said: ‘there is something missing’ – if one looks what does one see unfortunately or not is that it is precisely not the substance. What is lacking, is in this set that which when there is nothing else than what is missing, is equivalent to nothing. It is a definition like another. And it is said in the Logic that if from this all formed from the substance and the predicates, if one removes the substance, then nothing remains, for the reason that the predicates and the attributes, only exist because there is substance.

And there you are, here one is really embarked along a logical corridor from which one cannot emerge, a series of propositions that draw us along. Substance is nothing other than the predicates plus something. This plus is defined as lacking. And the predicates are what alone are nothing but what are produced when substance is presented. Namely, the predicates are nothing without something, the substance, which is nothing than the addition to these predicates supposedly contradictorily already presented, of that which in any case, in the sum total would be lacking.

The substance supports the predicates, but also in a certain the predicates the substance, like this nothing again which by (37) substantification there will be borne the singularity of a difference. The predicates are not just zero. The substance is what is added to zero to make 1. But in this One that is constituted, there are only predicates, namely, the zero that appears, because what makes One, precisely in the inscription of zero, is absent because of the fact that what inscribes the One, namely, of the content, of the designated of the One, namely, the zero.

These contradictions then, that I have highlighted by these few formulae, seem to be able to reorganised starting from the reintroduction of the ordinal point of view which preceded at the beginning of this taking into account of the logic of Port-Royal. Namely, of the opposition between the collection and the extension. That can be understood like that. The substance supports the predicate which, defined carried the substance. Now, we are going to take all the contradictory propositions one by one and only accept one at a time, this is the best solution, afterwards everything will work.

The substance being what is lacking, the predicate is an effect of lack, what carries a lack, the covering over of a lack. But on the other hand, the predicate is nothing without the substance, and it is impossible to differentiate the substance of the current predicate as a manifestation of the lacking substance. Nevertheless, since it is said that the predicate is nothing without the substance, and since it is said that there is no substance lacking to it, while since there is a predicate one is forced to deduce that the predicate is the substance, it is the substance. Because without substance, there is no substance, the predicate, should be nothing, now that gives something of the One, which implies that this One of the predicate is not the predicate but properly speaking the substance.

Now this cannot be understood except from the ordinal point of view which is the question of the substantification of the predicate.

The predicate which is not supposed to be anything without substance, if it manifests itself as something, this something as other than the nothing of the predicate is necessarily the substance. Namely, that in the extension of the predicate, the predicate is substantified. Namely, that the predicate in the extension is going (38) to take the place of the substance in a fleeting fashion, for something that is going to take the place of the predicate, namely,

the objects of extension. And at the same time, now there is substance, now it is supposed to be lacking, at the same time, once the second class of predicates is produced, the operation is repeated. And that which in the first phase took the place of the substance, is going to be lacking as substance, since through the operation that I already highlighted, this is going to be applied as a predicate to the new term that appears as a provisional substance. And this at infinity, namely, that once a substance is given, it is inscribed by being actualised by the predicates that are applied to it, but once the predicates are actualised, the substance is referred to these predicates which acquire a substantial value which is the extension. Namely, that it is impossible for the substance to be at once given and inscribed at the same time.

The substance may then very well be defined as what is lacking and as what creates the set. On the one hand a predicate is based on the first predicate taking the place of substance, in order to define it, to identify it, to predicate it. And on the other hand the first predicate substance referred in this relation to the second that acquires an extension disappears *qua* substance, support, in order to become only an element in the extension of the second predicate and confer on it the relays on this function of substance. The substance is a function that this will transmit to a third predicate etc....

We see that the first substance, the one that is supposed to be at the beginning, the potential substance, is quite mythical. What counts, is the operation of relays. It is the actual relation of predication which, made possible by potential substance, inscribes it and transforms it into a term, into a predicate into a relationship it being understood that the ultimate term of the relationship plays in its turn the role of substance. Namely, is lacking in the relationship and can only be inscribed by becoming other than the substance, namely, the predicate.

(39) The successive substances – and I will finish here – are then the series of transitory incarnations of what is lacking and which sustain any pseudo-substance as a covering over of lack: being. Being is indeed what supports all discourse *qua* discourse, this is what is produced on the edge of the hole that it constitutes. Being is then at once what is before discourse, what carries discourse, and what is after, the end of all discourse, its point of convergence, its limit.

In the logic of Port-Royal – I want to situate things – you do not find such a theory of discourse, but the contrary. And in the measure that it is the contrary, there is something like this theory that insists in the very heart of this discourse which is held. While the initial project of Port-Royal, was to construct a meta-language and this is specifically said, it is on the contrary that something insists in Port-Royal, despite Port-Royal. Namely, this takes on its effects starting from the fact that once being is presented as what cannot be predicated, as a set of everything that can be attributed it is said to be more than everything that can be attributed to it, this predication of being is presented in a formula that is already eloquent, what is said is: being cannot be predicated. Now precisely unpredicable, is perhaps the first predicate which, in this attempt to signify the impossible, only repeats it by exposing its own vacuity and which by that, traces out in a single stroke the limit of what is not it.

In this sense, the possible, the potential, is what is impossible to effectuate: it is what cannot present itself without being transformed and changing function; while the impossible, is the only thing that can be realised, leaving open what grounds this impossibility, namely, this gap. Because the type of realisation of the impossible leaves the impossibility gaping wide, the fact for example of the predication of what cannot be predicated.

I end on something which will take us a little further, but I do not (40) want to conclude, namely, to wind up this discourse which was only preliminary: language is what represents being for the word, namely, that the word is in the position of interpretant, between the tree and the bark, just as the finite is what is woven between two infinities.

J. Lacan: - I will conclude with these words: with time things emerge!

Seminar 3: Wednesday 19 December 1972

It seems to me difficult not to speak stupidly about language. That is nevertheless, Jakobson, since you are there – you will allow me to *tutoie* him because we have lived through a certain number of things together - it is nevertheless what you Jakobson manage to do.

Once again, in the talks that Jakobson gave I had the chance to admire him enough to pay homage to him now.

Stupidity nevertheless has to be nourished. Not because all those we nourish are stupid, as I might say, using a term that we will essentially have to come back to this year, namely, because it sustains their form, but rather because it has been proved that to nourish oneself is part of stupidity. Need I recall to this audience where people are ultimately at a restaurant and where they imagine moreover that they are being nourished - because they are not at the

university restaurant. But this imaginative dimension is precisely what one is nourished by.

What I am recalling is what – I trust you to remember - what analytic discourse teaches, this old bond with the nurse, who by chance is also a mother; and in the background this infernal business of the desire of the mother and all the rest of it. This indeed is what is at stake in feeding; it is indeed a kind of stupidity, but one to which the same discourse as I might say, accords its rights.

(2) One day I noticed that it was difficult – I am taking up the same word as in the first sentence – not to go into linguistics once the unconscious has been discovered.

On the basis of which I did something that appears to me, to tell the truth, the only objection that I could formulate to what you may have heard on one of these days from the mouth of Jakobson. Namely, that everything that relates to language falls under the ambit of linguistics, namely, in the final analysis, of the linguist.

Not that I do not grant it to him very easily, when what is at stake is poetry regarding which he put forward this argument. But if one takes everything that follows from language and specifically what results from it in this foundation of the subject, so renewed, so subverted that it is indeed the status from which there can be assured everything that from the mouth of Freud has been affirmed as unconscious, then I must forge some other word to leave to Jakobson his private domain. And if you like, I will call it *linguisterie*.

I do *linguisterie*, which leaves something in my work for linguists, which does not explain the number of times that from linguists I undergo, I experience, and indeed cheerfully on the part of so many

linguists, a lot of remonstrations. Certainly not from Jakobson; but that is because he is kindly disposed to me. In other words he loves me. That is how I express it in intimate circumstances.

But if you are waiting for what I may have to say about love, this will anyway only confirm this particular disjunction. That by luck, this morning, I found it this morning, exactly at half past eight, when I began to take notes - this is the time that I always do so for what I may have to tell you, not that I do not think about it for a long time, but it is only written down at the end - I found this *linguisterie*.

This has effects. Specifically at the level, not of what is said, because after all there are things said which are common to both fields. This indeed is what I refer myself to, it is because of this (3) that I can say that the unconscious is structured like a language. But it is sufficiently clear that having proposed this expression, like others I have put forward since, anyway it is already no bad thing that a certain number of people have stuck with this one. It is important.

This expression after all does not belong to the field of linguistics. It is a door opening out onto something that you will see being commented on in what is going to appear in a developed way in the next number of my well known aperiodical, with the title *L'étourdit* - *d.i.t.*

In it I take up again, I start from the sentence that I wrote on several occasions on the board last year without ever developing it, because I found that I had better things to do. Namely, to listen to someone who, after having been willing to take the floor, here specifically, this François Recanatti whom you were able to hear once more the last time, and thanks to whom I was able to highlight the legitimacy of the title of this seminar. Thanks to him then, I did not follow up

on the fact that “*the saying (dire) is precisely what is forgotten behind what is said (dit) in what is heard.*”

Nevertheless, it is from the consequences of the said that the saying is judged.

But what is made of the said remains open. One can do all sorts of things with furniture; when for example one is undergoing a siege or a bombardment. There is a text of Rimbaud which, I think, I mentioned last year. I did not go looking for where it is found textually. And then because I was in a hurry this morning and because it was this morning that I thought of it again. I think all the same that it is last year, it is the text that is called: *A une raison*, which is punctuated by this reply that ends each verse: *A new love*.

And since I am supposed to have spoken about love the last time, why not take it up again at this level?

For those who know, who have already heard a little about it, I will (4) take things up on the plane of this text and still on this point of marking the distance between linguistics and *linguisterie*. *Love is*, in Rimbaud, in this text, *the sign indicated as such that one is changing reason*.

This indeed is why it is to this reason that he addresses himself, to a reason. One has changed discourse. I think that all the same, even though there are some who go about the corridors asking that the four discourses should be explained to them, I think that like that, collectively, I can refer to the fact that I have articulated four of them and that I do not need to redo the list of them for you.

I want to point out to you that these four discourses are not in any sense to be taken as a succession of historical emergences.

That there was one of them that came a long time before the others is not what is important.

In saying that love is the sign of the fact that one is changing discourse, I am saying precisely that the last one to be deployed in this way allowed me to construct four of them. There exist four only on the foundation of this psychoanalytic discourse that I articulate from four places and, in each one, from the grip of some signifying effect.

Stipulated as such, *there is always some emergence of psychoanalytic discourse in every passage from one discourse to another.*

This is worth remembering. Not in order to do history, because in no case is this what is at stake. But in order, if you find yourself for example placed in a historical condition, if you map out, if you put forward – you are free to do so - that the foundation of the university at the time of Charlemagne, was the passage from a discourse of the Master to the edge of another discourse.

It is simply to be remembered that in applying them, these categories are only themselves structured from the existence – which is a term but which has nothing terminal about it – of the psychoanalytic discourse. It would only be necessary to prick up ones ears to the putting to the test of this truth that there is an emergence of analytic discourse at every passage of what the (5) analytic discourse allows to highlight as *the breakthrough from one discourse to another.*

The last time I said that the enjoyment of the Other – I am skipping the rest, you can take it up again – is not the sign of love.

And here I am saying that love is a sign. Does love stem from the fact that what appears is nothing other, is nothing more than *the sign*? It is here that the logic of Port-Royal, recalled the other day, will be of help to us. The sign, this logic advances – and one always marvels at these statements which take on their weight sometimes a very long time afterwards – the sign is what is defined only from the disjunction of two substances, that have no part in common. This is what, in our day, we called *intersection*. This is going to lead us to answers. A little later.

What is not a sign of love – I am taking up again then from the last time what I stated about the enjoyment of the Other, which I have just now recalled by commenting on the body that symbolises it – the enjoyment of the Other, with a capital O that I underlined on this occasion, is properly that of the other sex and – I commented – of the body that symbolises it.

Change of discourse. Assuredly this is where it is astonishing that what I articulate starting from the psychoanalytic discourse, well then, things budge, things knot, things cross over one another, huh! No one notices. I may well say that this notion of discourse is to be (6) taken as a social bond, founded as such on language and differentiating its functions in connection with this use of language. It seems then, as such, not to be unrelated to what in linguistics is specified as *grammar*.

Nothing seems to be modified in it. This use being set up – no one brings it up, at least so it appears – perhaps this poses the question about what is involved in the notion of information. By taking language up into *linguisterie*, does the notion that seems to be promoted as an apparatus that is easy, favourable to make language function in linguistics in such a stupid fashion, that which implied code and message, transmission, subject then and also space, distance. Does the fact that despite the overwhelming success of

this function of information, a success such that one can say that the whole of science has been infiltrated by it – we are at the level of molecular information, of the gene and the windings of nucleoproteins around the stems of DNA, themselves wound around each other and all of this is linked by hormonal links, they are messages that are sent, that are recorded... what does that mean? Because moreover the success of these formulae indisputably takes its source in a linguistics which is not simply immanent, but well and truly formulated.

In short, is there not in the notion that is going to extend to the very foundation of scientific thinking being articulated as negative entropy, something that cannot but make us ask the question whether it is not indeed, moreover, from my *linguisterie*, that I collect, legitimately when I make use of the function of signifier?

What is the signifier?

The signifier as the rites of the linguistic tradition, which, it should be remarked, is not specifically Saussurian but goes back much further - I am not the one who has discovered it - to the Stoics (7) from whom it is reflected onto St Augustine, is to be structured in topological terms. That in what concerns language, the signifier is first of all something that has a meaning effect, which should not be elided. That between the two something like a bar is written, that there is something barred to be crossed over.

It is clear that this way of topologising what is involved in language is illustrated certainly in the most admirable way by phonology in the sense that it incarnates from the phoneme what is involved in the signifier. But the signifier can in no way be limited to this phonematic support.

What is *a* signifier?

I must first of all stop and pose the question in this form. *a* put before a term, is used as an indeterminate article, namely, it already presupposes that the signifier can be collectivised, that we can make a collection of it, namely, speak about it as something that can be totalised.

This is something that the linguist surely, would have trouble, it seems to me, in explaining, because he has no predicate to ground this collection. In order to ground it on a *the*, as Jakobson very specifically pointed out yesterday. The word (*mot*) is not what can ground this signifier. The word has no other point at which a collection can be made than the dictionary where it can be listed.

In order to get you to sense that the signifier on this occasion as very properly deriving from its semantic reflection – Jakobson pointed it out – in order to get you to sense it I will not speak about the famous sentence. This nevertheless is clearly here also a signifying unit that on occasion people will try to collect, in its typical representatives, as is done on occasion for the same tongue.

I will speak rather about the proverb in which I do not want to say that a certain little article by Paulhan which came to hand recently did not make me interested. All the more vividly in that Paulhan seems to have noted this so ambiguous sort of dialogue, the one the (8) foreigner has with certain areas of linguistic competence, as they are called. He noticed in other words that with the people of Madagascar the proverb carried a weight which seemed to him to play an altogether specific role.

The fact that he discovered it on this occasion will not prevent me from going further. To note that in the margins of the proverbial function there are some things, at the limit, that are going to show

how this significance is something that fans out, if you will allow me this term, from the proverb to the expression (*la locution*).

I am going to ask you, or get you to look up in a dictionary, the expression *à tire-larigot*. Do that and you can tell me all about it. In interpretation, construction, fabulation, people go as far as to invent a gentleman, precisely, who on this occasion will be called *Larigot*, and it was also because of pulling his leg that people ended up by creating *à tire larigot*. What does *à tire-larigot* mean?

There are plenty of other expression that are just as extravagant that mean nothing other than that: the submersion of desire. That is the meaning of *à tire-larigot*.

By what? By the barrel pierced with what? With significance (*signifiance*) itself, *à tire-larigot*; a tankard of significance.

So then what is it? What is this significance?

At the level we are at, it is what has a meaning effect. But let us not forget that at the start, if people were so attached and to such an extent to the signifying element, to the phoneme, it was to clearly mark that this distance, that is mistakenly qualified as the foundation of the arbitrary, as it is put – probably reluctantly – by Saussure. He was dealing, as can happen, with imbeciles. He was thinking of something quite different, much closer to the text of *Cratylus*, is that not so, when one sees what he had in his drawers, this business of anagrams.

(9) What passes for arbitrary is that the meaning effects are much more difficult to weigh. It is true that they seem to have nothing to do with what causes them. But if they have nothing to do with what causes them, it is because one expects that what causes them should have a certain relationship to the real. I am talking about *the*

serious real. What is called the serious real. One must of course make an effort to approach, to grasp that the serious can be nothing but the serial. You have to have followed my seminars a little.

Meanwhile, what is meant by that, is that the references, the things that serve to approach this signified, well then precisely they remain approximate.

They remain macroscopic, for example. This however is not what is important. It is not that it is imaginary, because after all it would be already quite sufficient, if the signifier allowed there to be highlighted the image that we need to be happy.

Only this is not the case. It is in this approach that the signified has the serious as a property unless the serial is introduced. But that can only be obtained after a very long period of extraction from language of this something that is caught up in it. And of which we, at the point that I am at in my presentation, have only a distant idea. Even if it is only about this indeterminate One, and of this lure which we do not know how to make function as regards the signifier so that it collectivises it.

In truth, things must be upturned: instead of examining a signifier, to examine the signifier One. But we are still not at that point.

At the level of the signifier-signified distinction, what characterises the signified as regards what is nevertheless an indispensable third, namely, the referant, is properly speaking that the signified misses it. The fact is that the collimator does not function. And the final straw is that one manages after all to make use of it by passing through other devices.

(10) Meanwhile, to characterise the function of the signifier, to collectivise it in a way that resembles a predication, we have

something that I started from today. Because Recanati, still from the logic of Port-Royal, spoke to you about substantivised adjectives, of the roundness that one extracts from round. Why not justice from the just and prudence from some other substantive forms?

This indeed all the same is going to allow us to advance our stupidity to settle matters; that perhaps it is not, as is believed, a semantic category, but a mode of collectivising the signifier.

Why not? Why not? The signifier is stupid. It seems to me that it is of a kind that could give rise to a smile. A stupid smile naturally. But a stupid smile, as everyone knows, you only have to go into the Cathedrals; a stupid smile is an angel's smile. This is even, the only justification, as you know for Pascal's reprimand. It is its only justification. If the angel has such a stupid (*bête*) smile it is because it is submerged in the supreme signifier. Finding himself high and dry would perhaps do him some good; perhaps he would not smile anymore.

It's not that I do not believe in angels.

Everyone knows, I believe in them inextricably and even *inexteilhardily*. It is just that I do not believe, on the contrary, that he carries the slightest message. And on this point here he is at the level of the signifier, so that he is, precisely, truly signifying.

So then, it is a matter all the same of knowing where this leads us, to ask ourselves the question about why we put such an emphasis on this function of the signifier. It has to be grounded because after all it is the foundation of the symbolic. We maintain it whatever may be the dimensions that analytic discourse alone allows us to evoke in it.

I could have tackled things in a different way; I could have told you what people do when they come to ask me for an analysis, for example.

(11) I would not like to spoil this freshness, some people might recognise themselves, God knows what they might think, what they might imagine that I think. Perhaps they might think that I believe them to be stupid. It would be really the last idea that would come to me in such a case, is that not so. It is not at all a question of the stupidity of one or other person.

The question comes from the fact that the analytic discourse introduces a substantive adjective, stupidity, in so far as it is a dimension, in practice, of the signifier.

Here we must take a closer look at it.

Because after all once we substantiate, it is in order to suppose a substance, and in our day, good God, we do not have substances by the shovel full.

We have thinking substance and extended substance.

It would perhaps be appropriate to examine where, starting from there, where we can pigeonhole the substantial dimension. However distant it may be from us, precisely, and up to now only making a sign to us, on what can we hang this substance in practice. This dimension that must be written *dit-mention*, for which the function of language is *first of all* what watches over, before any better and more rigorous usage.

First the thinking subject. It can be said all the same that we have considerably modified it.

Since this *I think*, which by supposing itself deduced existence, we have had to take a step.

And this step is very properly that of the unconscious.

Since today I am dragging my feet in the rut of the unconscious as structured by a language, well then, all the same let it be known, that this totally changes the function of the subject as existing.

(12) The subject is not he who thinks. The subject is properly the one that we commit to doing what?

Not at all, as we tell him, like that, in order to charm him, to say everything. Because it is late and I do not wish to tire Jakobson whose host I consider myself to be on this occasion, I know that I will not manage today to go beyond a certain field.

Nevertheless, if I speak about the *not-all*, which worries a lot of people, if I put it in the foreground as the aim of my discourse this year, here indeed is the opportunity to apply it. One cannot say it all (*on ne peut pas tout dire*). But that one can utter stupidities, that is everything.

It is with this that we are going to do analysis, and that we enter into the new subject which is that of the unconscious.

It is precisely in the measure that the guy is willing to no longer think, that we will get to know perhaps a little more about it, and that we will draw some consequences from what is said (*des dits*). What is said precisely, and what cannot be unsaid. That is the rule of the game.

From this there arises a saying that does not always go so far as existing with respect to what is said. Precisely because of what happens the said as a consequence.

This is the test in which in the analysis of anyone whatsoever, however stupid he may be, a certain real may be reached.

The status of the saying: I have to leave all of that to one side for today.

But all the same I can indeed tell you that what is going to be a bigger pain in the ass this year is that we are all the same going to have to submit to this test a certain number of the sayings of the philosophical tradition.

What I greatly regret is that Parmenides – I am speaking about Parmenides, about Parmenides, about what we still have of his (13) sayings, anyway about what the philosophical tradition extracted from them. What my master Kojève starts from, for example, is the pure position of being. Fortunately, fortunately, Parmenides, in reality, wrote poems.

This confirms precisely, the way in which it seems to me the testimony of the linguist is at a premium here. The fact is precisely that by using these systems, these systems that are very like the ones that I am going to be able to highlight up to the end. Namely, mathematical articulation, alternation, then succession, framing after alternation; indeed it is precisely because he was a poet that Parmenides, in short, says what he has to say to us in the least stupid way.

But otherwise, that being is and that not being is not, I don't know what that says to you, but for my part I find it stupid.

You must not believe that it amuses me to say that. It is wearying, because all the same this year we will have need of being; of something that, thank God, I already put forward, the signifier One for which it seems to me I sufficiently opened the path for you last year in saying: there is something of the One. It is from here that the serious starts. However stupid that too may appear.

So then we will have all the same some bearings to take, and to take up minimally, from the philosophical tradition.

What interests us is where we have got to with the thinking substance and with its complement the famous extended substance which we cannot get rid of so easily either; because this is modern space. Substances this pure space, as I might say. This pure space as it is put - one can say it as one might say, pure spirit. And we cannot say that it is promising.

Pure space is grounded on the notion of the part, provided we add the fact that all are external to one another – *partes extra partes*.
(14) This is what we are dealing with.

People were even able to manage things with that. Namely, to extract a few little things from it, but serious steps had to be taken.

In order to situate my signifier before leaving you, I propose that you should weigh up what the last time was inscribed at the beginning of my first sentence, which involved *enjoying a body*. A body that symbolises the Other and perhaps involves something of a kind that would put some shape on another form of substance: enjoying substance.

Is this not what is supposed properly and precisely by this all which the analytic experience signifies here.

Substance of the body, on condition that it is defined only as what enjoys itself. Only property of the living body, no doubt, but we do not know what living being is except uniquely in the fact that a body for its part enjoys. And what is more: we fall immediately on the fact that it only enjoys itself from corporalising (*corporiser*) it in a signifying way.

This means something different than the *pars extra partem* of the extended substance, as is admirably underlined by the kind of Kantian, let us say - this is an old refrain, is it not, which is somewhere in my *Ecrits*, that are more or less well read – the kind of Kantian that Sade was. Namely, that one can only enjoy a part of the body of the Other, as he expresses it very, very well. For the simple reason that one has never seen a body completely, totally wrapped around itself to the point of including it and phagocytosing it around the body of the other. That is even why we are simply reduced to a little embrace, like that, a forearm or whatever ... ouille!.

And that enjoying has this fundamental property that it is in short the body of the One that enjoys a part of the body of the Other. But that part also enjoys; that pleases the other more or less, but it is a fact that he cannot remain indifferent to it. And even when it happens that something is produced that goes beyond what I have (15) just described marked with every signifying ambiguity, namely, that the enjoyment of the body is a genitive which, according as you make it objective or subjective, has this Sadean flavour that I have just added a touch to, or on the contrary ecstatic, suggestive which says that, in short, it is the Other that enjoys.

There is here, of course, only a level which was well localised and most elementary as regards what is involved in enjoyment, the enjoyment which I put forward the last time as not being a sign of love.

This is what will have to be sustained, and naturally this will lead us to the level of phallic enjoyment. And that what I am properly calling the enjoyment of the Other, in so far as here it is only symbolised, is again something quite different, namely, this *not-all* that I will have to articulate.

But in this single articulation, what is the signifier, what does it mean? The signifier, for today, and to close on this, given the motives I have, I would say that the signifier is situated at the level of the enjoying substance as being completely different to everything that I am going to recall as resonating with physics - and not by chance, Aristotelian physics. Aristotelian physics which simply by not being able to be used as I am going to do it, shows us the degree to which precisely it was an illusory physics. The signifier is the *cause* of enjoyment.

Without the signifier, how can we even tackle this part of the body, how, without the signifier, centre this something which is the material cause of enjoyment? Namely, that however blurred, however confused, it may be, it is a part of the body that is signified in this approach.

And after having taken up in this way what I will call the material cause, I will go straight away – this will be taken up later, commented on – to the final cause. Final in every sense of the term; (16) properly in that it is the limit. The signifier is what brings enjoyment to a halt.

After those who embrace (*s'enlacent*) – if you will allow me – alas! And after those who are weary (*las*), whoa! The other pole of the signifier, the counteraction is there, just as much at the origin as the vocative of the commandment could be.

And the efficient, the efficient, which Aristotle makes for us the third form of the cause, is nothing other than this project by which enjoyment is limited. All sorts of things, no doubt that appear in the animal kingdom, parody this path of enjoyment in the speaking being. Precisely, it is among them that something is outlined that shares a good deal more in the function of the message. The bee transporting pollen from the male flower to the female flower, is something that resembles much more what is involved in communication.

Now the embrace, the confused embrace from which enjoyment takes its cause, its last cause, which is formal, is it not much more something of the order of grammar that commands it?

It is not for nothing that *Peter hits Paul* is at the source of the first examples of grammar, nor that Peter – why not say it like that – Peter and Paul – prop up, give the example of conjunction. Except that you have to ask yourself afterwards who is propping up the other. I have already played on that a long time ago.

One could even say that the verb is defined only by the fact, it is by being a signifier *pas-si-bête* (not-so-stupid), this should be written in one word, *passibête*, than the others no doubt. It also brings about the passage, to this subject, of a subject precisely to his own division in enjoyment, and that it is still less so in that it becomes *sign* when, it determines this division as a disjunction.

One day I played on a literal slip of the pen, as it is called. I spent the whole of one of my lectures last year on the spelling slip that I had made: *You will never know how much I loved you (aimé)* (17) addressed to a woman and ending with *mé*. It has been pointed out to me since that, taken as a slip, that perhaps meant that I was homosexual.

But what I articulated last year, is that when one loves, it is not sex that is at stake.

If you don't mind, this is what I will end on today.

Seminar 4: Wednesday 9 January 1973

It's not quite time yet. I will skip any commentaries on these good wishes that can after all be taken as banal.

And then I am going to enter very gently into what I have reserved for you today which – what's not working? Where can people not hear? Which I have reserved for you today at my own risk which as you are going to see – or perhaps not see, who knows – in any case for me, before beginning, it seems jaw breaking.

To give a title, like that, what I am going to say to you is going to be centred, since in short it deals with something which is the analytic discourse, it deals with the way that, in this discourse, we have to situate the function of writing (*de l'écrit*).

Obviously, there is an anecdote here. Namely, that one day I wrote on the page of a collection I was bringing out – what I called *poubellication* – I found nothing better to write on the cover page of this collection than the word *Ecrits*.

These *Ecrits*, it is fairly well known, let us say, that they are not easy to read. I can make, like that, a little autobiographical avowal to you, which is that in writing *Ecrits* this was precisely what I thought. Which is, perhaps it even goes this far, that I thought that they were not to be read.

In any case, it's a good start. Naturally the letter is read. It even seems to be designed, like that, as a prolongation of the word. It is read – literally. But precisely, it is perhaps not at all the same thing to read a letter and to read. To introduce that, in a way that gives you an image, I want to start right away from analytic discourse.

(2) It is quite obvious nevertheless that, in analytic discourse, this is the only thing at stake: what is read. What is read beyond what you have urged the subject to say, which is as I underlined, I think, in passing the last time, which is not so much to say everything as to say whatever. And I pushed things further: not to hesitate, for this is the rule, not to hesitate to say something whose dimension I introduced this year as being essential to analytic discourse, to say stupidities.

Naturally, this assumes that we should develop this dimension, and this cannot be done without saying (*le dire*). What is the dimension of stupidity? Stupidity, at least the one that can be uttered, the fact is that stupidity does not go very far. In discourse, common discourse, it stops short. This of course is the thing, as I might say, that I make sure of when I do this thing that I never do without trembling, namely, return to what at one time I put forward. This always gives me a holy fear. The fear, precisely, of having said stupidities. Namely, something that, that by reason of what I am putting forward now, I might consider as not holding up.

Thanks to someone who has taken up this seminar that was announced, the first at the *Ecole Normale* which will be coming out

soon, I was able – which is not often granted me, because as I tell you, I myself avoid the risk of it – I was able to get the feeling that I sometimes encounter when put to the test, that what, for example, I put forward that year was not so stupid. At least was not all that much so, since it allowed me to advance other things which it seems to me, because this is what I am at now, hold together. It nevertheless remains that this *rereading oneself* represents a dimension. A dimension which is to be properly situated in what is, with respect to analytic discourse, the function of what is read.

Analytic discourse has a privilege in this regard. It seems difficult to me, and this is where I started from in what constitutes a crucial (3) date for me in what I teach, as I put it, which does not perhaps quite say what I seemed to state. Namely, to put the accent on the *I* in it, namely, what *I* may utter, but perhaps also to put the accent on the from (*de*), namely, where a teaching of which I am the effect comes from.

Since then, I put the accent on what I founded in terms of a precise articulation. One that is written, precisely, is written on the board with four letters, with two bars and with some strokes, five to be precise, which link each of these letters. One of these bars, since there are four of them, there could be six of them, six bars, one of these bars being missing.

What is written in this way, and what I call analytic discourse, arose from a reminder, from an initial reminder, from a first reminder. Namely, that analytic discourse is this new style of relationship which was founded only on what functions as speech and in this something that can be defined as a field. *Function and field*, I precisely wrote, of *speech and language* – I ended: *in psychoanalysis*. Which was to designate, designate what constitutes the originality of a certain discourse which is not homogenous to a certain number of others that fulfil an office and which simply by

this fact we are going to distinguish as being official discourses. What is at stake up to a certain point is to discern what the office of analytic discourse is and to make it too, if not official, at least officiating.

It is in this discourse such as it is, in its function and its office, that we must try to circumscribe – this is the path that I am taking today – what this discourse might reveal about the very particular situation of writing as regards what is involved in language.

It is a question that is very much on the agenda, if I may express myself thus. Nevertheless, nevertheless, I do not want to come immediately to this current high point. I intend particularly to specify what may be, if it is specific, what may be the function of writing in analytic discourse.

Everyone knows that I put forward, in order to explain the functions of this discourse, the use of a certain number of letters. Very (4) specifically, to rewrite them, to rewrite them on the board, the little **o**, that I call object but which all the same is nothing but a letter. The capital **O**, that I make function in what only took on a written form from the proposal, is a production of logical mathematics, or mathematical logic, however you want to state it. This capital **O**, I did not make just any old thing of it: by it I designate what is first of all a locus, a place. I said *the locus of the Other*, designated as such by a letter.

How can a letter serve to designate a locus? It is clear that there is here something excessive. And that, when you open for example the first page of what was finally put together in the form of a definitive edition with the title of *Theory of sets*, attributed to fictitious authors who called themselves by the name of Nicolas Bourbaki, what you see is the bringing into play of a certain number of logical signs. These logical signs, precisely, designate, in

particular one of them, the function *place* as such. This logical sign is designated, written by a little square: □.

So then I was not at first properly speaking making strict use of a letter when I said that the locus of the Other was symbolised by the letter capital O.

On the other hand, I marked it by redoubling it with this S which here means *signifier*, signifier of capital O in so far as it is barred: S(Ø). By this, I articulated in writing, in the letter, something that adds a dimension to this locus of O, and very precisely by showing that, as locus, it does not hold up. That there is in this locus, in this locus designated as the Other, a flaw, a hole, a locus of loss. And that it is precisely around what, at the level of the **o**-object, comes to function with respect to this loss, that something altogether essential to the function of language is put forward.

I also used this letter **o**. I am talking about what I introduced which functions as letter, which introduces as such a new dimension. I used, distinguishing it from the simply signifying (5) function which was promoted in analytic theory up to then by the term phallus, I put forward this capital **O** as constituting something original, something that I am specifying here today as being made precise in its relief by the writing itself. It is a letter whose very function is distinguished from others – and this indeed is why these three letters are different. They do not have the same function, as already you may have sensed from what I first stated about the S of barred O and of the small **o**. It has a different function, and nevertheless it remains a letter.

It is very precisely to show the relationship, from what these letters introduce into the function of the signifier, that it is a matter today of discerning what, by taking up the thread of the analytic discourse, we can put forward about it.

I propose. I propose the following which is that you should consider writing as being in no way of the same register, or cut from the same cloth – if you will allow me this sort of expression which may indeed have its use – as what is called the signifier.

The signifier is a dimension that was introduced from linguistics, namely, from something which, in the field where speech is produced, is not self-evident. A discourse sustains it which is the scientific discourse. A certain order of dissociation, of division is introduced by linguistics thanks to which there is grounded the distinction of what nevertheless seems to be self-evident, which is that when one speaks, it signifies. It includes the signified. What is more, up to a certain point, it is only supported by the function of meaning.

Introducing, distinguishing, the dimension of the signifier, is something that only takes on relief precisely from positing that the signifier as such, very precisely what you hear, I would say, in the literally auditory sense of the term, here and there where I am (6) speaking to you from, is very precisely to posit by an original act, that what you hear does not have any relationship with what it signifies. This is an act that can only be established by a discourse described as the scientific discourse. It is not self-evident. And it is so little self-evident that what you see coming out of a dialogue which comes from no bad pen since it is from *Cratylus* by the one called Plato, this is so little self-evident that this whole discourse is made up of the effort to ensure that precisely this relationship. This relationship which means that what is stated is made to signify and that it ought indeed to have some relationship. This whole dialogue is an attempt we can say, from where we are at, that is despairing, in making out that this signifier, of itself, is presumed to mean something. This despairing attempt is moreover marked by failure since it is from another discourse. But from a discourse that

included its original dimension, scientific discourse. There is promoted, there is put forward, and in a way, as I might say, that does not require its history to be investigated, there is put forward from the very establishment of this discourse, that the signifier is only posited in so far as it has no relationship.

The terms that we use here are themselves always slippery. Even as sharp a linguist as Ferdinand de Saussure spoke about the *arbitrary*. But there is here a slippage. A slippage into another discourse: the discourse of decrees. Or to put it better: the discourse of the master, to call it by its name. The arbitrary is not appropriate here. But on the other hand, we ought always pay attention, when we develop a discourse, if we want to remain in its own field, and not perpetually produce what I might call these effects of relapsing into another discourse, we ought to try to give its consistency to each discourse. And in order to maintain its consistency, not go outside it except with full awareness. To say that the signifier is arbitrary does not have the same import as to simply say that the signifier has no relationship with its signified effect.

Thus it is that at every instant, and more than ever in the case when it is a matter of putting forward as a function what is involved in a (7) discourse, we should every time, at every instant at least note how we slip into a different reference. The word *reference* on this occasion being only able to be situated from what the discourse as such constitutes as a bond. There is nothing to which the signifier as such is referred if not to a discourse, to a style of the functioning of language, for utilisation as a language bond.

We must still specify on this occasion what bond means. The bond, of course, we cannot but slide immediately into it. It is a bond between those who speak – and you immediately see where we are going. Namely, that those who speak, of course, it is not just anyone at all, it is beings that we are used to describe as living.

And perhaps it is very difficult to exclude from those who speak this dimension which is that of life. Except that we immediately note – you can put your finger on it – that in the field of those who speak, it is very difficult to bring in the function of life without at the same time bringing in the function of death. From this there results a signifying ambiguity, precisely, which is altogether radical, between what can be put forward as being a function of life or indeed of death.

It is altogether clear that nothing leads in a more direct way to the fact that the something from which alone life can be defined, namely, the reproduction of a body; this function of reproduction itself cannot be entitled as especially belonging to life nor especially to death. Since as such, in so far as this reproduction is sexed, as such, it involves the two: life and death.

But already by merely advancing into this something which is already in the thread, in the current of analytic discourse, we have made this leap, this slippage called *the conception of the world*, which nevertheless ought indeed for us be considered as the most comical of things. Namely, that we ought also to pay very careful attention to the fact that the term conception of the world presupposes itself a whole other discourse, that it forms part of that of philosophy. And nothing after all is less assured, if one leaves (8) philosophical discourse, than the existence as such of a world. That there is often only an opportunity, an opportunity to smile in what is put forward for example from analytic discourse as including something which is supposed to be of the order of such a conception.

I would even say more that, up to a certain point, a smile is also deserved when we see there being put forward such a term to designate, for example, let us say, what is called Marxism. Marxism does not seem to me, and however one examines it, even

in the most approximate way, cannot pass as *a conception of the world*. It is the contrary, by all sorts of quite striking co-ordinates. The statement of what Marx said, which is not to be confused obligatorily with the Marxist conception of the world, is properly speaking something else, what I would call more formally a gospel. Namely, an announcement. An announcement that something called history is establishing another dimension of discourse, in other words the possibility of completely subverting the function of discourse as such. I mean, properly speaking, of philosophical discourse, in so far as it is based on a conception of the world.

Language is proved then to be much more vast as a field, much more rich in resources than to be simply the one in which there is inscribed a discourse which is the one that in the course of time, has been established from philosophical discourse. It is not because it is difficult for us not to take it into account at all inasmuch as from this discourse - the philosophical discourse – certain reference points are stated which are difficult completely to eliminate from every use of language. It is not because of this that we ought at all costs do without it. On condition that we see that there is nothing easier than to fall again into what I called ironically, indeed on a comical note, the conception of the world but which has a more moderate name, a much more precise one which is called *ontology*. Ontology is especially what, from a certain use of language, has highlighted, has produced in an accentuated way, has produced the use in language of the copula, in such a way that it has been, in (9) short, isolated as signifier.

Dwelling on the verb *to be*, this verb which is not even, in the complete field of the diversity of tongues, used in a way that one could qualify as universal, to put it forward as such, is something that involves an accentuation. An accentuation that is full of risk. In order, as one might say, to detect it, and even up to a certain point exercise it, it would perhaps be sufficient to put forward that

nothing makes it obligatory, when one says that anything whatsoever is what it is, in any way to isolate this *to be*, by accentuating it. This is pronounced *c'est ce que c'est* (it is what it is) and this could moreover be written *seskecé*. One would only, in this use of the copula, one would only as I might say be completely hoodwinked by it [*n'y voir...que du feu*]. One would be completely hoodwinked by it if a discourse which is the discourse of the master, a discourse of the master (*maître*) which here may also be written *m'être* which puts the stress on the verb *être*, is something that Aristotle himself looked twice at before putting it forward. Since, as regards what is involved in being, he opposes to *to ti esti*, to essence, to what that is – he goes as far as to use the *to ti en einai*, namely, what would indeed have happened if it had quite simply come to be. What was to be. And it seems that here there is conserved the pedicle that allows us to situate from where this discourse of being is produced. It is quite simply that of *being at someone's heel, being under someone's orders*. What was going to be if you had heard what I am ordering you.

Every dimension of being is produced from something which is along the line, in the current of the discourse of the master who, uttering the signifier, expects from it what is one of the effects of the bond, assuredly, not to be neglected, which results from the fact that the signifier commands. The signifier is first of all and from its dimension imperative.

How return, if not by a special discourse, to what I could put forward in terms of a pre-discursive reality? This is of course the (10) dream, the foundational dream of every idea of knowledge, but which is moreover to be considered as mythical. There is no pre-discursive reality. Every reality is grounded on and is defined by a discourse. And this indeed is why it is important for us to realise what analytic discourse is made from. And not fail to recognise what no doubt has only a limited place in it, namely, good God, that

we speak in it about what the verb to fuck (*foutre*) states perfectly. In it we speak about fucking – I mean the verb ‘to fuck’ [*in English*] is that not so – and in it we say that something is wrong. This is an important part of what is confided in analytic discourse, and it is important to underline very precisely that this is not its privilege. It is clear that, in what I earlier called discourse and by writing it almost in a single word: the disc, the *disque ourcourant*, the disc also outside the field, outside the operation of every discourse. Namely, quite simply the disc, in the disc which is indeed after all the angle from which we can consider a whole field of language, the one which in effect clearly gives its substance, its stuff by being considered as disc. Namely, the fact that it turns and that it turns very exactly for nothing. This disc is exactly what is found in the field from which discourses are specified. The field where all of this is swamped, where each and every one is capable, just as capable of being stated just as much. But with a concern for what we will call for very good reasons, decency, does so, good God, as little as possible. What, in effect, constitutes the foundation of life, is that everything that is involved in the relationships of men and women, what is called the collectivity, does not work. It doesn’t work, and everyone talks about it, and a large part of our activity is spent saying it. Nevertheless, there is nothing serious except what is organised in a different way as discourse. Up to and including the fact that precisely this relationship, this sexual relationship in so far as it does not work, is going to all the same, thanks to a certain number of conventions, of prohibitions, of inhibitions, of all sorts of things that are the effect of language, which are only to be taken from this material and from this register. And which reduce very precisely the something that all of a sudden makes us come back as we should to the field of discourse. There is not the slightest pre-discursive reality, for the good reason that what constitutes a collectivity and what I called in evoking just now men, women and children, means very exactly nothing as pre-discursive reality. *Men, women and children are only signifiers.*

A man is nothing other than a signifier. A woman seeks out a man under the heading of signifier. A man seeks out a woman under the heading – this is going to appear curious to you – under the title of what is only situated from discourse, since if what I am tackling is true, namely, that the woman is not-all, there is always something that in her escapes discourse.

So then, it is a matter of knowing, in all that, what is produced in a discourse from the effect of writing.

As you know, perhaps you know it – you know it in any case if you have read what I write – the signifier and the signified, it is not simply that linguistics has distinguished them. The thing, perhaps, appears self-evident to you, but precisely it is by considering that things are self-evident that one sees nothing about what one has nevertheless before one's eyes. And before one's eyes concerning precisely the written.

If there is something that can introduce us to the dimension of the written as such, it is for us to realise that the *signified* – not the signifier - has nothing to do with the ears but only with reading, namely, *with what we hear in terms of signified*. But the signified, is precisely not what we hear. What we hear is the signifier. And the signified is the effect of the signifier.

There is something that is only the effect of discourse. The effect of discourse as such, namely, of something which already functions as (12) a bond. Well then, it is this something which, at the level of a writing, as effect of scientific discourse, of the capital S in order to connote the place of the signifier, and of the small s by which there is connoted as place the signified, and this function of place is only created by discourse itself. 'Everyone to his place', only functions in discourse. Well then between the two, there is the bar: S/s.

As you know, it seems to be nothing when you write a bar, to explain things. This word *explain* is very important. Because there is no way of understanding about a bar. Even when it is reserved to signify negation. All the same, it is very difficult to understand what negation means. If one looks a little bit more closely at it, one will see in particular that there is a great variety of negations. And that it is quite impossible to unify all the negations under the same concept: the negation of existence, is not at all the same thing as the negation of totality, to limit myself to the use that I have made of negation. But there is one thing which is in any case still more certain. It is that the fact of adding the bar to the notation of capital S and small s, which already are sufficiently distinguished, could be sustained as simply marked by the distance of what is written. To add the bar has something superfluous, even futile about it, and that in any case, like everything that concerns the written, is only supported by the fact that, precisely, the written is not there to be understood. This indeed is why you are not forced to understand mine! If you do not understand them, it is a good sign, so much the better! That will precisely give you the opportunity of explaining them.

Well then, the bar is similar. The bar is very precisely the point at which, in every use of language, there will be an opportunity for the written to be produced. If in Saussure even, capital S is over the bar over small s, it is thanks to this that in the *Agency of the letter*, which forms part of my *Ecrits*, I was able to show you in a way that is written, nothing more, that nothing is supported from the effects (13) described as unconscious unless, thanks to this bar - and if this bar were not there, nothing could be explained about it - there is *something of* the signifier, there is something of the signifier, I repeat, is that not so - I shortened things - there is something of the signifier that passes under the bar. If the bar were not there you

could not see that there is something of the signifier injected into the signified.

Thanks to the written there is manifested, there is manifested something which is only an effect of discourse. Because if there were not analytic discourse, you would continue to speak very exactly like birdbrains, namely, to say what I qualify as *discourcourant*. Namely, to continue the disc, the disc continuing this something which is the most important point that only analytic discourse reveals. Namely, something that can only be articulated thanks to the whole construction of analytic discourse. The fact is very precisely that *there is no* – I am coming back to this, because after all it is the formula that I have been drumming into you, but while drumming it into you I must still explain it because it is only supported precisely from the written, and from the written by the fact that *the sexual relationship cannot be written*. This is what that means, or more exactly that everything that is written is conditioned in such a way that it starts from the fact that it will be forever impossible to write the sexual relationship as such. That writing as such is possible, namely, that there is a certain effect of discourse, and that it is called writing.

Look, you could at a pinch write $x, R, y, - xRy$ – and say x is man, y is woman, and R is the sexual relationship. Why not! Only you see, this is what I was telling you earlier, it's a stupidity. It is a stupidity because what is supported under the signifying function of man and of woman, are only signifiers. They are only signifiers completely linked to this *courcourant* usage. And if there is a (14) discourse that demonstrates this to you it is that the woman will only ever be taken – this is what the analytic discourse brings into play – *quoad matrem*. Namely, that the woman will not enter into function in the sexual relationship except as mother. This is one of these massive truths which, when we look more closely at it, of course, will lead us further, but thanks to what? Thanks to writing,

which moreover will raise no objection to this first approximation, since precisely it is through this that it will show that it stands as a *deputy* for this *not-all* on which there rests what? The enjoyment of the woman. Namely, that she will find in this enjoyment *that she is not all*, namely, that somewhere, makes her absent from herself, absent *qua* subject, the stopper of this little \circ that her child will be.

But on the other side, on the side of the x , namely, of what man would be if this sexual relationship could be written in a sustainable way, sustainable in a discourse, you will see that man is only a signifier. Because where he enters into operation as a signifier, he only enters into it *quoad castrationem*. Namely, in so far as he has a relationship, some relationship or other with phallic enjoyment. So that it is starting from the moment when, from somewhere, from a discourse that tackles the question seriously, from analytic discourse, it is starting from the moment where what is the condition of the written, namely, that it should be sustained by a discourse, that everything will slip away and that you will never be able to write the sexual relationship. Naturally, in the measure where what is at stake is a true writing. Namely, of writing in so far as it is what in terms of language is conditioned from a discourse.

The letter is radically an effect of discourse. What is good, is it not, if you will allow me, what is good in what I tell you, is that it is (15) always the same thing. Namely, not of course that I repeat myself, that is not the question. It is that what I said formerly, the first time as far as I can remember that I spoke about the letter, I brought that out I know longer know when, I didn't look for it, I told you, I have a horror of re-reading myself, but it must easily be 15 years ago, some time at Sainte-Anne. I tried to point out this little thing that everyone knows of course, that everyone knows when they read a little – which is not the case for everyone. That someone called Sir Flinders Petrie, for example, believed he had noticed that the letters of the Phoenician alphabet were to be found

well before the time of Phoenicia on tiny pieces of Egyptian pottery where they served as trademarks. Which means simply the fact that the market, which is typically an effect of discourse, is where the letter came out first, before anyone dreamt of using letters to do what? Something which has nothing to do with the connotation of the signifier but which elaborates it, which perfects it.

Things should be taken of course at the level of the history of each tongue. Because it is clear that the Chinese letter, the one that disturbs us so much that we call it, God knows why, by a different name, character, namely, it is manifest that the Chinese letter emerged from very ancient Chinese discourse, in a completely different way to the way our letters emerged. Namely, that in short the letters I bring out here have a different value. And different as letters, because they come out of analytic discourse, to what can come out as a letter for example from set theory. Namely, from the use that is made of it and which nevertheless – this is what is of interest – is not without having a relationship; a certain relationship of convergence, to which I will certainly, have the opportunity in what follows, to contribute some developments.

The letter as effect, any effect of discourse whatsoever, is good in that it constructs a letter (which makes a letter).

(16) So then, good God, to end, to end today what is only a first outline of what I will have the opportunity to develop. What I will take up by distinguishing, discerning for you, for example, the difference between the use of the letter in algebra or the use of the letter in set theory. Because this directly interests us. But for the moment, I want simply to point out that something happens all the same which is correlative to the emergence into the world – into the world, make no mistake, to the world in decomposition, thank God. To the world that we see no longer holding up because even in scientific discourse, it is clear that there is not the slightest world,

once you can add to atoms a thing called the quark. And that this is the true line of scientific discourse, ought to make you all the same take into account that something different is at stake. That it is a matter of seeing from where one starts.

Well then consult, all the same, because it is worth reading, you should all the same set about reading a little, a little of the authors – I will not say of your time, of course, I am not telling you to read Philippe Sollers, he is unreadable, of course, like me, yes...but you could read Joyce, for example. Here then you will see how this has begun to happen. You will see that language is perfected and knows how to play when it knows how to play with writing. For my part I am ready to admit that Joyce is not readable. It is certainly not translatable into Chinese!

Only what is Joyce? It is exactly what I told you earlier: it is the signifier stuffing the signified. Joyce is a long written text – read *Finnegans Wake* – it is a long written text whose meaning comes from the following. It is because the signifiers dovetail, are composed, if you wish to give an image to those here who have not even an idea of what it is, are telescoped. That it is with this that there is produced something which, as signified, may appear enigmatic, but which is indeed the thing that is closest to what we (17) analysts, thanks to the analytic discourse, know how to read, which is what is closest to the slip. And it is *qua* slip that this signifies something, namely, that it can *be read* in an infinity of different ways. But it is precisely because of that that it is badly read or read amiss or not read at all. But is not this dimension of *being read* not enough to show you that we are in the register of analytic discourse, that what is at stake in analytic discourse, is always that you give a different reading than what it signifies to what is stated as signifier. But this is where the question begins.

Because, let's see, to make myself understood, I am going to take a reference in what you read, in the great book of the world. For example, you see the flight of a bee. A bee flies. It gathers honey. It goes from flower to flower. What you learn, is that it is going to transport at the end of his legs the pollen of one flower onto the pistil, and with that to the eggs, of another flower. That is what you read in the flight of the bee. Or anything else whatsoever. You see, I don't know, something that, that you call like that all of a sudden, a flight of birds that fly low, you call that a flight, in reality it is a group, a group at a certain level. You read in it that there is going to be a storm. But do they read? Does the bee read that it serves for the reproduction of phanerogamic plants? Does the bird read the omen of fortune, as was said in the past, namely, of a tempest? That is the whole question. It cannot be ruled out, after all, that the swallow reads the tempest; but it is not sure either.

What there is in your analytic discourse, is that you suppose that the subject, the subject of the unconscious, knows how to read. Your business about the unconscious means nothing else. It is that not only do you suppose that it knows how to read, but you suppose that it is able to learn to read.

Only what you teach it to read has then absolutely nothing to do, in any case, with what you may write about it.

Voilà.

Seminar 5: Wednesday 16 January 1973

What can I have to say to you, *encore*? Given the time that this has lasted and that it does not have all the effects that I would want of it. Well then, precisely because of that, there is no lack of things I have to say.

Nevertheless, since one cannot say everything and for good reason, I am reduced to making my way along this strict path which means that at every instant I must be careful not to slip back into what has already been made of what has been said.

That is why today I am going to try once more to maintain this difficult task of opening things up since we have at the same time a strange horizon, because of a title qualified by this *Encore*.

Today I must provide a mapping out of a certain number of points which this year will be our compass points. There is something that was formulated last time: *the function of the written*. It is one of our points this year. One of our poles. I would like to recall to you, all the same, that I think, the first time I spoke to you if I am not mistaken, I stated that enjoyment, the enjoyment of the Other, which I said was symbolised by the body, is not a sign of love. Naturally that gets across. It gets across because people feel that it is at the same level as what was previously said, that it does not deviate.

Nevertheless, there are in it a certain number of terms that deserve to be carefully commentated. Enjoyment is indeed what I am trying to make present by this very expression. This Other is more than ever put in question here. It must be hammered out, recast anew for it to take on its full sense, its complete resonance. A locus on the

one hand but, on the other hand, put forward as the term that is supported by - since I am the one who speaks, who can only speak from where I am - identified to what I qualified the last time as pure signifier. The man, a woman, I said – are nothing but signifiers. And it is from this that they take on, as such, the *dire* as a distinct incarnation of sex that they take on their function.

The Other, in my language, can thus only be the other sex. What is involved in this Other? What is involved in its position with regard to what the sexual relationship is realised around. Namely, an enjoyment that analytic discourse has precipitated from this function of the phallus whose riddle remains complete, since it is only articulated in it from effects of absence? Does that mean, nevertheless, that it is a matter here – as people believed they could translate it too quickly – of the signifier, of what is lacking in the signifier? This indeed is what this year ought to put a final term to. Namely, as regards the phallus, to say what its function is in analytic discourse.

We will not get to it directly. But with the simple goal of clearing the ground, I will say that what I was lead to the last time as being, as accentuating, the function of the bar, is not unrelated to the phallus. There remains to us in the second part of the sentence, linked to the first by an ‘is not’, is not the sign of love. This indeed is what also what points up our horizon. This year we must articulate what is at stake, what is indeed there as the pivot of everything that has been established from analytic experience: love. Love, it is a long time that people have been speaking about nothing else but that. Do I need to emphasise that it is at the centre, that it is at the heart, very precisely of philosophical discourse. And that this is assuredly what ought to put us on our guard. If philosophical discourse has been glimpsed for what it is: this variant of the discourse of the master. If the last time I was able to say about love, in so far as what it aims at is being, namely, what most slips

away in language, what I insisted on as what was ‘going to be’, or what precisely by being gave rise to surprise. If I was able to add that as regards this being, we ought to question ourselves whether it is not close to this being of the signifier *m’être*. If it is not ‘being in command’, if there is not here the strangest of lures, is it not also in order to command us to question with the word *sign* the way in which the sign is distinguished from the signifier?

Here then are some points: one of which is enjoyment, the other is the Other, the third the sign, the fourth love. When we read or re-read what was expressed at a time when the discourse of love proved to be that of being, when we open this book of Richard of Saint-Victor on the Divine Trinity, it is from being that we start. From being in so far as it is, forgive me for slipping into the written, conceived of as *l’êtrenel*, as eternal, for those who are hard of hearing. And that, from being, after this development, this journeying that is nevertheless so temperate in Aristotle and no doubt under the influence of the irruption of this ‘I am what I am’ which is the statement of Judaic truth. When all of this comes to culminate in this approximate idea of being – this idea up to then circumscribed, touched on, approached – comes to culminate in this violent tearing away from the function of time, by the statement of the Eternal, strange consequences result.

Namely, stating that there is being which, as eternal, is ‘of itself’. That there is being which as eternal, is not ‘of itself’. That there is being which as eternal, which as non-eternal, does not have this fragile, in a way precarious, indeed inexistent being, does not have it ‘of itself’, but comes to a halt at what seems to be imposed on it because of logical definitions. If however negation was satisfied in this order with a univocal function of assuring existence, which comes to a halt at the fact that what is not eternal could not in any case, since these four subdivisions that are produced from this alternation of affirmation and of negation, of the eternal and of the

‘of itself’ - is there, he asks, a being which, non-eternal, can be of itself? And assuredly this seems to the Richard of Saint-Victor in question to be ruled out.

Does it not seem, nevertheless, that this is precisely what is at stake as regards the signifier? Namely, that the signifier, no signifier is put forward, is produced as such, as eternal. This is what, rather than qualifying it as arbitrary, Saussure no doubt might have attempted to formulate. It would have been better to put forward the signifier, let us say, from the category of the contingent, in any case from what is assuredly not eternal. From what rejects the category of the eternal but which nevertheless, curiously, is ‘of itself’.

This is how it is proposed to us: this signifier, ‘of itself’, to its effects. And nevertheless, if there is something that can be put forward about it, it is its participation – to employ a Platonic approach – it is its participation in this *nothing*. From which effectively, it is the very emergence of the creationist idea that tells us something quite original was made *ex nihilo*, namely: from nothing.

It really seems, does it not seem that way to you, is there not something that appears (*aparaisse*) to you – if indeed your laziness (*parese*) could be woken up by some apparition – which is that Genesis recounts nothing other than the creation; of nothing in effect. Of what? Of nothing other than the signifier.

Once this creation arises, it is articulated from the nomination of what is. Is this not creation in its essence? Is it not the case that creation is nothing other than the fact of what was there, as Aristotle can assuredly not fail to state it. Namely, that if something ever was, it was there from all time. Is it not, in the creationist idea, essentially creation and the creation from nothing of the signifier

that is fundamentally at stake, that is at stake in a way that founds. Is this not how we can see what, by being reflected in a conception of the world, was stated as the Copernican revolution.

For a long time, I have been throwing doubt on what Freud believed he could put forward on this. As if, from what the discourse of the hysteric had taught him, namely, from this other substance which, stems entirely from the fact that there is something of the signifier. And that it is the effect of this signifier that is at stake in the discourse of the hysteric, that having picked it up he was able to make it turn by this quarter turn which made of it the analytic discourse.

The very notion of *quarter turn* evokes revolution but certainly not in the sense that revolution is subversion. Quite the contrary, what turns – this is what is called revolution – is destined by its very statement, to evoke return. Assuredly we are not at all at the completion of this return, since this quarter turn is accomplished already in a very painful way. But it is never too much to evoke first of all that if there was revolution somewhere it was certainly not at the level of Copernicus. That it would have been useless to evoke terms which belong only to historical erudition. Namely, that for a long time the hypothesis had been advanced that the sun was perhaps indeed the centre around which things turned.

But what matter? What was important to these mathematicians was assuredly the start, the start of what? Of what turns. What we know, of course, is that this eternal journeying of the stars from the last of the spheres, the one to which Aristotle supposes yet another which would be immobile, prime cause of the movement of the one that turns. If the stars turn, it is assuredly because the Earth, the Earth turns upon itself and that it is already a marvel that from this journeying, from this revolution, from this eternal turning of the stellar sphere, men were found to forge these other spheres, or to

make turn with this oscillatory movement, which is that of the Ptolemaic system, the spheres of planets. Of those that, turning around the sun, are found with respect to the earth in this ambiguous position of coming and going in a zigzag pattern.

Starting from that, was it not an extraordinary *tour de force* to have thought out the movement of the spheres, to which after all Copernicus only pointed out that perhaps this movement of intermediary spheres could be expressed differently. Whether the Earth was at the centre or not was assuredly not what was most important for him.

The Copernican revolution is in no way a revolution except in function of the fact that the centre of a sphere may be supposed, in a discourse which is only an analogical discourse, to constitute the *master point*. The fact of changing this master point, whether it is the Earth or the sun, involves nothing in itself that subverts what the signifier *centre* preserves of itself. This signifier preserves all its weight and it is quite clear that man – what is designated by this term, which is what? What makes things signify – that man was ever in any way shaken by the fact that the Earth is not at the centre. He very easily substituted the sun for it. The important thing is that there should be a centre and since of course it is now obvious that the sun is not a centre either, that it is moving through a space whose status is more and more precarious to establish. That what remains indeed at the centre is quite simply this good old routine which ensures that the signified always preserves, when all is said and done, the same meaning. And that this meaning is given by the feeling that each one has of being part of his world at least. Namely, of his little family and that everything that turns around it, and that each of you – I am speaking even for those on the Left - is attached more than you believe and to a measure whose span you would do well to estimate, to a certain number of prejudices which provide a stable position for you and which limit the range of your

insurrections, to the shortest term, to what very precisely does not involve any inconvenience for you. And specifically not in a conception of the world which remains, for its part, always perfectly spherical. The signified finds its centre wherever you take it. Until further notice, it is not analytic discourse, which is so difficult to sustain in its decentring, which has yet to make its entry into common consciousness, which can in any way subvert anything whatsoever.

Nevertheless, if I may be allowed to use all the same this reference described as Copernican, I would accentuate in it what is effective from the fact that it is not at all a change of centre that is at stake. That things turn continues to preserve its whole value, however justified, reduced it may be, when all is said and done, to this starting point that the Earth turns, and that, from this fact it seems to us that it is the celestial spheres that turn. It continues well and truly to turn and it has all sorts of effects. Which means that all the same it is indeed in years that you count your age.

If subversion has existed somewhere and at a moment, it does not at all consist in having changed the journeying point of what turns. It is because of having substituted for 'things turn' a 'things fall': *ça tombe*.

The key point, as some people, all the same, had the idea of noticing, is not Copernicus, Kepler a little more, because of the fact that things do not turn in the same way. They turn in an ellipse. And already this is more energetic than a corrective to this function of centre: it is what is put in question.

What things fall towards is at a point of the ellipse called the focus. And at the symmetrical point, there is nothing.

This assuredly is an altogether essential corrective for this image of the centre. But 'things fall' only takes on, if I may express myself in this way, its weight, its subversive weight, and precisely in the fact that it is not simply changing the centre that makes it a revolution, because by preserving the centre, the revolution continues indefinitely; and precisely to return always to itself. The fact is that 'things fall' culminates in what? Very exactly at the following and nothing more than:

$$F = g / \frac{mm'}{d^2}$$

(where d is the distance that separates the two masses expressed by m and by m') and that what is expressed thus, namely, a force. A force inasmuch as any mass is susceptible, with respect to this force, to take on a certain acceleration. That it is entirely in this writing, in what is summarised in these five little letters written on the palm of your hand, with an additional figure as power – power to the square of the distance – and inversely proportional to the square of the distance. It is here, it is in this effect of the written, that there consists what is unwarrantedly attributed to Copernicus, in something which, precisely, tears us away from the function as such, the imaginary function, the imaginary function that nevertheless is grounded in the real, of revolution.

Stating this recalls no doubt, but also preludes, what it is important to underline. That what is produced, what is produced as such in the articulation of this new discourse which emerges as the discourse of the analyst, the discourse of analysis, is the following: it is that the foundation, the start is taken in the effect, as such, of what is involved in the signifier.

Far from it being admitted in a way by lived experience. Far from it being admitted as based on facts. What this signifier brings with it are its signified effects - starting from which there has been built up this structure. And I earlier recalled the degree to which,

throughout the ages, it seemed natural that a world should be constituted whose correlatives were this something beyond, which was being itself, being taken as eternal, theology. And that this world remains, in short, a conception. That's the word. A view, a look, an imaginary grasp, a world conceived as being the whole. (9) The whole with what it involves in terms of limit, however open it may be. And that there thus results this something which all the same remains strange. Namely, that someone, a One, a part of this world is, from the start, supposed to be able to get to know it, to find itself there in this state that one can call ex-sistence. For how could it otherwise support getting to know if, in a certain way, it was not ex-sistent?

It is indeed here that from all time there has been marked the oscillation, the impasse, the vacillation, that resulted from this cosmology, from this something that consisted in the admission of a world. Is there not in analytic discourse in so far as it is established from this quarter turn that I spoke about earlier, is there not something which, of itself, ought to introduce us to the fact that every maintaining, every upholding, every subsistence, every persistence of the world as such, is precisely what we are introduced to by this discourse? In fact this subsistence, this persistence ought, as such, to be abandoned.

Language is such, the tongue forged by philosophical discourse, language is such that at every instant, as you see, when I put forward anything whatsoever about what can be established from this analytic discourse, you note that at every moment I cannot but slip back into what? Into this world, into this supposition of a substance which, all the same, is impregnated with the function of being. And that to follow the line of analytic discourse tends towards nothing less than to break up again, to inflect, to mark by its own incurvation, and an incurvation which could not even be maintained as being that of lines of force, which produces as such

the flaw, the discontinuity, the rupture which suggests that we should see in the tongue what, when all is said and done, breaks it up so well that nothing seems to better constitute what may be the horizon of analytic discourse. This use made by mathematics, this use made of the letter, as being singularly what, on the one hand (10) reveals in discourse what not by chance is called grammar, the thing in language which is only revealed by the written – but it is not either, except by chance, it is also not without necessity. The fact is, the fact is that if grammar is what is only revealed in language by the written, it is because beyond language this effect, this effect which is produced by being supported by writing *alone*, which is assuredly the ideal of mathematics, this is something around which what is involved in language is revealed. Namely, that to set one's face in any way against the reference to writing, is also to prohibit for oneself what of all the effects of language, can manage to be articulated. And to be articulated in this something that we cannot make not to result from language, namely, something supposed on its hither side and beyond.

It is already enough for these spatial references to be evoked for them to be in a way required. In supposing a hither side we clearly sense that this is only an intuitive reference. And nevertheless we know well that language is distinguished by the fact that in its signified effect it is never anything precisely but *to one side of the signifier*. That what is required, what we must discipline ourselves to, is to substitute for this requirement provoked by language, the requirement of being. The radical grasp, the admission from the start that with regard to being we have nothing, ever, but to write it otherwise than as *par-être* [para-being]. Not *paraître* [to appear] as has been said from all time, the phenomenon, beyond which there is supposed to be this something which God knows leads us. It has in effect led us to all these opacities which are named precisely obscurantism. That it is in the very paradox of everything that comes to be formulated as effect of the written of language, that it is

at the very point that these paradoxes spring up, that being is presented, and is never presented except as *par-être*. We should learn, when all is said and done, to conjugate, to conjugate appropriately: *je par-suis, tu par-es, il par-est, nous par-sommes*...and so on.

Well then, all of this introduces us, introduces us to this statement which, if you can indeed admit it, if you give the stress that this new (11) spelling, with all its consequences, all the morphological consequences that we must be able to assume, in this new conjugation that I am proposing to you. It is indeed starting from there that there must be taken up what is at stake in what also finds itself in a relation of *par-être*, of being to one side. Of being *para* with respect to this sexual relationship of which it is clear that in everything that approaches it, language only manifests itself by its inadequacy. It is indeed with respect to this *par-être* that what supplies for this relationship *qua* inexistent, it is indeed in this relationship *par-être* that we should articulate what supplies for it, namely, precisely love.

It is really fabulous that the function of the other, of the other as locus of the truth, and in a word of the only place, even though an irreducible one, that we can give to the term of Divine Being, of God to call him by his name. God is properly the locus where, if you will allow me the term, there is produced the *dieu*, the *dieur*, the *dire*, for a trifle, *dire* gives us *Dieu*.

As long as something is said, the God hypothesis will be there. And it is precisely as trying to say something that there is defined the fact that, in short, there can be no true atheists other than theologians. Namely, those who speak about God. There is no other means to be so, except to hide your head in your hands because of some fear or other, as if this God had ever effectively manifested any presence whatsoever.

On the other hand, it is impossible to say anything whatsoever without immediately making Him subsist even if only in the form of the Other, of the Other also described as the truth.

This is something that is quite obvious in the slightest movement of this thing that I detest, and that I detest for the best of reasons, namely History. History being very precisely designed to give us the idea that it has some sort of meaning. Whereas the first thing we have to do is to start from what we have when faced with a saying, which is the saying of another, who tells us about his (12) stupidities, his embarrassments, his impediments, his dismay? And that this is what it is a matter of reading. It is a matter of reading, it is a matter of reading what? It is a matter of reading nothing other than the effects of these sayings (*dirés*). And we clearly see the way in which these effects agitate, stir up, worry, speaking beings. And of course for this to result in something it must be of use. And it must be of use, good God to making things work out, to accommodating things, to ensuring that limping and hobbling, is that not so, they manage all the same to give a little shadow of life to this feeling described as love.

It must be, it must indeed be, it must be that this still lasts. Namely, that by the intermediary of this feeling something is produced that when all is said and done, as has been very well seen by people who have taken their precautions with respect to all of that, like that, under the protection of the Church, that this results in reproduction. In the reproduction of what? In the reproduction of bodies. But might it not be, not be sensed, not be touched by one's finger that language has other effects than leading people by the nose to reproduce themselves again (*encore*)? Body to body and, like that, in an incarnated body.

There is something all the same which is another effect of this language, which is precisely the written.

There is all the same something among its characteristics - if I dare to express myself in this way – that is worth raising, which is that since language has existed, we have seen mutations in writing.

What is written is not easy to say. What is written is the letter, and the letter, good God, is not always fabricated in the same way. So then, around this, people construct history, the history of writing. People rack their brains in imagining what the Mayan or Aztec pictographs might have been used for, and then a bit further back the pebbles of the Mas-d'Azil, in short, what could these funny dice be, what did they play at with them?

(13) All of that, since it is usually the function of history, it must above all be said: do not touch the h (*hache*), the initial of History, it would be a good way to bring people back to the first of the letters, the one to which I limit myself. I always remain at the letter A. It is moreover quite clear that the Bible only begins with the letter B, it left the letter A to me, huh! So that I could take charge of it!

There is a lot to be learned here, not in carrying out research on the pebbles of the Mas-d'Azil, nor even in doing what I do like that, for my dear audience, at one time, an audience of analysts, a good while ago. I explained the unary trait, the notch, that was within their range of understanding. But it would be better to look more closely at what mathematicians do with letters, and specifically since in contempt of a certain number of things, and in the most well grounded way, they set about, in the name of set theory, noticing that one could approach the One in a way other than intuitive, fusional, loving, in short. *We are but one*. Everyone knows, of course that it has never happened that two have never become one, is that not so. But anyway, *we are but one*.

It is from here that this idea of love starts, it is truly the crudest way of giving to this term, to this term which manifestly slips away from the sexual relationship, its signified.

The beginning of wisdom ought to be to begin to realise that this is how old father Freud opened up paths, all the same. It is all the same very nice, very striking. It is from there that I started because, like that, it touched me a little bit myself. It might touch anyone at all moreover, is that not so, to realise that if the foundation of love has a relationship with the One, it has very exactly the result of never making anyone come out of himself. If that is what it is, it is all that and nothing but that, he said, is that not so. Once he introduced the function of narcissistic love, everyone was able to sense that the problem was how there could be a love for another. (14) And that it is quite clear that this One, that is on everyone's lips, is first of all and essentially in its nature a kind of mirage of the One that you believe you are. But anyway this is not all the same to say that this is the whole of the horizon and to know that there are as many Ones as you like.

When I say: there are as many Ones as you like, I do not mean that there are as many individuals as you like. Because that means nothing, it is simply counting. There are as many Ones, as One, the Ones of the first hypothesis of *Parmenides*, these Ones are characterised by in no way resembling each other.

What constitutes the irruption, the intrusion of set theory, is precisely to posit that. Let us speak about the One, in that what is at stake are things which have strictly no relationship with each another. Namely, let us put into it what are called objects of thinking or objects of the world, all of that, each counts as one and if we assemble these absolutely heteroclite things we give ourselves the right to designate this collection (*assemblage*) by a letter. This

is how it is expressed, at the beginning of set theory, for example, by the one whom the last time I put forward under the title of Nicolas Bourbaki.

You pass over the fact that I said – as moreover is written, as is published, as is published in the aforesaid *Theory of sets* – that the letter *designates* a collection.

This is precisely, even though the authors – since, as you know, they are many – the authors who have ended up by giving their assent to the definitive edition of the aforesaid theory, are careful about saying that they designate collections. But it is here precisely that there lies their timidity and at the same time their error. The letter is the only thing that makes these collections. The letter, the letters *are* and do not simply designate these collections and *qua* letters they are taken up as functioning, like (*comme*) the collections themselves.

You see that by still preserving this *like* I am staying within the order of what I put forward when I said that the unconscious is structured *like* a language. This *like* is very precisely, I always (15) come back to it, thought of as saying, not saying that the unconscious is structured by a language. It is structured *like* the collections that are at stake in set theory, are *like* a letter. And this is what is at stake when we advance into mathematical utterance. What role does it play? What support can we take in it in order to read, to read inasmuch as there are letters, to only read, to only read letters, to read what is at stake when we take language as being what functions to supply for the absence of what is precisely the only part of the real that cannot manage to be formed in letters, namely, the sexual relationship?

It is in the very operation, the very operation of mathematical writing, that we have to find, as I might say, the orientation point

towards which we have to direct ourselves in order that from this practice, from this new social bond that emerges and spreads in a singular way, and which is called analytic discourse, to draw what one can draw from it as regards the very function of this language. Of this language in which we trust in short, in order that this discourse should have effects that are no doubt average but sufficiently tolerable, for this discourse to be able to support and complete the other discourses.

We will have the opportunity to see, since for some time it is clear that university discourse is written differently and that it ought to be *uni vers Cythère* [united towards Cytheris?], that it ought to spread sexual education. We are going to see how this is going to be done, what the result will be, and we must above all not create an obstacle to it.

The very idea of the point of knowledge is posed very exactly in the authoritarian situation of the semblance. That from this point something may be diffused which has as an effect ameliorating, as one might say, the relationship between the sexes is something which is assuredly designed, for an analyst, to provoke a smile. But after all who knows?

(16) As I have already said, the angel's smile is the most stupid of smiles, and one should thus never boast about it. But very assuredly it is clear that this very idea, that the demonstration, as I might say, on the blackboard of something related to sexual education is certainly not designed, from the point of view of the discourse of the analyst, to appear full of the promise of good encounters, or of happiness, as they say.

There is something all the same which, in my *Ecrits*, shows as I might say, that my correct orientation, since it is of this that I am trying to convince you, does not date from today or yesterday. It

was all the same, on the morrow of a war when nothing obviously seemed to promise glorious tomorrows that I wrote something called *Logical time and the assertion of anticipated certainty* in which one can all the same very very clearly read if one writes, not simply if one has a good ear, that the function of haste is the function of this little \mathfrak{o} , $t(a,t)$. I mean that what is at stake which would deserve to be looked at more closely is not simply something which is already very, very articulated, is it. Namely, a little riddle linked to the fact that for three people there are three white discs and two black, one less. That things are played out in fact, and that in this subjective extrapolation, which ensures that, in appearance, the moment of seeing, the moment of seeing two whites, the person who does not know what he is and who knows that the two others, in any case, each one can see himself as they are, namely white. And with that, if perchance they thought they were black and that the one who is originally thinking was so himself, will know very clearly, with that, that he is white. There is here something by which I simply highlighted the fact that something like an intersubjectivity can lead to a salutary outcome, but which would deserve assuredly to be looked at more closely. Very specifically at the level of what supports each of the subjects, not as being one among the others, but of being with respect to the two others the one who is the stake in their thinking. Namely, very precisely that each only intervenes in this threesome under the heading precisely of this little \mathfrak{o} -object that he is under the look of the others.

(17) This is what I will no doubt have the opportunity of emphasising in what I later put forward.

In other words, they are three but in reality they are two plus \mathfrak{o} , and it is indeed because this two plus \mathfrak{o} , at the point of \mathfrak{o} , is reduced not to two others but to a One plus \mathfrak{o} . You know that in this regard I have already used these functions to try to represent for you the inadequacy of the relationship of the One to the Other which I

already did by giving to this little **o**, as a support, the irrational number which is the number described as *the golden number*. It is in so far as from the small **o**, the two others are taken as One + **o**, that there functions this something that can end up with a hasty exit.

This function of identification which is produced in a ternary articulation, is one that is grounded on the fact , that in no case can two as such hold up as a support, that between two whatever they may be, there is always the One and the Other, the One and the little **o**, and that the Other cannot in any case be taken for a One.

It is very precisely in this that in the written, something, something is played out. Starting from this brutal thing, takes as One all the ones you want. That the impasses that are revealed thereby are by themselves a possible access for us to this being, a possible reduction of the function of this being in love (*de cet être dans l'amour*).

It is with this, with this that I want to end on this term by which there is differentiated the sign from the signifier. The signifier, as I have said, is characterised by the fact of representing a subject for another signifier.

What is at stake in the sign?

For all time the cosmic theory of knowledge, the conception of the world has noted the famous example of the smoke that is not there without fire.

(18) And why would I not put forward here the way it seems to me? The fact is that smoke can also be the sign of the smoker. And not simply moreover the sign of the smoker but that it always is so in essence. That there is no smoke except as a sign of the smoker.

And everyone knows that if you see smoke when you are approaching a desert island, you will right away say to yourself that there is every chance that there is someone there who knows how to make fire. And until further notice, it will be another man.

This sign, this sign in so far as the sign is not the sign of something but is the sign of an effect that is supposed as such from a functioning of the signifier. Which is what Freud teaches us and which is the start, the start as such of analytic discourse. Namely, that the subject is nothing other, whether he is or is not conscious of what signifier he is the effect, is nothing other as such than what slips along a chain of signifiers.

He is nothing other than this effect, the intermediary effect, intermediary between what characterises a signifier and another signifier, it is the fact that each is One, that each is an element. We know nothing, we know no other support in short, by which the One can be introduced into the world, except the signifier as such, and inasmuch as we learn to separate it from its signified effects.

What then is aimed at, is aimed at in love is the subject. The subject as such, in so far as he is sup-posed to a sentence, articulated to something which is ordered, can be ordered in terms of a whole life, but what we aim at in love, is a subject and it is nothing else. A subject, as such, does not have very much to do with enjoyment. But on the other hand, in the measure that his sign, his sign is something that is liable to provoke desire, there is the mainspring of love and through that the difficult journey that we will try to continue on the next occasions, in order to show you where love and sexual enjoyment meet up again.

Seminar 6: Wednesday 13 February 1973

All the needs of the speaking being are contaminated by the fact of being implicated in *another satisfaction* – underline these three words - that they may default on - the aforesaid needs, I mean.

How can that happen? This first sentence that, good God as I woke up this morning, I put on paper, like that, so that you could write it down. This first sentence hangs on the opposition of needs, if in fact this term, which as you know people often resort to, can be grasped all that easily; since after all it can only be grasped by defaulting on what I have put forward as this *other satisfaction*.

The other satisfaction – you should all the same understand – is indeed what is satisfied at the level of the unconscious, and in as far as something is said there, and is only said there if it is indeed true that it is structured like a language.

I am taking up here, I mean at a certain distance from what I have been referring to for some time, namely, the enjoyment on which there depends this *other satisfaction*, the one supported by language.

If – like that, in short, in the interval, in the interval between the phases of what I state here - you happen, anyway, you might happen, it might even have been indicated to you by echoes that you might have had of the fact that in treating of – it is a long time ago,

it is a very long time ago, '58 - '59 – *The ethics of psychoanalysis*, I (2) designated, in short, what I was insisting on by starting from nothing less than Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. That can be read; there is only one misfortune for a certain number here, which is that it cannot be read in French. It is obviously untranslatable. I was able to confirm this, I did not suspect it up to the present, by having sent to me a copy - while I was in the mountains - in having sent to me a copy that someone was able to find for me thanks to something or other that happens in the publishing world. Publishers enrage me, this is not a reason for me not to give them publicity by talking about it, precisely, about the reason they enrage me. As it happens this is not what enraged me at all. It was just a translation which, of course, had served me, me among others, because you should not believe that I read Greek easily, so then the translation, when it is on a facing page, gives a little support does it not? Yeah! Anyway in brief, Garnier previously had something which was able to make me believe that there was a translation by someone called Voillequin, or Voilquin, I don't know how it's pronounced. He is a university person, obviously. That is not his fault! It is not his fault if Greek cannot be translated into French! In any case, because of having this got translation by itself, for some time things have been condensed in such a way that Garnier – which moreover has joined up with Flammarion – yeah!, Garnier no longer gives you anything but the French text. Ouch! So then when you read that, there is no way of extricating yourself. It is properly speaking unintelligible. Yeah!

All art and all research, me, I don't know, I am beginning, huh, *like all action and all reflected deliberation...* what relationship between these four things, anyway good!...*tend it seems towards some good. Thus people have sometimes been perfectly right to define (3) the good: that to which one tends in all circumstances.* Nevertheless – and this is very out of place, not having yet been

spoken about - ...*it clearly seems that there is a difference between ends.*

I defy anyone to disentangle himself from this text without abundant commentaries. Those that cannot but genuflect, and, I assure you, always very painfully, to the Greek text to illuminate this thick mass, which nevertheless it is all the same impossible to think is so simply because it comes from badly taken notes. People have gone that far, of course, because there comes, there come like that, with time some fireflies into the mind of commentators. They come to the idea that if they are forced to go to so much trouble, there is perhaps in short a reason for that! It is not at all necessary that Aristotle should be unthinkable. I will come back to it.

For my part, what I had written, in the form of what was typed up, what was written about what I had said about ethics seemed more than usable to the very people who precisely at that very moment were busying themselves with making me, with designating me to the attention of the *Internationale de Psychanalyse*, with the result that is well known. But at the same time, it would have been a very good thing if from all of that there had all the same survived these few reflections about what analysis involved in terms of ethics. It would have been in a way all gain! I would have gone plop! And then the *Ethics of psychoanalysis* would have stayed afloat.

This is an example – things must always be studied carefully – an example of the fact that calculation is not enough. Because for my part I prevented this *Ethics of psychoanalysis* from appearing. I refused, simply, with the idea that, good God, that I for my part am not going to try to convince people who want nothing to do with me. One must not convince (*convaincre*). What is proper to psychoanalysis is not to conquer, *con* or not!

It was all the same not at all a bad seminar. Taking everything into account and because it had already been written out once, due to the (4) care of someone who did not at all participate in the earlier calculations, who for his part had done that like that, straightforwardly, clear as silver, wholeheartedly. He had for his part, then, made a writing of it, a writing of his own. He was not at all dreaming, moreover, of course, of robbing it from me. He would have published it if I had wanted. Good! But then I did not want. But this does not prevent it being perhaps of all the seminars, the only one that I would rewrite myself; and of which I would make an *écrit*. I should really do one of them, no? Why not choose that one?

Good! You see that what I am trying, what must be done, is all the same – let us say: there is no reason not to put oneself to the test. To see something like that, for example, how Freud, in positing certain terms, as he could, thinking about what he had discovered, how others had seen this terrain before him. This is what I say: a further proof, a different way of experiencing what is at stake. The fact is that this terrain is only thinkable thanks to the instruments with which one operates, and that the only instrument by which we can see testimony being conveyed, well, is writings. It is quite clear, it is made tangible by a very simple test, that even in reading it in the French translation, you will understand nothing about the *Nicomachean Ethics*, of course, any more than what I say, but it is enough all the same! You will see that Aristotle is no more comprehensible than what I tell you and that he is indeed rather less so, because he stirs up more things, and things which are farther away from us. But it is clear that this *other satisfaction* of which I spoke just now, well then, it is exactly the one that can be located because it emerges from what? Well, my good friends, it is impossible to escape from it if you set about confronting the matter: the universals: the Good, the True, the Beautiful.

That there should be these three significations, specifications, gives a touching aspect to the approach that certain texts make to it; those which derive from an authorised thinking – I say *authorised* with the meaning, in quotes, that I give this term – bequeathed with an (5) author's name. There are certain texts that come to us from something that I look at twice before calling it a *very ancient culture*, because it is clear that it is not culture. Culture *qua* distinct from society, does not exist. Culture is precisely that ancient thing, is that not so, that we no longer have on our backs except in the form of vermin. Because we do not know what to do with it except to get ourselves deloused. But I advise you to keep it, because it tickles you and it wakes you up. This will wake up your feelings which tend rather to become a little brutalised under the influence of surrounding circumstances, namely, of what the others, who come after, will call your culture. Culture! Culture which will have become for them culture! Because for a long time you will have been six feet under. Down below. With everything that you support in terms of social bonds. Because when all is said and done there is nothing but that: this social bond that I designate by the term discourse. Because there is no other means of designating it once it has been glimpsed that the social bond is only established by being anchored in a certain way that language is imprinted, is situated, is situated on what the place is teeming with; namely, the speaking being.

We should not be astonished, we should not be astonished that previous discourses – and then there will be others – previous discourses are no longer thinkable for us, or only with great difficulty. I mean, when all is said and done, just as the discourse that I am trying to bring to light is not, like that, immediately accessible to you when you hear it; from where we are at it is not very easy either to understand Aristotle's discourse. But is this a reason for it not to be thinkable? It is quite clear that it is so. It is simply that, when we imagine, in short, that Aristotle means

something, we should trouble ourselves about what he is circumscribing. Because after all, what he encompasses, what he catches in his net, in his network, what he draws out, what he handles, what he is dealing with, what he is struggling with, what is he sustaining, what is he supporting, what is he working at, what is he pursuing?

(6) But obviously after all, what I just read for you earlier, these first four lines, you clearly understand the words, you clearly suppose that it means something, like that, something or other, naturally. But *all art or all research, all action*...all, all of that, what do each one of these words mean? It is all the same because he produced a lot of them afterwards, and then because this comes to us in a printed form after having been written for a long time, that one supposes that there is something that offers a grip in the middle of all of that. And it is indeed from the moment that we ask ourselves the question, the only one: in what way did things like that satisfy them? It doesn't matter what they were used for at that time. We know that it was passed on. That there were volumes of Aristotle. That confuses us all the same. And very precisely in this: *in what way did this satisfy them* is only translatable in this way: *in what way might there have been a lack (faute) of a certain enjoyment?* In other words: why, in a text like this, why did he worry himself like that?

You have heard correctly: *faute, défaut*, something that isn't working, something that skids away from what is manifestly aimed at, and then it immediately begins like that, at the beginning, the Good and Happiness: *du bi, du bien, du benêt!*

Reality is approached by systems (*appareils*) of enjoyment.

Here again is a formula that I am proposing to you, as long as we centre ourselves clearly on the fact that there is no other system than

that of language. This indeed is how in the speaking being enjoyment is decked out. And this is what Freud says. Naturally if we correct this statement, which is the one that I am going to come to later, to grapple with it, namely, that of the pleasure principle, what it means, why he said it like that? He said it like that because (7) there were others who had spoken before him and that it was the way that seemed most audible for him. It is very easy to map out when all is said and done. And this conjunction between Aristotle and Freud helps in this mapping out.

If I push further to the point that it can now be done, if the unconscious is indeed what I say; structured like a language, namely, that starting from there, this language is illuminated no doubt by positing itself as a system of enjoyment. But inversely, enjoyment also. Perhaps in itself also it shows that it is in default; that in order for it to be like that, there must be something lame on its side.

What did I tell you? Reality is tackled with that, with the systems of enjoyment. And yes! That does not mean that enjoyment is prior to reality. Here again is a point where Freud lent himself to misunderstanding somewhere. And you will find in what is classified in French in the *Essais de Psychanalyse* - I am telling you that so that you can find your bearings, because if I simply give you the bibliographical co-ordinates, you would not even know where it is; it is in the *Essais de Psychanalyse*. There is something that resembles, that resembles the idea of a development, is there not, and that there is a *Lust-Ich* before a *Real-Ich*. This is a slippage. It is slipping back into a rut. This rut that I call development, and which is nothing but, nothing but a hypothesis of mastery. The baby supposedly has nothing to do with the *Real-Ich*, poor kid, incapable of having the slightest idea of what the real is, this is reserved for the people that we know, for these adults of whom moreover it is explicitly said that they can never manage to wake up. Namely, that

when they come in their dream something that might threaten to pass into the real, that disturbs them so much that they wake up immediately. Namely, they continue to dream! It is enough to read. It is enough to be a little bit with it. It is enough to see them living. It is enough to have them in psychoanalysis.....yeah! To realise what is meant then by development.

Yes....when one says *primary* and *secondary* processes there is (8) perhaps there a way of saying things that gives rise to an illusion. In any case let us say that it is not because a process is described as *primary* – you can after all call them whatever you wish – that it is the first to appear. In my own case, I never looked at a baby with the feeling that there was no outside world for him. It is quite obvious that that is all he looks at, and that obviously it excites him. And this, good God, in the exact proportion that he does not yet speak. Starting from the time that he speaks, well then, starting from that very time very exactly, not before, I understand that there is repression. The process is perhaps *primary*, belongs to the *Lust-Ich*, and why not? It is obviously *primary* once we begin to think. But it is certainly not first.

This idea of development is confused with what? With the development of mastery, as I said earlier. Here is where one must all the same have a little bit, anyway, a little bit of an ear, like for music, I am master/being (*je sui m'être*). I make progress in mastery/being, development is when one becomes more and more master – I am master/being of myself, as of the Universe – this indeed is what I was speaking about earlier, in terms of *con-vaincu*. The Universe, starting a bit from certain little lights, that I tried to give you, the Universe, the Universe is a flower of rhetoric. So then that might perhaps help you to understand, with this literary echo that the ego may also be a flower....A flower of rhetoric, no doubt, which grows from the pot of the pleasure principle. From what Freud calls *Lustprinzip*, and from what I define as what is satisfied

by blah-blah-blah. For this is what I am saying when I say that the unconscious is structured like a language. I have to dot the i's.

The Universe, you may perhaps all the same now realise because of the way I stressed the use of certain words, their different application in the two sexes, namely, what I stressed in terms of the all and the not-all; the Universe is where, by saying all, succeeds.

(9) Yeah! Am I going to set about doing a William James here? Succeeds in what? The answer, thanks to the point at which with time, I have ended up by making you come to – or I hope I have ended up by making you come to it. Succeeds in making the sexual relationship fail in the male way.

Normally, I should be getting some derisive laughter here. Alas, nothing of the kind! The derisive laughter would mean: *Ah, so now you're caught: two ways of missing it, this affair, the sexual relationship!* This is how the music of the epithalamium is modulated. The epithalamium, the duet – because you must all the same distinguish the duet of dialogue – alternation, the love letter, is not the sexual relationship. They turn around the fact that there is no sexual relationship.

That there should be then the male way of turning around it, and then the other that I am not designating otherwise, because this is what I am in the process of elaborating this year. Namely, how that is elaborated in the female way, from the not-all. Only since up to now that has not been explored very much, the not-all, this is obviously what is giving me a little trouble.

On that, I am going to tell you a good one to amuse you a little. Yeah! It is that, in the middle of my winter sports, I believed I should travel to Milan in order to keep my word. I was only an hour of rapid flying time as the crow flies from Milan – by rail, it

took a whole day to get there. Anyway, I was in Milan, and since I can never let things go, that's the way I am, you understand, I said that I would refer to *The ethics of psychoanalysis*. But since I was drawing it out anew, I could not remain at the point that I am at in it, so that I had given this absolutely mad title for a lecture to the Milanese who had never tell of that, *Psychoanalysis with reference (10) to the sexual relationship*. Well they are very intelligent. They understood it so well that immediately, that very evening, in the paper, there was written: *For Dr Lacan, ladies, le donne, do not exist!*

It's true, what do you expect. If the sexual relationship does not exist, well then, there are no ladies either, huh! One person was furious, a woman from their women's liberation movement there. And I even had to explain it to them! And I took care to explain to them – there was in any case one of them who was truly....Ah yes! I said to her: *Come along tomorrow morning, I will explain to you what it is about! I will explain to you what it is about, that this is precisely what I am talking about!*

I am trying to elaborate what is involved in this affair of the sexual relationship starting from the fact that if there is a point from which this might be illuminated, since precisely there is something there that is not joined up, it is precisely on the ladies side inasmuch that what is at stake is the elaboration of the not-all; that it is a matter of opening up the path. Which is my true subject this year – behind this *Encore*, which is... anyway there you are! One of the senses of which, and that I am trying, *encore*, and after others, that means, it is perhaps along a different path that I will manage to bring out something that is not altogether what has come out up to the present about feminine sexuality. Because all the same it is very interesting. It is even striking that, that if there is one thing in any case that gives a brilliant testimony of this not-all, with one of these nuances, one of these oscillations of meaning that are produced,

because the tongue, ought all the same get us used to that. You see that this not-all changes meaning, when I say to you: *Our women analyst colleagues, do not tell us all (elles ne nous disent pas tout) about feminine sexuality*. It is all the same very striking! Because it cannot be said that they have advanced the question the slightest bit. I am talking about feminine sexuality. They have no more reasons than the others not to know a bit about it. There must be a more internal reason for that, linked precisely to this structure of the (11) system of enjoyment.

Good, so then to come back to what I brought up all alone as an objection to myself. Namely, that, if there was a male way of failing (*rater*) and then an other – I am talking about failing the sexual relationship which is the only way of realising it if, as I posit, there is no sexual relationship. So then, when I say that saying all succeeds, huh, this does not prevent not saying all from succeeding also on condition that it is in the same way, namely, that it fails. It is not a matter of analysing how it succeeds; *it is a matter of repeating until you have slaked your thirst why it fails*. Why it fails is objective. I already insisted on it. It is even so striking that it is objective, that it is on it that we must centre, in analytic discourse, what is involved in the object. *It is* the object. It is not worth the trouble, as I have already said for a long time, to go looking for the good and the bad object, and how they differ. The object is neither good... There is the good, there is the bad, oh là là! Precisely today I am trying to start from it, huh! From what concerns the good (*le bon*), the good (*le bien*), and what Freud states. But the object, is a failure. Failure is the essence of the object. You will note, huh, that I spoke about the essence, huh, just like Aristotle. So what? That means that these old words are quite usable.

Anyway, at a period when I was marking time less than today, this is the very thing that I turned to immediately after Aristotle. I said that if there was something that had cleared the air a little after all

this Greek marking time around *eudemonism* - that means happiness, quite simply, it can be translated – if something had pulled them out of that, it was the discovery of utilitarianism. This did not affect the listeners that I had then in one way or another, because they had never heard tell of utilitarianism. So that they (12) could not be mistaken and they could not believe that it meant having recourse to the useful. I explained to them what utilitarianism was in Bentham's terms, namely, not at all what is believed, and that for that one must read the *Theory, Theory of fictions*. And that utilitarianism means nothing other than that: the fact that the old words – that is what is at stake – those that already serve, well then, it is what they are used for that one must think about. Nothing more. And not be astonished at the result when one uses them. We know what they are used for: that there should be the enjoyment that is required (*qu'il faut*) – if you have been following me up to now. Except thanks to something that – I cannot all the same always recall everything – from what I stressed about the equivocation between *faillir* and *falloir*, this leads us to translate *that there should be an enjoyment that is required/fails* by *that there should be an enjoyment that is not required/fails*.

Yes, I am teaching here something positive, as they say. Except that it is expressed by a negation. And why would that not be as positive as anything else? The necessary, what I propose stress for you in this style, that which does not cease to what? Well then precisely, to be written. It is a very good way to distribute at least four modal categories. I will explain that to you another time, but I am giving a little bit more of it this time. What does not cease not being written, is a modal category which is precisely not the one that you would have expected to be opposed to the necessary. Which would have been rather the contingent: but picture to yourselves that the necessary is conjugated to the impossible. And this *does not cease not to be written*, is the articulation of it. But let's leave it.

The necessary in so far as it does not cease to be written, the fact is that what is produced, is the enjoyment that is not required/failed. This is the correlate of the fact that there is no sexual relationship. And it is the substantial of the phallic function.

(13) So then now I take it up at the level of the text. It is the enjoyment *that is not required/fails* that I believed I could call conditional. This suggests to us, for it to be used, the protasis, and the apodosis. It is: if it were not for that, things would have gone better; conditional in the second part. Material implication, which the Stoics realised was perhaps what was most solid in logic.

Enjoyment then. How are we going to express what is not required/does not fail in its regard, if not by the following. If there were an enjoyment other than phallic – here, like that, so that you may not lose the thread, it's frightful but if I speak to you like that, since I took my notes this morning, you will lose the thread – if there were another one, it would not be required/failed that it should be this one. You must use, huh, you must use, but truly use, know how to use, use to the very limit things like that, these old words that are stupid as cabbages. That is utilitarianism. And it allowed a big step to be taken in disengaging from this old business of universals which people had been engaged with since Plato and Aristotle and which dragged on throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, and which still suffocated Leibniz to the point that we ask ourselves how he was so intelligent. Yes...

If there were another one, it should not be *this one*. Listen to that. What is designated by that, *this one*? Does it designate what is other in the sentence, or the one from which we started to designate this other as other? Because in short, if I say that, which is sustained at the level of material implication because in short the first part designates something false: *if there were another of them*;

there is no other of them than phallic enjoyment. Except that about which the woman does not breathe a word. Perhaps because she does not know it. That which makes her not-all in any case.

It is then false, huh, that there is another. Which does not prevent what follows from being true. Namely, that it must not be that one. (14) You know that it is quite correct, that when the true is deduced from the false, it is valid, the implication works. The only thing that cannot be admitted is that from the true there follows the false. Not badly made this logic! That the Stoics should have noticed this all by themselves, there was Chrysippus and then there was someone else who was not of the same opinion, but all the same! It must not be believed that these were things that had no relationship to enjoyment. It is enough to rehabilitate these terms. It is false then that there is another one, which will not prevent us from playing once more on the equivocation and starting not from *faillir* but from *faux*, and to say *it is not required that it should be that one*.

Suppose that there is another one, but precisely there is not, and, at the same time, it is not because there is not and that it is from this that there depends the *it is not required*, for the chopper to fall nonetheless on *well this one* which is not the other, that from which we started. It must be that *this one* is a *fault (faute)*, you should understand by that guilt, and the fault of the other, of the one *that is not*. Which opens up for us like that laterally, I am telling you this, like that, in passing, this little glimpse which has all its weight in a metaphysics. Cases can arise where it is not only we who go searching for something or other to reassure us in this manger of metaphysics. We can also, for our part, give something back to it. Well then even though not-being is not, it should all the same not be forgotten that at every instant, if what I have said about non-being is not, if this is set by the word against the account of being of which it is the *fault*, of which it is the fault that non-being is not – and it is quite true moreover, that it is its fault, because if being did not exist, we would be much more at ease with this question of non-being,

and to reproach it with that is then well merited, namely, that it is at fault.

That indeed is also why, if what I am spouting for you is indeed true, which enrages me occasion, which is what I started from – I suppose that you do not remember it – which is that when I forget myself (*je m'oublie*) to the point of publishing, namely, *poublier*, there is an *all* in that, well then I deserve to cop it. To put up with the fact that it is about me that people speak and not at all about my (15) book. Exactly as it happened – it is the same everywhere – at Milan where perhaps it was not quite about me that people were speaking when it was said that for me ladies did not exist, but it certainly was not about what I had just said.

After having giving this clarification let us come back to our Aristotle. That in short this enjoyment, this enjoyment, namely, that comes to the one who speaks, and not for nothing, it is because already, because it is a little premature, it has something to do with this famous sexual relationship which we will have only too many opportunities to realise does not exist, it is then more second, second rather than first, and in Freud there is a mark of this, there are traces of it, if he spoke about *Urverdrängung*, primal repression, it is indeed because precisely the true, the good, everyday repression, well then, precisely it is not first, it is second.

This aforesaid enjoyment is repressed because it is not appropriate that it should be said. And this for the precise reason that *the saying* of it can be nothing but the following: it is not suitable as enjoyment. What I already put forward earlier from this angle that it is not what is required/fails, that it is what is not required/does not fail.

Repression is only produced in order to attest in all these *sayings*, in the least of these *sayings*, what is implied by this saying that I have

just stated that enjoyment is not suitable, *non decet*. Is not suitable for what? For the sexual relationship in this sense that because it speaks, the aforesaid enjoyment, for its part, the sexual relationship, is not. That indeed is why, that it does, that it does better to keep silent, with the result that this renders the sexual relationship, in its very absence, a little heavier yet – or a little heavier (*lourde*) if it is the absence that is at stake.

(16) This indeed is why that, when all is said and done, it does not keep silent, and that the first effect of repression, is that it speaks about *something else*. And this is what constitutes the mainspring, as I have heavily indicated, this is what constitutes the mainspring of metaphor.

There you are. You see the relationship of all that with utility. It is utilitarian. It renders you capable of being of some use. This for want of knowing how to enjoy otherwise than being, than being enjoyed; or played with, since it is precisely the enjoyment *that is not required/does not fail*.

Well then, it is starting from there, it is starting from this step by step which made me today punctuate something essential, that we have to tackle – and I will leave you time for it, by taking my leave of you now – that we must tackle this illumination that Aristotle and Freud may take one from the other. And examine how there can be properly pinpointed, by criss-crossing one another, what Aristotle in Book VII of the aforesaid *Nicomachean Ethics*, poses the question of in connection with pleasure.

Since pleasure in this not uncertain way, the one that seems most sure to him by being referred to enjoyment, neither more nor less, he thinks, without any doubt, there is here something that cannot but be distinguished from need, these needs from which I started in my first sentence. Here it is a matter, he says, of what he frames in

terms of generation, namely, of what refers to movement. For him, Aristotle, movement, by reason of what he has put in the centre of his world, this world which has now forever gone down the tubes, what he put at the centre, the unmoved mover, it is in the line of what immediately follows, namely, the movement that this unmoved mover is able to cause, it is a little further away still as regards what is involved in what is born and what dies, what is engendered and what is corrupted, that needs of course are situated. (17) Needs are satisfied by movement. A strange thing, how does it happen that we should, from Freud's pen, precisely rediscover that in the articulation of what is involved in the pleasure principle? What equivocation ensures that in Freud, the pleasure principle is only evoked as what comes from excitation, and from the fact that this excitation provokes movement in order to get away from it? What a strange thing that it should be here that there comes from Freud's pen what must be translated by the pleasure principle when in Aristotle, assuredly, there is something there that can only be considered as an attenuation of pain, but surely not as a pleasure.

If Aristotle comes to pinpoint somewhere what is involved in pleasure, this can only be in what he calls, and what can only be translated in French as an activity, what he calls *energeia* and on this occasion again are there not only selected things that he can promote to this function of illuminating what is involved in pleasure.

A very strange thing. A very strange thing, the examples that he gives of it – and of course not without some coherence – are sight – this is for him where the supreme pleasure resides and at the same time the one that he distinguishes from the level where he places *genesis*, the generation of something, which he rejects from the heart, from the centre, of pure pleasure. There is no need for pain to precede the fact that we see, in order for seeing to be a pleasure.

It is amusing that when the question is put on this footing, put on this path, posited like that, he must – refer again to Book VII – put forward what? What French cannot translate otherwise, for lack, for lack of a word that is not equivocal, as smelling (*odor*). Here, Aristotle puts on the same plane smell – which is strange – smell and vision. And there is a lively sense of the diversity of the thing, and also that pleasure, however opposed this second seems to the first, pleasure finds itself supported by it. And he adds thirdly: hearing.

Since we are coming very close to quarter to, I can indeed begin, not to leave as a riddle for you the remark that by advancing along this path, but do you not recognise that along this path of which after all we must already have taken the step that I told you about earlier of seeing that enjoyment is centrally referred to the fact *that it is not required, that it will not fail (qu'il ne faut pas, qu'il ne faudrait pas)* in order for there to be a sexual relationship, but which rests entirely attached to it, something that arises from the point, from the pinpointing with which Aristotle designates it, but what? It is very exactly what analytic experience allows us to locate as being from at least one side of sexual identification, the male side, to name it; what is located as being precisely the object. The object which puts itself at the place of what cannot be glimpsed of the Other. It is in as far as the *o*-object plays somewhere and from one simple starting point, that of the male, the role of what comes at the place of the missing partner, and that there is constituted – but what? That which we are used to seeing arise also at the place of the real, namely, phantasy. But I almost regret having, in this way, said enough about it, which always means to have said too much. Since if one does not see the difference, the radical difference between what happens on the other side, namely, starting from – I cannot say the woman, since precisely what I will try to state the next time in a way that will hold up, which holds up and is complete enough for you to be able to tolerate the time that it

will subsequently take before we deal with it again, namely, a fortnight - that on the side of the woman, but mark this *the* with this oblique stroke with which I designate, every time I have the opportunity, what should be barred. Starting from The woman, it is something other than the o-object, I will state it for you the next time, that is at stake in what comes to supply for this sexual relationship not to be.

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Seminar 7: Wednesday 20 February 1973

I may well admit to you that I had hoped that the school vacation would have thinned out this audience. For a long time I have wanted to talk to you like that, by walking a little bit among you; this would facilitate certain things, it seems to me. But anyway, since this satisfaction is refused me, I come back to what I started from the last time, what I called *an other satisfaction*, this satisfaction of the word. *An other satisfaction*, the one, I repeat, this is the beginning of what I said the last time, the one that corresponds to the enjoyment that had to be just right (*juste*). Just right for it to happen between what I will abbreviate by calling them the man and the woman, and which is phallic enjoyment.

Note here the modification that the word *juste* introduces. This *juste*, this just is a just barely, just barely successful. Which, I think, you are sensitive to as giving precisely the reverse side of failed: it just barely succeeds.

And already here we are inclined by this - since the last time, at least I hope so, the majority of you were here and know that I started from Aristotle - to see justified what Aristotle contributed about the notion of justice as the happy medium (*juste milieu*). Perhaps some of you saw, when I introduced this *all* which is in the just barely (*tout juste*), that I took a roundabout path – Hello! - a roundabout path in order to avoid the word prosdiorism, which designates precisely this *all*, this *some* on occasion, which no tongue lacks.

That it should be the prosdiorism, *all*, which on this occasion has made us slip from Aristotle's *justice* to *justesse*, to the *just barely* successful, makes it legitimate for me to have first of all brought in Aristotle, because of the fact that it is not understood immediately like that. That, in fine, if Aristotle is not so easily understood by reason of the distance that separates us from him, this is something that justified me as far as I am concerned in saying to you that reading is not at all something that obliges us to comprehend. The reading must come first. This indeed is why today, perhaps, in a way that will appear paradoxical to some of you I am going to advise you to read a book about which the least that can be said, is that it concerns me. This book is called: *The title of the letter (Le titre de la lettre)*. It was published by Galilée, in the collection *A la lettre*.

I will not tell you the authors who seem to me on this occasion be rather playing the role of second fiddles, but this is not for all that to diminish their work. Because I would say that in my own regard it was with the greatest satisfaction that I read it. And it is in short a test to which I would want to subject this audience, rather than to recommend, to trumpet, the publication of such and such a book. This book, written in short with the worst of intentions, which you can only see in the last thirty or so pages, is all the same a book whose diffusion I could not encourage too much.

I can say that in a certain way, if it is a matter of reading, I have never been so well read, to the point of being able to say that, from a certain point of view I could say: with such love.

Naturally, as is proved by the end of the book, it is a love of which the least that one can say is that its habitual lining in analytic theory should be recalled. I think that that would be going too far. Then perhaps it is even saying too much to involve the subjects in it in any whatsoever. To evoke their feelings would perhaps be here to recognise them too much as subjects. It is a model of good reading. To the point that I can say I regret never having obtained from those who are close to me anything that, to my eyes, is equivalent.

(3) The authors – because all the same I have to designate them – thought they should limit themselves – and good God why not compliment them on this, since the condition of a reading, is obviously that it should be in place, that it should impose limits on itself – they attached themselves to my article, to this article collected in my *Ecrits* which is called *The agency of the letter*. I mean that to punctuate for example what distinguishes me from what may be understood about Saussure – I say no more – what distinguishes me from him, what brings it about that I, as they say, misappropriated him, could not be put better. And so this leads, little by little, to this impasse which is indeed the one that I designate concerning what is involved in discourse, in the analytic discourse, in terms of its approach to the truth and of its paradoxes. This no doubt is something where at the end, something or other, and I have no other way to fathom it, something or other escapes those who have taken this extraordinary work. Everything happens then as if it were precisely at the impasse that my whole discourse is designed to lead them to, that they think they are quits. That they declare themselves – or declare me, which comes back to the same thing – to be confused at the point that they have got to in it.

Precisely, it is here that I think it is altogether appropriate that you should yourselves affront, I underline it, the conclusions which you will see that after all can be described as offhanded. Up to these conclusions, the work proceeds in a way that I can only recognise as having an illuminating, enlightening, value that is altogether gripping.

If perchance this could thin out your ranks a little, given what I started with, I would only see advantages as far as I am concerned. But after all I am not sure, because why, since you are always just as numerous here, why would I not have confidence that assuredly nothing in the end would discourage you.

Up to these last twenty or thirty pages – I did not count them because in truth these are the only ones that I read diagonally – the others will be a (4) comfort that after all I can but wish for you.

With this, what I have to tell you today, is indeed what I announced to you the last time, namely, to push further along what is involved with respect to what I ended on. Namely, the consequences of what I believed, not certainly without having journeyed for a long time for all that, of what I believed I should state as regards what there is between the sexes – between the sexes in the case of the speaking being – which does not constitute a relationship. And how, in short, it is only starting from there that there can be stated what it is that supplies for this relationship.

On this for a long time I have punctuated with a certain *there is something of the One (y a de l'Un)* what constitutes the first step in this approach.

This *there is something of the One*, make no mistake, is not simple. Of course, in psychoanalysis, or more exactly, since it should be clearly said, in Freud's discourse, this is announced about Eros.

About Eros defined as a fusion, of that which from two makes one. And starting from there, good God, step by step, it is supposed to tend to make but one from an immense multitude. In return for which - since it is clear, that as many as you all are here, a multitude assuredly, not only do you not make one, but have no chance, even when communing, as they say, in my word, of getting there, as is only too well proved every day – Freud must indeed bring out this other factor which acts as an obstacle to this universal Eros in the form of Thanatos, the return to dust.

This is obviously something Freud is metaphorically allowed, thanks to this blessed discovery of two units of the germ, this ovum and this spermatozoon of which, roughly speaking, one could say that it is from their fusion that there is engendered what? A new being. And (5) moreover by limiting oneself to two elements that are joined in marriage, except for the fact that it is quite clear that in looking at things more closely, it does not happen without a meiosis, without a quite manifest subtraction, at least for one of the two. I mean just before the very moment the conjunction occurs, the subtraction of certain elements which, of course, do not count for nothing in the final operation.

But the biological metaphor is assuredly here much less than elsewhere, enough to comfort us. If the unconscious is indeed what I say by being structured like a language, it is at the level of the tongue that we must examine this One. This One to which of course subsequent centuries gave an echo, an infinite resonance. Do I need to recall here the Neo-Platonists and all the rest? Perhaps I will later have to mention again very rapidly this adventure, since what I have to do today, is very properly to designate from where the matter not alone can but ought to be taken up from our discourse. From this new discourse, from this renewal that there contributes in the domain of Eros what our experience contributes.

We must begin from the fact that this *there is something of the One* is to be taken with the stress *that there is something of the One*, but precisely, since there is no relationship, *that there is something of the One*, and of the One all alone. That it is from here that there is grasped the core of what is involved as regards what, after all, we have to call by the name with which it echoes right throughout the centuries, namely, that of love.

In analysis, we deal with nothing but that. And it is not, it is not along any other path that it operates. A singular path: in that it alone has allowed there to be separated out that with which I who am speaking to you believed I could support it. I mean this transference, and specifically in so far as it is not distinguished from love, with the formula: *the subject supposed to know*.

And there, I think that right through what today I am going to have to state, in everything that follows, I cannot fail to mark the new resonance that this term knowledge may take on for you. Perhaps even, (6) in what you saw me wavering, retreating about tipping over in one direction or another, that of love or of what again is called hate, think that in short, since, as you have noted, what I explicitly invited you to take part in, namely, a reading, whose point is explicitly designed in order, let us say, to discredit me, which is certainly not something before which someone who only speaks in short about desideration and who aims at nothing else, can retreat. That in short, what this point is aimed at, or more exactly appears to the authors to sustain, is precisely a *de-supposition* of my knowledge. And why not? Why not if it proves that this has to be the condition of what I called reading? What do I know, after all, what can I presume about what Aristotle knew? Perhaps I would read him better in the measure that I presumed he had less knowledge. Such is the condition of a strict putting to the test of reading. And this is the one that, in short, I am not dodging.

It is certainly difficult, it is not in conformity with what in fact is offered to us to read by what exists in terms of language, namely what is woven as an effect of its being cut up. You know that this is how I define the written. It would, it seems to me, be disdainful, not at least to go through or give an echo of what throughout the ages and in a thinking which was called, I must say wrongly, philosophical, of what, in the course of the ages was elaborated about love.

Here, I am not going to carry out a general review. But I think that, given the type of faces that I see dotted around here, you ought all the same to have heard tell that from the side of philosophy, the love of God, in this business, has held a certain place. And that there is here a massive fact which, at least laterally, analytic discourse cannot but take into account.

Like that, some well intentioned people – these are much worse than (7) those who are badly so – well intentioned people when, as is said somewhere in this booklet, I was, according to what is written there, excluded from Sainte-Anne. I was not excluded, I withdrew, it is very different, but anyway what matter, we are no longer at that point, all the more since the terms *excluded*, *to exclude* have all their importance in our topology. Well intentioned people found themselves in short surprised at hearing an echo – it was only an echo – but since these persons were, good God, it must be said, from the pure philosophical tradition, and amongst those who appealed to it – this indeed is why I call it pure – there is nothing more philosophical than materialism. And materialism believes it is obliged, God knows why, make no mistake, to be on its guard against this God of whom I said that he has dominated, in philosophy, the whole debate about love.

The least that one can say is that a certain embarrassment - given the bridge, the springboard, the maintaining for me of an audience,

that was offered me because of this warm intervention – [was caused by] the fact that I was putting between the man and the woman a certain Other, with a capital O, in which there was according to those who were the voluntary conveyors of this echo, a certain Other who indeed seemed to be the same good old God.

For my part, it seems tangible to me that as regards this good old God, this Other, this Other put forward at that time, at the time then of *The agency of the letter*, this Other put forward at that time as locus of the word, can only be inscribed in truth. This Other was all the same a way – I cannot even say of laicising - of exorcising this good old God. But what matter! After all who knows? There are lots of people who compliment me, in one or other of the last or second last seminars, for having been able to posit that God does not exist. Obviously, they hear. They hear but alas, they comprehend. And what they comprehend is a little precipitate.

So today I am going rather to show you how precisely this good old (8) God exists. The style in which he exists will not perhaps please altogether everyone, and especially not the theologians who are, as I have been saying for a long time, much more capable than I am of doing without his existence. Unfortunately, I am not altogether in the same position. Because precisely I deal with the Other. And that this Other, this Other who, if there is only one of them, all alone, must indeed have some relationship to what then appears in terms of the other sex; this Other, I am indeed forced to take it into account, and everyone knows that after all, I did not refuse in the same year that I evoked the last time, of *The ethics of psychoanalysis*, to refer to courtly love.

What is courtly love? It was this kind, this highly refined way of supplying for the absence of the sexual relationship, by feigning that it is we who are setting an obstacle to it. It is truly the most

formidable thing that has ever been attempted. But how can one expose its feint?

Naturally, I am passing over the fact that, that for materialists, it would be a magnificent way, instead of being there wavering about the paradox that it should have appeared at the Feudal epoch, to see on the contrary how it is rooted, how it comes from the discourse of fealty, of fidelity to the person, and in a word, to the final term, of what is always the person, namely, the discourse of the master. It would be the most splendid way of seeing how it was necessary for the man to whom the lady was entirely enslaved in the most servile sense, how it was the only way to escape from it with elegance in terms of what is at stake and which is its foundation, namely, the absence of the sexual relationship.

But anyway I will have to deal – I will take it up later, today I must split open a certain field – I will have to deal with this notion of obstacle which, in Aristotle – because despite everything I prefer all the same Aristotle to Jaufré Rudel – what in Aristotle is precisely called the obstacle, *enstasis*.

My readers, my readers whose book, I repeat for you, you must all go (9) out and buy later, my readers even found that. Namely, that the agency that they examined with a care, a precaution, I tell you, I have never seen a single one of my pupils doing such a work, alas! No one will ever take seriously what I write; except of course those of whom I earlier said, like that, incidentally, that they hated me on the pretext that they have de-supposed me of knowledge, what matter! Yes! They went as far as to discover *enstasis*, the Aristotelian logical obstacle that I had reserved as a treat for this *Agency of the letter*. It is true that they do not see the relationship. But they put it into a note. But they are so used to working, especially when something animates them, the desire for example of

obtaining a Masters, it is more than ever appropriate to put it that way, they also produced that.

Where is it? Where is *ekstasis*? Shit! It's murder! Again I can't find the page at the moment when I have to produce it for you! Good, wait! There you are! There you are, pages 29, 28 and 29, after that you can read, you can read after that the piece of the *Rhetoric* and the two fragments of the *Topics* which will allow you to immediately understand, to know clearly what I mean, what I mean when I will reread Aristotle and more exactly when I will try to reintegrate into Aristotle my four formulae, you know them,..... and all the rest.

Anyway, why should the materialists, as they say, become indignant that, like always, I even put, why not, God as a third party in the business of human love? I suppose that it even happens that materialists, all the same, get to know something about the *ménage à trois*, no?

So then let us try to advance. Let us try to advance about what results from this step that has to be taken. In its regard, in any case, nothing indicates that I do not know what I still have to say, at this level, here, where I am speaking to you. The least that I can say, is to be at least, in short, able at least to suppose, that I have made you admit, at least to (10) admit that I admit, that as regards what concerns being – because the shift in this book, the shift that is opened up from the start, and is pursued to the end, is that not so, is to suppose that I, and with that you can do anything, is to suppose that I have an ontology or, what comes down to the same thing: a system. Honesty all the same ensures that, in the circular diagram where supposedly there is tied together what I put forward about *The agency of the letter* - it is in dotted lines, quite correctly, because they carry little weight – there are put, enveloping, enveloping all my statements, the names of the principal

philosophers into whose general ontology I am supposed to insert my so-called system. Well then for me, let us say, there can be no ambiguity that, at least as regards what I articulated these last years, this being, as it is sustained in the philosophical tradition, namely, which is based in the thinking that is itself supposed to be its correlate, that to this, very precisely, I oppose that, in this very affair, we are the playthings of enjoyment. That thinking is enjoyment, that what analytic discourse contributes, is something that was already initiated in the 'philosophy' of being, namely, that there is enjoyment of being. I would even say more: if I spoke to you about the Nicomachean *Ethics*, it is precisely because the trace is there. What Aristotle is seeking, and what opened the path to everything that he subsequently drew along after him, is what this enjoyment of being is. From which a Saint Thomas would subsequently have no trouble in forging this theory, as it is called, as Abbé Rousselot, about whom I spoke the last time, calls it, as Abbé Rousselot calls it: the physical theory of love. Namely, that after all, the first being of which we have a sense, well it is our being: and that everything that is for the good of our being will be, by this fact, enjoyment of the Supreme Being, namely, of God. That in loving God, in a word, it is ourselves that we love. And that in first loving ourselves – well ordered charity, as they say – we pay appropriate homage to God.

To this, what I oppose as being, is, if people want me at all costs to use (11) this term, what this little volume bears witness to, what it is forced to bear witness to, from the first pages of its reading, simply reading, is namely, the being of significance (*significance*). And the being of significance, I do not see how I am falling below the *ideals*, the *ideals*, I say, because it is altogether outside the limits of the blueprint of materialism, altogether outside the limits of its blueprint, in recognising that the reason for this being of significance is enjoyment in so far as it is enjoyment of the body.

Only a body, you understand, ever since Democritus, does not seem materialist enough, huh! One has to find the atoms, and all the rest, vision, smell and all the rest; all that is absolutely solidary. It is not for nothing that on occasion, Aristotle, even if he acts disgusted, quotes Democritus, he relies on him.

The atom, is simply an element of flying significance. It is quite simply a *stoicheion*; except for the fact that one has all the trouble in the world getting out of it when one only retains what makes the element an element, is that not so, namely, that it is unique. While one should introduce a little bit of the Other, namely, difference. Good!

If there is no sexual relationship, we would have to see how the enjoyment of the body can be of use to it. It seems to me that I already punctuated – I am pressed for time – it seems to me that I have already punctuated that to take things from the side where it is logically that the quantor \forall , namely: *all x*, is a function, a mathematical function of \forall of x, namely, on the side where one ranges oneself, in short, by choice! Women are free to rank themselves there also if they want to, huh! Everyone knows that, that there are phallic women! It is clear that the phallic function does not prevent men from being homosexuals. But that it is also, indeed, what allows them to situate themselves as man and to approach the woman.

Since what I have to talk about is something different, about The woman, precisely – I am going quickly because I presume I have already sufficiently dinned it in for you to still have it in your heads – I say that unless there is castration, namely, something that says *no* to this phallic function – and God knows that it is not so simple – there is *no chance* for the man to enjoy the body of the woman. In other words, to make love. This is the result of analytic experience. That does not prevent him desiring her in every way. Even when

this condition is not realised. Not only does he desire her, but he does all sorts of things to her that resemble love in an astonishing way.

Contrary to what Freud puts forward, it is the man – I mean the one who finds himself male without knowing what to do about it, while at the same time being a speaking being – who approaches the woman, as they say, who can even *believe* that he approaches her. Because in this regard, huh, the convictions of which I spoke the last time, the *con-victions* are not lacking. Only what he approaches, because this is the cause of his desire, is what I designated as the little *o*-object. This is precisely the act of love. *To make love*, as the name indicates, is *poetry*. But there is a world between poetry and act. The act of love, is the polymorphous perversion of the male. In the case of the speaking being, there is nothing more assured, more coherent, more strict as far as Freudian discourse is concerned.

Since I still have a half-hour to try to introduce you – if I dare express myself in this way – it is what is involved on the side of the woman. So then, it is one of two things, either what I write has no meaning – this is the conclusion of this little book and this is why I beg you to consult it – or when I write the following: $\bar{}$, which is read as a function, as an unusual, unwritten, function I must say, even in the logic of quantors, namely, the bar, the negation being brought to bear on the *not-all* and not on the function. When I say the following: that there is ranked – if I may express myself thus – there is ranked under the banner of women some speaking being or other, it is starting from the fact that it is only grounded by being *not-all*, and as such, ranked (13) with the phallic function.

This is what defines the...wait there, huh! The...the...the...the what? The woman precisely. Except for the fact that The woman – let us give her a capital T while we are at it, that would be nice –

except for the fact that The woman can only be written by barring The. There is no, *the woman*, the definite article to designate the universal. There is no *The woman* since – I already risked this term, and why would I think twice about it? – since, of her essence, she is not *not-all* (*elle n'est pas-toute*).

So that, to accentuate something to which I see my pupils much less attached when they read me than the slightest second fiddle when he is animated by the desire of getting a Masters. There is not a single one of my pupils who does not produce some sort of mess about, about something or other, the lack of the signifier, the signifier of the lack of the signifier, and other nonsense about the phallus. While I am designating for you in this The, the signifier – after all current and even indispensable, the proof is that earlier I spoke about the man and *the woman*. It is indispensable that this The should be a signifier, that it is by this The that I symbolise the signifier. The signifier with which it is altogether indispensable to mark the place which cannot be left empty because of the fact that this The is the signifier whose characteristic is that it is the only one *that can signify nothing*. But this simply by grounding the status of The woman in the fact that she is *not-all*, which does not allow the woman to be talked about.

But on the other hand, if there is no woman, as I might say, who is not excluded, in the nature of things, which is the nature of words – it must indeed be said that what I put forward here, all the same, can be said. Because if there is something that they themselves complain enough about at the moment, it is indeed that, huh! Good! Simply they do not know what they are saying. That is the whole difference between them and me!

If there is then no woman who is not excluded by the nature of things as The woman, it nevertheless remains that if she is excluded by the (14) nature of things, it is precisely because of the fact that

by being *not-all*, she makes sure as The woman of the fact that, with respect to what I designate as the enjoyment of the phallic function they have, as I might say, a *supplementary* enjoyment. You will note that I said *supplementary*; because if I had said *complementary*, huh, where would we be?! We would fall back again into the all.

They do not abide, none of them abide, being *not-all*, with respect to the enjoyment that is at stake, all the same, and my God, in a general fashion, we would be quite wrong all the same, not to see that, contrary to what is said, it is all the same women who possess men, no? At the working class level – and that is why I never speak, in short truly, except from time to time, probably, anyway I must talk drivel like everyone else, but anyway in general I say important things - and when I note that the working class call, for my part I know what I am talking about! They are not necessarily here, huh, but I know quite a few of them! Working class people call the woman the boss (*la bourgeoise*) that indeed is what this means. The fact is that as regards being at someone's beck and call, he is the one who is so, not her.

So then the phallus, *her* man as she says, and since Rabelais we know that this is not indifferent to her! Only this is the whole question: she has different ways of approaching this phallus and of keeping it for herself. And even that this works, because it is not because she is *not-all* in the phallic function that she is *not in it at all*. She is in it not *not at all*. She is fully into it. But there is something more (*en plus*). This more, pay attention, beware of accepting echoes of it too quickly. I cannot designate it better nor otherwise because I have to decide and go quickly.

There is an enjoyment – because we are confining ourselves to enjoyment, enjoyment of the body – there is an enjoyment which is – if I can express myself in this way because after all, why not make a book title out of it? It is for the next one in the Galilée collection:

beyond the phallus. Wouldn't that be sweet, huh! And then it would give a different consistency to the Women's Liberation Movement! An enjoyment beyond the phallus, huh!

(15) If you have not already noticed that – I am speaking naturally here to the few semblances of men that I see here and there. Luckily for the most part I do not know them, that way I am not prejudging in any way, because as regards the others... There is something that perhaps the few semblances of men in question may have noticed like that, from time to time, for a brief moment, that there is something that shakes them (*les secoue*) or that helps them (*les secourt*). And then when you also look at the etymology of these two words in this famous Bloch et Von Wartburg that I delight in and that I am sure that not all of you have in your library, you would see the relationship between *secouer* and *secourir*. These are not things that happen by chance all the same! There is an enjoyment, let us say the word, of her own (*à elle*), of this *her* who does not exist, who does not signify anything. There is an enjoyment, there is an enjoyment for her *of which perhaps she herself knows nothing*; except that she experiences it. She knows that. She knows it, of course, when it happens. It does not happen to all of them.

But anyway, on the subject of this so-called frigidity after all, consideration must be given to the style also, and to relationships between men and women. It is very important. Since of course, all of that, as in courtly love, is, alas, in Freud's discourse, covered over by, covered over, like that, by minute considerations that have worked havoc, just like in courtly love. All sorts of minute considerations on clitoral enjoyment, on the enjoyment that we call as best we can, the other precisely, the one that I am in the process of trying to get you to tackle along the logical path. Because until further notice, there is no other one.

There is one thing certain, and which leaves all the same, for some time, some chance for me to advance, that the woman, for her part, knows nothing about this enjoyment. The fact is that ever since the time all the same that they have been begged, that they have been begged on bended knee – and I spoke the last time about women psychoanalysts – to try all the same to tell us, to approach that, well (16) then mum's the word! We have never been able to get anything out of them. So then we call it as best we can *vaginal*, the posterior pole of the uterine orifice and other stupidities (*conneries*), make no mistake! But after all what if she simply experienced it, and if she knew nothing about it? That would also allow us to throw a lot of doubt, there, on this frigidity of which I spoke earlier, which is also a theme! A literary theme. It would be worth the trouble all the same for one to dwell on it, because, imagine, since these few days, there, that I am spending – anyway these few days! I have been doing nothing but that since I was twenty years old, anyway let us pass on, in exploring the philosophers on this subject of love. Naturally, I did not immediately centre that on this business of love, but anyway it came to me at a time, with precisely Abbé Rousselot of whom I spoke to you earlier, and then the whole quarrel about physical love and ecstatic love as they call it. I can understand that Gilson did not find this opposition to be a very good one. He found that Rousselot had perhaps here made a discovery which was not really one, that that was part of the problem. That love is just as ecstatic in Aristotle as in Saint Bernard on condition that one knows how to read the chapters on *philia* – on friendship. You cannot imagine – still yes, you cannot imagine, that depends, there are some here, who ought to know all the same – what literary debauchery has been produced around that. Denys de Rougemont, you know what that is, *Love in the western world*, it really goes at it! And then there's another one, which is no more stupid than the next, who is called Nygren, a Protestant, *Eros and Agape*. Anyway! It is true, it is true, naturally people ended up in Christianity by inventing a God. That it is He who enjoys!

There is all the same a little bridge, a bridge. When you read certain serious people, as it happens they are women. I am going to give you all the same an indication of it, which I owe, like that, to a very nice person who had read it and who brought it to me. I threw myself into it! Ah! I have to write it out, otherwise it would be of no use to you and you would not buy it. Moreover you would buy it less easily than (17) the book about me that has just appeared. You will buy it less easily because I believe it is out of print. But anyway you will perhaps manage to find it. It took a lot of trouble to get it for me it is Hadewijch d'Anvers. She is a Beguine. Namely, what is called very prettily like that a mystic. I do not use the word mystic the way Péguy used it. Mysticism is not everything that is not politics! Mysticism is something serious. There are some people, and precisely, most of them women, or else gifted people, like St John of the Cross – because one is not obliged, to put oneself on the side of . One can also put oneself on the side of the *not-all*. There are men who are just as good as women. That happens! And who at the same time find themselves just as happy about it. They glimpse, let us say, despite - I did not say despite their phallus – despite what encumbers them under that heading, they experience the idea that somewhere, there might be an enjoyment which is beyond. These are what are called mystics. And if you read this Hadewijch, whose name I don't know how to pronounce, but anyway someone here who knows Dutch will explain it to me, I hope later, if you read this Hadewijch – I already spoke about other people who were not so bad either on the mystical side, but who situated themselves rather there on the side of what I said earlier, namely, on the side of the phallic function. Angelus Silesius, all the same, despite everything, in short, by dint of confusing his contemplative eye with the eye with which God looks on him, it is all the same a bit funny, this must all the same form part of perverse enjoyment. But for the Hadewijch in question, for Saint Theresa! Anyway, let us say the word all the

same, and then what's more you only have to go to look, in a certain church in Rome, at the statue by Bernini to understand immediately, in short what! That she is having an orgasm (*qu'elle jouit*), there is no doubt about it! And what is she enjoying? It is clear that the essential testimony of the mystic, is precisely to say that: that they experience it but that they do not know anything about it.

So here, like that, to end, what I propose to you, what I propose to you, (18) is that thanks to this little clearing of the way, something will bear fruit, will *just barely* succeed, in terms of what was attempted at the end of the last century, in Freud's time precisely. What was attempted was to bring back this thing that I would not at all call chit-chat nor verbiage, all these mystical jaculations which are in short some of the best things one can read – right at the bottom of the page, put a note: *add to these the Ecrits of Jacques Lacan*, because they are of the same order.

As a result of which, naturally, you are all going to be convinced that I believe in God. I believe in the enjoyment of The woman in so far as it is *more*, on condition that you put a screen in front of this more until I have explained it properly.

In fact all they were seeking, all these honest people in the entourage of anyone at all, of Charcot and others, in order to explain that mysticism, was all about fucking. But the fact is that if you look closely at it, it is not that, not that, not that at all. This is perhaps what ought to make us glimpse what is involved in the Other, this enjoyment that is experienced of which one knows nothing. But is this not what puts us on the path of ex-sistence? And why not interpret *one face* of the Other, the face of God since it was from that, through that that I tackled the business earlier, a face of God as supported by feminine enjoyment?

Since all of this happens thanks to the being of significance and since this being has no other locus than this locus of the Other that I designate with a capital O, we see the cockeyed nature of what is produced. And since it is there also that there is inscribed the function of the father in so far as it is to it that castration is referred, we see then that this does not give two Gods but that it does not make a single one either. In other words, it is not by chance that Kierkegaard discovered existence in a seducer's little adventure. It is by castrating himself, it is by renouncing love that he thinks he can accede to it. But perhaps after all, why not, perhaps Regine for her part also existed. It is perhaps through the intermediary of Regine that he had the dimension of this (19) desire for a second degree good that for its part is not caused by a small o.

Seminar 8: Wednesday 13 March 1973

After what I have just put on the board for you, you may think that you know everything. You have to be careful about that; precisely because today we are going to try to talk about knowledge. About this knowledge that, in the

inscription of the discourses, those by which I believed I was able to exemplify for you as supporting the social bond, in this inscription of the discourses, I put, I wrote S_2 to symbolise this knowledge.

Perhaps I will manage to make you sense why, why this goes further than a secondarity with respect to the pure signifier, that inscribed as S_1 , that it is more than a secondarity, that it is a fundamental disarticulation.

In any case, since I have taken the option of giving you the support of this inscription on the board, I am going to comment on it - briefly I hope. Moreover I have not, I must admit, written it anywhere, prepared it anywhere.

It does not appear to me to be exemplary; except, as usual, in (2) producing misunderstandings.

Nevertheless, because in short of the situation that results from a discourse like the analytic one, which aims at meaning (*sens*), I can quite clearly only deliver to each of you the amount of meaning that you are on the way to absorbing, and this has a limit. It has a limit that is given by the meaning in which you live, and which, one can well say, it is not too much to say that this does not go far. What analytic discourse gives rise to is precisely the idea that this meaning is a semblance. If analytic discourse indicates, if it indicates that this meaning is sexual, this can only be, precisely, by, I would say, giving an explanation for its limit. There is nowhere any kind of last word, except in the sense – *mot* is *motus* [word is mum] as I already insisted – *no response, keep mum*, la Fontaine says somewhere, if I still remember it. Meaning indicates very precisely the direction towards which it runs aground.

This having been posited, which ought to make you beware, up to the point to which I may be able to push my elucidation of it this year, of comprehending too quickly what is supported by this inscription, starting from there, namely having taken all prudent precautions, *phronesis*, as it is put in the Greek tongue where many things were said that have remained far, in short, from what analytic discourse allows us to articulate. Having taken then these prudent precautions, here is more or less what is written on the board: the recalling of propositional terms, in the mathematical sense, by which any speaking being whatsoever is inscribed on the left or indeed on the right. This inscription being dominated by the fact that on the left, on the left what corresponds to *all men* – – is in function of what is described as x , that it takes on its inscription as *all*; except for the fact that this function finds its limit in the existence of an x by which the

function x is denied: . This is what is called the function of the father from which there proceeds, in short, by this negation of the proposition , what grounds the exercise of what supplies for the sexual relationship inasmuch as this can in no way be inscribed, what supplies for it by castration.

The *all* is based here then on the exception posited as the limit to (3) what wholly denies this x .

On the other hand, opposite, you have the inscription of something that, for a part of speaking beings, and moreover for every speaking being as is explicitly formulated in Freudian theory, for every human being it is permitted, whatever he may be, provided or not with attributes of masculinity, attributes that remain to be determined, provided or not with these attributes, he can inscribe himself in the other part, and, what he inscribes himself as, is precisely not to allow any universality, to be this *not all* inasmuch as he has, in short, the choice of positing himself in x , or indeed of not being of it.

Such are the only possible definitions of the part described as man or indeed as woman in what finds itself being in this position of inhabiting language.

Underneath, under the bar, the transversal bar where there is crossed the vertical division of what is wrongly called *humanity* in so far as it is supposed to be divided into sexual identifications, you have the indication, the indication punctuated about what is at stake, namely that at the place of the sexual partner on the side of the man, of this man that I have, not certainly to privilege him in any way, inscribed here with the S barred – the \$ - and with this that supports him as a signifier; this , which moreover is incarnated in this S_1 by being, among all the signifiers, the one that paradoxically has only played the role of function, in the x , is precisely this signifier of which there is no signified. Which as regards meaning (*sens*), symbolises its failure, its *mésens*, which is the *in-désens* par excellence or, if you wish again, the *réti-sens*. This S thus redoubled by the signifier on which in short it does not even depend, this S never deals as a partner except with this *little o-object* inscribed as such on the other side of the bar. It is not given to him to reach this partner, this partner which is the Other, the Other with a capital O, except through the mediation of something which is the cause of his desire, but only under this heading, as is moreover indicated in my graph by the conjunction highlighted between this S barred - \$ - and this little *o*, which is nothing other than the phantasy. This phantasy moreover also constitutes for this subject, in so far as he is caught up in it as such,

(4) the support of what is explicitly called in Freudian theory, the reality principle.

What I am tackling this year is very precisely something that the theory, the theoretical articulation of Freud, is very specifically something that in Freud is left to one side. Is left to one side in an acknowledged way, the *was will das Weib?* ‘What does the woman want?’ Which Freud’s theory, as such, explicitly acknowledges it does not know. Freud puts forward that there is only masculine libido. What does that mean, if not that a field which all the same is not negligible, that of all the beings, as they say, by assuming as one might say and in so far as this being assumes anything whatsoever about its destiny, what is wrongly called – since here I remind you, what I underlined the last time, is that this *The* of *The woman* from the moment that it is stated only from a *not-all*, cannot be written, that there can only be here a *The* that is barred – *The*. This barred *The*, explicitly, is related – and this is what I will illustrate for you today, at least I hope so – to this signifier of *O qua* barred – \emptyset – in so far as this locus of the Other itself, where there has been inscribed everything that can be articulated in terms of signifier is, in its foundation, of its nature, so radically Other, that it is this Other that must be examined. Whether it is not simply this locus where truth stammers, but whether it deserves in a way to represent that to which, like the last time and in a way that was somewhat metaphorical, I put this to you, that from the start, from the start at which the unconscious is articulated, *The woman*, *The woman* since we assuredly only have sporadic testimonies of it, that is why the last time I took them up in their function of metaphor, *The woman* has, fundamentally, this relationship to the Other of only being in the sexual relationship, with respect to what is stated, to what can be said about the unconscious, radically the Other, she is related to this Other, and this is what today I would like to attempt to articulate more closely. It is to the signifier of this Other, in so far as, as Other, I would say, cannot but always remain Other, assuredly, we can only proceed here by as difficult an (5) opening up as is possible to apprehend any one of them. And that is why, taking my risks as I always do each time before you, I can but suppose here that you will recall - for that, I must remind you of it - that there is no Other of the Other, and that that is the reason why this signifier, opened up by this parenthesis, marks this Other as barred: $S(\emptyset)$.

How then can we approach, imagine, that this relationship to the Other might be, somewhere, what determines that half – since moreover it is roughly the biological proportion – that half of speaking beings refer themselves to it? This is nevertheless what is written here on the board by this arrow starting from the *The*,

from this The that cannot say itself. Nothing can be said about The woman. The woman has a relationship, a relationship with this S of O barred – $S(\emptyset)$ – on the one hand – and it is already in this respect that she is reduplicated, that she is *not-all* since on the other hand she can have this relationship with this capital that in analytic theory we designate by this phallus that I specify as being the signifier. The signifier which does not have a signified. The very one that is supported, that is supported in the case of man by this enjoyment of which, in order to point it up, I will say, I will put forward today that what best symbolises it, what is it after all, if not something that the importance of masturbation sufficiently underlines in our practice, what is it, except something which is nothing other, in what I might call favourable cases, than the enjoyment of the idiot?

After that, to help you recover, it only remains for me to talk to you about love. What meaning may it have, what meaning is there in the fact that I have come to the point of speaking to you about love?

I should tell you that it is not very compatible with the position from which here I am stating for you...

...What's happening? Is something wrong? And like that, is it better? Is it better like that? Can those at the back hear?

- No!

(6) ... this is not very compatible, I was saying, with what it must be said, for some time I have not ceased pursuing it, namely, this direction from which analytic discourse may give a semblance of something which is *supposed to be science*. Because in short this supposed to be science, is something that you are very little aware of. Naturally, you have some reference points. You know, I got into it, because I thought it was a good stage for you to locate it in history, you know that there was a moment at which people, not without foundation, were able to award this guarantee that scientific discourse was well grounded. I sufficiently insisted, it seems to me, on the Galilean turning point to assume that at the very least some of you, have gone back to the sources, where this can be located, to the work of Alexandre Koyré, since the time, I think, at least given the experience of a part of this assembly.

But what is important to see, is the point to which it is a step, a really subversive step with regard to what, up to then, had been entitled knowledge. It is very difficult to sustain, to maintain equally present these two terms, namely, that scientific discourse generated all sorts of instruments that we must indeed from

the point of view that is at stake here, qualify by the fact that they are, all the 'gadgets' of which you are henceforth the subjects infinitely more than you might think, all their instruments which, good God, from the microscope to radio and television, is that not so, become elements, elements of your existence, something whose import you cannot at present even measure but which nevertheless form part of what I am calling the scientific discourse inasmuch as a discourse is what determines a form as such; a completely renewed form of social bond.

The connection that is not made is the following. It is that what I called earlier the *subversion of knowledge* is indicated by the fact that up to then, nothing about knowledge, it must be said, was conceived of without every little bit of what was written about this knowledge (7) participating – and one cannot even say that the subjects of the ancient theory of knowledge did not know it – without there being nothing of this theory I am saying, which did not participate in the phantasy of an inscription of the sexual bond.

The terms active and passive, for example, which, one can say, dominate everything that has been cogitated about the relationships of form and of matter, this so fundamental relationship to which there is referred every Platonic and then Aristotelian step concerning, let us say, what is involved in the nature of things. It is visible, it is tangible at each step of these statements, that what supports them is a phantasy by which an attempt is made to supply for what can in no way be said – this is what I am proposing to you as an expression (*dire*) – namely, the sexual relationship.

The strange thing is that all the same, within this crude polarity, that which makes matter passive, and form the agent that animates it, something, something ambiguous has happened, namely, that this animation is nothing other than this *little o* with which the agent animates what? It animates nothing. It takes the other as its soul. But that from another side, if we follow what progresses in the course of ages about the idea of a being *par excellence*, of a God which is very far from being conceived of as the God of Christian faith, since moreover, as you know, it is the unmoved mover, the supreme sphere, that in the idea that the Good is this something which ensures that all the beings less beings than it, can have no other aim than to be the most being they can be, and this is the whole foundation of the idea of the Good in this *Ethics* of Aristotle and it is not for nothing that I reminded you that not only had I treated it, but that I encouraged you to consult it in order to grasp its impasses. It turns out all the same that this something, if we follow the support given by the inscriptions on this board, what is revealed is that it is all the same in this opacity of that in which, the last time, I explicitly

designated the enjoyment of this Other, of this Other in so far as there could be, if she existed, the (8) woman, that it is at the place of the enjoyment of this Other that there is designated this mythical being, manifestly mythical in Aristotle, of the Supreme Being, of the unmoved sphere from which there proceed all movements whatever they may be: changes, generations, movements, translations, increases, etc.

How can we approach this ambiguity? Approach what in short? By interpreting it according to what our function is in analytic discourse, namely to record, to punctuate what can be said to be going, going towards failure in the formulation of the sexual relationship. That if we manage to dissociate the fact that it is in so far as her enjoyment is radically Other that in short The woman has a greater relationship to God than anything that can be said in following the path of what? Of what manifestly, in all the ancient speculation is only articulated as the good of man; if in other terms, we can, which is our goal, the goal of our teaching inasmuch as it pursues what can be said and stated about analytic discourse, it is by dissociating this *small o* from this O, by reducing the first to what is involved in the imaginary, and the other to what is involved in the symbolic. That the symbolic is the support of what became God, is beyond doubt. That what is involved in the imaginary, is what is supported by this reflection of fellow to fellow, is most certain.

How, in short, this *small o*, by being inscribed just below this S of barred O – S(Ø) – in our inscription on the board, could have been able up to a certain limit to lend itself in short to confusion? And this very exactly by means of the function of being, is assuredly where something as I might say remains to be detached. Remains to be split. And precisely at this point where psychoanalysis is something other than a psychology.

Psychology is this splitting that has not yet taken place. And here, to give myself a rest, I am going to allow myself, good God, to share with you, I am not saying to properly speaking read to you, because I am never sure about ever reading anything whatsoever, to read for (9) you all the same what I wrote to you some time ago, wrote precisely, wrote about what? Wrote from where alone one can speak about love. For we do nothing but speak of love in analytic discourse. And, after the discovery of scientific discourse, how can we not sense, put our finger on the fact that it is a waste of time? Very exactly a waste of time with respect to everything scientific that can be articulated; but that what analytic discourse contributes – and this is perhaps after all the reason for its emergence at a certain point of scientific discourse – is that to speak about love is in itself an

enjoyment. This assuredly is confirmed by this effect, tangible effect, that to say anything at all, which is the very watchword of the discourse of the analysand, is what leads to the *Lustprinzip*, and what leads there in the most direct way, and without there being any need for this accession to higher spheres which is the foundation of Aristotelian ethics inasmuch as I evoked it briefly for you earlier, in so far as in short it is only founded on the coalescence, on the merging of this *small o* with the capital S of O barred – S(Ø). It is only barred, of course, by us. That does not mean that it is enough to bar for nothing to exist of it. It is certain that if, by this S(Ø), I designate nothing other than the enjoyment of The woman, it is assuredly because here is where I highlight the fact that God has not yet made his exit.

So then here is more or less what I wrote for your use. In short, what was I writing to you? The only thing one can do that is a bit serious: a love letter.

The psychological presuppositions thanks to which all of this has lasted such a long time, well then, I am among those who do not accord them a good reputation. I cannot see nevertheless why the fact of having a soul should be a scandal for thought if it were true. If it (10) were true, the soul could only say itself – that is what I wrote to you – because of what allows a being, a speaking being to call it by its name, to put up with the intolerable in its world. Which presupposes that it is foreign to it, namely, phantastical. Which only esteems (*considère*) this soul here, in this world, by its patience and its courage in facing up to it. All of this is affirmed by the fact that right up to our time, the soul has never had any other meaning.

Well then, here is where French ought to bring me some help. Not that of homonymy as can happen sometimes in a tongue, as in *d'eux* with *deux*, or this *peut* with *peu*, *il peut peu*, which is all the same there to be of some kind of use to us, and it is here that the tongue can be of use. The soul, in French, at the point that I am at, I can only make use of it to say that it is what one souls (*qu'on âme*): *j'âme, tu âmes, il âme*. You see that here we can only use writing, even to the extent of including in it *jamais j'âmais* [I never souled/loved?].

The existence then of the soul, can certainly be put in question (*mise en cause*) – that is the proper term – by asking oneself whether it is not an effect of love. As long in effect as *l'âme âme l'âme*, there is no sex involved. Sex does not count in it. The development from which it results is *homo* –with two m's - *homosexuelle*, as is perfectly readable in history. And what I said earlier about this courage, about this patience in tolerating the world, is the true surety of what

makes someone like Aristotle end up in his search for the Good as being only able to be carried out by admitting the fact that in all the beings in the world, there is already enough internal being, if I can express myself in this way, that they can only orientate this being towards the greatest being by merging its good, its own good with the very one that the Supreme Being is supposed to radiate. That within this, he evokes *philia* for us as representing the possibility of a bond of love between two of these beings, is indeed something which by manifesting the tension towards the Supreme Being, can just as easily (11) be reversed from the way in which I expressed it. Namely, that it is in the courage to support this intolerable relation to the Supreme Being that friends, the *philoï*, recognise and choose one another. The outside-sex (*hors-sexe*) of this Ethics is manifest to the point that I would like to give it the accent that Maupassant gives it by announcing somewhere this strange term of *Horla*. The *outside-sex* is the man on whom the soul speculates. There you are!

But it turns out, it turns that women also are *âmoreuses*. Namely, that they *âment l'âme*. What indeed could be this soul that they *âment* in the partner, nevertheless *homo* to the hilt, and from which they will not get out? This can only in effect lead them to this ultimate term, and it is not for nothing that I describe it as such: *ysteron*, as it is put in Greek, of hysteria, in other words to play the man, as I have said. By being themselves, because of that *homosexuelles*, if I may express myself thus, or *hor-sexe*; it being difficult for them not to sense from then on the impasse that consists in the fact that they *mêment* themselves in the other. Because after all there is no need to know one is other in order to be so. Since where the soul finds itself to be, it is differentiated for its part from the woman and that from the very origin. She is *diffâmed*. The most notorious things that have remained in history about women, are properly speaking everything infamous that one can say about them. True she retains the honour of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi. But this is precisely what for us analysts – I do not need to speak about Cornelia about whom analysts scarcely think, but speak to an analyst about some Cornelia or other, and they will tell you that things will not work out very well for her children, the Gracchi they will be liars (*ils feront des gracques*) until the end of their existence.

That was the beginning of my letter, it was an *âmusement*! Yes....

Well then here of course I could have, I did it moreover, but I don't (12) have time, huh! I re-made an allusion to this courtly love; to this courtly love in which all the same, at the point that this *âmusement homosexuel* had got to, at the point that it had reached, had fallen into supreme decadence, into this kind of

impossible bad dream described as feudalism. At this level of political degeneration, it is obvious that something had to appear, and this something is precisely the perception that for the woman in this context, there was something that could no longer work in any way whatsoever.

So then the invention of courtly love, is not at all the fruit of what people are used, like that, in history, to symbolise by *thesis, antithesis, and synthesis*. There is of course not the slightest synthesis; there never is one. Everything that was seen after courtly love, is something that shone, like that, in history, like a meteor that remained completely enigmatic. And then after that, we saw returning all the bric-a-brac of a supposed renaissance of outworn antiquities.

There is here a little parenthesis, which is that when one makes two, there is no way back. This does not come back to making one anew. Even a new one. The *Aufhebung* is again one of these pretty dreams of philosophy. It is very obviously, if we had this meteor of courtly love, it is obviously from a third, from a completely different quarter there came this something that rejected everything to its first futility.

That is why something completely different was required. It required nothing less than scientific discourse, in other words, something that owes nothing to the presuppositions of the ancient soul, for there to arise from it what is psychoanalysis, namely, the objectification of the fact that the being of the speaking being still spends time speaking to no purpose (*en pure perte*), as I told you, still spends time speaking for this shortest of functions, the shortest, I am saying, because of the fact that it goes no further than being still in progress. Namely, the time required for it to be finally resolved – because after all this is what we in for – for it to be finally resolved demographically.

(13) It is quite clear that this will not at all fix the relationships of men to women. This is Freud's genius. It is that he was carried along by this turning point; this turning point, he took some time, of course, I mean that he took some time to get to it; there was a Freud, it is a name that is well deserved, Freud, it's a funny name *Kraft durch Freud*, it's a whole programme! It is the funniest leap in the holy farce of history. We might perhaps, as long as it lasts, see a little flash, a little flash of something that might concern the Other. The Other in so far as it is with this that the barred The, The woman, The woman has to deal with.

There is something essential in what I am contributing as a complement to what was very well seen along paths that would be illuminated by seeing that this is

what was seen, what was seen is that if only from man's side, namely, that what man had to deal with, was the *little o-object*. That his whole realisation of this sexual relationship culminated in phantasy, and it was seen, of course, in connection with neurotics. How do neurotics make love? This is where we started. On this point, of course, people could not have failed to notice that there was a correlation with the perversions. This supports my *little o*, since this *little o* is that which, whatever they may be, these aforesaid perversions, is there as their cause. That was seen first, which was already not bad.

The amusing thing is that Freud originally attributed them to the woman. It is very amusing to see that in the *Three Essays*. It is truly a confirmation that one sees in the partner, when one is a man, exactly (14) what one is supported by oneself, if I can express myself in that way, what one is supported by narcissistically.

Luckily, there was subsequently an opportunity to become aware that the perversions, are, the perversions as one grasps them in neurosis, as one believes that one can map them out, are not at all that. Neurosis, is the dream rather than the perversion – I mean the neurosis. That neurotics have none of the characteristics of perverts, is certain; simply they dream about it, which is quite natural, because otherwise how could they reach their partner?

People then all the same began to meet perverts. These are the ones that Aristotle did not want to see at any price. People saw here that there is a subversion of behaviour based, as I might say, on a know-how which is altogether linked to a knowledge. And to a knowledge about the nature of things. A direct engaging, as I might say, of sexual behaviour with, it must be said, what is the truth of sexual behaviour, namely, its amorality. Put some soul, at the start, into it, if you wish: *âmorali  *.

There is a morality, this is the consequence, a morality of sexual behaviour which is under-stood in everything that is said about the Good. Only, by dint of saying it, of saying the Good, well then that ends up with Kant, where morality (*la moralit  *) – two words this time - admits what it is. And this is what I believed I should put forward in a little article: *Kant with Sade*; morality admits that it is Sade. You can write Sade as you wish, either with a capital S, to pay homage to this poor idiot who gave us interminable writings about it, or with a small s in order to say that it is when all is said and done its own way of being agreeable, because this is an old French word which means that, or better still: *  ade*, namely, that morality, it must all the same be clearly said that it ends up at the level of the

ça, and that it doesn't go very far. In other words that what is at stake, is that love is impossible, and that the sexual relationship is engulfed in non sense, which does not in any way diminish the interest that we may have for the other.

Because, it must be said, the question is the following: in what constitutes feminine enjoyment, in so far as it is *not-all* occupied by man, and even, I would say, that as such, it is not so at all, the question is to know precisely what is involved in its knowledge.

If the unconscious has taught us so many things, it is first of all the fact that somewhere, in the Other, it (ça) knows. It knows because it is supported precisely by these signifiers with which the subject constitutes himself. This is what lends itself to confusion. Because it is difficult for one who *âme's* not to think that *everything throughout the world knows what it has to do*. The unmoved sphere by which there was supported the Aristotelian God who is demanded by Aristotle to follow one's Good in its image, as I might say – it is because it is supposed to know its good. Only this is precisely something which after all the flaw of scientific discourse, I would not say allows us, *oblige*s us to do without. There is no need to know the why of what Aristotle starts from originally. We no longer have any more need to know than to impute to the stone that it knows the locus that it must rejoin, for us to explain the effects of gravitation. The imputation to the animal – this can be read very clearly in Aristotle's *Treatise on the Soul* – is this point which makes of knowledge the act par excellence of what? Of something that – it should not be believed that Aristotle was all that wrong – of something that he sees as being nothing but the body; except for the fact that the body is designed for an activity, an *energeia* and somewhere the entelechy of this body can be supported by this substance that he calls the soul.

Analysis, in this respect, lends itself to the confusion of restoring to us the final cause, of making us say that for everything that concerns at least the speaking being, reality is like that, namely, phantastical, (16) for it to be like that. It would be a matter all the same of knowing whether this is something that, in some way or other can satisfy scientific discourse. It is not because there are animals which happen to be speaking, for whom, because they inhabit the signifier, it results that they are its subjects, and that everything for them is played out at the level of phantasy. But of a phantasy that can be perfectly disarticulated in a way that accounts for the fact that he knows much more about it than he believes when he acts, it is not enough for things to be so for us to have the beginnings of a cosmology. This is the eternal ambiguity of the term *unconscious*. The

unconscious is presupposed on the pretext that the speaking being, there is somewhere something that *knows* more than him, and of course what he knows at the limits, of course, this being of the unconscious. But anyway this is not an acceptable model of the world. In other words, it is not because it is enough for him to dream for him to see emerging this immense bric-a-brac, this lumber room with which he, he in particular has to sort himself out with, which assuredly makes a soul of him, and a soul that is on occasion lovable when something is willing to love it.

The woman, I have said, can only love in man the way in which he faces up to the knowledge which he *âme*'s. But, as regards the knowledge of which he is, the question is raised. The question is raised starting from the fact that there is something, if what I am putting forward is grounded, there is something of which it is not possible to say whether she can say something about this thing called enjoyment. In other words what she knows about it.

And this is where I propose to you, at the end of today's lecture, namely, as always I come to the edge of what polarised my subject, namely, whether the question of what she knows about it can be raised. This is not a completely different question; namely, that whether this limit at which she enjoys beyond all this *playing* that constitutes her relationship to the man, if this term that I am calling the Other, signifying it with the barred O – Ø – whether this term, for its part, *knows* something. Because it is in this that she is herself subjected to the Other, just as much as man. Does the Other know?

(17) There was someone named Empedocles whom, as if by chance, Freud makes use from time to time as a corkscrew, there was someone named Empedocles about whom we only know three lines, but of which Aristotle drew very clearly the consequences when he stated that, in short, for Empedocles, that God was the most ignorant of all beings; and this very precisely because of knowing no hatred. This is what Christians later transformed into floods of love. Unfortunately that does not hold together; because to know no hatred, is not to know love either. If God does not know hatred, it is clear for Empedocles that he knows less than mortals. So that one could say that the more a man may lend to woman in confusion (*à confusion*) with God, namely, what she enjoys, the less he *hait/est* – the two spellings: *hait* (hates) and *est* (is). And in this affair also, since after all there is no love without hatred, the less he loves.

Seminar 9: Wednesday 20 March 1973

For my part, I would really like from time to time to have a response, even a protest. I do not have much hope since one of the people who formerly gave me this satisfaction – true I only begged him to take on this role a half an hour ago – asked me to get out of it. But if there were someone, by chance, who found in what I said the last time, the last time that I went out myself, let us simply say rather uneasy to say the least, and which proved when I reread it altogether tolerable to me – that is my way of saying that it was very good – I would not be unhappy if all the same someone could bear witness to me of having heard something in it. It would be enough for a hand to be raised for me to give the floor, as I might say, to that hand.

I see that there is nothing doing, so that I must then continue. It will perhaps be less good this time.

I would like to start from a remark, from a few remarks, the first two make a connection with what today I would be happy to write for you as *hainamoration*, which must be written h.a.i.n.a.m.o.r.a.t.i.o.n This as you know, is the relief psychoanalysis was able to introduce in order to situate in it the zone of its experience. It is a testimony – as I might say – of good will, on its part. If precisely it had only been able to call *hainamoration* by a different term than the bastard one of ambivalence, perhaps it would have succeeded better in waking up (2) the context of the epoch in which it is inserted.

Perhaps also it is modesty on its part. And in effect, if I ended on something, this something thanks to which I can only approach what polarised everything I was stating the last time. I stated, in the final paragraph, that there was someone named Empedocles, and I had pointed out that it was not for nothing that Freud arms himself with him. That for Empedocles God must be the most ignorant of all beings, which links us up to the question of knowledge. And this very precisely, I said, because of not knowing hatred. To this I added that later on Christians transformed this non-hatred of God into a mark of love.

It is here that the analysis of the correlation that it establishes between hatred and love encourages us towards something by a reminder, to which I will come back later, and which is exactly the following: that we do not know love without hatred. Namely, that if there is knowledge of something, if this knowledge that was fomented throughout the centuries disappoints us and means that we must renovate the function of knowledge, it is indeed perhaps that hatred has never been put in its place in it.

It is true that this is not either what seems to be the most desirable thing to evoke. And that is why I ended with this sentence: *One could say that the more man attributes to the woman a confusion of himself with God, namely, of what she enjoys – remember my schema from the last time, I am not going to do it again – the less he hates*; and at the same time, I said that I was equivocating on *hait* and *est* in French. Namely, that in this business, moreover, the less he loves.

I was not very happy at having ended on that, even though it is the truth. This indeed is what will make me question myself today once more about what is apparently confused in terms of the true and the real, in the way I have contributed a notion of the way that they are sketched out in analytic experience, and what it would be well in (3) effect not to confuse.

The truth, of course, is affirmed as aiming at the real. But it is only stated here as the fruit of a long development and, I would say more, of a reduction of the pretensions to truth. Everywhere we see it presenting itself, affirming itself as an ideal, as something of which the word can be the support, we see that the truth is not something that is so easily attained.

I will say that if analysis is based on a presumption, it is that a knowledge about the truth can be constituted.

In the schema, the little formula (*gramme*) that I gave you of analytic discourse, the **o** is written on the top left and is sustained by this S_2 , knowledge in so far as it is at the place of truth. It is from there that it summons S_1 ...asked to say anything whatsoever, which ought to result in the production of S_1 , of the signifier from which there can be resolved what? Precisely its relationship to truth.

The truth, let us say to cut to the quick, is originally *aletheia* on which Heidegger speculated so much. *Emet*, the Hebrew term, which, like every use of this term truth, has a judicial origin. Even in our day, the witness is asked to tell the truth. Nothing but the truth. And what is more, *all* if he is able. How alas could he do

so? The whole truth about what he knows. But what is sought, and precisely, more than anywhere else in judicial testimony, is what? It is to be able to judge what is involved in enjoyment. And I would say more: the fact is that enjoyment is avowed and precisely in that it may be unavowable, that the truth sought is precisely that which, more than any other with regard to the law, rules this enjoyment. This is moreover how, in Kant's terms, the problem is evoked. Is evoked as regards what the (4) free man ought to do with respect to the tyrant, the tyrant who proposes every enjoyment to him in exchange for him denouncing the enemy whom the tyrant fears may be, with respect to enjoyment, the one who is disputing it with him.

How is the question evoked about this imperative not seen: that nothing in the name of what is of the order of the pathetic ought to direct the testimony of what after all is evoked in terms of it? And if what the free man is asked to denounce the enemy, the rival about, if it were true, ought he to do it? Can it not be seen, simply by evoking this problem, that if there is something that assuredly inspires in us all the reservations that are indeed those that we all have, that we all have. It is that the whole truth is what cannot be said. It is what can only be said on condition of not pushing it to the end; to only half-say it.

There is something else that constrains us as regards what is involved in the truth, which is that enjoyment is a limit. This is something that stems from the very structure that was evoked, at the time when I constructed my quadripodes for you, the fact is that enjoyment can only be summoned, can only be evoked, can only be elaborated starting from a semblance. Love itself, I underlined the last time, is addressed from the semblance. It is addressed from the semblance and moreover, if it is indeed true that the Other can only be reached by being bracketed, as I said the last time, with *small o*, the cause of desire, it is moreover to the semblance of being that it is addressed; this being, there, is not nothing. It is sup-posed to this something, to this object which is the little *o*. But here, ought we not to rediscover this trace that as such it corresponds to some imaginary?

Assuredly I have explicitly designated this imaginary by *i*, by small *i* placed here isolated from the term i-maginary and that this is why it is only by the clothing, by the clothing of the self image that has enveloped the object cause of desire that there is most often sustained – this is the very articulation of analysis – that there is most often sustained the objectal relationship.

This affinity of small **o** to this envelope is the connection, it must be said, one of these major connections that has been advanced by psychoanalysis, and which, for us, is the point of suspicion that it essentially introduces.

This is where what we come to say about the real is distinguished. For this real, if you take it as I believed I should in the course of time, a time which is also that of my experience, the real can only be inscribed from an impasse of formalisation. And that is why I believed I could sketch out the model of it, from mathematical formalisation in so far as it is the most advanced elaboration that we have managed to produce, the most advanced elaboration of significance (*signifiante*). Of a significance which in short – I am talking about mathematical formalisation – one can say that it runs counter to meaning. I almost said in the opposite direction. The *it means nothing* about mathematics, is what is said in our time by philosophers of mathematics, even when they are themselves mathematicians. I sufficiently underlined the Russell's *Principia*.

And nevertheless, can one not say that this network precisely of mathematical logic that has been pushed so far, inasmuch as with respect to something that found its high point from a philosophy that was indeed forced to emerge from its own entrenchments – the summit, is Hegel – can we not say that with respect to this plenitude of contrasts dialecticised in the idea of a historical progress whose substance it must be said nothing attests for us, can we not say that with regard to that, what is stated in terms of this formalisation that is so well constructed supported as it is by nothing but the *written*, is something that may only serve us, would only be of service to us if required in the analytic process, in that what is designated in it, in that what is designated in it is what invisibly retains bodies?

And if I were not allowed to give an image of it, I would easily take it from what in nature appears to be closest to what ensures that the written requires, in a way, this reduction to the dimensions, two dimensions, of the surface and which, in a certain way, is supported, I would say, in nature, by this something at which Spinoza already marvelled, namely, the textual work that comes out of the spider's belly. The spider's web, a truly miraculous function to see in a way being already supported by it, in this opaque point of this strange being, seeing appear from the surface itself, the one which for us allows the outline of the tracing of these writings which are finally the only point where we might find graspable these limits, these points of impasse, of dead ends which, make the real understood as coming from (*accédant du*) the symbolic at its most extreme point.

That is why I do not believe it was vain that after a work of elaboration whose date I do not need to recall here and now, I came to the writing of this *little o*, of this capital S read as signifier, of O *qua* barred – Ø – and of capital . Their very writing constitutes the support that goes beyond the word and which nevertheless does not go beyond the very effects of language, and in which there is designated this something where, by centring the symbolic, something that is important on condition of course of knowing how to make use of it. But make use of it for what? To retain a congruent truth. Not the truth that claims to be *all*; the one precisely, the one that we have to deal with in terms of a half-saying, the one that proves to be wary of going as far as an avowal, an avowal which would be the worst, the one that is wary starting with the cause of desire. It presumes that this desire is inscribed on the basis of *corporal contingency*. I recall for you the way in which I support this term *contingency*. One could say that the phallus, as tackled in analytic (7) experience as the key point, the extreme point of what is stated as cause of desire, one could say that *analytic experience does not cease writing it*. Now, if I call it contingency, it is inasmuch that here is where analytic experience encounters its limit. That all it can produce is this S₁, this signifier, this signifier which the last time, I think you still remember the uproar that I succeeded in producing from this audience by qualifying it as the signifier of the most idiotic enjoyment itself, and, it was pointed out to me in the two senses of the term, that of the idiot on the one hand, which has indeed here its function as a reference, and also the one which is most singular.

It is in this *does not cease to be written* that there resides the high point of what I called *contingency*. Contingency, if as I say it is opposed to the impossible, it is inasmuch as the *necessary* is the *does not cease not to be written*. I beg your pardon. It is necessary that introduces to us this *does not cease*. But the *does not cease* of the *necessary*, is the *does not cease to be written*. Now here indeed is the apparent necessity to which the analysis of the reference to the phallus leads us. The *does not cease not to be written*, that I said in a slip just now, is the *impossible*. The impossible as I define it as what cannot in any case be written. This is how I designate what is involved in the sexual relationship. *It does not cease not to be written*, but the correction that by this fact it allows us to contribute to the apparent necessity of the phallic function, is the following: that it is *really qua* mode of the *contingent*, namely, that the *does not cease to be written* ought to be written, *ceases* precisely *by not being written*.

It is as *contingency*, *contingency* in which there is resumed everything that is involved of that which for us submits the sexual relationship, for the speaking being, to being only in the regime of encounter, it is in this sense that one can say

that, through psychoanalysis, the phallus, the phallus reserved in ancient times for the Mysteries, has *ceased not being written*. Nothing more. It has not entered into the *does not cease*, in the field on which there depends necessity on the (8) one hand and, above, impossibility.

The true then, here, bears witness that by warning about the imaginary, as it does, it has a lot to do with a-natomy.

It is in the final analysis from a depreciatory angle that I contribute these three terms, those that I inscribe as *small o*, $S(\emptyset)$ and . What shows us the conjunction of these three terms is precisely what is inscribed in terms of this triangle, of this triangle constituted by the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real, and in which what is designated by their conjunction is what? On the right the *little reality* on which there is supported this principle that Freud promised as being the one that is elaborated by a progress, which would be fundamentally that of the pleasure principle. The *little reality*, namely, the fact that everything that we are allowed to approach in terms of reality remains rooted in phantasy.

On the other hand, what is $S(\emptyset)$ but the impossibility of saying the whole truth that I spoke about earlier?

And finally, the third term, this, this through which the symbolic by directing itself towards the real, demonstrates for us the true nature of this *little o* object that I earlier qualified as *semblance of being*, not by chance. It is indeed because it seems to give us the support of being, it is moreover because what is confirmed by everything that is elaborated as such, and anything whatsoever that belongs to being, of being and even of essence, that we can, by reading it starting from analytic experience, in reading Aristotle for example, see that what is at stake, is the *little o* object; that Aristotelian contemplation, for example, issues from this look as I defined it in *The four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis* as representing one, one of the four supports that constitute the cause of desire.

It is then from a graphing (*graphicisation*), not to mention graph, since moreover a graph is a term that has a very precise sense in mathematical logic, in this graphing that there are shown these (9) correspondences that make of the real one open between the semblance that results from the symbolic and the reality as it is supported in the concrete of human life, in what leads men, in what makes them always charge along the same paths, in what makes them produce still other men, in what ensures that forever the still to be born (*l'encore à naître*) will never result in anything than ... *l'encorné*.

On the other hand, this *small o* which for its part, by being overall on the right path, would make us take it as being, in the name of the fact that it is indeed apparently something, which only resolves itself when all is said and done by its failure, by precisely not being able to be inscribed in any way completely in approaching the real.

The true, then, the true, then, of course, is that. Except for the fact that it is never reached except along twisted paths, and that everything to which the true, to which frequently we are led to appeal, is simply to recall the fact that one must not make the mistake, that one must not believe that one is already even in the semblance, that before the semblance with which in effect everything is supported in order to rebound into phantasy, that before that, a severe distinction must be made between the imaginary and the real; that it must not be believed that it is in any way we ourselves that even support this semblance. We are not even semblance. We are on occasion what can occupy its place and make reign there what? What assuredly, to limit ourselves to the immediate of today, allows us to say that after all, the analyst, in all the orders of discourse which are those, in any case, which are actually sustained – and this word *actually* is not irrelevant if we give to the act its full Aristotelian sense – among all the discourses that are actually sustained, it is indeed the analyst who, by putting the *small o* object in the place of the semblance, is in the most appropriate position for doing what it is right to do, namely, to examine, to examine what is involved in truth in terms of knowledge.

(10) What is knowledge? It is strange that apart from Descartes who not for nothing is at the dawn of modern science – not the only one but he is there all the same – that before Descartes, the question of knowledge had never been put, that it required in a way this something that is analysis and which came to announce to us that there is some knowledge that does not know itself, and that it is properly speaking a knowledge that is supported by the signifier as such, that a dream does not introduce us to any unfathomable experience, to any mysticism, that it is read in what is said about it and that one can even go further, by taking up its equivocations in the most anagrammatic sense of the word, that it is at this point of language where someone like Saussure asked himself the question as to whether even in the Saturnian verses in which he found the most strange punctuations of writing, it was or was not intentional. Here is where Saussure is in a way waiting for Freud. It is here that there is renewed the question of knowledge.

If you will pardon me here something that I will borrow from a completely different register, that of the virtues inaugurated by the Christian religion – but you will see that it is not out of place because we will indeed have to speak again about the aforesaid religion – there is there a sort of elated effect of a shoot, a sucker of charity. What indeed was it if not something that has some kinship, affinity with what, in the style of the speaking animal, partakes of the gift, as they say. I do not see it elsewhere than in this gift of Freud saying that the unconscious is at least this little beginning stage thanks to which misery could say that there was here something that truly, and not in the way it had been said up to then, transcended it? Nothing other than the language that this species inhabits. Nothing other than this language and that from this language it found itself having, in what was involved in everyday life, further support for reason than there might appear. Namely, that this vain pursuit of a wisdom that is unattainable and always destined for failure, was already there in part.

(11) But then, do we need this whole detour to put the question, the question of knowledge in the form of: what knows? Do we realise that it is the Other? The Other with a capital O as I posited it at the start, as nothing other, nothing other than the locus in which the signifier is posited and without which nothing indicates to us that there is somewhere a dimension of truth, *dit-mension*, in two words. The residence of the said, the said whose knowledge posits the Other as locus. The status of knowledge implies as such that there is already knowledge - in the Other. That it is to be taken (*à prendre*), in two words, that is why it is designed to be learned (*d'apprendre*), in just one.

The subject results from the fact that this knowledge must be learned and even *have a price put on it (mis à prix)*. Namely, that it is its cost that evaluates it, not as exchange, but as use. Knowledge is worth just as much as it costs *beau-coût* and costs *beaucoup*. That one must pay with one's hide for it, because it is difficult, difficult to what? Less to acquire than to enjoy.

There in the enjoying, its conquest of this knowledge, its conquest is renewed *each time* this knowledge is exercised, the power that it gives remaining always turned towards its enjoyment.

It is strange that this has never been put into relief. That the meaning of knowledge is entirely in that. That the difficulty in exercising it is what enhances that of its acquisition. It is because with every exercise of this acquisition it is repeated that there is no question of which of these repetitions, of which is to be posited as first in its *learnt*.

Of course there are things nowadays which seem to work completely like little machines; these are called computers. But what says that a computer thinks? I don't mind that! But what says that it knows? The foundation of a knowledge, is what I have just said. It is that the enjoyment of its exercise, is the same as that of its acquisition. This is how, since as you see, here there is encountered in a sure way, surer (12) than in Marx himself, what is involved in use value. Since moreover in Marx, it is only there to act as an ideal point as compared to exchange value in which everything is summed up. And precisely, let us talk about this learnt that is not based on exchange. About the knowledge of Marx himself, since I have just evoked him, about the knowledge of Marx himself in politics which is not negligible! You cannot do *commarxe*, if you will allow me. Any more than one can make *fraud* from that of Freud.

You only have to look to see that everywhere that one does not rediscover these knowledges, make them get under your skin by means of hard experience, they fall flat. This can neither be imported nor exported! There is no information that holds up except in the measure that it is shaped for use.

There is thus deduced from the fact that knowledge is in the Other that it owes nothing to being except for the fact that this has carried its letter. From which it results that being can kill where the letter reproduces. But never reproduces the same, never the same being of knowledge.

I think that you sense here, the function that I give to the letter with respect to knowledge. It is one that I beg you not to slip too quickly onto the side of so-called messages. The one that makes it analogous to a germ cell. A germ cell that we ought so severely, if we are in the line of molecular physiology, that we ought so severely separate from bodies to which it conveys life and death all together.

Marx and Lenin, Freud and Lacan, are not coupled in being. It is by the letter that they found, found in the Other, that as beings of knowledge, they proceed two by two, into a supposed Other. What is new in their knowledge, is that in it there is not supposed what? That the Other knows anything about it. Certainly not of course the being who made the letter there. Because it is indeed from the Other that he constituted the letter at his own expense, at the price of his being. At the price of his being, good God, for each of them. Not from nothing at all, but not from very much either.

To tell the truth, these beings, these beings from whom the letter is (13) made, I am going to tell you a little secret about them. I do not think, despite everything that has been recounted for example about Lenin, that neither hatred nor love, that *hainamoration*, that this really suffocated any of them. And no stries about Mrs. Freud! On this I have Jung's testimony. He told the truth, this was even his mistake; he told nothing but that!

Those who manage to make once again these shoots of being, are rather those who share in contempt (*mépris*), that I will make you write this time since I am amusing myself today with *l'a-prix* and all the rest: *méprix*. That gives *Uniprix*. We are all the same in the era of supermarkets. So then one must know what one is capable of producing; even in the matter of being.

The annoying thing is the following. It is that the Other, the locus, for its part, as I told you, knows nothing. One can no longer hate God if he himself knows nothing; in particular nothing about what is happening. When one could hate him, one could believe he loved us, because he did not pay us back for it. It was not obvious, despite the fact that in certain cases, people put the whole packet into it!

Anyway, since I am coming to the end of these discourses that I have the courage to pursue before you, I would like, since this is an idea that comes to me, and after all it is an idea also about which I have reflected a little bit, it is that that Christ, in short, whose misfortune is explained to us by an idea of saving men, I find rather that it was a matter of saving God, in giving once more a little presence, actuality to this hatred of God about which, of course, we are rather indecisive and with good reason. It is from this that I say that the imputation of the unconscious is an unbelievable act of charity! The subjects know, they know. But anyway all the same, they do not know all. At the level of this *not-all*, there is only the Other who does not know. It is the Other who makes the *not-all*, precisely in that he is the part of not knowing at all in this *not-all*.

So that momentarily, of course, it may be convenient to make him responsible for something at which analysis culminates in the most avowed manner apart from the fact that no one realises it. It is that, in (14) short, if desire, libido is only masculine, well then the dear woman, it is precisely only through this that she is *all (toute)*. Namely, from where the man sees her and only from there, that she can have an unconscious, and what use is that to her? It is of use to her, as everyone knows, to make the speaking being, here reduced to the man, speak. Namely – I do not know whether you have clearly noted it in analytic theory – to

exist only as mother. She has unconscious effects. But her unconscious, at the limit, where one is not responsible for the unconscious of everyone, is that not so, namely, at the point where the Other with whom she has to deal, the big Other, where the Other ensures that she knows nothing, because he, the Other – it is only too clear – knows all the less in that it is very difficult to sustain his existence. Well then, one cannot say that all this gives him much of a chance!

I played, in short, the last time, as I allow myself to do, on the rather far fetched (*tirée par les cheveux*) equivocation of *il hait* and *il est*. I do not enjoy it. Except in posing the question whether it is worth a pair of scissors. It is precisely what is at stake in castration.

That being should provoke hatred as such is not, let us say, ruled out. Because if Aristotle's whole concern was to conceive of being as being that through which the beings with less being participate in the highest of beings, it is tremendous that St. Thomas succeeded in reintroducing that into a Christian tradition which of course, since it had spread among the Gentiles, was forced to be entirely shaped by it. So that he only had to pull on the strings for it to start working again. But anyway, do people realise that in the Jewish tradition the cut does not go from the more perfect to the less perfect? That the less perfect is quite simply what it is, namely, radically imperfect, and that one must only strictly obey to the finger and eye, if I can express myself in this way, of the one who bears a name, Yahweh, with moreover some other names in the entourage, which are not ruled out as such. (15) But he has made a choice of his people, and there is no going against Him. Is it not laid bare there that it is much better to betray him on occasion than to *être-hair* him. And this is what, quite obviously, the Jews did not deny themselves. They could not get out of it in any other way!

We are so stifled about this subject of hatred that no one notices that a hatred, a solid hatred, is addressed to being; to the very being of someone who is not necessarily God. We remain with that, and this indeed is why I said that the *small o* is a semblance of being. We remain with the notion – and it is here that analysis as always, in short, is a little bit lame – we remain stuck with jealous hatred, the one that springs from *jalouissance*, from what *s'imageaillisse* from the look according to St. Augustine who is observing the little man. He is there as a third party. He observes the little man and he sees that *pallidus*, he grows pale in observing, suspended on the nipple, his *conlactaneum suum*. Luckily, it is the first substitutive enjoyment as stated by Freud. The desire evoked from a metonymy that is inscribed from a demand that is presumed to be addressed to the Other, from this core of what I called *Ding* in my seminar on *The ethics of*

psychoanalysis; the Freudian thing, in other words, the very neighbour whom Freud sets his face against loving beyond certain limits. A child looked at, for his part, has the *small o*. Is to have the *o* to be it? This is the question on which I will leave you today. And if you would not mind reading between now and the next time that I see you, namely, if I remember correctly the 10th April, what I wrote about the *Bedeutung des phallus*, on the meaning of the phallus, if you read it, you will see to what the final question on which I am leaving you leads.

Seminar 10: Wednesday 10 April 1973

I hardly ever speak to you about what is coming out when it is something by me. All the more so because I generally have to wait for long for it that, for me, the interest in it has dropped away. Nevertheless, it would be no bad thing for the next time which will be the 8th May, not before, because the 17th of this month will be right in the middle of the Easter vacation; I am forewarning you then that the next of my classes is on 8th May. It would be no bad thing if you had read something that I entitled *l'Étourdit*, writing it as *d.i.t.*, and which starts from the distance there is between the saying (*dire*) and the said (*dit*).

Whether there is being only in what is said is a question that we will leave in suspense. It is certain that there is no said except about being. But this is not to assert the converse. On the other hand, there is a saying of mine, which is that there is no unconscious except from the said. That is a saying (*un dire*). How say it? That is the question. One cannot just say it any old way and this is the problem of whoever inhabits language. Namely, of all of us.

This indeed is why today and in connection with this gap that I wanted to express one day by distinguishing from linguistics what I am doing here, namely, *linguisterie*. Namely, what is grounded in what I have just stated at the beginning and which is assured, that we can only deal with the unconscious starting from the said, the said of the analysand. It is indeed within this reference that I asked

someone who to my great appreciation was willing to accede to it, namely, a linguist, to come before you today. And I am sure that you will greatly profit from what is currently the position of the linguist. And I cannot even indicate what cannot fail, in such a statement, to interest you, that (2) someone has written to me in connection with an article that has appeared somewhere, that someone has written to me that shifts are taking place in the position of the linguist. This is what I wanted someone to tell you about today and no one is more qualified for it than the person that I am presenting to you, namely, Jean-Claude Milner, a linguist.

J. C. Milner – There was always grammar. It was there before modern times and it will no doubt be there after us. For linguistics it is something different, if one understands by linguistics what should be understood: something rather precise, namely, a field, a discourse that considers language as object of science. That language, the name matters little, that language should be the object of science, is a proposition that has nothing trivial about it and which is even, from a certain point of view highly improbable. Nevertheless, a discipline was constituted around this hypothesis and we know in general at what price, along what paths, this discipline was constituted.

Historically, and from a systematic point of view, the starting point is the course on linguistics by Saussure which articulates, then, the linguistics as science around a certain number of linked propositions. From among these propositions, I will pick out three in order, let us say, to sum up the first approach of linguistics taken as science.

The first of these propositions is that language, in so far as it is the object of linguistics, has as properties only those that can be analytically deduced from its nature as sign. This proposition can be analysed into two sub-propositions. The first is that language has no specific properties as compared to other systems of signs. The second is that the notion of sign is essential for linguistics. In other words one can define linguistics as the general type of any theory of (3) signifying systems.

The second big proposition which is linked to the first, is that the properties of any system of signs can be described by rather simple operations, these operations being themselves justified by the very nature of the sign. Essentially, its nature of being two faced and of being arbitrary. For example, among these operations one is well known – commutation. These operations are not at all

specific to language. They can be applied and have been applied to other systems.

The third proposition is that the set of properties of the tongue, the object of linguistics then, what one can call this set, what one can call the structure is, in a way, from the same stuff as observable data. This structure has nothing hidden about it, nothing secret. It presents itself for observation and the operations of the linguist only elucidate, explicitate what is copresent in the data themselves.

These three propositions have given birth to a type of linguistics that is well known: structural linguistics. It is an important fact that these three propositions have been, all three of them, refuted. In other words, in the very movement of linguistics considered as science, another hypothesis, another theory of the field has been proposed which is equally articulated by three propositions which take the opposite view to those that I have just stated.

I will begin with the last one. In order to analyse, not.....the first proposition of the new theory which corresponds to a different point of view to the third that I stated previously: to analyse a tongue one needs to bring into play abstract relations that are not necessarily represented by the data themselves. In other words, there is not a single structure that is co-present to the data, but there are at least two structures: one which is observable that is called the surface structure, and the other or several others which are not observable whose structure is described as underlying.

A second articulated proposition which takes then the opposite point (4) of view to the second structural proposition, these two structures, surface structure and underlying structure, are linked to each other by complex operations, in any case too complex to be drawn from the nature itself of the sign; for example, what are generally called transformations. And the first structural proposition finds a contrary point of view in the third transformational proposition; these transformations are specific to language. In other words, no other known system presents operations of the type of transformations: in other words again, there are specific properties to language.

A corollary that I am not explicitating, whose reasons I will not explicitate, is that the notion of sign as such, is in no way necessary for linguistics. One can perfectly well develop linguistics as a science without making use of the notion of the Saussurian sign, of the notion of signifier as opposed to signified; which, let us say in parenthesis, renders a little bit comic a certain recent assertion according

to which one should turn towards the quarter of linguistics in order to understand the notion of signifier.

This change, within linguistics, has all the external appearances of what has been called a recasting, namely, the passage from a configuration of the field of a science to a different configuration of this field. This second configuration integrating the first and presenting it as a particular case of its own analysis. And thus structuralist linguistics is refuted by transformational linguistics, but at the same time it is integrated into it since structural linguistics appears as a particular more restrictive case of transformational linguistics.

Far then from this passage from one linguistics to another being qualified as a difficulty or as a crisis, the fact that this type of recasting is possible appears, rather, a proof that linguistics is well integrated into the field of sciences.

Here roughly is the most up to date presentation that one can give (5) about the system of linguistics. What I am going to try to show is that in reality the situation is quite different: there is not, in the difficulties that exist, firstly, the difficulties today, in the field of linguistics, and these difficulties do not present themselves as the forerunners of a recasting, namely as the advanced signs of a new shape of linguistics that might integrate the preceding one, but as the signs of a fundamental difficulty, what is usually called a crisis, and I will try to show you in the last place the kernel, the source of this crisis.

I am then going to consider in succession some problems of interference, of antinomy that are covered over by the linguistics described as transformational. The first will be the antimony, the, how can I put it? The possibility, of interpreting in two different ways the opposition between surface structure and underlying structure.

In order to present the problem in a simple way, one can consider that the given to be explained for a transformational grammar is, let us say, a set of sentences that one considers as belonging to a well formed set. For example, I take a completely abstract example, a positive, assertive, active sentence will be linked and will be classified in the same set as the negative version of this same sentence, as the same set as the interrogative version of this sentence and in the same set as the passive version of this same sentence. One has then a set, one can put questions about the way in which the set will be constructed, but anyway one has the two. One can admit that if this set is well formed, it is justified by a property common to all the elements of the set. A very simple operation.

Question: is this common property a reality or a *flatus vocis*? In other words, the interpretation of this proposition: there is a property common to sets, to sentences of the set, can have a realist version or a nominalist version. If one adopts the realist interpretation, that comes back to saying that one has a reality, that (6) this common property is a reality, this reality is of a language, linguistic type, in other words that the property common to all the sentences of the set will be represented in the form of a linguistic structure, this structure being obviously qualified as being the underlying structure of sentences belonging to the set. Starting from this structure it will be enough to construct a certain number of rules, of transformations which will allow us to obtain then, starting from the common structure, by a series of different operations one or other differentiated element of the initial set. Another interpretation, the nominalist interpretation, in this case, there is no reality that represents the common property as such, the only reality there is, is the class that one has been able to construct, the sentence that one has been able to construct and, from this point of view, the transformational system no longer has a starting structure on which these modifications will have to take place.

A second possible divergence concerning transformations themselves, let us say the totality of the grammar that is described as transformational; given a transformation or given any grammatical assertion from the grammatical theory, one can envisage it either in extension or in intension. For example, in extension, a transformation consists in a pair of sentences that one affirms are linked. For example an active and a passive sentence. And the transformation will be nothing other than the couple that one will have been able to construct: active sentence – passive sentence.

If one adopts the intensional point of view, well then the transformation is not reduced to the pair of sentences but becomes a property of this pair that is not confused with the pair itself.

This opposition, this divergence, can involve a certain number of differences that are quite tangible in the theory.

Let us take for example a structure like one that exists a lot in tongues where the presence of an element can be foreseen starting from the presence of another one. For example, in French, there is no article that is not followed, from near or far, immediately or not, by a (7) substantive. In other words, when one says about a structure that it involves an article, one says the same thing as when one says that this structure involves an article followed by a substantive, quite

obviously. In other words again, the class of sequences comprising an article is identical to the class of sequences comprising an article plus a substantive.

In an extensional approach, any expression having the same extension as another expression, can be freely substituted for this other expression. In the particular case this will mean that an expression of the structure type comprising an article will be freely substitutable for a structure comprising an article plus a substantive.

But in the intensional approach, it is not necessarily true that two expressions having the same extension are substitutable. For example, to take an example by Quine, between the property: to be a marine animal living in 1940, and the property: to be a cetacean living in 1940 the extension could well be the same, let us accept, but it is not obvious for all that that the two properties are the same and are substitutable for one another whilst preserving the synonymy of the statements.

Consequently, in the case that we are occupied with, there may very well be a difference between the property: to be analysable into an article, and the property: to be analysable between an article plus a noun and one can perfectly well imagine rules that will be correctly present following one of these propositions and which would not be so following the other.

In other words, here again one has a bifidity, a split between two possible interpretations of the notion of transformation. In general, linguistic theories combine the intensional point of view on transformation and the realist point of view concerning the underlying structure. And the one that adopts the extensional point of view concerning transformations adopts the nominalist point of view about the underlying structure. I will not delay on this fact, it is surely not (8) due to chance, and I will simply take the situation as it is.

There are then two possibilities for the transformational linguistic theory: on the one hand to be realist intensional and on the other hand, to be nominalist extensional.

If one adopts the realist extensional point of view, the nominalist extensional point of view, I beg your pardon, the underlying structure begins being simply a class, the rules of a grammar being purely extensional are for their part simply classes, in other words the demonstrations of this theory will consist quite simply in finding construction procedures for well formed classes. And one will have proved a thesis in this grammar if one has found the constructive, effective

procedure allowing it to be shown that the class aimed at is well formed, is exhaustive, etc.....

Inversely, in the other hypothesis, the nominalist intensional version then, the underlying structure is a real structure and what is more a hidden structure. In order to reconstitute it, one is obliged to rely on the indices given by observation. On the other hand, transformations are formulated in terms of properties, essentially starting from the following statement, the following principle: two sentences are in a relation of transformation if they have the same properties. A whole series of reasonings would then be necessary showing that such a property is well represented in the two sentences, that this property is the same in the two cases, that, on the other hand, the fact that this property is the same is a sufficient argument for combining the two sentences by one transformation, etc.

In other words the force of the proof will be not of the order of the construction of classes but of the order of argumentation starting from indices or starting from reasonings. The type of certainty in one case will be of the order of exhaustive enumeration, in the other case, it will be of the order of combined reasons of the relative force of the indices, etc....

Conclusion, there is not, just as there is not, then, one univocal (9) interpretation of the fundamental notion of linguistics, in the same way there is not a unique type of proof and of certitude.

Can one nevertheless maintain that on the notion of the property of language, we have seen that it was singular in transformational theory, can one say that there is agreement? The problem is important in the measure that, if one admits that language has specific properties, the object of linguistics will obviously be to discover these specific properties and it can have no other. If then, it appears that there is ambivalence, ambiguity about the notion of the property of the language one would be led to conclude that there is not a univocal notion of the object of linguistics.

Well then in fact, one can effectively show that there is an ambivalence even about the notion of property.

Let us take for example transformations. It is a specificity, let us admit, of linguistic systems, to be articulatable in terms of transformations. Well then, there exists the following interpretation according to which it will be said: what guarantees for me that this property is precisely that one can imagine a priori a

whole series of formal systems not provided with transformations, in other words a priori nothing prevents me from representing a system by transformations, but in fact, well then that is how it is, there are transformations into nouns. The notion of property is thus linked to *that's how it is* to the undeducible a priori and to the observable a posteriori. This in particular is the position of Chomsky. And for those who practice the reasonings, the arguments, the discussions of grammar of a Chomskian type, they will recognise very frequently arguments of the style: there is no a priori reason for such a structure to be present in tongues; now, it is present in them so then I have a property. And having a property recognisable according to this criterion that it cannot be deduced a priori I reach the ultimate thesis of my theory and I reach my object.

(10) But one can imagine a quite different interpretation that would say: well then, there is no reason not to apply the principle of reason to the phenomenon that one has discovered, for example the existence of transformations, and one will seek to say: well then, if there are transformations in tongues, well then, that stems from their essence whatever may be these essences, for example, that of being instruments of communication or for example that of representing objective situations or any essence that one could imagine from that side of things. The stage does not matter, what is important is that in an interpretation of this kind, the criterion of a property is not that it should be undeducible a priori, but it is that it should be on the contrary deducible starting from a fundamental principle which would articulate, which would formulate the very essence of the tongue taken as such.

You see that in this case one has two quite different linguistic theories and that the object of linguistics will not be formulated at all in the same way. Since in one case the object of linguistics will be to record, to seek to discover the whole set of properties that are in a way inexplicable a priori, from tongues that one can simply record as being data; in the other case, the object of linguistics will be to try to reduce the set of properties that one may have discovered objectively to an essence of language whatever its definition might be.

Well then, it seems to me, when, in a theory, one has a divergence about the object, one has a divergence about the nature of proofs, on the nature of certainty, there is obviously something up. Well then, if one observes what is happening, one becomes aware that in order to choose between the diverse interpretations, at every moment of ambivalence, of successive ambivalences, the linguist, the linguists (11) have no other principle, in any case that one can recognise, than their own vision of the world. They will choose for example on the last point the

hypothesis of the a priori inexplicable or on the contrary of the a priori (*sic*) inexplicable uniquely in function of their conception of the principle of reason. And so on. As regards the choice between nominalism or realism, well discussions of this order will simply come down to a selection in terms of the vision of the world: what do I prefer? Nominalism or realism? Or: what do I prefer? Extension or intension? This may be masked by a certain number of assertions on the nature of science which ought to be measurable or not measurable etc.... What matter. The basis, is a question of vision of the world.

It seems to me that one can advance without improbability the thesis that when in a field related to science the selection between concurrent theories is made in terms of a vision of the world, that can be called a crisis. Well then one could simply note this crisis, it seems to me that the core, the fundamental principle of it can nevertheless be articulated more precisely.

Something is at stake at this very moment in the system of linguistic theory that puts in question its very nature as a science. Between the passage from Saussure to transformationalism which as we have seen is based on the inversion of propositions, there is something that I did not describe which remains intangible, it is what I could call the model of the syntactical subject. What is this model? Well then Saussure describes it in a very simple way, it is a relation in two terms between the locutor and the interlocutor. We know, everyone knows the Saussurian schema: one has a starting point which is A, and an arrival point which is B. What is proper to this model is that an interlocutor only functions as such in the system if he proves that he has the capacity to be in his terms a locutor at another moment of the system. In other words one has two terms that are symmetrical and different, a little bit like the left hand and the right hand but which are, (12) like to the right hand and the left hand, homogenous from a certain point of view. And one can speak about the linguistic interlocutor and locutor in the singular, having as a distinctive property that of being reduplicated in reality, in the reality of bodies, just as one can speak about the hand in the singular, which everyone knows has the property of being reduplicated in the human body. Well then this passage, in short this structure, this model, is absolutely unchanged in Chomsky, the reference that Chomsky moreover makes to Saussure at this point is explicit, and one can show in a rather simple way that outside such a model, the integration of language to science, to the field of science, is absolutely impossible.

The question that is raised is not so much what one lets drop when one proposes such a model. Because after all, practically, one can show that all scientific

discourses pay a certain price which is the price of their being scientific. That is not the problem. The problem is whether in the very movement of its positive exploration of the field of language phenomena, in supporting oneself then on what makes this positive exploration possible, this model then, linguistics is not led to be confronted with data that are properly speaking inexplicable, impossible to elucidate if they continue to be supported by this model. In other words the point is to know whether in the very movement of its scientific exploration linguistics does not encounter something that dissolves what made this scientific exploration possible.

Well then, without going into details, it seems that this indeed is the situation.

In other words, one can show, one can show that linguistics, and this is happening now, finds itself in the process simply by the movement of its syntactical exploration, the most positive possible then, is faced with unavoidable phenomena which pure syntax, the syntax founded on formalisation as I might say, on, let us say, what can be formalised, which pure syntax cannot account for if it continues to posit two (13) subjects that are absolutely symmetrical, absolutely homogenous to one another one of which would be the locutor and the other the interlocutor. I refer you for an illustration of this kind of problem, to the recent book by Ducros, *Dire ou ne pas dire*, which clearly shows that there are a whole series of phenomena that are perfectly locatable in positive terms, that can be located in terms of grammatical structure, of words, of things that are altogether recordable by the data, that all of these phenomena cannot be understood if one does not posit at least two subjects that are heterogeneous to one another. One of whom exercising on the other what Ducros calls a relation of power; an exercise of power.

In other words, the point of the crisis, is that in order to continue the exploration that it is necessary to carry out, by its very definition, namely, as integration of language into the field of sciences, linguistics must now, and is in the process of paying a price that is impossible for it to pay. Because if it pays it, its deconstruction as science begins.

As if, what can I say to conclude, well then something like the following it is that the day is coming when linguistics, and it is already present in Ducros, begins or will begin to see itself as contemporaneous with psychoanalysis, but that it is not obvious that when that day comes linguistics will be there to see it.

J. Lacan – I would be very happy to concentrate today the interventions that I wanted for today. I think that François Recanati is willing, since in short the locutor who came before him remained within his time limit.....perhaps for his sake.....I would like to know what he can bring today as a contribution.

F. Recanati – I will not go back on what has just been said. I think that a certain time of meditation is necessary, but it appears obvious to me that what was presented here as a conception of the world regulating in a certain way the current fate – namely, not the evolution what presents itself as a science, like linguistics, these choices that must be made between nominalism and realism on the one hand and on the other hand two principles of reason, or rather a principle which (14) is the a priori undeducibility and the other the old principle of reason, this arises precisely from a certain way of what one could call *linguisterie*, but at a level in a way at which these choices are constituted, in the measure in which they are articulated, these choices are constituted as objects.

And in a certain way, what I am going to say here which was not foreseen as having to be articulated to what has just been said, nevertheless has certain relationships with the possibility of these choices, with the functioning of something like precisely the a priori undeducibility functioning as a principle of reason.

This perhaps will appear all by itself, I will not particularly try to show it. In general, I point out that this will be related to everything that Lacan has developed recently in connection with the *not-all (pas-toute)* and feminine enjoyment, and that more particularly it is a matter of a question that I would like to raise. And in order to raise it, I am going to try to illustrate it, which is not without risk in the measure that precisely it is a matter of a possible mode of illustrating a relationship, and this illustration that I will perhaps try a little metaphorically to give, may perhaps encroach a little in a certain way on the very fact of this illustrating that I am waiting for. First of all I am going to trace out a schema.

(15) Now I have another one but it will come a little later. Good, the question that I put to Dr Lacan and that I am going to illustrate here is precisely the following: how articulate the relationship between *the father function* on the one hand, *the father function* as supporting the universality of the phallic function in man, and on the other hand the supplementary feminine enjoyment that is pinpointed by this The $S(\emptyset)$ constituting what one could call the universality or rather the inexhaustibility – and this does not have exactly the same meaning – of the woman with respect to as well as her position in the desire of man under the species of the *small o* object. How image these two terms whose cockeyed nature, according to Lacan, is that they both join up at the locus of the Other? How can the be imaged? And on the other hand, can one say that effectively – it is more or less the same thing as the first question – that effectively they are two if it is a fact that, if Rêgine had a God, perhaps it was certainly not the same one as that of Kierkegaard. But on the other hand, Lacan said, it is not sure either that one can say that there were two of them.

I am going to give here some markers which will not be exactly the markers to tackle this question that I am raising, but more precisely to approach what I would like to avoid. In the measure that, once there is question of the *not-all*, I think there are two ways of envisaging it, and that precisely one of these ways is completely silent in the measure that once one accedes to it, in a way, there is a silence, there is no longer any question of it; and the other of these ways evacuates the problem in a way, and it is the manner that evacuates that I am going first of all, to recall by certain markers to show that it leaves (16) completely intact the question of feminine enjoyment.

You remember that this *there exists an x that says no as no*, this is what permits the universal *for every x*, to hold up. It is the limit, it is the bordering function, it is the envelopment by the one that permits a set to be posited with respect to castration.

According to an inverted symmetry – which moreover is not a symmetry – it is because nothing in the woman comes to say *no* comes to deny the function

that precisely nothing decisive can be established in her. It is in the measure that there does not exist an x such that no - - the woman being fully into the function, she only signals herself by whatever it is that goes beyond this function in terms of something supplementary. There is no objection to the function , namely, there does not exist an x that says no to x . implies that the woman is situated with respect to something other than the limit of the masculine universal which is the father function: there exists an x such that no x : T his other thing is pinpointed by its relationship to the other as barred - \emptyset . With regard to this function the woman can only be inscribed as *not-all*.

But this is in the position of a radical otherness with respect to I in an unconnected position; certainly, it is a necessary existence, but she necessarily posits herself moreover outside the field covered by .

In the father function, the function, in the measure that it is on it that negation is brought to bear, is emptied out by no longer being able to be indexed by any logical truth.

Over against this, in there does not exist an x such that the function is more than fulfilled; it overflows. And the interplay of the true and of the false is in the same way rendered impossible.

In the two cases that I would like to signal as being the two cases of existence, existence is in an eccentric position with respect to what in has a regulatory value, namely, the function of truth that can be invested in it.

(17) What is played out, I said, between and on the other hand b lank, is existence, and existence is posited in this double decoupling with respect to .

Existence comes certainly from the contradiction between the two, between the father function and what one could call perhaps the virgin function, namely, that there does not exist an x such that no . The two are signalled by being inessential with respect to . One cannot be inscribed in , the other cannot but be inscribed in it. On the one hand the necessary , on the other, I said there the impossible to go quickly, in fact there would be a variation to be added: . The impossible is rather what happens between the two, and could be called impotence if this term had not already served for other purposes.

The disjunction between the two is radical. All two are not uncoupled from one another, but all two are uncoupled with respect to , and the two uncouplings themselves are in disaccord. In no way are they commensurable.

One could even say more; as long as The woman – always this The barred – remains defined by this , she is situated between zero and one, Between centre and absence and not numerable. She can in no way be hooked on to the One of , not even in the already twisted fashion in which the is hooked on to it - for all x, x, if I called the One, why not call it the zero? - So then not even in the already twisted way in which the zero is hooked on to it, namely by what I called here denial.

It is here that there must be situated, in looking at the second schema, the truth that there is no sexual relationship. But the reason why I put forward this was in order to mark that existence is only posited by relationship to in this otherness. And the fact that both one and the other, existence and otherness, can be disassociated to this point, implies the wanderings that are going to be followed especially by the destiny of the desire of man.

If one examines now the vertical relationships between the formulae (18) and in taking up again these marks that I described as zero and One, the One of allows by its necessity, for to be constituted as possible, let us say under the heading of zero.

It is absolutely not the same thing on the other side, despite the apparent symmetry; because from the other side, it is from that originates. Now here, it is rather the which plays the role of the indeterminate, namely, of the zero before its constitution by the One, namely, a sort of non-zero of not quite zero. And from this point of view, it is which would play - in the conditional - the role of the One, namely, the possibility, the opening up of something like a supplementarity of a possible *One more (Un en plus)*. But of course this additional pseudo-One more plunges immediately into the indetermination of , that no existence, that no support comes to sustain, that no saying-that-not comes to sustain.

As long as no x comes to deny of x for The woman, the One more of which the *not-all* feels itself to be the bearer remains ghostly.

No production is possible starting from , but only a circulation of the original indeterminateness.

Between the two terms and , there is the undecidable. The undecidable in question is crystallised in the following way: The woman does not approach the One, she is not the One, which does not imply that she is the Other. In a word, she is in an undecidable relationship to the barred Other, she is neither One nor the Other- with two capitals. The *not-all* is supported by the *not-One*. Since does not mean anything other than not-One. And the *all-men*, the which for its part is supported precisely by the One, by the existence of this One of the , the *all men* makes use of The woman qua *not-All* in order precisely to have a relationship to the One, or rather a relationship to the Other, in accordance with a quite particular type of procedure.

Since the One is banished from its *all* in the time that constitutes it, it considers the two as antinomial by repeating a negation, while this negation is brought to bear on what I will call a *complex*. Namely, the complex of existence and of otherness and it always sees itself being displaced with respect to the aim of . It believes, through the *not-all* of The woman, that it can rediscover the Other, even though we can in no way identify the two negations of the One. For on one side it is the necessary existence of the One that grounds, that limits the space of the , while the Other is inexistence, it is the negation of the existence of the One which supports the undecidable of the relation of The woman to the barred Other, \emptyset .

It is here that there is situated the imaginary relationship of the man to the woman. The man as is in prey constitutively to the otherness of the existence of the One. We have seen that the two cannot be disassociated. In repeating the constitutive detachment of but inversely there is created in a way the imaginary model of an Other of the Other and, in this kind of intermediary phase, the woman is for man the signifier of the Other in so far as she is *not-all* in the function . Namely, that a relationship is on the point of being established between this *all* and this *not-all*, but between *all* and *not-all*, between *all men* and the *not-all* of The woman, there is an absence, there is a flaw which is specifically the absence of any existence that supports this relationship. The man apprehends The Woman only in the in the procession of *little o* objects, at the end of which only the Other is supposed to be found. Namely, that it is after the exhaustion of the relationship to The Woman, namely, after the impossible reabsorbing of *little o* objects that the man is supposed to accede to the Other; and subsequently The woman becomes the signifier of the barred Other as barred, of the barred Other qua barred, namely of this infinite cursus.

J. Lacan-... of this?

F. Recanati - infinite cursus. The phantasy of Don Juan - I am only quoting it for what is going to come - illustrates very well this infinite quest and moreover its hypothetical term, in other words precisely the return of a statue, of what should only be a statue to life, and the immediate punishment for the author of the awakening. I had raised a (20) kind of subsidiary question to Dr. Lacan about the relationship between the enjoyment of Don Juan presented as this, and on the other hand the constituting function of what he called the enjoyment of the idiot, namely, masturbation.

In this development that I have summarised, certainly there is question of *not-all*, but it is more specifically about the function of this *not-all* in the masculine imaginary, if one can express it in this way, that was at stake. So that while my initial question, that I am maintaining, was about the supplementary feminine enjoyment and the father function from the point of view of The woman, which, in a certain way, raised above all another question: is there a point of view of The woman? And this raises still another one: can one speak about perspectives in psychoanalysis? Are there points of view? Specifically what is involved in the imaginary of the woman, since her relationship to the big Other appears privileged only from the point of view of man who considers her as the representative, if he does not confuse the two of them?

Perhaps of course, this question is one that does not have an answer, which, if it were decidable, would certainly be fruitful in this sense that one could at least detect the answers that are false.

The woman as *not-all*, as we have seen, is the signifier of the complex existence One Other, barred Other of course, for man. The triad of the desire of man can thus be written with the semiotic triangle and this is my third schema.

If I took this schema, it is because you remember I hope, what it supports. So then I will not have to come back to it and I can content (21) myself with a certain number of allusions; not that I am transporting the terms of the problem into the

semiotic configuration, in order to see in it in a way what remains posited as problematic with respect to feminine enjoyment.

But I want all the same to take someone, that one could call a semiotician, let us say that he is one of the most important modern theoreticians on the arbitrariness of the sign; I want to talk about Berkeley. What does he say? That there is language, namely, signifiers, which have signified effects (*effets de signifié*). Now starting from the moment that they have signified effects - which is not self evident at all for Berkeley - these signifiers- when Berkeley says *signifier*, I mean when he does not say it but all the same when I say it in his place, that means anything whatsoever, thing etc... - these signifiers are held to deploy, once they have signified effects, their existence elsewhere then on the scene of the signified. The material evacuation of signifiers allows the signifieds to continue their round.

The signifying chain is the effect, still according to Berkeley, of the fortuitous encounter - the chain of signifieds is the effect of the fortuitous encounter between the chain of signifiers on the one hand and on the other hand what? Certainly not the chain of signifieds since one sees that it originates from it, but much more rather what one could call subjects, namely, what becomes, starting from this encounter, subjects, and which up to then were only signifiers like the others. Once the signifiers encounter subjects, namely, once there is a production of subjects by a shock of signifiers, these are displaced - the subjects - are displaced with respect to existence which is the material existence of signifiers. They cease to participate in the material life of signifiers in order to re-enter the domain of the signified, namely by being subjected to signifiers which, as we have seen, have become eccentric and inaccessible to them.

The loss of signifiers for the subject delimits the space of what Berkeley calls signification, signification which is universalised. From the universal point of view of signification the evacuation of the (22) signifier into its effects is something absolutely necessary; it is an a priori of the field of signification. But from the point of view of the necessary itself, namely, of the signifier, nothing is more contingent, nothing is more suppletory, than the signification itself. From the point of view of the intrinsic necessity of the signifier, the signification is even impossible - this is the word employed by Berkeley - namely, that it is without any relationship to the internal reason of the signifier. But this impossibility is realised all the same. In the same way, says Berkeley on the first page of the *Treatise on vision*, distance is imperceptible and nevertheless it is perceived.

Distance is imperceptible, namely, that nothing, in the signifier *distance* leads us (*noumène*) - to be written in a single word as you have done - leads us to the signification of this distance, namely, to the internal exclusion of the subject from this signifier, the signifier distance. Nothing leads us to it (*Rien nous y mène*). The distance is imperceptible, and nevertheless it is perceived. How understand this if not in the way Berkeley does it, by following a triadic schema?

From the point of view of signification as a datum, the directive detachment from the signifier is something necessary. From the point of view of the signifier itself, its expansion into signification is absolutely impossible. We have here a disjunction to which Lacan has accustomed us, that of the *pas-sans* [not without], namely, not one without the other, but the other without the one. You remember that the example given for this third figure of disjunction was *your money or your life*. There is no one without the other, but the other without the one.

This figure that Berkeley isolated in a remarkable way, he describes as the arbitrary; it is the arbitrariness of signs which is nothing other, he says, than divine arbitrariness. Much more: the arbitrariness of signs, is a proof, for Berkeley of the existence of God. It is even the fundamental proof in his system. Something is impossible and nevertheless it is effective. This signifies that the conjunction between impossibility and effective reality, which is the human space, is a (22) manifestation of Providence. It is altogether providential that these two divergent things should all the same reunite, and that the interpretation of this relationship, the interpretation of this relationship following the triadic schema, namely, two terms posited here and this infinite interpretation, inaccessible at its limit, leads to God. But also and for obvious reasons, man cannot in any way lead to its term this infinite interpretation which would be a transgression of his space, since he himself originates in a way from the movement and the convergence of these two terms posited at the start as separate. All he can do is to idealise a point of convergence and to form of it what Berkeley calls an *idea of God*.

We find ourselves now in the presence of a quaternary system which is the classical quaternary system of the sign of which I already spoke. The four terms are there: the material signifier on the one hand, the signified on the other hand, the idea of God, and God. The signifier - I am summarising a little Berkeley's positions - the signifier is the material, the punctual being of the raw thing (*de la chose brute*).

J. Lacan - ...the punctual being...?

F. Recanati - ... of the raw thing. The signified, is the distanced appropriation of idealised material, correlative to detachment at the limit of the loss of the signifier;

it is language, language understood in its effects, of course, temporality as opposed to punctuality. God is temporal punctuality, condensed temporality, it is eternity, the superior expansion of contradictions. As for the idea of God, it is the signifier of eternity, namely, the renunciation of language by language, the temporal site of eternity. It is the mystical instant of grace, the repetition of the renunciation of the signifier, in renouncing this (23) renunciation itself. It is a denial of temporality which is presented as if it did not exist. Namely, that the language grasping of eternity would have itself absent from the represented eternity, while at the same of course being present enough for this, namely, the represented eternity, should be valid as a pseudo-transgression as is sufficiently proved by the fact that from this mystical instant, from this superior instant of grace, one enjoys it. Now the instant of grace is very exactly the representation, from the temporal point of view of language, of the lost punctuality of the signifier. The universal of language and of signification only holds up by this failed translation of the punctual that is ceaselessly recommenced. This is where there is resolved the paradox of the impossible to the realised, and it is resolved in a fashion that has marked modern philosophy, which is due in part to Berkeley, also in part to Locke.

The punctual or the signifier cannot have a relationship to what might be temporal or signified. This relationship, in the measure that they have nothing in common, is impossible. But they can have a relationship to this relationship itself. Now what is it this relationship if not impossibility? Namely, that the imaginary figures of the mystic are thus only the limit series of perverse representations of this impossible that language enrobes, namely, of this hole that goes between the universal of signification and the closed corporality of the signifier.

The barred Other appears then as the point of convergence of the series of figures of the absence of the existent One, the series of the drift in a way of the father function, the infinite derivation of its effects starting from an initial rupture. The mystic's journey towards God, is then the impossible exhaustion of that which already, between the universal and existence, excludes what grounds it, between the zero and the One, from what already is happening there.

It is here, of course, since I am talking to you about zero and One in order to make you sense an analogy, it is of course here that the mystic encounters The woman as signifier precisely of this not-all who supports his quest. But we see that this has finally changed nothing in this new development, and the question is put again as it was initially; (25) namely, what then is this supplementary feminine enjoyment, apart from the signifier of this masculine *fatum*?

One could take things from another angle in order to see that the question always, in considering perhaps something which - we have already approached mysticism - and which is going to be of use to us; I want to talk about Kierkegaard and his story with Regine.

Perhaps Regine also had a God, Lacan told us, which might be different to that of Kierkegaard. What is self-evident, is that Kierkegaard is not the one who will tell us, but in taking in a way his own position as he at length developed it, one can see the place that he reserves for Regine and that this place is not so erroneous as it might appear.

It is necessary, he says, to situate oneself, it is Kierkegaard who says that, to situate oneself either in the temporal perspective, or in the eternal perspective. This distinction takes its effects in temporality itself, namely, in social life, namely, with respect to what he calls the mass. Either one is a simple individual or one recognises oneself as a participant in the mass, in the established order, and thanks to this recognition, one avoids being merged with it, or one is what Kierkegaard calls by different names either *genius*, or *particular individual*, or *extraordinary individual*, either one is an extraordinary individual and then one has the duty, with regard to eternity, to say no to the mass, to established order, for it is only by the intermediary of these geniuses that construct its history that the mass remains in relation with eternity. Genius presents itself as the repetition of the act of Christ by which he separated himself from the mass, or again the repetition of the act of Kierkegaard's own father who is supposed, we are let understand, in transgressing the law of *noli tangere matrem*, provoked God to ceaselessly keep his eye on him and thus to particularise him.

The extraordinary individual is in a personal relationship with God. Now Kierkegaard thought he had received from his father this (26) relationship that he had to assume by genius. Now this is precisely for him the explanation of the breakdown of his betrothal to Regine. The fact is that if he were married, he says, to Regine, after the marriage he would have been forced either to let Regine enter into the secret of this personal relationship to God - and this would have been to betray this relationship -or indeed to do nothing about it, and this would have been to betray the relationship of the couple to God. Before this paradox, Kierkegaard decided to break away all the same, and the genius of Regine was to reproach him precisely in the name, which was allowed to her, in the name of Christ and of Kierkegaard's father; namely, that there was here a double impasse from which it was impossible for Kierkegaard to get out of.

What this whole story shows, is that no doubt there are not two Gods, that of Regine and that of Kierkegaard, but at least there is, for Kierkegaard alone, two paths to follow, and the opposition is that of the Two to One, namely, for Kierkegaard there are two paths to follow, not for Regine. Namely, the two paths are: either to put oneself, for Kierkegaard into the position of exclusion, to say no to *all x* and to live as if he were already dead, already subject to eternity, or to seek God in a mediated relation, through the intermediary of his fellow. I hope that that reminds you of something.

The important thing in this dilemma, but it is above all that Kierkegaard approaches Regine for not being a prey to it, namely not to choose in the alternative that he proposes as being that of ethics and of aesthetics. Now this choice, we see in reading for example the biography of Kierkegaard, is quite simply to be or not to be in the . We understand of course that this should not have been put to Regine who, as woman, is there without being there (*y est sans y être*).

In other words, here again silence. When Kierkegaard speaks about the God of Regine, he believes that she has already made the choice of aesthetics against ethics. He says that for her, God is a kind of debonair, rather benevolent grandfather. While in fact this choice is not put; she is on this hither side or beyond this choice which is raised only for Kierkegaard.

The question that Kierkegaard puts and that after him I will repeat to Dr. Lacan is: is there an alternative for The Woman, The barred, and what is it? Does the choice pass between knowledge and the semblance, between being or not being hysterical? The disjunction that passes between the man and the woman, between the *all* and the *not-all* runs the risk of remaining, as long as there has not been determined the imaginary relation of the woman to the Other and the place of man in this relation, runs the risk of remaining in a singular analogy with what I named the third figure of the disjunction, the disjunction of *your money or your life*, namely, no relation of the man to the Other without the *not-all* of the woman, but on the other hand a supplementary feminine enjoyment, a privileged relationship to the Other, a personal enjoyment of God.

J. Lacan - What time is it? Yes! I have a quarter of an hour left, I have a quarter of an hour left. I don't know what I can do in this quarter of an hour. I think that it is an ethical notion; ethics, as you may perhaps glimpse, or at least those who have formerly heard me speaking about ethics, ethics, of course, has the closest relationship with our inhabiting of language, as I was saying earlier to my dear

Jean-Claude Milner, like that, in a confidential way, and then also opened up by a certain author whom I will re- evoke another time, ethics, is of the order of gesture. When one inhabits language, there are gestures that one makes, gestures of salutation, of prostration on occasion, of admiration when what is at stake is another vanishing point: the Beautiful. What I said there implies that it does not go any further. One makes a gesture, and then one conducts oneself like everyone else, namely, like the rest of the rabble. Nevertheless, there are gestures and there are gestures, and the first gesture that is literally dictated to me by this ethical reference must be that of firstly thanking Jean-Claude Milner for what he has presented us with about the present point of the fault line that is opening up in linguistics itself, and which perhaps after all justifies us in a certain number of behaviours that we only owe perhaps - I am speaking about myself - that we only owe (28) perhaps to a certain distance we were at from this rising science when it believed it could become one. It is certain that the bearings that we have taken with respect to it were altogether urgent for us, because it is all the same very difficult not to realise that, as regards analytic technique, if the subject before us says nothing, the least that one can say is that it creates a rather special difficulty.

What Jean-Claude Milner indicated to us in particular about the radical difference, is what I tried to bring out for you last year in writing *lalangue* in a single word, this is what I put forward in terms of a coupling between these two words, it is indeed by means of this that I am distinguishing myself. And that, that seems to me to be one of the numerous lights that Jean-Claude Milner has projected, the way in which I distinguish it from structuralism, and specifically in so far as it would integrate language and semiology, that, as the little book that I got you to read with the title of *The title of the letter* indicates, that it is indeed a subordination of this sign with regard to the signifier that is at stake, that is at stake in everything that I have put forward.

I cannot expand on this. You can be sure that I will come back to it. I must also take the time to pay homage to Recanati who assuredly proved to me that I had been well heard. This can be seen in all the pointed questions that he put forward which are the ones in a way that remain for me to open up for you at the end of this year. In other words to provide you with what I now have as a response. The fact that he ended on the question of Kierkegaard and of Regine is absolutely exemplary, and since I had only made a brief allusion to it, this indeed is something that comes from himself; one cannot better illustrate I think the point that I am at in this ground-breaking that I am carrying out before you, one could not better illustrate this resonance effect which is simply that someone cops on, cops on to what is at stake. And by the questions that he proposed to me,

assuredly, I will (29) be helped in what I will subsequently have to say to you. I will ask him for his text so that I can refer quite specifically to it when I find that I am able to respond to it.

That he should have referred to Berkeley, on the other hand, there had not been any indication of this in what I had stated before you, and this indeed is why, in this case, I am still more grateful to him if that were possible. Because, in a word, I even took the trouble quite recently to get hold of an edition, an original one I imagine because I am also a bibliophile, but I have the sort of bibliophilia that has it hold on me which, which... it is only books that I want to read that I try to get hold of in their original. I re-examined on this occasion last Sunday this - I no longer know, I don't know very well how it is pronounced in English - *minute*, this tiny philosopher, this minute philosopher, Alciphron as he is called again. On this assuredly, in short, it is certain that if Berkeley had not been part of my oldest nourishment, probably many things, including my lack of constraint in the way I use linguistic references, would not have been possible.

I still have two minutes left. I would like all the same, I would like all the same to say something, something about the schema that unfortunately, Recanati had to rub out earlier. This truly is the question. To be hysterical or not? Is there a One or not? In other words this *not-all*, this *not-all* in a logic which is classical logic, seems to imply the existence of the One that constitutes an exception. So that it would be here that we would see the emergence, the emergence in an abyss - and you are going to see why I qualify it thus - the emergence of this existence, this *at least one* existence which, with respect to the function is inscribed in order to say it. But what is proper to the said is being, as I told you earlier. But what is proper to the *saying* is to *ex-sist* with respect to any said whatsoever.

But then there is the question of whether, in effect, whether from a *not-all*, from an objection to the universal there may result something that would be stated about a particularity that contradicts it; you see here (30) that I am remaining at the level of Aristotelian logic.

Only there you are. Whether the fact that one can write *not all x* is not inscribed in *x*, that it can be deduced from it by way of implication that *there is an x* that contradicts it, this is true but on a single condition: it is that in the *all* or the *not-all* that is at stake, we are dealing with the *finite*. As regards the *finite*, there is not simply implication, but equivalence. It is enough for there to be one of them that contradicts the universalising formula, for us to be obliged to abolish it, and transform it into a particular. This *not-all* becomes the equivalent of what in

Aristotelian logic is stated about the particular. There is an exception. Only it is precisely from the fact that we may be dealing not with anything finite whatsoever, but on the contrary that we are in the infinite, namely, that the *not-all*, there, should no longer be taken on the side of extension, and this indeed in effect is what is at stake. When I say that The woman is *not-all* and that it is for that reason that I cannot say the woman, it is precisely because this is what I am putting in to question, namely, an enjoyment which, with respect to everything that can be used in the function of x , is of the order of the infinite.

Now, once you are dealing with an infinite set, you cannot posit that the *not-all* involves the ex-sistence of something that is produced from a negation, from a contradiction. You can if need be posit it as a quite indeterminate existence. Only we know through the extension of mathematical logic, the one precisely qualified as intuitionist, that to posit a *there exists*, you must also be able to construct it, namely, be able to *find* where this ex-sistence is. It is on this basis that I am grounding myself in order to produce this quartering which, on the line superior to the one I am positing in terms of an ex-sistence very, very, well qualified by Recanati as excentric to the truth. It is between the quite simply and the marked by a bar that there is situated the suspension of this indetermination between an existence which finds itself to be affirmed, The woman, in this it can be said that she is not found; which is confirmed by the case of Regine.

(31) And to end, good God, I will tell you something that is going, like that, to constitute, in my style, a little bit of a riddle. If you re-read somewhere this thing that I wrote under the name of *The Freudian thing*, you should understand in it the fact that there is only one way of being able to write without barring the 'the' of the article of which I spoke to you earlier, of being able to write the woman without having to bar the 'the', it is at the level at which the woman is the truth. And that is why it/she can only be half-said.

I think of you (*Je pense à vous*). That does not mean that I think you. Perhaps someone here remembers what I said about a tongue in which one would say, if I am to believe what I am told about its form, in which one would say: I love of you (*J'aime à vous*). This indeed is how it models itself better than any other on the indirect character of that reaching out called love.

I think of you; this already creates an objection to everything that might be called *human sciences* in a certain conception of science. Not the one that has been done for only a few centuries, but of the one which has, since Aristotle, been defined in a certain way. Whence it results that one must ask oneself about the foundation, about the principle of what analytic discourse has brought us, along what path can indeed there pass this new science of ours.

This implies that I first of all formulate where we are starting from. Where we are starting from, is from what this analytic discourse gives us, namely, the unconscious. That is why I will give you, first of all some formulae that are perhaps a little close knit, concerning what one can say about what is involved in the unconscious, and precisely as compared to this traditional science will make us pose the question: how is a science still possible after what can be said about the unconscious?

As of now, I announce to you that, however surprising this may at first appear to you - but as you will see it is not so - this will lead me today to talk to you about Christianity.

(2) The unconscious - I begin with my difficult formulae that I suppose must be so - the unconscious, everything that I will develop today to make it more accessible to you, but here I am giving here my formulae - *the unconscious is not that being thinks*, as is nevertheless implied by what is said about it in traditional science. The unconscious is - after having said what it is not, I am saying what it is - is *that being in speaking* - when it is a being that speaks - *is that being in speaking, enjoys* and, I add, *wants to know nothing more about it*. I add that that means *to know nothing at all*.

To put on the table immediately a card that it could have made you wait a little for: that *there is no desire to know*, that there is nothing of this famous *Wissentrieb* that Freud highlights somewhere. Here Freud is contradicting himself. Everything indicates - this is the meaning of the unconscious - not simply that man *already knows* everything that he has to know, but that this

knowledge is completely limited to this insufficient enjoyment constituted by the fact that he speaks.

You clearly see that this implies a question about what is involved in this effective science that we possess so well under the name of a physics.

In what sense does this new science concern the real? The mistake in the science that I am qualifying as traditional since it comes to us from Aristotle's thinking, this mistake, I have said, is to imply that being thinks; that thought is such that to think it (*le penser*) is in its image, namely, that being thinks.

To take an example that is the closest possible to you, I will put forward that what renders what are called *human relationships* liveable, is not to think about them. And it is on this that in short there is founded what is comically called *behaviourism*. Behaviour, according to it, can be observed in such a way that it is illuminated by its end. It is on this that it was hoped to found human sciences, to envelop all behaviour, without supposing in it the intention of any subject, any finality posited as constituting the object of this (3) behaviour, nothing is easier, this object having its own regulation, than to imagine it in the nervous system.

The problem, is that it does nothing more than inject into it everything that has been elaborated philosophically, in an Aristotelian manner, about the soul. Nothing has changed. We can put our finger on this from the fact that behaviourism has not distinguished itself, as far as I know, by any upset in ethics, namely, of mental habits, of the *fundamental* habit. Being only an object, it serves an end. It is founded - whatever one may think about it, it is always there - on its final cause, which in this case is to live, or more exactly to survive; namely, to postpone death and dominate the rival.

You see, it is clear that the number of thoughts implicit in such a conception of the world, *Weltanschauung* as it is called, is properly incalculable. It is always the equivalence of the thought and the thinking that is at stake.

What is most certain about this way of thinking of traditional science, is what is called its classicism; the Aristotelian reign of the class, namely, of the genus and of the species, in other words of the individual considered as specified. It is also the aesthetics that results from it, and the ethics that are ordained by it. I would qualify it in a simple way, too simple and which risks making you see red, make no mistake, but you would be wrong to see too quickly. In any case, I say my

formula: *thought holds the whip hand and thinking is on the other side (la pensée est du côté du manche, et le penser de l'autre côté)*. This can be read from the fact that the whip hand is the word, it alone explains and justifies. In that sense, behaviourism does not go beyond the classic. It is *dit-manche* - to be read as I write *dit-mansion*. The *dit-manche* of life as Queneau says; without at the same time revealing its brutalising being. Not evident in a first approach. But what I will pick out about it, is that this *dit-manche* was read and approved by someone who knew a little about the history of thought, namely, Kojève, who applauded this *Dimanche de la vie*, recognising in it nothing less than absolute knowledge as it is promised to us by Hegel.

As someone has recently noticed, I am becoming more settled (*je me range*)! Who is making me settle down? Is it him or is it me? A (4) subtlety of the tongue. I align myself (*je me range*) with the Baroque. This is a pinpointing borrowed from the history of art. Since the history of art, just like history and just like art, are dealing not with the whip hand but with luck (*la manche*), namely, with sleight of hand, I must, before continuing, say what I mean by that, the subject *I* not being any more active in this *I mean* than in this I align myself, etc... rather with the Baroque.

And this is what is going to make me plunge into the history of Christianity. You were not expecting that! Well nevertheless I am going to do it! Plop! There you are.

The Baroque is at the start the storyette. The storyette! The little story of Christ. I mean what history recounts about a man. Don't get worked up, it was he himself who designated himself as the Son of Man. What is recounted by the four texts described as evangelical not so much because they are *good news* as *good announcers for their sort of news*. It can also be understood in that way and it appears to me to be more appropriate. They write in such a way that there is not a single fact that cannot be contested in them - and God knows that naturally people charged straight into the *muleta*, they did not spare themselves - but that these texts are nonetheless what go right to the heart of truth, the truth as such, up to and including the fact that I state that one can only half-say it.

That is a simple indication, is it not, this breathtaking success might imply that I should take up these texts and give you classes on the Gospels. You can see where that would lead us!

This to show you that they can only be got close to in the light of the categories that I have tried to separate out from analytic practice, namely, the symbolic, the imaginary and the real.

To stay with the first, I stated that truth is the *dit-mension*, with a little hyphen, and *d.i.t.* at the start, the *dit-mension* properly so called: the *mension* of what is said.. In this style of things, you cannot say better than the Gospels. One cannot say the truth any better. That is why they are Gospels. You cannot even bring the dimension of the truth (5) into play any better, namely, reject reality into phantasy.

After all, what followed sufficiently demonstrated - since I am leaving the texts aside, I will confine myself to the effect - that this *dit-mention* stands up. It inundated what is called the world, by restoring it to its filthy truth. Namely, it took up the baton of what the Roman, a mason like no other had founded in terms of a miraculous, universal balance, with what is more baths of enjoyment sufficiently symbolised in it by these famous terms of which there remain to us only crumbled pieces of which we no longer have the slightest idea to the extent it, in terms of enjoyment, anyway, really took the cake. Yeah! Christianity rejected all that into the abjection considered to be the world. It is thus not without an intimate affinity to the problem of the true that Christianity subsists. That it is the true religion, as it claims is not an excessive pretension. And this all the more so in that, closely examining the true, it is the worst that can be said about it. In particular because in this register, that of the true, once one enters it one can no longer get out of it. To *downplay* (*minoriser*) truth as it deserves, one must have entered into the analytic discourse. What analytic discourse dislodges puts the truth in its place but does not shake it. It is reduced but indispensable. It's all there, and nothing can prevail against this consolidation. Except the wisdoms that subsist, but they have not affronted it. Taoism, for example, or other salvation doctrines for whom what is at stake is not truth but the way, as the name *tao* indicates. The way, if they manage to continue something like it.

It is true that the storyette about Christ does not have, to all appearances, and as I clearly stated with the effect even that - there are nice people, they are just like dogs, they fetch the ball and bring it back to me, this was brought back to me - the little story, I was saying then, is presented not as the enterprise of saving men but as that of saving God. It must be recognised that for the one who charged himself with this enterprise, namely the Christ, for those who are (6) completely deaf, he paid the price. That is the least that can be said! And we ought indeed to be astonished that the result seems to satisfy people. For that

God should be indissolubly *three* is of a nature all the same to make us prejudge that the counting *one-two-three* pre-exists him. It is either one thing or the other: either he only takes it into account in the aftermath of the Christic revelation and it is his being that suffers, or if the *three* is prior to him, it is his unity that cops it. Whence it becomes conceivable that God's salvation is precarious and is delivered over, in short, to the good will of Christians.

The funny thing is obviously – I already told you that but you did not hear – I already told you that. The funny thing is that atheism can only be sustained by clerics; it is much more difficult for the laity whose innocence in the matter remains total. Remember poor Voltaire. He was a clever, agile, devious, extraordinarily capricious, but altogether worthy of entering, as you know, into the storage tray across the way: the Panthéon! Yeah!

Freud luckily gave us a necessary interpretation – which does not cease being written, as I define the necessary – a necessary interpretation of the murder of the son as founding the religion of grace. He did not say it quite like that, but he clearly noted that it was a mode of negation, which constitutes a possible form of the avowal of truth.

This is how Freud saves the father once again; in this he is imitating Jesus Christ. Modesty, no doubt, he does not go all out! But he contributes his little part to it, such as he is, namely, a good Jew who was not quite up to date. It is extremely widespread. They should be regrouped for them to get the bit between their teeth. How long will that last? Because there is all the same something that I would like to approach concerning the essence of Christianity. You are going to have a hard time of it today.

(7) For that, I will have to take it up from earlier on. The soul – you have to read Aristotle, you know he is worth reading – is obviously what the dominant thinking (*la pensée du manche*) culminated in. It is all the more necessary – namely, not the ceasing to be written – that what it elaborates there, the thinking *that is said* to be in question, are thoughts about the body. The body ought to amaze you more. In fact it is what amazes, what amazes classical science: how is it able to work like that? Namely, at the same time a body, your own, or any other, moreover, a wandering body, it is the same thing, you are at the same point, it must at the same time be sufficient in itself – something made me think, a little syndrome that I saw emerging from my ignorance, which was recalled to me: that if perchance tears were to dry up, the eye would no longer work very well. This is what I am calling the miracles of the body. That can already be sensed

immediately. Just suppose that the lachrymal gland no longer cried, no longer gave any more juice, you would run into trouble. Good! Ouch!

And on the other hand, it is a fact that it snivels – and why the devil does it? When corporally, imaginarily or symbolically someone steps on your foot, *you are affected* as they say. And what relationship is there between this snivelling and the fact implied by warding off the unexpected, in other words that you make yourself scarce (*qu'on se barre*)? This is a popular formula, but it clearly says what it means because it rejoins exactly the barred subject, some consonance of which you have heard here. The subject *se barre*, in effect, as I said, and more often than in his turn.

You should note here simply that there is every advantage in unifying the expression for the symbolic, the imaginary and the real; as, I am saying it to you in parenthesis, Aristotle did, in not distinguishing movement from *alloiosis*. Change and motion in space were for him – but he did not know it – were for him the fact that the subject makes himself scarce. Obviously he did not have the *true* categories, but all the same he had a good sense of things. In other words, the important thing is that all of that sticks together sufficiently for the body to subsist, barring any accident as they say, external or internal; which (8) means that the body is taken for what it presents itself to be: a closed body, as they say.

Who can fail to see that the soul, is nothing other than its supposed identity to itself? With everything that is thought up to explain it. In short, the soul is what one thinks about the body, from the dominant side. And people reassure themselves by thinking that it thinks likewise. Hence the diversity of explanations: when it is supposed to think secretly, there are secretions, when it is supposed to think concretely, there are concretions, when it is supposed to think information, well there are hormones. Or still further it gives itself over to *AND* (DNA), Adonai, Adonis, in short whatever you want!

All this to bring you to what I all the same announced at the start about the subject of the unconscious – because I am not simply talking like that, as if I were whistling in the wind – that it is truly curious that it has not been put to the test in psychology that the structure of thinking reposes on language, which language – this is all that is new in this term *structure* – the others, qualified by this label, can make of it what they wish, but I for my part what I point out, is that language comprises a considerable inertia, which can be seen in comparing its functioning to those signs called mathematical, *mathemes*, solely from the fact that they are integrally transmitted. We have absolutely no knowledge of what they mean, but

they are transmitted. It nevertheless remains that they are only transmitted with the help of language, and this is what makes the whole business so lame.

If there is something that founds being, it is assuredly the body. On this point Aristotle made no mistake. He sorted out many of them one by one in his *History of animals*, but he does not manage, read him carefully, to make the link with his affirmation – it is a matter of what he affirms, you have naturally never read the *De Anima* despite my supplications – but what he affirms, is that man thinks *with* the instrument, with his soul, namely, as I have just said to you, I could say it rapidly by way of summary, the supposed mechanisms by which (9) his body is supported.

Be careful, naturally! We are the ones who go on about mechanisms because of our physics. But our physics moreover is a physics already sidelined, on its way to the garage, I mean, because there has been quantum physics, and ever since, for mechanisms, things have exploded! Good! But anyway Aristotle, who did not get into the narrow defiles of mechanisms, that simply shows what he thought of them.

So then, *man thinks with his soul* means that man thinks with the thinking of Aristotle; so that thinking naturally holds the whip hand.

It is obvious that people all the same tried to do better, there is something else again before quantum physics. There is energetics and the idea of homeostasis. But all of this would lead us... Yeah! Would lead us toward the fact that the unconscious is something completely different. And if I wove the thing around what I stated first of all, namely, what I called the inertia in the function of language, which means that every word is this energy not yet taken up into an energetics because this energetics is not easy to measure, to make emerge from there not quantities but figures (*chiffres*) which, chosen in a way, note, that is completely arbitrary, we fix it so that there always remains somewhere a constant – for this is the foundation of energetics – and it is not easy to handle. As regards the inertia in question, we are forced to take it at the level of language itself.

What relationship could there possibly be between the articulation that constitutes language and an enjoyment which reveals itself to be the substance of thinking, which makes of this thinking so easily reflected in the world by traditional science, the one that means that God is the Supreme Being and that this Supreme Being cannot, Aristotle said, be anything other than the locus from which *it is known* what the good of all the others is? That means something. It means

something which has no great relationship with thinking if we consider it as being above (10) all dominated by this inertia of language.

It is not very surprising that people have not known how to circumscribe, corner, enjoyment or make it squeal, by making use of what seems the best thing to support what I am calling *the inertia of language*, namely, the idea of the chain, in other words pieces of string; pieces of string that make rings (*ronds*) and which, we do not very well know how, catch onto one another. I already put that forward to you at one time – I will of course try to do better – in connection with a class, and I myself am astonished, as I get older, that last year's things seem to me to be a hundred years ago! It was then last year that I took as a theme the formula that I believe I could support by a well known knot which is called the Borromean knot. The formula: *I ask you to refuse what I am offering you because it's not that (Je te demande de refuser ce que je t'offre parce que ça n'est pas ça).*

It is a formula that is carefully adapted to its effect, like all those that I utter. Look at *l'Etourdit*, I did not say: *the saying remains forgotten etc....*, I said: *that one should say*. In the same way here, I did not say *because it is only that. It's not that!* It is the cry by which there is distinguished the enjoyment that is obtained from that expected. It is where there is specified what can be said in language. Negation has every appearance of coming from there. But nothing more.

Structure, because it connects up here, demonstrates nothing if not that it belongs to the very text of enjoyment in so far as by marking the distance by which it fails, the one that would be involved if it were that, it does not simply suppose what *that would be*, it supports a different one.

There you are. This *dit-mension* – here I am repeating myself, but we are in a domain where precisely repetition is the law – this dit-mension, is Freud's saying. It is even the proof of Freud's existence. In a certain number of years we will need one! Earlier I compared him, like that, to a little pal, I compared him to Christ. Good, well obviously, we must also have proof of the existence of Christ; it is obvious, it is Christianity. Christianity in fact, as you know, is hooked (11) on there. Anyway for the moment, we have the *Three essays on sexuality*, which I would ask you moreover to consult, which I will have to use, as I formerly used these writings about what I call the drift (*la dérive*) to translate *Trieb*, the drift of enjoyment.

Yes. All that, in short, all that I insist, is properly what was contributed throughout the whole of philosophical antiquity by the idea of knowledge. Thank God, Aristotle was intelligent enough to isolate in the active-intellect what was involved in the function of the symbolic. He simply saw that the symbolic was there. It is there that the intellect must act. But he was not intelligent enough, not enough so because he had not enjoyed the Christian revelation, to think that a word, even his own in designating this *nous* which is only supported on language, concerns enjoyment, which nevertheless everywhere designated by him metaphorically, because this whole business of matter and form, think of what all of that, what all of that suggests in terms of an old yarn about copulation! That would have allowed him to see that that is not it at all. That there is not the slightest knowledge, but that the least that one can say is that the enjoyments that support the semblance of it, are something like the spectrum of white light. On the sole condition that one sees that the enjoyment at stake is outside the field of this spectrum, that it is a matter of metaphor, that we must put, as regards everything that is involved in enjoyment, we must put the false finality as a warrant of what is only the pure fallaciousness of an enjoyment that is supposed to be adequate to the sexual relationship, and that in this respect, all the enjoyments are only rivals for the finality that it would be, if enjoyment had the slightest relationship with the sexual relationship.

(12) I am going to add on, like that a little legato on Christ, because he was an important personage, and then because it comes here as a commentary on the baroque. The Baroque, it is not for nothing that it is said that my discourse partakes of the Baroque. I am going to ask you a question: how important is it for Christian doctrine that Christ should have a soul? This doctrine speaks only about the incarnation of God in a body, that it must be that the passion suffered in that person constituted the enjoyment of another. There is nothing lacking here, especially not a soul. Even the resurrected Christ is valued for his body. And his body is the means by which communion in his presence is incorporation, oral drive, with which the spouse of Christ, the Church as she is called, is very well content, having nothing to expect from a copulation. Everything that unfurled in terms of the effects of Christianity, in art specifically, and it is in this respect that I rejoin this Baroque with which I accept being clothed, is that not so. See the testimony of someone who comes back from an orgy of churches in Italy, everything is exhibition of the body evoking enjoyment, except for copulation. And if it is not present, it is not for nothing! It is just as much outside the field as it is in the human reality that it sustains, that it nevertheless sustains with the phantasies by which it is constituted. Nowhere in any cultural era has this exclusion been avowed in such a naked way. I would even say more – and you

must not think that I am not measuring out my sayings for you – I will go as far as to tell you that nowhere more than in Christianity, does the work of art as such show itself in a more blatant way for what it is, always and everywhere: obscenity.

The dit-mension of obscenity is that by which Christianity revives the religion of men. I am not going to give you a definition of religion, because there is no more a history of religion than a history of art. *The* religions are like *the* arts, it is a dustbin. There is not the slightest homogeneity.

There is all the same something in these tools that people fabricated to best one another; what is at stake is the urgency for these beings (13) whose nature it is to speak, the urgency that is constituted by the fact that they engage in amorous pursuits in modes that are excluded from what I could call, if it were conceivable, in the sense that I earlier gave to the word soul, namely, what ensures that it functions, excluded from what is supposed to be the soul of copulation, if I may dare to support with this word what by effectively pushing them if that were the soul of copulation, could be elaborated by what I am calling a physics which on this occasion is nothing more than the following: a thought sup-posed to thinking.

There is here a hole, and this hole is called the Other. At least that is how I thought I could name it. The Other as the locus in which the word, by being deposited – pay attention to the resonances here – founds the truth and with it the pact that supplies for the inexistence of the sexual relationship inasmuch as it might be supposed to be thought that is thought, in other words thinkable: that the discourse would not be reduced to starting only – if you remember the title of one of my seminars – of starting only from the semblance. That thought only acts in the sense of a science by being supposed to thinking, namely, that being is supposed to think. This is what founds the philosophical tradition starting from Parmenides on. Parmenides was wrong and Heraclitus right. This indeed is what is marked by the fact that somewhere Parmenides states: *oute legei, oute kruptei*, he neither avows nor does he hide, *alla semainei* – he signifies, putting back in its place the dominant discourse itself, of what he describes as such: *oanax, oanax ou* and *to manteion esti to en Telphois, the prince, the dominant one, who vaticinates in Delphi*.

The most unlikely, the crazy business, the one that as far as I am concerned arouses the delusion of my admiration, I roll on the ground when I read St Thomas! Because it is bloody well done. For Aristotle's philosophy to be

reinjecting by St Thomas into what one could call the Christian consciousness, if that had a meaning, is something that can be explained only because it, in short, anyway it is just like for psychoanalysts: Christians have a horror for what has been revealed to them, and they are quite right! This gap inscribed in (14) the very status of enjoyment *qua dit-mension* of the body, this in the case of the speaking being, here is what spring forth again with Freud, through this test – I am saying nothing more – which is the existence of the word. Where it speaks, it enjoys. And that does not mean that it knows nothing, because all the same, up to now, the unconscious has revealed nothing to us about the physiology of the nervous system, no! Nor even on the functioning of a hard on or premature ejaculation.

To be done this business of the true religion, I will highlight all the same, while there is still time, that God only manifests himself from writings that are described as Holy. How are they Holy? In that they do not cease to repeat the failure – read Solomon, all the same, he is the master of masters, he is the *senti-maître*, a guy like me! – the failure of the attempts of a wisdom to which being would be the testimony.

All of that does not mean, my little friends, that there were not devices from time to time, thanks to which enjoyment, and without counting it in there could be no wisdom, was able to believe that it had arrived at this end of satisfying the thinking of being. Only there you are! This end has never been satisfied except at the price of a castration. In Taoism for example – you do not know what it is, of course, very few do know, anyway I, I practised it, I have worked on the texts, of course – in Taoism, and the example is patent in the very practice of sex, in order to be well one must restrain one's ejaculation. Buddhism, for its part, of course, is the trivial example by its renunciation of thinking itself because what is best in Buddhism, is Zen; and Zen consists in that, in answering you with a bark, my little friend! That is the best thing when one naturally wants to get out of this infernal business, as Freud said.

It is more than probable that the fabulations of the ancients, mythology as you call it – for Claude Lévi-Strauss also called it that – the mythology of the Mediterranean area, among other things is precisely the one that is not touched, because it is the most bountiful, and then especially because so many different sauces have been got (15) out of it that we no longer know from what end to take it. Well then, this mythology has also arrived at something, at something in the style of psychoanalysis, do you understand? These gods, there were gods by the shovelful, it was enough to find the right one. It was enough to find the right one

and that produced this contingent business which means that sometimes, after an analysis, we end up with the fact that *each one* appropriately fucks *his own one* (*sa une chacune*).

They were all the same gods, namely, fairly consistent representations of the Other. Because naturally, let us pass over the weakness of the analytic operation. There is something very, very singular, which is that this is so perfectly compatible with Christian belief that we saw the renaissance of this polytheism, during the epoch pinpointed by the same name.

I am saying all of that to you because precisely I have come back from museums and because in short the Counter-Reformation was a return to sources and Baroque is its display. It is the regulation of the soul by corporal X-ray. I should sometime, anyway I don't know whether I will ever have the time, speak about music in the margins: but I am only talking about what is seen in all the churches of Rome, everything that is hanging on the walls, everything that crumbles, everything that delights, everything that is delirious, anyway what I called earlier obscenity, but exalted. I ask myself, what effect this stream of representations of martyrs must have on someone who might come from the depths of China. And I will say that this can be reversed, these representations which are themselves martyrs – you know that martyr means witness – martyrs of a more or less pure suffering. This is what our painting was until a vacuum was created by people seriously beginning to busy themselves with little squares.

There is here a reduction of the human species, from the motive no (16) doubt that this word human (*humain*) resonates like unhealthy mood (*humeur malsaine*). There is a remainder, which gives *malheur*. This reduction is the term by which the Church intends to carry the species, precisely, to the end of time. And it is so founded in the gap proper to the sexuality of the speaking being, that it runs the risk of being at least as well founded let us say – because all the same I do not want to despair of anything – just as well founded as the future of science. This is the title, as you know, given to one of his books by this other priestling called Ernest Renan and who for his part also was an out and out servant of the truth. He only required one thing of it, and this was absolutely primary otherwise there would be panic, which is that it should have no consequences!

The economy of enjoyment is something that is not yet at our fingertips. It is important all the same, it would be of some little interest to get there. But to tell you what is involved in it from what can be seen of it from analytic discourse, perhaps there is a little chance of finding from time to time, along paths that are

essentially contingent and that is why, if my discourse today was not something absolutely entirely negative, I would tremble at having re-entered philosophical discourse. But all the same there is a path, since already we have seen some wisdoms which have lasted for some little time, why should one not rediscover with analytic discourse something which might give a glimpse of some precise device? And after all what is energetics if not also a mathematical device? This will not be mathematical. This indeed is why the discourse of the analyst is distinguished from scientific discourse.

Anyway! Let us put that chance under the sign of *the luck of the draw*. *Encore*.

Seminar 12: Wednesday 15 May 1973

Every year things remain open on a certain number of outstanding points. This is moreover what I will be largely expanding on today.

I dreamt last night that, when I came here, there was no one. This is how the wishful character of dreams is confirmed. Naturally, since I had worked during the night, I was rather outraged since I remembered in the dream that I had been working at 4 o'clock in the morning. I was rather outraged, but the fact that all of this had been useless was all the same the satisfaction of a wish; namely, that as a result I would have nothing to do but twiddle my thumbs.

I am going to say the function, I am going to say it once more because I am repeating myself, I am going to say once more something which is a saying (*dire*) of mine which is stated as: *there is no metalanguage*.

When I say that, I am apparently speaking about the language of being, apart from the fact that of course as I pointed out the last time, what I say is that there is none. But being is, in other words non-being is not. There is or there is not.

For me it is only a matter of what is said (*dit*). Being is presupposed in certain words, individual for example, or substance. It is even designed to say that: that

being is supposed in the individual, among others. This word *subject* that I use, as you are going to see, I will come back to it, obviously takes on a different emphasis because of my discourse.

(2) In a word, I forewarn you, I distinguish myself from the language of being. This implies that there may be word fictions. I mean starting from the word. And as perhaps some of you may remember, this is where I started in order to speak about Ethics. It is not because I wrote things which play the function of form of language that I am assuring the being of metalanguage. Because I would have to present this being as subsisting by itself, by itself alone; the language of being.

Mathematical formalisation which is our goal, our ideal, why? Because it alone is *matheme*, namely, capable of being transmitted integrally. Mathematical formalisation is something written. And this is what I will try to go into today.

Now this mathematical formalisation only subsists if I employ in presenting it the tongue I use. Therein lies the objection. No formalisation of the tongue is transmissible without the use of the tongue itself. It is through my *saying* that I make *ex-sist* this formalisation, ideal metalanguage. Thus it is that the symbolic is not to be confused, far from it, with being. But that it subsists as *ex-sistence* of saying. This is what I underlined in the text called *L'Etourdit - d.i.t-* this is what I underlined in saying that the symbolic supports only *ex-sistence*. In what respect? I recalled it the last time it is one of the important things that I said in this exercise that as usual, I more or less did to hold you, to make you understand, but it would all the same be important for you to remember the essential. The essential I recalled one more time in connection with the unconscious.

The unconscious is distinguished in the midst of everything that had been produced up to the then in terms of discourse, by the fact that it states the following which is the core of my teaching, that I speak (3) without knowing it. I speak with my body, and this without knowing it. So then I always say more than I know. This is where I arrive at the sense of the word *subject* in this other discourse. What speaks without knowing it makes me *I, subject*, subject of the verb certainly, but that is not enough to make me be. It has nothing to do with what I am forced to put into being: sufficient knowledge for it to hold together. But not a drop more. And this is what up to now was called form.

In Plato form is this knowledge that fills being. Form does not know any more about it than it says. It is real, I have just said, in the sense that it holds being in

its cup, but full to the brim. It is the knowledge of being. The discourse of being presupposes that being knows. And that is what holds it together.

There is some relationship of being that cannot know itself. It is that whose structure I examine in my teaching in so far as this knowledge, which I have just said is *impossible*, is thereby prohibited (*interdit*). This is where I play on equivocation. On the equivocation which from this impossible knowledge tells us that it is censured, forbidden; it is not so if you write this *inter-dit* properly, with a hyphen between the *inter* and the *dit*. The fact is that it is said between the words, between the lines, and that this is to expose the sort of real to which it allows us access.

It is a matter of showing where the putting into form of this metalanguage which is not and which I make ex-sist, is going.

What cannot be proved suggests something true that can be said about the subject; for example, among others, what is unprovable. Thus it is that there opens up this kind of truth, the only one that is accessible to us and that impacts, for example, on the *lack of know-how (non-savoir-faire)*.

I do not know how to approach the truth - why not say it - any more than The woman since I have said that both one and the other at least for the man, are the same thing. They give rise to the same embarrassment. As if by accident, it happens that I have a taste for (4) both one and the other, despite everything that is said.

This discordance between knowledge and being, this is our *subject*. Nevertheless, one can also say that there is no discordance as regards what directs the operation, according to my title this year, *encore*. It is the insufficiency of knowledge by which we are *still* caught, and it is through this that this game of *encore* is carried on, not that by knowing more about it, it would lead us any better, but perhaps there would be better enjoyment, harmony between enjoyment and its end. Now the end of enjoyment is, this is what everything Freud articulates teaches us about what he ill-advisedly calls *partial drives*. The end of enjoyment is to one side of what it culminates at, namely, that we reproduce ourselves.

The *I* is not a being, it is a sup-position to what speaks. What speaks deals only with my solitude regarding the point of the relationship that I can only define by saying as I have done that it cannot be written. This solitude for its part, of a break in knowledge, not only can be written, but it is that which is written par

excellence. What leaves a trace of the break in being. This is what I said in a text, certainly not without its imperfections, that I called *Lituraterre*. *The cloud of language*, I expressed myself metaphorically, *constitutes writing*. Who knows whether the fact that we can read these streams that I was looking at on my return from Japan, over Siberia, as metaphorical traces of writing, is not linked – *lier* and *lire* are the same letters, pay attention to that – is not linked to something that goes beyond the effect of rain which there is no chance of animals reading as such?

It is much more rather linked to this form of idealism, that I would like you to get into your head, certainly not the one Berkeley speaks about, living at a time at which the subject had acquired its independence. Not that everything that we know is representation, but much more rather this idealism that emerges with the impossibility of inscribing the sexual relation between two bodies of different sexes. It (5) is through this that there is made the opening by which it is the world that comes to make us its partner. It is the speaking body in so far as it can only succeed in reproducing itself thanks to a misunderstanding about its enjoyment. And that means that it only reproduces itself thanks to missing what it means. For what it means (*il veut dire*) as French clearly states, its meaning, is its effective enjoyment, it is by missing it, namely, by fucking, for this is precisely, in fact, what it does not wish to do! The proof is that when it is left alone, it sublimates all the time with all its might. It sees beauty, the good, without counting the true; it is there again as I have just told you, that it comes closest to what is at stake, but what is true is that the partner of the other sex remains the Other.

It is then by missing her that it succeeds in being once again reproduced, without knowing anything about what reproduces, and in particular something which is altogether tangible in Freud, it is only gibberish but we cannot do any better – he does not know whether what is reproduced is life or death. I did not say *that which it*, I said *that which*, which it – they have to be separated. [?]

I must nevertheless say what there is *qua* metalanguage and how it is confused with the trace left by language. This is how it returns to the revelation of the correlate of the tongue, this additional knowledge (*savoir en plus*) of being, its slight chance of going to the Other, which I nevertheless pointed out the last time, this is the other essential point – is, this additional knowledge, a passion for ignorance; that precisely this is what it wants to know nothing about. *About the being of the Other it wants to know nothing*. This indeed is why the two other passions are those called love which has nothing to do, contrary to what

philosophy has lucubrated, with knowledge, and hatred which is what has most relationship with being, what comes closest to it, what I call the to ex-sist (*l'exister*). Nothing concentrates more this hatred than this expression (*dire*) where there is situated what I call ex-sistence.

(6) Writing is a trace where a language-effect can be read.

When you scribble something, and me too, I do not stint myself, certainly not, that is how I prepare what I have to say. And it is remarkable that one must make sure d by writing. This is not metalanguage even though one can make it fulfil a function that resembles it. But which nonetheless remains, with regard to the Other where language is inscribed as truth, which nonetheless remains quite secondary. For nothing of what I could write for you on the board in terms of general formulae which link, at the point that we are at, energy to matter, for example, the last formula of Heisenberg, nothing of all of that would hold up if I were not to sustain it by a saying which is that of the tongue and a practice which is that of people who give orders in the name of a certain knowledge.

So then when you scribble, faith, as they say, it is always on a page, and with lines. And here we are plunged immediately into the business of dimensions. Since what cuts a line is the point, and the point has zero dimensions, the line will be defined as having two [*sic*]. As what cuts, the line will be defined as having one. Since what cuts the line is a surface, the surface will be defined as having two. Since what cuts the surface is space, space will have three.

Only here is where the small sign that I wrote on top takes on its value. I mean the one that I must distinguish from the one that I wrote beneath. They are separate. You may note that it is something that has all the characteristics of a writing; it might moreover be a letter. Only since you write cursorily, the idea will never come to you of stopping the line before it encounters another one in order to make it pass underneath. *Assume* that it passes underneath. Because in writing we are dealing with something quite different to 3-dimensional space.

(7) This line cut here, as I have said, means that it passes under the other. Here it is over because it is the other one that is interrupted, this is what produces – even though here there is only a line – this thing which is distinguished from what might be a simple ring (*rond*) a ring of string if that existed. It is distinguished from it in the sense that even there is only a single string, it makes a knot.

This line is all the same something quite different than the definition that we have given of it earlier with regard to space, namely, in short, a cut, which makes a hole, an inside, an outside of the line.

This *other* line, this string as I called it, is not incarnated so easily in space. The proof is that the ideal string, the most simple, would be a torus. And it took a long time for it to be noticed thanks to topology that what is enclosed in a torus, is something that has absolutely nothing to do with what is enclosed in a bubble. It is not a matter of cutting the torus, for whatever you do with the surface of a torus you will not make a knot. But on the contrary with the locus of the torus, as this proves you, you can make a knot. This is why, allow me to tell you, the torus is reason (*la raison*). It is what allows the knot. This indeed is why what I am showing, this twisted torus is the simplest and neatest image that I can give you of what I evoked the other day as the trinity, one and three, in a single burst.

It nevertheless remains that it is by remaking three toruses of it by the small device that I already showed you under the name of Borromean knot that we are going to be able to bring about, say something about what is involved in the use of the first knot. Naturally there are some who were not there when I spoke last year, around February, about the (8) Borromean knot.

We are going to try today to make you sense the importance of this business. And how it is related to writing inasmuch as I defined it as what language leaves by way of traces.

The Borromean knot consists in something that we have to deal with and which is seen nowhere, namely, a true ring of string. Because imagine that when one traces a string, one never manages for its weave (*trame*) to join its two ends. In

order for you to have a ring of string, you have to make a knot, preferably a sailor's knot. I can't see what's so funny about that (*laughter in the audience*) anyway what matter! Ah! Let us make a sailor's knot. If you believe that it is easy! Try it yourselves! It always a bit embarrassing. Good! Anyway, despite everything, I tried these days to get the hang of it, and there is nothing, nothing easier than to get it wrong. There you are! Thanks to the knot you have here a ring of string.

The problem posed by the Borromean knot is the following: what to do when you have made your rings of string, in order that, in order that something in the style of what you see above, namely a knot, in order that these three rings of string should hold together, and in such a way that if you cut one of the them, they are all freed? I mean the three. The three, which is not nothing. For the problem is to ensure that with some number or other, whatever number of rings of string, when you cut one of them, all of the others, without exception, are henceforth free, independent.

Here for example is the case that already last year I put that on the board.

Naturally since I made a small mistake....

It is not quite satisfying but it is going to become so. Nothing easier in this order than to make a mistake. Ah! Another mistake!

As you see it inscribed here, it is easy for you to see that since these two rings are so constructed that they are not knotted to one another, it is uniquely by the third that they hold together. Which curiously is something that I did not manage to reproduce with my rings of string. What's the matter? But thank God, I have all the same another means of making it than reproducing what I did on the board, namely failing to do so. (**To his assistant:** *would you mind opening it for me. That one.*) I am going to immediately give you.....give you the means, in a completely rational and comprehensible way: there you are, here then is another ring of string, and here is another.

You insert the second ring into the first and you bend it like that. It is sufficient then that from a third ring you take the second, for these three to be knotted, and knotted in such a way that it is quite obviously sufficient for you to section one of the three for the other two to be freed.

You don't get it? Suppose, my dear friends, that you take this one away. The one that I have just taken up again. Huh? You want the last one? Is this the one that you want? But it is altogether the same thing! It is altogether the same thing for the simple reason that this one, that I represented to you as bent and which has in short two ears into which the third one passes, it is absolutely symmetrical on the other side, namely that with respect to the third there are also two ears that catch the first. Not simply this, you must not believe, you know, that all this messing is useless. It is not so familiar. The way in which I am led to explain it, with the mistakes, precisely, is not going to make you get it into your head. Because I have to show it to you. Because after all, that is the only way that it can get in. After the first bending, you can with the third, on condition here of making a knot, make a new bend. And at this one a fourth, which is like the first being added on.

You see that it remains just as true with four as with three, that it is enough to cut one of these knots for all the others to be free of one another. You can put an absolutely infinite number of them, it will always be true.

Nevertheless, this business which makes the Borromean knot simple in this sense that here for example you can perfectly well put your finger on how the two parts of this element make an ear, this one and this one, and that in short, by pulling it with the other one, it is this ring which is bent in two. Here and here go the two ears, and this (11) circle there, which for its part will go, that we can on this occasion, but only on this occasion, call first, which will remain in the state of a ring, of support-ring for the first bent ring.

With this tangible intuition, in a way, of the function of rings, you can ascertain that it is enough to cut any one of them, either one in the middle or one of the two extremities, for all the bent knots that are there to be freed from one another at the same time. The solution is then absolutely general.

This does not mean that for any number whatsoever of rings of string, one can make an arrangement that is so relatively elegant by its relative symmetry as the one that I have made on the board, namely that these three rings are strictly, with respect to one another, of equivalent form. It will certainly be more complicated once you have arrived at four, this will quite often show us effects of torsion which will not allow us to maintain them in the state of rings.

(12) Nevertheless, what I want to get you to sense on this occasion is that, starting from rings, we are dealing with something that can only be distinguished by being the One. This is very precisely, moreover, why a true ring of string is very difficult to make without a knot. But it is certainly the most eminent representation of something that is only sustained by the One. Very precisely in this sense that it encloses nothing but a hole. And that why, in times past, I brought the Borromena knot into play.

It is very precisely to express the formula: *I ask you, what?, to refuse what, what?, what I offer you*: namely, something that with regard to what is at stake – and you know what it is - namely the small **o**-object – the small **o**-object is not any being, the small **o** object is what is supposed, supposed in terms of void, by a

demand. And when all is said and done, it is only by defining it as situated by metonymy, namely by the pure continuity assured from the beginning or the start of the sentence, that we can imagine what can be involved in a desire that no being supports. I mean that it is without any other substance than that assured by the knots themselves. And the proof, is that, in stating this sentence: *I ask you to refuse what I am offering you*, I can only justify it from the *it's not that* of which I spoke, that I took up again the last time, and which means that, in the desire of every demand, there is only the request of this something which with regard to enjoyment would be satisfying, which would be the *Lustbefriedigung* supposed in what is equally wrongly called in analytic discourse *the genital drive*, the one in which there is supposed to be inscribed a relationship which is supposed to be the full relationship, the relationship inscribable between what is involved in the One and what remains irreducibly the Other.

That is why I insisted on the fact that the partner of this *I* which is the subject, the subject of any demand sentence, the fact is that its partner is not the Other but this something which comes to be substituted for it in the form of this cause of desire that I believed I could diversify, diversify and not without reason, into 4, in so far as it is constituted, according to the Freudian discovery, in so far as it is diversely constituted from the object of sucking, the object of excretion, of the (13) look and moreover of the voice.

It is as *substitute* of what is involved in the Other that these objects are claimed to be, are made into the *cause* of desire.

As I said earlier, it seems that the subject represents inanimate objects to himself very precisely in function of the fact that there is no sexual relation. It is only speaking bodies, as I said, who have an idea of the world as such. And in this respect one could say that the world, that the world as such, the world of being full of knowledge, is only a dream, a dream of the body in so far as it speaks.

There is no knowing subject. There are subjects that give themselves correlates in a small *o* object. Correlates of enjoying words *qua* enjoyment of the word. What do they corner (*coincer*) but other Ones? For, as I pointed out to you earlier, it is clear that this bilobulation, this transformation of the ring of string into ears, can be done in a strictly symmetrical way. This is even what happens as soon as one gets to the level of four. Namely, that the two rings represented by my fingers at the extremity of these will be functioning. There will be four of them.

The reciprocity, in a word, between the subject and the small **o** object is total. For every speaking being, the cause of his desire is strictly, as regards structure, equivalent, as I might say, to its bending, to what I called its division as subject. And this indeed is what explains to us why the subject was so long able to believe that the world knew as much as he about it. It is because it is symmetrical. The fact is that the world, what I called the last time thought (*le penser*), is the equivalent, is the mirror image of thinking (*la pensée*). This indeed is why the subject, in so far as he phantasises, there was nothing, until the advent of the most modern science, there was nothing but phantasy as regards knowledge. And this is what allowed this ladder of being thanks to which there was supposed a being called the Supreme Being, which was the good of all, which is moreover the equivalent, the equivalent of the fact that the small **o**-object can be said, as its name (14) indicates, write *petit a*, in brackets, put *sexué* after it, (*a*)*sexué*, and you know that the Other is only presented to the subject in an a-sexed form. Namely, that everything that was the support, the substitute support, the substitute of the Other in the form of the object of desire, everything that was made of this order, is a-sexed. And this is precisely why the Other as such remains, remains, not that we cannot advance a small further in it, remains a problem in the Freudian doctrine, theory; the one that is expressed by the fact that Freud repeated: what *does The woman want?* The woman being on this occasion equivalent to the truth. It is in that sense that this equivalence that I have produced is justified.

Are we not able nevertheless, along this path, this path of what I distinguished as the One to be taken as such, in this sense that there is nothing other in this figure of the ring of string, which has nevertheless the interest of offering us the something that no doubt rejoins writing, the requirement in effect that I produced under the name of Borromean knot, namely, of finding a form, this form supported by this mythical support which the ring of string is. Mythical, I said, because a closed ring of string cannot be made. This is an altogether important point.

What is this requirement that I stated under the name of Borromean knot? It is very precisely something which distinguishes what we find in language, in the everyday tongue, which is supported by the very widespread metaphor of the chain, as opposed to rings of string. Chain elements are made, are forged. It is not very difficult to imagine how this is done, one twists the metal until one can manage to solder it and the chain is thus something which can have its function in order to represent the use of the tongue. No doubt it is not a simple support. In this chain we would have to make links which would hook (15) onto another link a little further on, with two or three intermediary floating links. And also

understand why a sentence is of limited duration. Now, the metaphor cannot give us all of this.

It is nevertheless striking that in taking the supports of the rings of string that I told you about, there were all the same, in what I made tangible for you, a first and a last. This first and this last were simple rings which broke through, which pierced as one might say the two, what I call, you see the difficulty of speaking about these things, what I call the earlobes, the bent back rings. It was then two simple knots that at the end, were found to constitute something like the beginning and the end of the chain.

There remains the following. There remains the fact that nothing prevents us from confusing these two initial and terminal rings. Namely, that having cut them – cut, this is imaginary, it is enough to undo them – get single one of them to catch the four lobes thus summed up in the case in which there are only two. But the situation would be exactly the same if there were an infinite number of them. Something to note: we would not have, to express myself quickly, we would not all the same still have a difference in this case. It is not because we would have married the two final knots that all the articulations would be the same, for here they are confronted two by two, there are then four strands to make a knot, while here in taking my single circle, you would have the support of this circle and four strands to pass through. Which would give a confrontation not of two by two, which make four, but of four and one which make five. And then one could say what would then be, since here you only have two elements, the third element in its topological relationship would not have the same relationship with the two others as the two others among themselves. And as such, by a simple inspection of the functioning knots, the third element would be distinguished from the others.

(16) I think I have said enough about the symmetry of the relationships of the first and the second, since I called the third the last. This symmetry still holds up if you unify the third ring with any one whatsoever of the two others. Simply you will then have a figure like this one, the one which confronts a simple ring with what I call the internal eight.

You will then have had the full flowering of the Other but at the cost of the looming up of something which is the internal eight which, as you know, is that by which I support the Moebius strip. In other words, that by which in a strict support of this path that I am trying to open up for you about the function of the knot, is expressed by the interior eight. Here I can only begin it, why? Because I have still, before I leave you, to put forward something which seems to me to be essential. If I gave you the solution of the Borromean knots by this succession of bent chains in the form of these rings that become totally independent again provided you cut one of them, of what use can this be?

Contrary to what you see in language, namely, what is very simply materialised for you, and it is not very difficult either to find an example of it, and not for nothing in psychosis. Remember what hallucinatorily peoples the solitude of Schreber: *Nun will ich mich.....*, which I translate: *now I am going to.....* it's a future. Or again: *Sie sollen nämlich, you ought for your part.* These interrupted sentences that I called *code messages*, these interrupted sentences, leave in suspense some substance or other. Of what use can there be (17) to us this requirement of sentence whatever it may be which is that having sectioned the One, namely, having withdrawn the One from each of these links all the others are freed at the same time, do we not have here the best support that we could give of the way in which there proceeds this language that I called mathematical?

What is proper to mathematical language once it has been sufficiently tightened up as regards its exigencies of pure proof, is very precisely that everything that is put forward in it, not so much in spoken commentary as in the handling of letters, assumes the fact that it is enough for one not to hold up for all the remainder, all the rest of the other letters, not only do not constitute anything valid by their arrangement, but are dispersed. And it is very precisely in this that the Borromean knot can serve us as the best metaphor as regards what is involved in a exigency which is the following: that we proceed only from the One.

The One engenders science. Not in the sense that anything whatsoever is measured by it. It is not what is measured in science that is important, contrary to what is believed. What constitutes the original core, what distinguishes science, modern science from the science of the reciprocity between the *nous* and the world, between what thinks and what is thought, is precisely this function of the One. In so far as the One is only there, is only there we may suppose, to represent what is involved precisely in the fact that the One is alone. In the fact that the One is not truly knotted to anything that resembles the sexual Other. That it is, contrary to the chain between the Ones which are all made in the same way,

by being nothing other than being of the One. When I said: *there is something of the One (il y a de l'Un)*, and when I insisted on it, that I really pounded that like an elephant all through last year, you see what I am opening up and what I am introducing you to.

How then put somewhere as such the function of the Other?

How if, up to a certain point, it is simply from the knots of the One that there is supported what remains of any language when it is written? How posit a difference, for it is clear that the Other is not (18) added to the One, the Other is simply differentiated from it? If there is something by which it participates in the One, it is that far from it being additioned, what is at stake concerning the Other, is, as I already said but it is not sure that you have heard it, the fact is that the Other is the less One (*l'un en moins*). That is why that in, in any relationship of the man with the woman she who is implicated, it is from the angle of the less One that she ought to be taken.

I already indicated that to you a little in connection with Don Juan; but of course, I believe there was only a single person, to wit my daughter, who noticed it.

Nevertheless in order simply today to begin something else that I can tell you, I am going to show you something. For it is not enough to have found a general solution to what is involved in the problem for an infinite number of Borromean knots. We must have the means of showing that it is the only solution. Now the state we are at up to today, is that there is no theory of knots. What does that mean? That means that very precisely there is not applied to the knot, up to today, any mathematical formalisation which will allow us, outside some small fabrications of small examples such as the ones I showed you, to foresee a solution, the one I have just given, is not simply an existent solution, but that it is necessary; that it does not cease – as I say to define the necessary – that it does not cease being written. Now, it is enough for me right away to show you something that of course I am going to write on the board because you have no idea of the trouble it gives me to put all of that on paper in a way that I make available to you, which will moreover be photographed in a forthcoming article but which demands a certain.....

It is enough for me to make this for you, huh?

(19) It is annoying that the other knots are there, look at that: I have just put two of these rings into one another, in such a way that they give here not this bending that I showed you earlier, but simply a sailor's knot. Since they are by this very fact, since I have fitted them together closed, since they are by this very fact perfectly separable from one another, you must think that, if simply, which is also just as possible for me, I make with a circle which follows the same sailor's knot, it is enough for me to bring another one close to these, here is the sailor's knot, here I can do the same thing with a third ring, I will still have a sailor's knot. It does not matter that it is face to face with the first or that it is strictly in the line, namely, that what goes in front, also goes in front of the following, I can make an infinite number of them and even close the circle that this will give, close it simply for the last one; the last one of course will not be separable, I must put this last one between the two at the end of what I have already constructed and I must put it through by making a knot, and not by introducing it as I have just done with these two there.

It nevertheless remains that here is another solution, just as valid as the first, because if I were to section any one of those that I have fitted together in this way, all the others at the same time are free and nevertheless it would not be the same sort of knot. I passed over on this occasion the fact that earlier, for the knot that I thus showed you, telling you that moreover there was some necessity that the one in (20) which I married the first and the last ring, some necessity for a difference, in reality it is nothing of the kind. For I point out to you, at the moment when I had just shown you the others, namely, what I called the taking shape of the sailor's knot, you see very clearly from the fact that even the last, this last of whom I told you that the confrontation was from one to four, and that at the same time there were five strands involved, that I can even make the last exactly like all of those here. That there is no difficulty in that. And that thus, I would also have resolved in this way, without introducing any privileged point, the question of the Borromean knot for a number x , and moreover indeed infinite number of rings of string.

Is it not in this possibility of difference, since moreover there is no topological analogy between the two ways of knotting these rings of string? Is it in this different topology, one that we can express here in connection with sailors' knots, it is a topology of torsions, let us say, as compared to the others, which would be simply one of flexion. Can we use this in order, for it would not be contradictory to take even this into a sailor's knot? It is very easy to make; try it out. Very exactly, here is the way the thing bends, tackles, the sailor's knot.

Where put the limit of this use of knots in order to arrive at the solution of the following: the sectioning of any one whatsoever of these rings of string involves the liberation of all the others? Namely, gives us the model of what is involved starting from this mathematical formalisation, the one that substitutes for the function of any number whatsoever what is called a letter. For mathematical formalisation is nothing other than that. When you write that something, inertia, is half of mv^2 – what does it mean? That means that whatever may be the number of ones that you put under each of these letters you are subject to a certain number of laws which are the laws of grouping, such as addition, multiplication.....

(21) This is the question that I am opening up and which is designed to announce to you, if required, what I hope, what I can eventually transmit to you about what is written.

What is written, in short, what might that be? The conditions of enjoyment. And what counts, what might that be? The residues of enjoyment. Because moreover, is it not by conjoining this a-sexed O with what she has in terms of more enjoying at being the Other, of being only able to be said Other, that the woman offers it under the species of the small o-object.

Man believes he creates (*croit créer*) – you may believe that I am not saying that to you by chance, *croit – croit- croit – good! – crée – crée – crée*, and he *crée – crée – crée*'s the woman. Yeah! In reality, he puts her to work, and to the work of the One. And this indeed is why this Other, inasmuch as the articulation of language, namely, of truth can be inscribed in it, the Other may be barred. Barred on the basis of what I qualified earlier as less One. The S of O in so far as it is barred – S(\emptyset) – it is indeed this that it means. And this is how we manage to pose the question of making of the One something that holds together, namely, that is counted without being.

Mathematisation alone reaches a real, and this is why it is compatible with our discourse, the analytic discourse, a real which precisely escapes, which has nothing to do with what traditional knowledge has supported, namely, not what it believes, reality, but indeed phantasy.

The real is the mystery of the speaking body, it is the mystery of the unconscious.