



*Jacques
Lacan*

THE FRENCH CONTEXT

Marcelle Marini

Translated by Anne Tomiche

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**To Doctor Edwige Eliet-Bronislawski who died in 1983;
she was my analyst and my friend.**

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List of Abbreviations

- A.E. Analysts of the Ecole (E.F.P.).
- A.M.E. Member Analysts of the Ecole (E.F.P.).
- A.P. Practitioner Analysts (at the E.F.P.).
- A.P.F. Association Psychanalytique de France (1964), affiliated with the I.P.A.
- E.C.F. Ecole de la Cause Freudienne (1981)
- E.F.P. Ecole Freudienne de Paris (1964–1980)
- E.N.S. Ecole Normale Supérieure, an important place of teaching, located in Paris at the rue d’Ulm.
- E.P. Evolution Psychiatrique, both the name of the organization and of the journal.
- E.P.H.E. Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, an important place of research in France.
- I.J.P. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, the I.P.A.’s journal.
- I.P.A. International Psycho-Analytical Association (1910).
- R.F.P. Revue Française de Psychanalyse, the S.P.P.’s journal.
- S.F.P. Société Française de Psychanalyse (1953–1964)
- S.P.P. Société Psychanalytique de Paris (1926), affiliated with the I.P.A.

Introduction

The career of Jacques Lacan (1901–1981) covers more than fifty years of work and struggle, a span of over fifty years in the troubled history of psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and intellectual life in France (from surrealism to phenomenology, then to structuralism).

Jacques Lacan: psychiatrist; psychoanalyst; clinician and theoretician; teacher (almost thirty years of seminars open to a diversified audience who, as early as 1966, crowded eagerly to attend); lecturer at the *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes*; and founder in 1964 of his own group, the *Ecole Freudienne de Paris*. He was its sole director until 1980 when he, and he alone, decided to dissolve it, only to invite, immediately thereafter, those who wanted to go on with Lacan to form around him what was to become the *Ecole de la Cause Freudienne*. This was the last gesture of an old and sick man who bequeathed to his son-in-law, Jacques-Alain Miller, an institution that could look after Lacanian orthodoxy, spread it through the world, and defend a teaching that was mainly oral, and therefore, fragile. It was Lacan's name that allowed the Department of Psychoanalysis at the University of Paris at Vincennes to be created in 1969, including, shortly thereafter, a clinical section, which was a very controversial decision in psychoanalytic circles.

As early as the end of World War II, Lacan participated in editorial initiatives. At the time of the success of *Ecrits*, in 1966, Lacan was the director of a series, "Le Champ freudien," at the Seuil publishing house. Some of his own texts, but mainly the books of the members of his group [*les siens*], were published there. Publication in such a series constituted a stamp of membership. Finally, he was famous for the cases he presented at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne, where he was a much sought-after lecturer and was often invited abroad. Lacan was a personality not only in the intelligentsia but in all of Paris as well. Such fame and glory seems incongruous with the romantic figure of the excluded, the accursed, and the unrecognized genius that is often part of his legend.

In fact, Lacan is the best-known French theoretician of psychoanalysis. Indeed, he was the first one, inasmuch as one speaks of Lacanianism as one speaks of Jungianism, Kleinianism . . . or Freudianism. Abroad, Lacanian psychoanalysis is often synonymous with French psychoanalysis, which, as we shall see, is problematic. He is even sometimes called the French Freud.

This increasing confusion among a name, a theory, and the broad and open field of psychoanalysis as a discipline led me to dedicate this book to my analyst, now gone without having left a single piece of writing. Take it as an homage to unknown psychoanalysts, to all those men and women who spend their lives alleviating intolerable and unnamable suffering, by their listening and their speech. They help everyone (men or women) individually move toward a different way of being with oneself, with others, and with the world, neither hoping for, nor imposing, nor making anybody believe in a miracle. They, themselves, must come to terms with the successes or failures of daily work. They are the forgotten in the history of psychoanalysis.

Lacan is the most controversial psychoanalyst, in part because, as a fearsome polemicist, he assailed all other theoreticians, including his own students—to some extent with the help of the wonderful lightning rod he created for himself in 1953, “the return to Freud.” The character himself seduces, fascinates, revolts, but rarely leaves anybody indifferent. Anecdotes about him abound, just as they did about Salvador Dali whose appetite for provocation and whose art of display and scandal, in turn, fascinated Lacan. But the stakes here are higher because Lacan practices, legislates, and theorizes in a domain that deals with the unconscious and in which an individual’s future, even his life, is on the line. Eccentricity in behavior and in speech may be the sign of a mode of thinking outside norms (“too far ahead,” the Lacan—Master said), but nonetheless, it cannot guarantee the real value, the truth, or even the originality of a theory. Understandably, the fight is raging among Lacanians, anti-Lacanians, non-Lacanians, ex-Lacanians, and now among Lacanians of a different allegiance.

In his “Address to the Congress in Rome,” in 1974, Jacques-Alain Miller showered Lacan with praise: “Lacan the master”; “Lacan the *enseigneur*” (and not the common *enseignant*, teacher; “Lacan the hysteric,” but in the manner of Socrates whose speech is authentic; “Lacan the educator”; “Lacan the analyst” who is at the same time “always analysand.”¹ One also ought to read Gérard Haddad’s article in the journal *L’Ane*, which appeared shortly after the Master’s death: “I testify for Lacan,” “a prince of the mind”; “a new Socrates who invited the young to express the full speech that they have in them”; “a convict of psychoanalysis or a saint”; only the “limping ones” came to him, not “the Trissotins of clinical practice”;^a and, as a final note: “Lacan, a pervert, a liar, a swindler, an inducer-of-suicide? Alas! the poor people!” Carried along by his own momentum, Haddad even states that “he does not know any work clearer than the seminars.”² However, Lacan rejected clarity of expression as too univocal and, as early as 1956, he

a. Throughout the text, lettered footnotes are the translator’s; numbered endnotes are the author’s. Trissotin is a character in Molière, characterized by his pretentiousness and his affectation.

claimed with pleasure and not without irony his title as the “Gongora of psychoanalysis.”³

Criticism of Lacan started in 1953 and became more and more violent through the years. It can be summarized by the following three judgments. “Lacan’s specific practice is a perversion of psychoanalysis by seduction, manipulation of transference, and lies.”⁴ His increasingly abstract theory rejected some fundamental aspects of psychoanalysis, aspects that were nevertheless required for the efficiency of its practice, in favor of a strictly linguistic and logico-mathematical conception of the unconscious and of the subject. As for the suicides, the failures, and the disasters among some of his analysands, they were not “gossip from Orleans”: they were actual facts, but they were difficult to evaluate in relation to the number of psychoanalytic treatments conducted in France.⁵ In any case, one can say that, on all these points, Lacan kept obstinately silent, except to reassert that, for him, to “cure” patients was an irrelevant project.

So, who was Lacan? Was he a visionary, a shaman, or a guru? Was he an analyst who, at last, was a scientist, the inventor of the graphs and the mathemes meant to become the foundations of the analytic experience—to the point that, for some, he has substituted himself for Freud so that there would be no need to read any other analyst, except for critical purposes? Was he a sorcerer’s apprentice or an exemplary practitioner? With its doctrinal wars, psychoanalysis in France today seems to repeat the old religious wars. In such doctrinal wars one wonders about the importance given to the patient (or to the analysand). This is reminiscent of Wladimir Granoff’s amazing statement, at the beginning of *Filiations*: he calmly asserted that he did not have any means to decide who was a good or a bad analyst, but that, nonetheless, he could provide “safe landmarks by which to know who is a Freudian or who is not.”⁶ These were disturbing comments because they were often true. Such comments passed by word of mouth or through the networks of personal or institutional relations. How could we not end this series of questions about Lacan with Althusser’s heartrending scream, addressed to Lacan, at the time when things were coming to an end between them: “Magnificent, pathetic Harlequin”?⁷

If we tried to judge on tangible evidence, that is, on the whole of Lacan’s works, we are indeed embarrassed, because few texts are really accessible to a broad audience. Of course, there is *Écrits* (forty thousand copies sold in a short period of time). However, *Écrits* comprised only a selection of texts written before 1966; some of them are difficult to read, because of Lacan’s writing itself and because they are cut off from older texts or from the teaching given in the seminars since 1953. The publication of the seminars in book format took place late and in dispersed order: *Télévision* was published at the very moment of its broadcasting in 1973; it was only in 1975 that the 1932 thesis on paranoia was reprinted, at the time of the publication of *Séminaire I*

and *Séminaire XX*; *Séminaire II* came out in 1978, and *Séminaire III* in 1981; finally the article on the family (1938) was reprinted in 1984. These are only the tip of an iceberg of an immense body of work whose bulk remains unknown (disseminated in different journals that are out of print or have a small distribution), even buried under water. Nowadays, at a time when pornography has been accepted, most of Lacan's seminars circulate clandestinely, as anonymous versions (my expression) or as pirated editions (the expression of a recent trial).

Lacan's work, in official or clandestine circulation, adds up to over eight thousand pages. This includes neither the scientific publications signed collectively before 1932, nor the countless addresses in the different psychiatric, psychoanalytic, or philosophical associations in which he participated, nor the lectures that have not yet been published, nor the summaries of seminars that he approved! Less than three thousand pages constitute volumes sold in bookstores, about one thousand pages are disseminated in journals or collective works. One must be an initiate to discover them. Half of all the printed pages—the half that is discreetly called unpublished in critical works (when they mention it)—deals with seminars that have elaborated fundamental notions, a new conception of psychoanalysis, and an ethics that reveals a notion of the human being, not to say an ideology (in the general sense of the term), which helps understanding of both Lacan's career and his system of values. The problem of the dissemination of Lacan's published and unpublished works is so complex that I have devoted part of my first chapter to it. Indeed, two important questions are raised. The first one is that of the relations between the oral word and the written word in Lacan. I would readily call the second one, more sociological, a situation of annuity: someone attended one of Lacan's unpublished seminars or found a copy of it; s/he then revises the concepts in his/her own name, in return for a few quotes, isolated from their context and unverifiable by the audience (or the reader). This situation is repeated, from place to place, where everyone's discourse becomes in turn the Master's discourse. The annuity is both symbolic and financially concrete, since psychoanalytic teaching, which is generally a private teaching, is very expensive. Lacan used a harsher expression to describe these practices: he talked about the *poubelliciation* (trashing by publishing) of his work.^b This is why I pay homage to all those men and women who took the risk of publishing—more or less well, indeed, because it is difficult—Lacan's speech.

Understand my fundamental choice: to give the primary importance to the second half of the dossier. The Works of Jacques Lacan. I tried to follow, in its chronological order and in its historical conditions, the elaboration of a theory, without taking into account the dates of publication, often very remote from the time of writing or delivery of speech. I tried to spot the emergence of

b. *Poubelliciation* combines and plays on *poubelle*, trash, and *publication*.

a concept and to follow its transformations throughout the texts. I tried to stress the reversals in Lacan's position, to point out the repetitions, sometimes boring, yet sometimes revealing of a change due to a new context. Such changes have often been overlooked in most works on Lacanian themes when they were meant for large audiences, and they have tried to avoid hiatus and contradictions. I have forced myself to do this chronological rereading, and personally I found it very healthy. I hope it is for the public too. I conceived that section of the book as a journey of discovery, in which the informative character could not be separated from a precise analysis. I have hidden neither my questions, nor my confusions, doubts, and choices. Otherwise how could I have made it a liberating journey for the different audiences to whom this book is addressed: students in psychology, psychiatry, literature, or philosophy; nurses or teachers going through analytic training; a broader audience who wants personal landmarks to understand these often peremptory or abstruse discourses; intellectuals (men and women) in whose landscape Lacan belongs without being precisely situated? Internal cross-references (from one text to others) and appendices have been included to allow everyone to find his/her own paths, to pursue his/her questions or interests, without, however, ignoring the sociocultural context in which Lacanian theory found its place. That context creates a link with the first part of the dossier, *Chronology*, in which the insertion in history has been stressed more.

I want to resist the retention—or the confiscation—of knowledge and, for that purpose, I have conceived this dossier within the limits of what was available to me. Indeed, who has not had to make real investigations to find out where, when, and how Lacan elaborated a certain concept, analyzed a certain literary, philosophical, or psychoanalytic text, or talked about a particular case study? Who, daring to express a reservation or a criticism concerning a Lacanian formula, has not received as an answer an unknown text that worked against him? One can also experience the opposite situation: one quotes a noncanonical text only to have to return to one's own studies: either the text does not exist, or it does not have any official doctrinal value. This happened to me with “*Le Mythe du névrosé*,” which was completely ignored in 1970 and rehabilitated in 1978.^c I am sure that the reader is familiar with other examples.

In the first part of my study I have, therefore, freed myself, because to present, with precision and nuances, the whole Lacanian theory, was to attempt the impossible and I could not do it. In that first section, one will find

c. In order to avoid cumbersome citations, the titles of Lacan's works (texts, articles, etc.) will be given in French. For each work, a translation can be found in the section on *The Works of Jacques Lacan*. Moreover, very few of Lacan's works have been translated. I have used the existing translations when they were available; in such cases I refer to them, but unless otherwise specified, all translations are my own.

information about the French psychoanalytic movement, about the burning questions of the training of analysts and of the internal functioning of the different societies. One will find a study of the major points of the theory, a reflection on the underlying and sometimes explicit values that motivate Lacan's thought processes and his discoveries. In short, what is the Lacanian creed that satisfied so well an audience and a time?

To conclude on a humorous note, I want to quote Victor Hugo's sentence in *L'Homme qui rit*: "Some destinies have a secret, I have the key to mine, and I open my enigma. I am predestined, I have a mission." Would Lacan deny this sentence?

On what grounds, some may ask, can I speak about Lacan? On no grounds, it is a privilege. I write as an analysand from the years 1959–1963 who completed her analysis, as one who never became an analyst, but who, as often happens to many of those who went through analysis, always remained more or less in analysis, with literary or theoretical texts, and as a teacher, always confronted with relations of transference; no more, no less.

In any case, I refuse one of Lacan's statements, concerning his *Écrits* but which, in his eyes, holds for all his research: "one either takes what they formulate or one leaves them."⁸ The greatest reward I expect from the work I have done is dialogue: criticism and confrontation.

Lacan and Psychoanalysis

“Take a leaf out of my book
and don’t imitate me.”
(1974)

“It is up to you to be Lacanians.
As far as I am concerned, I am a Freudian.”
(1980)

Lacan Came and Went

THE PRESENT SITUATION OF PSYCHOANALYSIS IN FRANCE

Consider the following extraordinary situation: in France, as of July 1985, to my knowledge, no fewer than *fifteen* groups with different names all claimed to be practicing the most orthodox form of psychoanalysis, namely Freud's. Yet, there is no guarantee that since then one of them has not split up, shut down, or, for that matter, that several friends did not decide out of the blue to form a group by creating a new association according to the law of 1901. Because the fear of a takeover is very strong, such an association would need meticulously elaborated statutes and a complicated theoretical preamble in order to distinguish itself from the others. First, to avoid all confusion, allow me to recall that there were, and still are, Jungian psychoanalysts: they form La Société Française de Psychologie Analytique. Belonging to this society, Le Groupe d'Etudes C. G. Jung, in Paris, organizes seminars, conferences, debates, publishes the *Cahiers de psychologie jungienne*, circulates tapes, and makes its tape library available to the public.¹ In that group, as elsewhere, one can find good analysts and happy members who are in analysis [*analysants*] or who have completed analysis [*analysés*].^a Indeed, one day at a party, a young woman I had met told me in what appeared to be an apology: "I will probably become a Jungian psychoanalyst because, in that group, I felt like I was finally able to breathe and talk." Like many others she had attended the workshops or weekends held by many small organizations born out of the dissolution of the Ecole Freudienne de Paris (E.F.P.).

Let us adopt the point of view of someone who wants to begin psychotherapy or psychoanalysis: one does not embark on such an experience without anxiety, and the desire for a minimum of guarantees is, thus, quite strong. Nobody knows by heart the *Who's Who* of psychoanalysis, the directories of the different schools, or the reputations that, rightly or wrongly, circulate. The analysts themselves, in order to keep track of the institutions, need to publish a (genealogical) list of the associations, declarations of principle, and different modes of functioning.² Furthermore, a good number of analysts,

a. The analysands [*analysants*] are still in the process of analysis while the analyzed patients [*analysés*] have completed their analysis. This distinction will recur throughout the book.

both experienced and beginners, do not belong to any group and sometimes have a second job. So, how does one choose? Does one rely on luck? Does one pick a name in a book, or somebody heard at a conference? How about a friend's advice? However, that is often contradicted by another friend's advice. A radio or television show? A doctor's or a professor's advice? What about the coincidence of an encounter? An advertisement in a paper? Even a sticker on a street lamp (I used to see those at Denfert-Rochereau)? When disarray prevails anything might work. Given this situation, how can people still be surprised about the endless line of those in search of an analyst, about the number of abrupt interruptions in the course of analysis, or about the frequent changes of analyst?

Some have no choice: those are the ones who are sent to hospital services, institutions for children, or other medical centers. More and more often an analyst's professional role in a public institution (including the requisite abilities) is confused with the analyst's affiliation with a particular theoretical stand or school, which analysts nonetheless claim are free from any official control. A fascinating article published in *Psychanalyses*, "La Psychanalyse à sa place," along with an order of the Court of Appeal in Paris in 1983, clearly raises the question of this desire for homogeneity, which in turn may lead to the exclusion of some psychoanalysts on account of "analytic deviance."³ Is one thinking about the patients? For them, either it works, in which case it's fine, or it doesn't and they have to keep going from institution to institution.

Such an example leads us to the problem of the training of analysts, the main source of their conflicts, and since the 60s, the problem is also that of the training of psychiatrists, psychologists, medical aides in psychiatric hospitals, social workers, teachers in medical-pedagogical centers, etc. Because the private practice of analysts who hold an institutional position or who belong to an association has kept increasing, camps and allegiances have developed. The analyst-in-training is dependent before analysis, dependent after analysis, dependent for a potential job, and dependent regarding the effects of group transference.^b Those at the top of the social hierarchy (doctors, psychiatrists, academics) choose to be trained in a particular society, depending on that society for its theoretical interests, of course, but also on the professional perspectives of the society (membership and then tenure at a prestigious place). Often, however, it is an open secret that one underwent (and is still undergoing) a "fragment of analysis" [*tranche d'analyse*] in another society, often without making any mention of it. This was especially true when Lacan was alive. But what about those psychologists who, in order to pay for their analysis and the training curriculum, must accept whatever positions they are

b. Those who want to become psychoanalysts have to undergo a training analysis [*analyse didactique*], which is one of the most important part of their training. It is thus important to distinguish therapeutic analysis from training analysis.

offered, positions that the most experienced do not want, often the most difficult ones, and those for which they find themselves unprepared? They are neither physicians nor the quite literary people required especially by the Lacanian training. No matter how discredited the university system might be, they have to take university courses in linguistics, literature and psychoanalysis, semiology, and philosophy. And what about the nurses who watch the psychoanalysts coming and going, but cannot follow their discourse, which often has little to do with what the nurses experience day and night with their patients? For them, analytic training is a promised land but, in order to reach it, they often have to prepare a competitive exam for university admission and undertake long studies. The jargon is often such, the cultural references (including those to Freud and Lacan) are often so implicit that one might wonder about the nature of the analytic teaching in certain groups. Does the psychoanalyst who teaches talk just for a small elite, for himself, and for his image in front of his peers and the Master, both of whom he is in competition with? Then there is the paradox that one must have already done many years of official higher education in order to say: here and now we start anew for this is something totally different.

Having attended various seminars, conferences, or classes, I have had the opportunity to notice how, most of the time, the mode of discourse and the relationship between the teacher and the audience is most traditional. Actually, the only difference is that the teacher is credited not just for a communicable knowledge but also for a knowledge of and about the unconscious, a knowledge that is said to be impossible to communicate. The audience participants tend to be all the more silent since any question they venture—especially a provoking or an embarrassing one—is immediately sent back to the questioner: he is the one who will have to call himself into question. The analyst always lurks behind the teacher. One can understand why many students in a class on literature and psychoanalysis, for example, in which the teacher is not endowed with the analyst's power—an imaginary but actually exercised power—come forth and ask for the references on where Freud and Lacan spoke of a particular literary or philosophical text, a case, or a dream, where they explained a notion, and what other psychoanalysts they can read on a given question. Fortunately, in some universities, there are psychology departments where psychoanalysis has its place; let us not forget that Daniel Lagache promoted them in Strasbourg and then Paris even before World War II. Today at Paris VII,^c the department of Clinical Human Sciences [Sciences Humaines Cliniques] trains clinical psychologists, and it offers a relatively broad variety of theoretical positions. At Vincennes-Saint-Denis, in the Department of Psychoanalysis (also called department of the *Champ freudien*)

c. The University of Paris VII, also called Jussieu, is one of the branches of the Parisian University system of the Sorbonne.

the prevailing school is the Ecole de la Cause Freudienne (E.C.F.), and it seems that the goal is to form analysts, provided that they go through analysis and participate in the activities of the école. Some young (or future) psychologists declare that they take advantage of that department in order to hear different voices and theories before they start an analysis or, once begun, outside the institutional affiliation of their own analyst. For the same reason, they attend meetings of different groups, as well as classes taught in different hospitals. They take advantage of the institutional dissemination, even when they are already applying to join a specific society. Thus, a quasi-underground circulation of ideas is established, and it coexists with the violent oppositions or compartmentalizations created by the number of organizations.

However, the basic question is why do the analysts, who are close to their patients by their culture (for they have cultures, popular languages, expressions and metaphors, readings, and ways of life in common) have to dissociate themselves radically from this shared culture in order to enter an analytic training where what prevails is the dominant class's culture, and, if one thinks of the Lacanian associations, that is the most sophisticated culture that can be. Take, for example, a nurse in a psychiatric hospital, who is most likely to want to undergo analysis, although any other nurse could serve as an example as well: once the analysis is said to be successful, the only reason that this nurse is not able to become an analyst is socio-cultural inadequacies. In fact, in front of patients, the nurse is able to find the right words that the analytic intelligentsia often lacks. What if these nurses try to fight to assume the position of analyst? They become painfully divided people, precariously and awkwardly positioned with respect to an entire part of the suffering population whom they are however best capable of helping. . . . Psychoanalysis for whom and for what? To reproduce analysts? This movement of self-reproduction was obviously most developed by Lacan and his école. In 1964, Lacan had already separated "pure psychoanalysis, that is, didactic psychoanalysis" from "applied psychoanalysis," that is, so-called medical psychoanalysis (would it be impure?). Then, in 1967, he suggested to institute a new test for the accreditation of the analyst,^d the *passé* (the passage from the position of analysand to that of analyst), which led to the creation of a new category of analysts, the analysts of the école [analystes de l'école, A.E.], who would alone be capable of advancing theory. Incidentally, one could belong to that new category without being a professional analyst, provided that one had been an analysand!⁴ Thus, in my understanding, the creation of the category of practitioner analysts [analystes praticiens, A.P.] was a demagogic measure, taken in the name of the expression "the psychoanalyst only authorizes himself by himself" [le psychanalyste ne s'autorise que de lui-

d. The accreditation [*habilitation*] is the final test before the analysand becomes an analyst.

même], an expression indeed misunderstood, but also ambiguous on purpose. This expression was used as an outlet, a means of false social promotion, by a number of people who were practically forced to start an analysis in order to survive a bad working environment. At the same time, it allowed the inflation of the number of members at the école in its war against the two societies recognized by the International Psychoanalytic Society: the Société Psychanalytique de Paris (S.P.P.) and the Association Psychanalytique de France (A.P.F.). Registered on the lists of the école but without being officially recognized by it, the A.P.s were used as a maneuvering mass. One only had to read the victory reports about the number increases in the *Lettres de l'École Freudienne*.⁵ To find evidence that some were given a rough time, read *L'Ordinaire du psychanalyste*, the only truly anonymous journal, where whatever was said or thought secretly could be publicly written.⁶

The question of an officially established status for psychoanalysis—with all the risks it entails of an externally controlled normalization of training and practice—arises so insistently today in France only because of the dissemination, if not the swarm, of often very heterogeneous groups. In France psychoanalysts practice, most of the time, under the official title of doctor or psychologist. Otherwise, nothing prevents them from declaring themselves analysts or, more modestly, psychotherapists. They would then be following the example of the primal-scream followers who have actually reached the point of trying to constitute a union. No wonder the Internal Revenue classifies them with fortune-tellers et al. The dissolution of the E.F.P. in 1980 is in great part responsible for this situation because it set off a real explosion in the French psychoanalytic community. It was not, however, a thunderclap in a peaceful sky. For example, think about the (naive?) stupefaction of the Committee for Approval when it claimed to have suddenly found out, concerning the *passé*, that many member analysts of the école (analystes membres de l'école, A.M.E., hence members who had received the école's stamp of approval) were everything but analysts! But what were the criteria to become A.M.E.s? Nothing was ever actually said about them. Should that be a surprise in a group that too often confused legitimate theoretical and practical standards with intolerance of the slightest difference in opinion, especially in the interpretation of the word of its Master and director? Indeed, that group made privileged the role of psychoanalysis among the human sciences in the name of the logic of the unconscious, and did so to the detriment of clinical practice. Although secured by the most courageous and honest practitioners, practice was looked down upon as inferior, unable to produce anything new, and inevitably used as illustration of a Lacanian concept of ready-to-wear clothes [*prêt-à-porter*]. Reading the *Lettres de l'école freudienne*, the separation between the two types of work is obvious.

Let us enumerate the present analytic institutions. Still in the lead is the Société Psychanalytique de Paris (S.P.P.), which was founded in 1926 and

very easily survived the 1953 split.⁷ André Green and Conrad Stein did not leave it in spite of Lacan's entreaties to them to do so in the 60s (they even gave conferences and participated in the Master's seminar). Julia Kristeva became a member and thus joined Doctors Isle and Robert Barande, Christian David, René Diatkine, Serge Lebovici, Pierre Mâle and Dominique Geahchan, Jacqueline Chasseguet-Smirgel, René Major, Jòyce MacDougall, Serge Viderman, Michel de M'Uzan, Anne Clancier, Georges Devereux and Gérard Mendel, Jean-Claude Sempé, Maria Torok, Jean Cournut, etc. The strength of the S.P.P. (three hundred members, and approximately three hundred analysts in training) does not lie only in its affiliation with the powerful International Psychoanalytical Association (I.P.A.) but also in the diversity of its members, which testifies to what might be called a liberal association even if the word is outdated. It absorbed its own crises by regularly changing its statutes, it separated the training at the institute from the society itself when conflicts between tendencies arose, and it did not hide the hierarchical aspect of its functioning. Besides the *Revue française de psychanalyse*, its canonical journal going back to 1927, it publishes an inside bulletin that also includes theoretical articles. In addition to its numerous activities, it is regularly in contact with the provinces and the Francophone countries, and it participates in the I.P.A. congresses. Finally, the training institute works jointly with the Center for Psychoanalytic Consultation and Treatment, one of the original aspects of this institution.

The A.P.F.⁸ was born in 1964 from the split of the Société Française de Psychanalyse (S.F.P.) between Lacanians and non-Lacanians (the S.F.P. was itself born from the 1953 split). It is also affiliated with the I.P.A. It has fewer members and more academics than the S.P.P., with whom it maintains neighbourly relations and theoretical exchanges. Some names may help the reader to situate it: Jean Laplanche, Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, Didier Anzieu, Guy Rosolato, Wladimir Granoff, Pierre Fédida. Although it publishes very well known journals, such as the *Nouvelle revue de psychanalyse* and *Psychanalyse à l'université*, these journals are very open and refuse to be the direct product of the association.⁹

The Quatrième Groupe (also called Organisation Psychanalytique de Langue Française) originated from a split in the E.F.P. over the methods Lacan suggested in 1967 for the analysts' training and accreditation, methods much disputed but finally adopted by the majority.¹⁰ In 1969, François Perrier, Jean-Paul Valabrega, Piera Aulagnier, Cornélius Castoriadis, Micheline Enriquez, and Nathalie Zaltzman founded this association whose method of accreditation (modified several times) is the most original. In addition, the association accepts members who belong to other associations and who have been analyzed by analysts from other groups, and all knowledge that the candidate-to-be might have of what is done in the other groups is encouraged as part of the training. Its members publish in *Etudes freudiennes*, a broadly accessible

journal.¹¹ In October 1969, they also created *Topique*, a “journal of Freudian psychoanalysis addressed to the *practitioners* of this discipline.”¹² On these grounds, the journal gives a preference to “works that testify to and shed light on the difficulties of contemporary psychoanalytic practice by putting to the test its theoretical bases.” Such a rigorous concern for a clinical practice, inseparable from theory, characterizes this Quatrième Groupe, which, in 1984, consisted of just more than two hundred members. The flux of departures and arrivals does not seem to create any crisis for them. Finally, there has not been any request for any affiliation with the I.P.A., which incidentally does not prevent national and international contacts.

Until 1980, one could thus more or less orient oneself among the four analytic societies, including the E.F.P. created by Lacan. But the dissolution of the E.F.P. generated a flourishing of tiny groups, not only by a fission but, if I may say, by fissiparous reproduction. What is the situation today? First, although most members of the former E.F.P. did not join it, the E.C.F. presents itself as founded by Lacan.¹³ In his letter of February 26, 1981 he declared: “This is the school of my students” and he appointed a small committee around his son-in-law Jacques-Alain Miller. This enterprise, which can be described as a family enterprise (with Judith Miller, Lacan’s daughter, Laurence Bataille, his daughter-in-law, Jacques-Alain Miller’s brother, and even Gloria Gonzalès, the faithful secretary, joined by some unquestioning followers), has solid logistic support: the department of psychoanalysis at the University of Paris VIII and its clinical section. It has considerable funds, a journal *Ornicar?*,¹⁴ which existed before it was formed but that it appropriated; a magazine, *L’Ane*¹⁵; and a publishing house, *Navarin*.¹⁶ It has all the rights to print or reprint Lacan’s works. Finally, it develops groups (and bulletins) abroad, especially in Belgium, Italy, Latin-America, but it is not easy to measure their importance.

Jacques-Alain Miller’s avowed ambition is indeed to develop, around Lacanian thought and its continuation, an international association that would compete with the I.P.A.¹⁷ A genealogy of sorts from Freud to Lacan and on to Jacques-Alain Miller would guarantee the analytic orthodoxy that has been betrayed by the other societies. All the other groups born from the E.F.P. and from Lacanian teaching can, therefore, from the outset, only posit themselves as being in conflict with the E.C.F., in the very name of faithfulness to Lacan, which is not an easy situation.

However, we have to make an exception for the Collège de Psychanalystes, founded on November 3, 1980: “An association that does not owe its origin to the split of a society but to a reunion of practitioners; which does not inscribe in its project rules for the training and accreditation of its members, but sets the forms of their co-optation; which does not unload the effects of social order on analytic practice and theory but includes their analysis in its research; such an association seems to fulfill simultaneously all the conditions

required to defy the institutional psychoanalytic tradition of perpetual transference.”¹⁸ Such is the declaration made by its first president Dominique Geahchan in the first issue of the journal *Psychanalystes*.¹⁹ Indeed, analysts coming from different horizons meet at the Collège de Psychanalystes while sometimes remaining members of another group: it is truly an “association,” I would say a professional association but in the noble sense of the term. The journal gives the most information about the birth and statutes of new societies, about their position as far as training and research, and about the relations with the state and more generally civil society. Placed side by side with clinical and theoretical reflections and very open accounts of published books are problems of value-added tax, of an official status for the analysts, of their place in the educational, scientific, or hospital institution, of their position in a totalitarian regime, or in the face of nuclear war, etc. A special issue on “The Myth of Oneness in Fantasy and in Political Reality,” devoted to a colloquium led by Claude Lefort and François Roustang, illustrates the novelty of the project.²⁰ Upon reading this journal, one has the feeling of escaping from psychoanalytic closure. Of course, analysis has always addressed literature, arts, ethnology, or mathematical logic, but it seemed to do so in order to enclose itself better in them or to enclose them, outside of the concrete social time. Once again, the last issue of *Psychanalystes* is concerned not “to elude the question of the insertion” of psychoanalysis “in the political space and the sociocultural field.” It intends to decipher the effects that social revolution in France may have on analytic practice and theory, insofar as analysts and analysands live, as everybody else, the various crises of the time. It seeks to delineate the field of analytic activities without falling either into the trap of the “apolitical and solipsistic illusion,” which would turn the treatment into an extratemporal space meant to “ward off the social,” or into submission to political immediacy and to the dominant values of the time. Moreover, it aims at avoiding the perpetual transference which, although it sustains the analytic organizations, instigates their repeated splits by creating a gap between the training spaces and the associations of established analysts. Let me end with Jacques Sédat’s sentence: “Here we have to defend the idea that in analysis what ultimately enables the analyst to hold out is a will to live for himself and for the other, beyond all the *reasons* to live which, like a scaffolding, support his unsteady building.”²¹

There remain, besides the E.C.F., about ten groups of various importance, all born from the dissolution of the E.F.P. in 1980. Born at different conflictual moments, their objectives are different, although the years spent under the authority of Lacan’s teaching have never been totally denied and have sometimes even been highly claimed. In alphabetical order, let us name the Association Freudienne, Les Cartels Constituants de l’Analyse Freudienne, Le Centre de Formation et de Recherches Psychanalytiques (C.F.R.P.), Le Cercle Freudien, La Convention Psychanalytique, Le Coût Freudien, the Ecole

Freudienne, Errata, the Fédération d'Espaces Psychanalytiques, the journal *Littoral* (associated with a less known group, the Association de Recherche et d'Etude du langage), not to mention Psychanalyse hors Institution whose present existence I was not able to verify.²² There are several ways to classify them but none is satisfying in and of itself. Does one adopt an historical approach? There are those who said no to the January 1980 dissolution because they did not consider the E.F.P. to be Lacan's property but rather a collective construct; they even doubted that the initiative of the dissolution was really Lacan's. This is how Le Cercle Freudien, the Ateliers de Psychanalyse that are now integrated into the Fédération d'Espaces Psychanalytiques, and Errata all grew out of Entre-Temps (1980–1982), while some analysts individually joined the Collège de Psychanalystes. Others responded to the letter—the *Lettre aux mille*—that announced, in February 1980 and under Lacan's signature, the creation of La Cause Freudienne (1981), but they refused to accept the power structure of the E.C.F. given its family transfer of power. At that point, many regrouped themselves around the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Freudiennes (C.E.R.F.) created by Jean Clavreul, Solange Faladé, and Charles Melman. Then, the splintering of the C.E.R.F. produced the Association Freudienne, the C.F.R.P., the Ecole Freudienne, La Convention Psychanalytique, and Le Coût Freudien. But other questions may be asked: who is for or against the *passé* created by Lacan in 1967 as supreme accreditation of the analyst? Firmly against: the Quatrième Groupe, Le Cercle Freudien and the C.F.R.P. directed by Octave and Maud Mannoni and Patrick Guyomard, and the Fédération d'Espaces Psychanalytiques. Otherwise, in spite of Lacan's declaration about the failure of the *passé* at the Congress in Deauville, all the other groups desperately attempt to maintain it, and, like the E.C.F., try to modify its procedures but not its principle.²³ Some groups even reproduce exactly the hierarchy of the E.F.P. For example, the Association Psychanalytique has practitioner analysts, member analysts of the association, and analysts of the association [*Analystes Praticiens*, A.P., *Analystes Membres de l'Association*, A.M.A., *Analystes de l'Association*, A.A.] as there were practitioner analysts, member analysts of the école, and analysts of the école. From that point of view, the C.F.R.P.'s position is the clearest, putting an end to the *passé* in order to revive the training through analyses under supervisory control, which is the concrete apprenticeship of the relationship to the patients or analysands. But one could also distinguish between those groups that provide, within the group itself, a complete training and guarantee its final recognition, and those that favor exchanges among psychoanalysts who might have originally belonged to other groups. . . .

Let's consider here two absolutely different examples: Le Cercle Freudien is indeed what it says it is, a circle in the eighteenth and nineteenth century sense of the term, where speech circulates from one speaker to the other, and to the audience. It rejects all training and all power to designate. Can we say

that it is a place of reflection and exchange among different analysts, artists, philosophers, and former analysands who did not become analysts? Yes. At its origin were five founders, five friends who wanted something different: Michèle Abbaye, Jacques Hassoun, Claude Rabant, and Olivier Grignon. They have always remained the five—without co-optation—but their audience has grown: they organize colloquia, workshops of reflection, they now publish the journal *Patio* (published by the Editions Ebel) and, most importantly, they always ensure in their meetings that speech circulates freely. I don't think that they have returned to "the surrealist Lacan" (if he ever existed) as *Tribune I* puts it.²⁴ However, they do not support the dream of the "matheme of psychoanalysis" as the key of the future. Their question is that of a listening and of an exchange: for them, the literary text is not clinical material but a place that allows them to interrogate psychoanalysis itself. Moreover, as *Psychanalystes* or *Tribune* said about them, they think that they can learn something more (and, I would say, something different) by listening to those who have completed analyses without finally choosing to become psychoanalysts. I can personally testify to this listening, especially since it is my only experience of that kind in institutional psychoanalytic circles. One may criticize them for a certain affectation in their titles but, in actual fact, in their discussions, clinical practice is never absent from cultural or theoretical reflection. They may have struck the fragile balance where clinical practice is in life, art, and thinking, and vice versa.

Octave Mannoni, Maud Mannoni, and Patrick Guyomard work on a very different project: what is at stake for them is to break away from "a form of psychoanalysis that has been dogmatic and sterilizing for ten years." Against the *passe*, against the mathemes, they offer a diversified training for psychoanalysts, psychologists, social workers, etc., where there are no professors but elders who accompany the youngers. Indeed, the heaviest and most risky cases, which are also the most fascinating for research, are assigned de facto to the youngers. Against the dream of the pure reproduction of analysts—what Octave Mannoni calls *Simony*—the C.F.R.P. wants to be a place of passage, training, work, exchanges, and not a place of membership and belonging. One is not a psychoanalyst in one's being—one's title—but in an act, each time renewed. Dr. Gentis, Dr. Ginette Michaud, and a number of former members of the E.F.P. who kept themselves out of the splits, joined them. Work is mainly done with people in the field, where each time it is necessary to invent the words with the patient who is no longer considered to stand in the way of analytic theory. Affiliation with other groups is accepted; the analyst must only question the desire that makes him occupy a certain place, that is, he must put himself into question. The intended purpose is to reduce the gap between theory and practice, and to make sure that one never forgets that such a gap exists. The experiment conducted by Maud Mannoni in Bonneuil remains present in everybody's mind.²⁵ It opens up other types of

experiments that normally would be rejected in the name of psychoanalysis's purity. The social activity of the group is, therefore, amply taken into account. As for the training itself, emphasis is placed again on the elaboration of one's own experience with the patient, with the help of a supervisor or controller (whatever his schooling may be). For Lacan "the real is the impossible," but the real is indeed clinical practice.²⁶ As opposed to the cynicism of the Lacanian institution over the last years—and still today at the E.C.P.—this group, with others, believes that psychoanalysis is the daily confrontation with the "real": the suffering of the other.

All these organizations have an intense publishing activity: journals and series. We can only add a brief table of such journals in the appendix.²⁷ Similarly, they make an imaginative effort to create new titles so as to distinguish themselves from each other: an analogical dictionary, at least, is required! Strikingly, this dissemination—some say this diaspora—is not limited to the analytic community: it is a phenomenon that could be observed in France on the political scene even before 1968 and that has become more and more pronounced in the 70s and 80s. We live in the ideology of oneness and centralization. For us, any conflict is a source of separation; we can relate neither to federalism nor to mobility in a group, which would allow us to respond to problems differently case by case. At the same time, exchanges increase among analysts: upon reading the table of content of a journal or the program of a colloquium, it is impossible to believe in the institutional homogeneity of the participants (who, besides, emigrate from one group to the other). All the associations—including the S.P.P., the A.P.F., and the Quatrième Groupe but except the E.C.F.—meet together, even if there is divergence or opposition. Indeed, among the young people, the problem of exchange is hardly even mentioned: what they want to know is who is who and what is what. And between statutes and practices, there is often quite a gap! The real hope for psychoanalysis in France today is that titles of societies and proper names are beginning to circulate, and no longer function as (single) emblems. It is still just a fragile change in our mentalities, however, to be followed. . . . More and more often, patients or analysands go to see *someone*, they do not go to a school. More and more frequently, psychoanalysts themselves go through the experience of "another analysis" in a group whose perspectives are somewhat different from theirs. Thus an entire underground network creates links among apparently incompatible organizations.

A SHORT AND EXTRAORDINARY HISTORY OF LACANIAN PUBLICATIONS

Since Lacan's death, conflicts regularly take place concerning the publication and distribution of his numerous unpublished seminars. The latest trial started on June 28, 1985 and was a delight for the press.²⁸ Two factions were op-

posed: on the one hand, the Editions du Seuil and Jacques-Alain Miller, son-in-law, "faithful Acathe," guardian of the moral right for any use of part of the work, "co-author" of the seminars since the first volume that came out in 1973 (*Les Quatre Concepts*), and finally executor of the will. On the other hand, the Association Pour la Recherche et l'Établissement des Séminaires (A.P.R.E.S.), had firmly decided to ensure the clarification of the Lacanian word. Collectively and under a journal's title, *Stécriture*, they intended to sell by subscription.²⁹ The publication of the seminar on *Le Transfert*, the object of contention in 1985, had already started.

In December 1985, Miller won his case. The publication and the distribution of the *Séminaire* by *Stécriture* was forbidden, and the existing copies had to be destroyed or given to Miller. However, the members of *Stécriture* were cleared of any guilt and the association sentenced only to pay a small amount.

Let us leave the legal details aside and proceed to the fundamental issues. In fact, some transcriptions circulate, written from stenographies and borne out of a long work of cartels within the E.F.P.; rough versions, they are occasionally and unofficially distributed (however, many are registered and can be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale). Even though they are not always easy to read and contain obvious errors, their mere existence is to their credit. The main argument in favor of their existence is that Miller has stopped the publication of the *Séminaires*. As a matter of fact, since the publication in 1981 of *Séminaire III* on *Les Psychoses*, he repeatedly announces new volumes: *L'Éthique de la psychanalyse* and *Le Transfert* are scheduled to be published by Seuil in 1986.^c Five to seven books: that is very little when twenty-four, at least, are publishable. Then, why not rely on Lacan's sentence: "There is no intellectual property"?³⁰ To this, Miller responds that Lacan would have mandated his publisher "to prevent a shameless commercial exploitation of the so-called pirate editions."³¹ The word has been spoken. Some also talk of the "samizdats of all of the Lacanian Paris."³² For Miller, it is all "illicit counterfeiting."

The antimony of choices appears clearly in the interview between J.-A. Miller and François Ansermet concerning the establishment of Lacan's seminar ("Entretien à propos de l'établissement du Séminaire de Lacan"³³), and in the issue of the journal *Littoral* on "the transcription of Lacan."³⁴ In 1973, Miller had already written: "My intention here was to be as unobtrusive as possible and to obtain from Jacques Lacan's spoken word an authentic version that would stand, in the future, for the original, which does not exist" for it is impossible to "take as such the version provided by the stenography."³⁵ Later, recordings providing silences and intonations were made. Everyone agrees on the term *transcription* and on the difficulties of a task that entails

e. *L'Éthique de la psychanalyse* indeed came out in 1986, (Paris: Seuil) and *Le Transfert* in 1991 (Paris: Seuil).

inventing punctuation and obtaining a legible text that would nevertheless be faithful. Lacan's own position was ambiguous since he asked Miller to co-sign the book (Miller refused), entrusted him with the entire transcription, and, at the same time interpreted the term transcription in his own way—"what is being said passes through writing and remains intact" and talked about "stécriture."³⁶ To simplify things, one can say that Miller's text is pedagogical (it is divided into lessons with titles and epigraphs, the sessions are organized in three parts with an introduction and a conclusion, the sentences are short, etc.). One can also say that it is rational since, for Miller, what is at stake is to present logically Lacan's teaching: did not Lacan himself look for the "matheme," hence that which is fully transmissible? Although Miller distinguishes between "systematization" (his own goal) and "universitarization,"^f he nevertheless thinks he carries out the highest function of the university, i.e., "the preservation and maintenance of what is said by what it [the university] apprehends as the author." Far from imitating Lacan who, in his articles, "concentrated his teaching on what seemed most difficult for his audience to assimilate," that is on stumbling points, Miller goes for optimal readability. It is probable, indeed very possible, that Lacan might have appreciated it, he for whom "the originality, the contorsion proper to his own thinking has been a curse for a long time." In any case, Miller says: "I am working on the seminars with a feeling of certainty, not one of doubt."³⁷ When Lacan was alive, Miller's numerous meetings with Lacan must have been useful to Miller while he was writing. Now that Lacan is dead, it is more difficult for him to put forward the notion of a collaborative work in order to justify his "writing."

The team of *Stécriture* proposes instead a "critical transcription of Jacques Lacan's oral seminars": "Except for *Les Ecrits* and a few other texts, Lacan's letter is lacking. Lacan's letter must be established through a reading that is not satisfied by patiently following the twists and turns of sense, but rather is grounded in incongruities, a literality that will remain conjectural."³⁸ In their opinion, "the monopoly" by right of succession "no longer attempts to establish its authority on the quality of the work." The opposition is thus clearly radical between, on the one hand, Miller's "certainty" and, on the other hand, the concern to invite the reader to "an effective reading, that is, a reading open to hazard." Many of the articles of the above mentioned issue of *Littoral* raise fascinating technical problems, and a text by Jean Allouch, "Lacan censuré" ("Lacan censored") notes the multiple transformations (for him misrepresentations) of the seminars published by Miller. As for the seminars published, as they were produced, in *Ornicar?*, Miller himself recognized their limitations. Maybe then, in the urgency of a first step, it would have

f. The term *universitarisation*, created by Miller, designates the University's systematization and presentation of Lacan's teaching.

been preferable to write accounts of the seminars as, in the past, Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, Jacques Nassif, and even Moustapha Safouan (unpublished summary) did. In the present situation, one can say that it is impossible to really trust any of the seminars, official or not, but it is also impossible to do without them. Miller refuses to consider “that the twists and turns of this teaching *are* the teaching itself,” while others have taken the risk of respecting the rhythm, the meanderings and sometimes the obscurity of Lacan’s word. Let us hope for the existence of critical editions at the same time as for the very multiplicity of versions allowing different readings. I have chosen here, for the purpose of establishing the dossier, the most neutral term: “anonymous version.”

In a country that still does not have an edition of Freud’s complete works—and Lacan, in spite of his claim of a “return to Freud,” contributed to such an edition less than anybody—should one be surprised at the prevailing anarchy and Malthusianism concerning the Lacanian seminars, seminars that nevertheless function in certain groups as both law and gospel? But this raises the question of Lacan’s own relationship to the written and oral registers.

Can one say that Lacan was a man of writing? No, especially compared to Freud. Except for his thesis in psychiatry, which was a university requirement, we do not have any book by him: even *Ecrits* is only the reprint of old and relatively short articles, a reprint structured by some recently written pages. The longest text may be *Etourdit* published in 1973 (48 pages). Above all, it is true that Lacan wrote more on commission—the demand of others—or in response to circumstances than in response to an interior calling. Our bibliography shows the variety of journals and encyclopedias to which he contributed, and the prefaces he wrote for different works. From Lacan’s maturity, there remain the official reports on the congresses, often written and circulated in advance; but often Lacan, at the last minute, substituted an improvised allocution to the written text. Such is the case in 1953 with “Fonction et Champ” and “Le Discours de Rome,” and again at the colloquium in Royaumont, etc. Obviously, for him, speaking and writing are two different registers associated with two different relations to others, listeners or readers.

Should we then conclude that Lacan is only a man of immediate and active speech? A man indifferent to writings that nonetheless do remain? Neither. Yet, it is to the seminars that he devoted most of his energy because he believed in the deep inscription of speech in the listener: an influence, more subtle but repeated, which transforms the other. In this sense, he is a Master in the fashion of antiquity, a teacher or an *enseigneur* as he calls himself.⁸ However, I disagree with those who maintain that *Ecrits* is paradoxically

g. The play here is between *enseignant* (teacher) and *enseigneur*, a word that Lacan makes up to stress the act of teaching.

pure speech. For Lacan, the two domains are separate and engage him differently. Read for example his “Introduction” and his “Commentaire à l’exposé d’Hyppolite” in the *Séminaire I* and what appeared from it in *La Psychanalyse*³⁹; read his analysis of Poe’s *Purloined Letter* in the *Séminaire II*, read the version written for *La Psychanalyse* in 1957 and the new version in *Ecrits* in 1966; read his *Séminaire III* on *Les Psychoses* and “La Question préliminaire à tout traitement possible de la psychose” (1958); read what he says of *Lituratere* in the *Séminaire VIII* and the article in *Littérature*, etc.

In *Ecrits*, many other examples support my point by their transformations or additions in 1966. Moreover, after the active period of semi-improvisation, Lacan revealed a desire to put things down in writing after a period of reflection: let us mention *La Chose freudienne* (1955, 1956, and 1966), *L’Instance de la lettre* (1957–1966), *La Signification du phallus* (1958–1966). Similarly, he willingly accepted to write down his isolated interventions on the works of others after having delivered them: such is the case for his *Remarques sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache* (*La Psychanalyse*, 1961), for the questions he asked Pérelman at the Société Française de Philosophie, questions that gave him the opportunity to develop his own theory of metaphor, and for the gathering in one text of his many oral contributions during the Colloquium at Bonneval (“La Position de l’inconscient,” 1960–1966), etc. It is thus impossible to deny his quasi-obsessional attachment to the letter of his texts and perhaps the underlying anxiety that every written word would commit him and hand him over to the enemy. Thus, for the transcription of his closing speech at the colloquium on child’s psychosis—*Journées sur les psychoses chez l’enfant* (1968)—he added, in 1972, a written clarification of his position.

Personally, I am not surprised by this separation between writing and speech because, as a teacher and scholar bound to talk in colloquia and to publish, I face a similar problem: for me also speaking and writing are not equivalent, because the relation to the other(s) is different in each case. Some write a text and then read it: the delivery can be either monotonous or extraordinarily brilliant, producing a perfect feeling of improvisation or at least of direct address. But for others the oral improvisation and the final text written after the oral presentation are two different events, and such an approach creates twice as much work. The oral relies, of course, on notes, references, articulations, and main points that have been prepared, in short on a framework. The final text necessarily incorporates the reactions of the audience and also marks another functioning of language in relation to the public and in relation to one’s own text. This is why I have often wondered about Lacan’s work for *Radiophonie* or *Télévision*, both recorded and published: had he written them beforehand, or are they just a transcription of the oral presentation? I have the same question regarding some of his con-

ferences abroad: at some point, one wonders who has written what is quoted under Lacan's name. There is a margin of uncertainty in which everybody participates.

Let us move on to the institutional texts where, as Lacan says, speech is act and pact. Those texts that he undoubtedly wrote himself have an unquestionable impact, although maybe not the one he expected. His signature has more and more authoritative power: it functions as an act, in the symbolic sense that he grants to the term in the seminar on *La Logique du fantasme* where he refuses to talk of the "sexual act" insofar as there is no committing word. There is a kind of tragic outcome to his last texts because, even if his signature functioned as an act, some called into question the authenticity of the writing. Such is the case for the *Lettre aux mille*, for the creation of the Cause Freudienne and of the Ecole de la Cause Freudienne, and even sometimes for the letter of *Dissolution*. In such cases, it is as if his inimitable style turned against him and as if it had become gradually easier to "speak Lacan": for doubts regarding the authenticity of his writing to emerge, paraphrase had to be possible—incidentally, *Scilicet* attests to such a possibility more than does Miller's transcription of the seminars. Such questions arose during the difficult period of the dissolution of the E.F.P. and its aftermath: one thus wonders about the functioning of such a unique institution and about what Lacan meant by the transmission of his word.

WHEN PATHS DIVERGE . . .

Lacan's history is that of successive ruptures. For him, everything seems to center on these few words: to leave, to be left or abandoned, to be excommunicated, and in turn to anathematize.

First there are the institutional ruptures. In order to understand the present situation of psychoanalysis in France, one must link it to its beginnings and to its repeating crises. The reader not familiar with its numerous turns for better or for worse might want to turn immediately to the section of our dossier entitled "Chronology." Our reflection is based on it since it was impossible to give just a factual enumeration without giving a narrative and sometimes a brief study of the essential moments.

The 1953 split was undoubtedly decisive. Alain de Mijolla regrets the radical break that started then and did not end until 1963 among "Nacht's concern to cure," "Lagache's concern to understand," and "Lacan's concern to invent."⁴⁰ Toward the end of his life, Lacan himself made a statement of failure and declared in 1976: "I have embarked on this navigation basically because I have been incited to—this is what comes out of what has been published in a special series of *Ornicar?* on the 1953 split. I would certainly have been more discreet if it had not taken place."⁴¹ Indeed, everything seems to indicate that he was not the instigator of the split, rather that he tried to compro-

mise, making a kind of self-criticism about his nonconformist practice of training analysis, announcing that he had regularized the length of his sessions, and asserting his desire that “the Institute live,” the institute where he would be able to work. He was forced by the rigid position of Nacht’s group; he was led by the rebellion of students among whom many were his, and by the group formed by Daniel Lagache, Juliette Favez-Boutonier, and Françoise Dolto who decided both to resign and to create the S.F.P. He was led to embark on an adventure that, at first, was exciting—he continued his short sessions, found an audience that allowed him to shine in the theoretical domain—but then became painful because the nonrecognition by the I.P.A. deprived him of an international audience. Was his dream to stay in a recognized and well-structured society, and to be at once the *enfant terrible* (because of his nonorthodox training analyses) and the respected theoretician? Did he think that such a dream could come true?

In 1976, in an article entitled “Où les chemins divergent . . . ,” Jenny Aubry, who triggered the students’ uprising in 1953, discussed the twenty-three years she spent at Lacan’s side.⁴² The title of her article is interesting because she refused to separate the factual and passionate aspects of the conflicts from the theoretical stakes of the training of the analysts-to-be. Her personal itinerary is interesting, too, because in 1976, wondering about “the future of the E.F.P., the dangers that threatened it, its flaws, its weaknesses,” she went as far as saying: “The members of the E.F.P. have too good of a conscience and too readily think that they are *the only ones* to preserve the Freudian doctrine.” In any case, Lacan’s practice of training and control analysis remained a taboo, although it had spread within the école. As opposed to Aubry who stayed with Lacan, Dr. Anne Clancier, taking a different path, ended her control analysis with Lacan because she considered it dangerous for her patient. She testified in front of D. W. Winnicott when the I.P.A. Inquiring Commission came to visit in 1953–1954.⁴³ According to her, three quarters of those who complained about Lacan did not testify, which foretold Jean Laplanche’s observations during the 1963 split: “Didn’t we hear a different discourse in our private conversations? Lacan is indefensible but we cannot do that to him! And what would we look like?”⁴⁴ Whether concerning an agreement on the practice of training and control analysis, or concerning Lacan’s personality, the two French societies were unable to solve the problem from within. Lacan never gave in, except sometimes in some soothing statements. He returned to Freud’s position: “Paths diverge each time that the progress of analytic science touches on certain *ideologies*, on *facts of beliefs*, or on the *narcissism* of the analysts themselves.”⁴⁵ But he never seemed to include himself in the batch of these half-blind analysts. Should one incriminate Lacan’s analysis? It was probably neither worse nor better than that of others, as the first two volumes of Anaïs Nin’s journal show. However, he did not conduct new “fragments of analysis” [*tranches d’analyse*] with different

people, as did Sacha Nacht, Marc Schlumberger, and many others. The position of Rudolph Loewenstein, his former analyst who, in 1953, supported the recognition of the S.F.P., may be due to tolerance or to the influence of the long and very clever letter that Lacan addressed to him, but it may also be due to cautiousness: better to contain the Lacanian practice by keeping Lacan within the I.P.A. than to let him found an independent society where nothing would restrain him any longer in his dangerous innovations.

Until the end Lacan wished to return to the I.P.A. The wound was terrible for him when, in 1963, the price of the S.F.P.'s recognition was his exclusion from all training analysis and all accredited teaching. He saw himself denied, abandoned, betrayed by his peers and, worst, by some of those whom he had analyzed and in whom he thought he had followers. Several elements show that he was going through a tragic crisis about the relations between father and son and between brothers: the interruption of his seminar *Noms-du Père*, the fact that he constantly repeated that "they" had prevented him from holding it—when he could actually very easily have resumed it at the rue d'Ulm in 1964 or later—and his creation of the term *hainamoration*.^h The crisis was more internal than external, as we shall see in chapter 3.

When Lacan founded the E.F.P. in 1964, he took a position that Freud had never occupied: director for life, master of the doctrine, of the training, and of the institution in all its structures. Thus could one read his statement: "I hereby found the Ecole Française de Psychanalyse, by myself, as alone as I have ever been in my relation to the psychoanalytic cause." Alone in his dialogue with Freud, like Moses with God? Alone to transmit the truth and the law? Alone to decide, as in the cases of the bid for power of the October 9, 1967 proposition concerning the *passe* and of the January 1969 vote? At this time although Themouray Abdouchéli's *Proposition* was very reasonable, suggesting that the experience should be tried out for a few years before making any definite decision so as to maintain cohesion and exchanges within the group, it was not even considered. From then on, no matter what happened, one had to submit or to resign; hence the birth of the *Quatrième Groupe*—but also, and more and more so, the splintering of the école in multiple factions. At the 1970 Congress, Félix Guattari declared: "May people speak up! Such a call, already heard during our last annual meeting, echoes the call that Thorez addressed in 1936 to a closed, muzzled, fascinated, perverted party that only functioned by a delegation of power from its leaders. Certain accents, bad faith, manoeuvres within the école remind me of Stalinism."⁴⁶ With Jacques-Alain Miller's intervention, the 1974 Congress in Rome completely established the hero's cult: Daniel Sibony heard "Lacan's praise along with sounds of beams being nailed," and, in the desire for absolute mastery thanks

h. The term is a combination of the French words *haine* (hatred) and *enamourer* (archaic term for "to fall in love"), and of the Latin *amor* (love).

to mathemes, he heard “sounds of anathema and death.” As for Havaron, he asked why the E.F.P. functioned as a religious institution, etc. In effect, it was more and more the reign of hierarchy and arbitrariness: appointments, dismissals or threats of dismissal, denials of existence, all depended on Lacan who chose analysts, nonanalysts, even nonanalyzed candidates, but above all followers to occupy all the key positions. Besides, one knew that being analyzed by Lacan meant being exempt from all control analysis. People pushed and rushed to get in or they went away. In January 1978, the Congress in Deauville devoted to the *passe* turned out to be dismaying: it initiated the decay of the *école*.⁴⁷ There, Lacan actually stated the failure of the *passe*, of his teaching, of the *école*, of the cartels, of *Scilicet*, etc.: it was indeed “time to conclude,” which was the title of his 1977–1978 seminar. Some tried to reorganize the *école* but the dissolution prevailed in 1980. Was it Lacan’s decision? Maybe, along with the desire that everything might disappear with him. But, in any case, Lacan had already disappeared; a brain-trust had taken his place. The creation of the E.C.F., its resumption of what Lacan and the E.F.P. had produced, Miller’s avowed desire to create a translinguistic and international organization to counterbalance the I.P.A., such are the official remains of Lacan’s passage in the psychoanalytic field: the management of Lacanianism.⁴⁸

Ultimately, Dr. Turquet (the “turkey” of the *école*) might have been right when, in 1963, he said that Lacan saw himself as the source of rewards and punishments. He linked this alienating image to the practice of the super-short sessions meant to avoid transference. Thus, he raised the problem at the level of therapy (both for personal and didactic analyses). This question of transference is at the heart of the matter, both in personal and collective terms, as a transference to the master and to theory. It is along these lines that Roustang’s book, *Un destin si funeste*, analyzes the functioning of analytic societies.⁴⁹ As Lacan said in 1956 and again in 1958, “I hope to show how the inability to sustain a *praxis* in an authentic manner results in the exercise of power, as the history of mankind illustrates.”⁵⁰ In turn, he himself illustrated this statement until power may have been confiscated from him in his own name.

Meanwhile, the other societies evolved and allowed the development of debates without secession: hence, beginning in 1961, Conrad Stein opened his seminar at the S.P.P. to members of other societies; René Major and Dominique Geahchan created the group Confrontation, whose meetings were open to all analysts wishing to come, and the experience led, in 1978, to publications. People were tired of fights and sterilizing ghettos. It is well known that Lacan made Denis Vasse pay dearly for his participation in one of those meetings in 1979. In short, while the structures of these three existing societies were becoming less rigid and more open, as they discussed institution, training, and clinical practice, the E.F.P., on the contrary, in spite of the

increase in its numbers, withdrew, in fact even enclosed itself in its one and only truth. Paradoxically, this society, created in the name of freedom, became a place of dogmatism and of the recitation of catechism. In the process, dramas, tears, solitude, and sometimes suicide took place.

Some time ago, in 1971, an article by Micheline and Eugène Enriquez—"Le Psychanalyste et son institution"—already called into question the psychoanalyst and his institution.⁵¹ Both authors addressed the issue in an original way as they tried to analyze psychoanalytic societies in terms of three types of functioning. First, some institutions are grounded in a *knowledge* that has the force of *law*; they presume the word of a founding father, which has to be transmitted, hence the necessity of an educational structure, and they rely on an interiorization of such values as, for example, the family, school, church, or the army. Second type, the organizations for the production of goods and services have limited goals rather than global ones; everyone participates in the activities of the organization in a structure of statutes and roles considered as efficient; *production* is at the center of the organization rather than knowledge, and there is no interiorized faithfulness but rather ties knotted around the obedience to a *contract*. Finally, there are voluntary organizations, such as parties or unions, but also any group bound by the shared desire to accomplish a task, to be influential, or to exercise some power; they rely on a doctrine, a mobilizing ideology capable of ensuring collective action, and here the values of solidarity and *fraternity* prevail. One could classify the different types of analytic societies in those terms, discovering their contradictions and their evolution: it would be a game that is worth as much as the little topological games offered by some contemporary journals. Also, think about the fact that an analyst participates in different modes of functioning—at the hospital, in his private practice, in the meetings of his group or in intergroup meetings, in his family, or in the world. Micheline and Eugène Enriquez's article opens up a very rich reflection, undermining the myths of the "wild horde" and of the "elitist sect" that are so complacently perpetuated.

In Lacan's life, however, it was always a matter of everything or nothing. At the slightest divergence or difference he felt threatened. From one day to the next, a friend could become an enemy to kill, he would scratch names out of his texts, attack on all occasions and without any moderation: think about Henri Ey, Sacha Nacht, Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, Piera Aulagnier, etc., but also Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Ernest Jones. . . . Either he would enter in a polemic to the point of ridiculing the other, or he would complain; nevertheless, the split was always the other's responsibility. Even those closest to him were not spared: they were accused of not understanding him or of understanding him too well. Lacan lived in narcissistic rivalry more than dialogue: the reading of *Lettres freudiennes* is obvious proof. Can one really believe him when he wished: "Should someone get ahead of my discourse to the point

of making it outdated, I will finally know that it has not been useless"? He may have suffered from the many breakups, but they served as a boost to his life and thinking. As for the other's suffering, did he ever think about it?

THE IMAGE OF THE PSYCHOANALYST IN LACAN

The title of this section could be in the plural, but a common element exalts the analyst's function: he is the one who went where no other human being has gone, confronted the anxieties and the monsters from which others flee, probed the depths of the abyss in himself and in others, went the furthest on the path of truth, without fear and without trembling—a hero of our time. He has reached the borders of procreation and death, those two enigmas that, according to Lacan, escape all symbolization. Lacan's analysis of Freud's dream of Irma's injection functions as the founding myth of the psychoanalyst who fights, in all its horror, the "ultimate real," "impossible to mediate," this "something in front of which words stop," that is, both the mouth and the feminine genitals.⁵² Or else, like Socrates, the psychoanalyst faces both the desire of the other, only to shy away from it, and death, only to accept it. What is at stake is thus a real initiation that separates him from ordinary men. It is probably along these lines that one should understand the story told by Lacan: Jung would have passed on to him what Freud said when he was sailing toward the United States: "They do not realize we're bringing them the plague."⁵³ Pamela Tytell says that she has not found any trace of this sentence anywhere else, and neither have I, but what is interesting is precisely its constant repetition. As if the psychoanalyst, running a prosperous business and very well integrated in society, needed to see himself as a fundamental threat to all ideologies and institutions. One thinks of the Trumpets of Jericho . . .

Freud's desire to cure, a point of honor in his opposition to psychiatrists,⁵⁴ was rapidly replaced by the desire to reach the knowledge of the very being of man,⁵⁵ the desire to make the patient discover the *dérélection* constituting our destiny by accompanying him in discreet fraternity, a mission that is the very vocation of the psychoanalyst. The tone was often messianic: "In the recourse we maintain of the subject to the subject, psychoanalysis can lead the patient to the ecstatic limit of the 'you are that' where his mortal destiny is revealed to him." Then began the real journey. The mission consisted of leading the patient to the act of speech as the "founding moment of the subject in an essential annunciation." In order to do that, one had to be a practitioner of the Symbolic, a practitioner both of language and of the fundamental pact of culture. The desire to cure faded very rapidly behind a model of life where gap and lack were accepted, thanks to a "mutation in the economy of desire."⁵⁷ In this perspective, the post 1966–1967 developments about "unbeing" [*désêtre*] and "subjective destitution," the willingness to be an object of

repulsion, rejection, or a place of abjection were nothing but the other side of the idealized image. Besides, there was some glory in receiving this rain of trash that Lacan predicted would fall on the trace of his works. What a magnificent image of the victim, one always purer than the torturers who unrelentingly attack him/her! We shall analyze later the Christian representations that underlie part of Lacan's texts.

But at the same time the psychoanalyst is a scientist. Furthermore, psychoanalysis, a conjectural science (i.e., a science in the humanities) must become a rigorous science interrogating all other sciences in the name of the truth of the unconscious. Here is where graphs and mathemes come into play: they are meant to give a formula of the subject who is subjugated to a diagram—sometimes a paralyzing diagram such as that of the unconscious functioning according to a cybernetic model. The two images compete with each other and combine until the end of Lacan's work. Between the abject and the matheme, what should one choose?

One may sometimes shudder when thinking that Lacan could have realized the project he formed in *La Psychiatrie anglaise* to psychiatrize/psychoanalyze the French population—and I have always shuddered at the assertion that the E.F.P. should be the “school of a way of life.” The psychoanalyst, master of desire, master of sciences, alone able to approach the truth: this alone is enough to make one worry. When Socrates becomes the model for the analyst—“I am here, not for his good, but for him to love me and to be disappointed”—there is some truth to it, provided the analyst finds the freedom to live and love somewhere else. Reading Lacan one wonders if he works at the service of life or death. Such is the whole problem of transference and counter-transference. How can one resist thinking of the legend of Hans who, with his music, led the rats outside of the city instead of bringing them in? Without turning psychoanalysis into Samaritan help which, indeed, is not its role, one should nevertheless hope to acquire with it the strength to assume life . . . that is, its pleasure as well as its sufferings. Otherwise, psychoanalysis would be no more than a philosophy among others and not a specific battle against the impossibility to live from which so many people suffer.

Lacan's Theoretical Itinerary

Many books introduce Lacanian theory: the most recent is Joël Dor's *Introduction à la lecture de Lacan*.¹ There are also many more scholarly books such as Alain Juranville's *Lacan et la philosophie*.² Articles in journals abound. There are also all those who speak, more or less, "Lacanian." Our purpose here is different: it consists in formulating briefly the concepts or notions, in situating them, and, if possible, in questioning them. The present chapter cannot be dissociated from the second half of our dossier where we try to follow step by step the elaboration of the doctrine. We can, at least, raise the following questions: Was Lacan a discoverer, to the point of replacing Freud? Was he a theoretician as opposed to the pragmatic Freud? Was he someone who re-elaborated psychoanalysis in a different socio-cultural and scientific context? Or was he a manipulator of ideas who knew remarkably well how to use theoretical novelties in order to interest a broad audience and give psychoanalysts the wonderful impression that he himself was the necessary host of serious colloquia (including religious colloquia), of dinners on the town, and of salons in the eighteenth-century fashion (indeed, in some of these he showed a real talent to embody the figure of Montesquieu's Persian). We should not forget here Françoise Dolto's remarks: "Lacanian? It does not mean anything, psychoanalysis simply goes on. He never claimed to be Lacanian, he was Lacan."³

PSYCHIATRY

Like most of his contemporaries in France, Lacan had to invent his passage from psychiatry to psychoanalysis. Rather than discovering in his life and work a shattering rupture—as for Saint Paul in the revelation on the way to Damascus—we observe a series of compromises between these two disciplines, both sisters and enemies.

Lacan's 1932 thesis, *De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité*, was an important milestone. In it Lacan broke away from a preference for treating schizophrenia that prevailed in Professor Claude's practice at Sainte-Anne, and chose instead the treatment of paranoia. This choice brought him back in contact with Clérambault at the Infirmerie du Dépôt where he presented cases of patients, mainly of paranoic murderers

(and murderesses). He also discovered Freud's article on "Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia, and Homosexuality," which he immediately translated, prior to reading the analysis of the case of Schreber.⁴

He was particularly interested in a certain woman, and multiplied the interviews with her: *le cas Aimée* has remained famous, all the more so since it was Lacan's only case study. However, his method coincided more with a phenomenological choice than with a psychoanalytic one: he was more interested in understanding the apparently incomprehensible than in creating a liberating psychotherapy. The writing exercises he required of his patient in the process of the treatment, *Les Mémoires de Bécassine*, were very disappointing. The title alone would arouse a psychoanalyst's suspicion.^a Later, when he met Aimée again (she was the maid of his father whom he seldom saw), Lacan did not recognize her.

He was following his own path: about Freud, he said that "our research in psychoses takes up the problem from the point where psychoanalysis left off." As for the surrealists, he did not share their exaltation of madness nor their desire to hold society responsible for the illness: the fact that he published in a surrealist journal *Les Motifs du crime paranoïaque* concerning the Papin sisters did not make Lacan a surrealist, but demonstrated the surrealists' fascination with his works.⁵ Lacan was not the André Breton or the Louis Aragon of the Val-de-Grâce of 1914–1918. Neither was he the Breton who, at Saint-Dizier, tried to listen to the dreams, narratives, and free associations of soldiers traumatized by the war, against the policy of his master Joseph Babinski who hunted down "false" patients in order to send them back to the frontline. Nor was he like the painter André Masson, his future brother-in-law who, locked up amidst the madmen of Maison-Blanche, was to write, much later: "The self had been devastated forever." They had all opted for art and, through it, for the fundamental change of both individuals and society. Lacan, on the other hand, considered social sanction to be an aid for his patients, and, in any case, he separated the role of the psychiatrist/psychoanalyst from that of society, which punishes in the name of group values.⁶ His reactions during and after the war were telling: in *La Psychiatrie anglaise et la guerre*, he stressed the social role of psychiatrists/psychoanalysts, showed an interest in group therapies, in the integration of the individual into society, and rejected any ideology that could be called revolutionary.⁷ Indeed, Lacan's dream at the time was the contribution of psychiatrists/psychoanalysts to a better organization of society. We will come back to this issue later. Lacan was fundamentally a man of order, at least for others.

As a retort, however, one might point out his attack against Henry Ey in his essay on psychic causality, "Propos sur la causalité psychique." However,

a. Bécassine, the main character of some French children's books, is mainly characterized by her stupidity.

to declare that “madness is entirely on the side of sense” did not in itself make Lacan a psychoanalyst, and might have only constituted a disagreement among psychiatrists. Later, during *Séminaire III* on *Les Psychoses*, Lacan would study texts about texts concerning the case of Schreber; the few allusions to his own patients, whom he had met only once, were not enough to redeem this seminar from being a reading of texts of texts. . . . As Maud Mannoni said much later, the notion of the “foreclosure of the Name of the Father” can be as confining as neuropsychiatric discourses, if nothing is offered as a solution.⁸

In order to reinforce his theory, Lacan once again substituted men's cases for women's cases; what do “Aimée” and “Schreber” have in common? Urged by a pressing desire for classification, nomination, and concepts that can be valid for everybody, Lacan missed his chance to innovate. One could have expected from someone so intensely involved in paranoia something better than this new version of Schreber. As for the article entitled “D'une question préliminaire à tout traitement de la psychose,” something more was expected than a mere recording of facts, for many people were trying to innovate, every day, in their practice. By dint of “preliminary questions,” nothing ever gets done, or things only get done in disorder and solitude. Moreover, can psychosis be reduced to paranoia?

Despite the conflicts or difficulties in his career, Lacan never stopped presenting cases of patients at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne. Some praised these case presentations, but others found them unbearable because they were hoping for a completely different relationship among the patient (even if he was hospitalized), Lacan, and the audience. I have selected only the unconditionally favorable descriptions, and I shudder. They really make me shiver. Jacques-Alain Miller's account in “L'Enseignement de la présentation des malades” is a good example: “After all, what we are witnessing here is a man, the patient, who, without knowing it, meets with his destiny. What will he be? He will be listened to, questioned, interrogated, maneuvered, sized up, for one or two hours, and then, once he is gone, there will be the few words that, as everybody suspects, will weigh heavily on the scales of his fate.” Or else, “There are two parts to the presentation of a case. While the patient is present, he, of course, is the one who mainly speaks and Lacan is there, isn't he, to encourage him—as they say—to open himself up, to go to the end of his thoughts, to specify and to investigate more and more precisely what he has to say. Often, Lacan's last question is, ‘And how do you see the future?’ A young paranoiac woman responded, saying that she was sure everything would go well for her now, better and better, and Lacan agreed. As soon as she had left, he said, ‘she isn't off on a good start, she won't make it. . . .’”⁹

The audience was apparently shattered by Lacan's reversal. What about the patient and the projected treatment? Can one make a diagnosis or prognosis in only a second? What is the point of psychoanalysis? I have to admit that I

am shocked. Between Lacan's position, from which he identified with the psychiatrist/psychoanalyst for whom the patient is an illustration of a theoretical point (and there is no way out for the patient), and Maud Mannoni's position, from which, through personal experience, she ultimately makes an effort "on the contrary, to identify with the patient," I do not hesitate, despite the dangers inherent in a too close proximity to the patient. How is it possible to insert the psychotic into social bonds without oppressing him and enclosing him forever in his alienated being (which is so convenient for psychiatrists), and without letting oneself be seduced and led by him into his fascinating world? I must say that I do not expect Lacan to provide the answer to such a question.

One might wonder if the system of short sessions (which were not temporarily shortened, since they were never extended) and the system by which patients were all given appointments at the same time, and the Master chose among them as he pleased, were not the aftereffects of medical practices which, in his discourses, Lacan usually held in great contempt. One might wonder if what he advocated—numerous interviews before the treatment—did not originate from this desire for a diagnosis, of which all psychoanalysts must beware, and, even worse, from a desire for a prognosis. Lacan often joked about Françoise Dolto or Maud Mannoni's love for children or for mentally deficient persons. Was he himself truly ready to embark on an adventure without a rewarding end? He was a theoretician indeed, but was he not a theoretician of others' practice? Was "the real," that is, daily practice with its ups and downs, really "the impossible" for Lacan, that is, the unbearable?

THE MIRROR STAGE

In 1966, in *Écrits*, Lacan presented the "mirror stage" [*stade du miroir*] as "the first pivotal moment of [his] intervention in the psychoanalytical field." He thereby wanted to recall the speech he delivered in 1936 at the Congress of the International Psychoanalytical Association, a speech that was interrupted and never published. It was not until 1949 that he delivered the version whose text is known today.¹⁰ Later he would only see this text as a "small handbrush" [*une balayette*], compared to his true discoveries that began, in 1953, with *Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage*, and that would ultimately build, notion after notion, a new theoretical construction. Still, with the term *imaginary*, he never stopped re-elaborating his first analyses of primary narcissism, even if he abandoned their genetic study in favor of a strictly structural approach. While he was elaborating the mirror stage, the expression was already spreading throughout psychoanalytic circles. Everyone interpreted it in his own way, but everyone also recognized in it a problem encountered in clinical practice, one for which the classical theory of identifications had not provided any satisfactory answers. What was involved here

were the first images of the self, which constitute the subject and alienate him all the while, images without which he is, in any case, destructured or nonstructured.

What is at stake? At first, for the child who is between six and eighteen months old, it is the “orthopedic” function, the fact of seeing his body in a mirror. The “image of the body proper” [*l'imgo du corps propre*] allows him, by identification, to anticipate both his physical and psychological unity. The “jubilant activity” of the infant in front of the mirror, and the “jubilant assumption of his specular image,” linked to a “libidinal dynamism,” which remains mysterious but is undeniable, testify to this first conquest of a unifying identity. Thus, Lacan's work clearly and primarily concerned psychogenesis: this pivotal moment in his theory is also a pivotal moment in the child's history. This is why, in order to figure out Lacan's personal contribution, it is necessary to know his sources.

A person's life begins with the “specific prematurity of birth in man.” Such a prematurity has been duly established by neurologists and embryologists, and it has been taken into account by psychologists and psychoanalysts. Its consequences are the slow learning of motor coordination and of the distinction among the world, the others, and oneself, as well as the long period of dependency during upbringing.

In 1936 a number of publications in experimental psychology already addressed these issues; they compared the behavior of animals to that of children. They studied the relationship to the mirror in the context of a set of behaviors in which the individual experimented simultaneously with objects, parts of his body or of the body of the other, vocalization, and the mastery of the sphincters and of walking. They analyzed, week after week, on all levels, the evolution of the newborn. In fact, Lacan did indeed quote either James M. Baldwin or Charlotte Bühler; he referred—especially in his London lecture in 1951—to stories of female pigeons and migratory locusts transformed by the lure of the mirror;¹¹ however, he never quoted—not even in 1966—Henri Wallon's theories, out of which his own thinking developed. Yet, Wallon's 1931 article, “Conscience et individualisation du corps propre,” reprinted in the 1934 book *Les Origines du caractère chez l'enfant*, had allowed Lacan to broaden his own research on narcissism, which had begun with the study of paranoia.¹² Reading Wallon elucidates many implicit points and makes Lacan's text clearer.

What about psychoanalysis? Instead of referring us to the 1936 intervention, Lacan referred us to the chapter on the complex of intrusion in his article on the family, *La Famille*.¹³ This complex lies between the complex of weaning [*complexe du sevrage*] (in relation to the mother) and the Oedipus complex (in relation to the father and the entrance into the cultural and social field). Before that, there would, thus, only be “states of horror” and of “passive beatitude,” as he said in a 1938 speech,¹⁴ in which he seemed to want to

create a saturnian stage, prior to the mirror stage and corresponding to the fantasy of the fragmented body, a fantasy which, in 1949, he proudly asserted he invented. This happy formulation was nothing other than a renaming, in a French way, of the already advanced work of Karl Abraham and, above all, of Melanie Klein whose first studies, both theoretical and clinical, on the archaic moments of the formation of the ego, were published as a volume as early as 1932.¹⁵ Lacan did not give them any credit until 1966, in *Ecrits*.¹⁶ After the mirror stage, which epitomized the complex of intrusion, there was the Oedipus complex, which Lacan wanted to redefine, for he was dissatisfied with Freudian theories and those of psychoanalysis in general.

With this trilogy of complexes, our young psychiatrist/psychoanalyst thus presented himself as the one who could renew the widely accepted theory of the different stages of psycho-sexual development defined by Freud (oral, anal, phallic, and genital stages). In order to do so, he called upon some rival psychological theories. This might explain why Jones interrupted him in 1936 and why part of the audience of the S.P.P. responded ironically in 1938. At the same time, the notions of complex and of fantasy (at this point, the notion of unconscious was missing) allowed him to treat offhandedly the methods and results of experimental psychology. He played one camp off against the other, and short-circuited both. By so strictly isolating the experience in front of the mirror, Lacan revealed his passionate curiosity for narcissism, this *terra incognita* that fascinated him. He also narrowed down the field of his own investigations.

It looks as though he had to dismiss the relationship to the mother and the relationship to the father in order to leave room for the relationship to the counterpart, the one whom, in *La Famille*, he calls "the brother in the neutral" [*le frère au neutre*]. Lacan thus combined two experiences observed by psychologists: the ambivalent relationship of identification and rivalry—"transitivism" or "participation"—among children who are not separated in age by more than two and a half months, a relationship that usually excludes fraternal feelings in favor of social behaviors; and, beyond this difference in age, the despotism of the older sibling toward the youngest one, which is more in accordance with the "Hegelian murder," called for by the disparity of status between counterparts. Throughout the seminars, Lacan never got tired of using the following image in Saint Augustine: two brothers at the mother's breast (twin brothers or foster brothers?), jealous rivals, but who recognize each other through reciprocal identification in the common desire for the same object. Originally this fascinating and alienating dual relationship was not conceived as a relationship with the mother—who is undeniably out of the picture—but as a relationship with the subject's counterpart. The solution to the conflict was first drawn among counterparts, which put the father in the position of the one who intervenes only after the fact, the one who belongs to a totally other order, i.e., the domain of pure socio-symbolic

values. The mother was assigned the most archaic position, the chaos out of which the subject can only emerge through the conflictual recognition of his counterpart. The father was confined to being a pure metaphor or the pure Name linked to the Law. What desire did Lacan reveal in his avoidance of a direct encounter with both? What is left of the counterpart's body and of the subject's own body when the mirror (which finally replaced the fight and in which the subject is confronted with the image of "himself as other" and of "the other as self") is superimposed on their fight filled with desire? So ultimately, if there is a counterpart—an other who might be me—it is only because the self is originally other.

In the 1949 text presented in Zurich, Lacan's position was the same. Its difficulty comes from the fact that the author hid his true quest for "an ontological structure of the human world" under a heterogeneous genetic façade that is, the notion of stage or phase. Indeed, the "anticipated image of the body as totality" puts an end to the anxiety of the fragmented body; it results in a "jubilant assumption" because it is "the experience of a fundamental identification and [of] the conquest of an image, that of the body that structures the self, or rather the 'I,' before the subject engages in the dialectic of identification with the other through the mediation of language." However, this image is also an "alienation in a fictional figure" that "runs the risk of being resolved in murderous or suicidal aggressiveness." How is it possible to avoid such a risk when theory locates the "temporal dialectic that decisively projects the formation of the individual into history" in a radical break with what comes before and what comes after, turning this history into an autarchical and atemporal history? In this respect, the metaphor of the fortress is revealing: the subject, who is still an embryo, is fatally caught between, on the one hand, the "quest for the lofty, remote inner castle, whose form [. . .] symbolizes the *id* in a quite startling way" and, on the other hand, the *ego* who grabs him as if from the outside, fixing him like a statue and "in an inverted symmetry, in contrast with the turbulent movements that the subject feels are animating him." A primordial "symbolic matrix," this hieratic image institutes in the individual the split between the "I," which is still fragile, and the *ego*, which is his imaginary figure and his "alienating destination." All this occurs even before his social determination. In order to confirm his thesis, Lacan appealed to Anna Freud, who had analyzed the "function of misconstruction of the ego" [*fonction de méconnaissance du moi*] in terms that were not quite Lacan's but in which he wanted to hear an echo, which would serve as a reinforcement of his refusal to see in the ego the agency of the perception of reality.^b

Indeed, he went as far as possible in the exploration of the abysses of the

b. The term *méconnaissance* indicates both the fact that the ego does not recognize itself and that it misconstrues itself.

specular. Further proof is that he waited until *Ecrits* to finally talk about the exchange of gazes between the child and the loving and loved adult, an exchange that guarantees the living link between the image and the body experienced from within.¹⁷ However, such an observation had already been part of experimental psychological literature for a long time. The child sees not only his own image in the mirror but also that of the world and of others: participation in the gazes elaborates, and even dissolves, a derealizing effect [*effet déréalisant*], which is sometimes a deadly effect. There needs to be love for the other in these gazes. However, for a long time, Lacan, who decided to apply the “guiding grid for a *method of symbolic reduction*” to experimental data (even in psychoanalysis), built a more and more sophisticated edifice of seeing, which, as early as 1954, invaded *Séminaire II, Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache*, then *Séminaires XI and XIII*, etc. What fascinated him was the “gaze-trap” [*piège à regards*]: one always wonders who traps whom.

The ego, alienated from the other as self or from the self as other, is soon integrated into the complex topography of the subject where language, the law of the Father, and the phallic signifier play the main roles and constitute the foundations of culture that creates man rather than nature. Hence, in a retroactive and sometimes simplistic way, the mirror stage is often only discussed within a system in which the paternal metaphor, “the unconscious structured like a language,” and the phallus are already secured—or reassuring—bases. However, other analysts have worked differently with the Lacanian texts and have read them through their own analytic experience.

For example, in 1949, Françoise Dolto gave a lecture at the S.P.P. on the “flower-puppet” [*poupée-fleur*] that she used in her analyses of children.^c Lacan immediately declared that Mrs. Dolto’s flower-puppet fitted in with his personal research on the image of the body proper, the mirror stage, and the stage of the fragmented body. He said that it was important that the flower-puppet did not have a mouth and, after remarking that the doll is a sexual symbol and that it masks the human face, he ended by saying that he hoped, “*someday, to write a theoretical commentary on Mrs. Dolto’s contribution*” (sic).¹⁸ She answered with the exigency for truth characteristic of her relation to her practice: for her “one must understand the idea of the mirror not only as an object of reflection of the visible but also of the audible, the sensible, and the intentional. The doll has no face, no hands, and no feet, no front and no back, no joints, no neck.” It is the freest possible place offered to the creative invention of the child confronted with his fantasies in the analyst’s presence.

Winnicott also read this Lacanian text in his own way: “In individual emotional development *the precursor of the mirror is the mother.*”¹⁹ He broad-

c. The *poupée-fleur* is a small doll with a daisy where the face would be.

ened the definition of the mother to the entire family, thereby reinstating the social-familial aspect that Lacan had eliminated, and emphasizing the lability of identifications in contrast with Lacan who had articulated the mirror stage both in terms of ruptures, impossible to fill, and in terms of a paralyzing fixation to the double in the mirror.

In Rome, in 1953, Françoise Dolto vehemently protested against Lacan's contempt for the hypothesis of instinctive maturation, which, for her, was not a mythology but the experience of her daily practice.²⁰ Maud Mannoni later denounced the confusion, in Lacanian analysis, between the imaginary and the specular:²¹ she was fighting against the dogmatism of the specular, appealing precisely to the texts where Winnicott treated the imaginary as a "potential space" among beings, as the possibility of indefinite and infinite creation of constantly changing words and representations, with others and with the world, in everyone's daily experiences as well as in art or mathematics. The *imaginary* encompasses and goes beyond the *specular*. It alone can free the "I" from the fixed figures of the specular, from the alienated images that it creates for itself but that are also created for it, and that theory, too, creates for it when it becomes mechanized and paralyzing, in the form of a frozen and deadly super-ego. Hence, let us not forget Freud's note in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: he described his grandson who *played* at making himself disappear and reappear in front of the bedroom mirror, after having played at making the wooden reel that symbolized his mother appear and disappear while accompanying his gesture with contrasting sounds where jubilation marked the successive returns. Through the activity of the game (Winnicott's *playing*) the specular becomes more elaborate. It is already a power of symbolization, before the intervention, at the moment of the Oedipus complex, of the paternal function, and the support of the law, of language, and of social values.

We have dwelled on the reading of the *Stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je* for two reasons: this first elaboration of a concept in the psychoanalytic field is an excellent opportunity to discover the processes, if not the strategy, of Lacanian thinking; the title itself, in its obscurity, already indicates what underlies the research. Lacan wants to define a new agency, the *I*, which would be neither the "I" of reflective mastery in the Cartesian tradition, nor the *ego* defined by psychoanalysts, which, according to him, is a privileged place of *méconnaissance* rather than of encounter with reality. Evidence of his attempt to define a new agency lies in the fact that he refused the usual French translation of Freud's famous expression "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden," by "The ego must drive out the id," that is, all archaic drives. Further evidence lies in the fact that he constantly reworked the translation of Freud's expression around the "I," just as he constantly transformed Descartes's "Cogito ergo sum" (I think therefore I am). Thus, he gradually went further in the direction of a *science of the subject*. He was perhaps trying to

grasp, in himself, what was this ungraspable "I" that he considered to be the only guarantee for his salvation. How could one forget the play on words and on writing that he made later?²² By its pronunciation, the *S* (initial of the subject) refers both to the German *Es* (the impersonal id, the vivid force of the subject's embryonic times), and to the Latin *Es* (You are) in which one can hear the word of recognition addressed by the Other who constitutes you, by defining you, if only by a simple pronoun. Between the two, there is the entire space of the imaginary, reduced to the specular capture of the ego by the object that is its inverted double: it is always possible to fall in it, and to be completely lost. Will such dramatic questions ever truly find a theoretical resolution? This interrogation can serve as a leading thread in the following presentation of our successive sections, sections which, in our attempt to reach a broad audience, are doomed to schematization. Hopefully though, they can function as an introduction to our more complex dossier, too dispersed for anyone who is not already familiar with the main Lacanian notions, and as an introduction to more scholarly works devoted to particular aspects of his theory. Finally, it goes without saying that only by reading many of Lacan's texts can they shed light on one another.

THE RETURN TO FREUD

This expression, which has become a real slogan and rallying point, goes back to the first conference that took place, right after the 1953 split, in the dissident society, the S.F.P. The conference was entitled *Le Symbolique, l'Imaginaire et le Réel*.²³ Its polemical tone was aimed at those analysts who did not read Freud or who no longer read him. It was also directed at those who misread him, through confusion, through arbitrariness,²⁴ or through a stupid faithfulness that dared not see what was indeed obsolete in the work of an unequalled master.²⁵ Finally it was aimed at those who "betray[ed] him, whether they focus[ed] on social environment or on the ego"²⁶ (that is, the *ego* of American ego-psychology as the concept was reaching France).

This expression was also an expression of commitment, whether it was in the field of clinical practice, of theory, or of the ethics of psychoanalysis, the three being indeed impossible to isolate. If Lacan's project, at the beginning, was to integrate the "phenomenological asset of Freudianism" into a "new and broader psychological science,"²⁷ one could say that, from the time he joined the Freudian school, he wanted to make of psychoanalysis the science of which he dreamed, a science capable of shedding light on the foundations of other sciences as well as on the human psyche. For that purpose, he invoked the rationality of the Freudian approach: "the introduction of an order of determinations into human existence, into the domain of meaning, is what we call reason. Freud's discovery consists in the rediscovery, on fallow ground, of reason."²⁸ He used Freud in order to defend, as early as 1957, his

own search for a “formalization that will finally institute psychoanalysis as a science,”²⁹ a search whose end will be the quest for a “matheme of psychoanalysis,” which could make psychoanalysis entirely transmissible.

From this perspective, Lacan oscillated between a critique or a relativization of the Freudian texts—which does not preclude his admiration—and an unconditional faithfulness, especially when he felt threatened in his own innovations. Consider, for example, the difference in the two following judgments. In 1953 he stated that “some of these notions were, at a given moment, indispensable to Freud because they supplied an answer to a question that he had formulated previously, in different terms. One can thus only gain a sense of their value by repositioning them in their [internal and external] context.”³⁰ On the other hand, in 1964 he said that Freud “gave us this knowledge in terms that may be said to be indestructible. . . . No progress has been made, however small, that has not deviated whenever one of the terms around which Freud ordered the ways that he traced, and the paths of the unconscious, has been neglected.”³¹ Lacan oddly compromised between scientific transmission and doctrinal filiation. In 1965–1966, he declared that he was speaking in Freud’s name “as others have to speak in the name of he who bears my name” because “the birth of science does not remain linked for ever to the name of he who institutes it.”³² Do not forget what he said at the end of his life: “It is up to you to be Lacanians. As far as I am concerned, I am a Freudian.”³³

As early as 1951, the return to Freud was linked to the critical analysis of five cases, *Cinq Psychanalyses*.^d The case of Dora allowed Lacan to give a superb study of the “dialectical reversals” that operated in the Freudian interpretation, reversals which, each time, concerned “a moment of truth of the subject.” Lacan did not hide the final failure that he attributed to Freud’s too strong identification with Herr K. and to his blindness to feminine homosexuality.³⁴ The problems of the treatment—transference and counter-transference—that were addressed concretely, were the basis of a theory that was to be elaborated throughout the years. With the case of the Rat Man, he was interested in “going in depth into the fundamental reality of analysis and in renewing it” by bringing to light the obsessional’s “original constellation” and by creating a universal myth of the neurotic, in relation with Lévi-Strauss’s structural analysis of myths.³⁵ As for *Schreber*, this text led Lacan, in the seminar on psychoses, to create the concept of the “foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father.”³⁶ It is, however, impossible to know if this concept would truly work in the case of Aimée or in the crime of the Papin sisters, which Lacan had previously studied. Nothing links together the two theories

d. Title of the volume which includes the French translations (by Marie Bonaparte and Rudolph Loewenstein) of five case histories: the case of Dora, Little Hans, the Rat Man, the President Schreber, and the Wolf Man.

of psychosis. More and more often, Freud's texts served as a starting point for a different elaboration, which appealed as much or even more to linguistics, philosophy, ethnology, or formal logic. Although Lacan discussed at length the death instinct in Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he built his own conceptual edifice in order not to take into account the drive and the affect. His *return* to Freud was also an identification of Freudian theory with his own.

He, too, was caught in the insoluble debate between faithfulness and unfaithfulness. His audacity itself would be the mark of true faithfulness against a deceptive orthodoxy: "The operation that consists of waking up, an operation that relies on the Master's words in order to bring his Word back to life, may be equated with the care for a decent sepulture."³⁷ The Master. The Father. When Lacan said that it was necessary "to return to the pure Freudian position," that is, "to go deeper into the metaphysics of his discovery," a discovery that was "entirely inscribed in man's relation to the symbolic," he showed his agreement with the paternal function defined by Freud.³⁸ He lived it with him: the identification with a Freud who was idealized and who was the ego's ideal model came to the foreground in the analysis of the dream of Irma's injection³⁹ and even more so in *La Chose freudienne ou sens du retour à Freud*,⁴⁰ or in the first pages of *Ecrits techniques*. Could such a relation to the Father-Master exist without ambivalence? The quest of the psychoanalyst's desire was grounded in the quest of Freud's desire, an enigma that had never been solved. For Lacan, "the Father's inheritance is sin, and the original sin of psychoanalysis is the desire of Freud himself, which was not analyzed."⁴¹ The Freudian discovery would stem from Freud's anxiety about desire, "an anxiety rooted in the principle of his ridiculous attachment to this impossible woman, who incidentally buried him, Mrs. Freud."⁴²

Lacan was well aware of his own ambivalence: "I mainly talk about a dead God, maybe in order to better free myself from my relation to a dead Freud."⁴³ Was his inability to resume the seminar *Les Noms-du-Père* linked to the love/hate relationship [*hainamoration*] between son and father? We shall come back to these problems in chapter 3. All this explains why the mission that Lacan ascribed to psychoanalysis is not the cure, but an access to truth and ethics. It is in this very direction, in which he himself felt led, that he also wanted to lead his disciples.

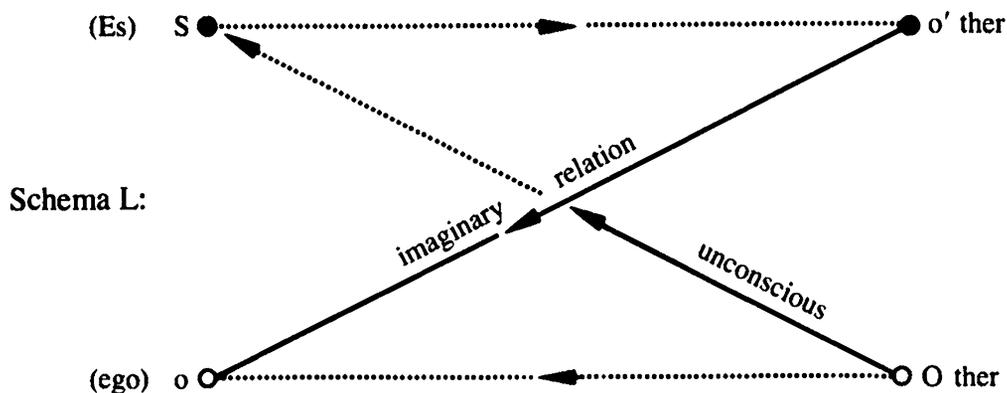
THE IMAGINARY, THE SYMBOLIC, AND THE REAL

At the beginning of *Ecrits techniques*, Lacan stressed the ineluctable specificity of each treatment: "When one interprets a dream, one is always up to one's neck in meaning. What is at stake is the subjectivity of the subject, in his desires, in his relation to his environment, to others, and to life itself."⁴⁴ But, at the same time, he stressed that concepts are necessary, which, by

“their original order of reality,” allow psychoanalysis to ground universalization in the singular. Furthermore, the temptation soon would become to ground the singular in the universal; Lacan was not the only one to yield to it. Indeed, even if one analyzes concepts as he did, exclusively from the angle of language, such concepts vary historically. In 1953, Lacan definitively replaced the Freudian system—which relied on biology, neurology, and even physics, in order to follow the development of the individual from birth to adulthood—with his own system, which claimed to be structural rather than genetic. The Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real were “the three registers of human reality” and would, from then on, form the framework of his entire theory.⁴⁵ Although in 1960 he claimed to be structuralist, he later specified that what he meant by that was not a negation of the subject, but his dependency on an order that went beyond him and that was at his origin—the Symbolic.⁴⁶ This section’s title is in accord with the history of Lacanian thought. The title of the 1953 conference is *The Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real*: it shows the revelation that Lévi-Strauss’s first theories prompted in Lacan. The anthropologist’s analysis of the elementary structures of kinship considered as the fundamental institution of any society led him to assert the primacy of culture, as a third element between nature and society. Such an analysis went against Marxist thinking, which prevailed in France at the time. Relying on linguistics, which was at the time still unknown in France, and turning it into an experimental science, Lévi-Strauss used the structure of language as a model structure capable, through methodological transposition, to explain all human facts. Lacan tried to do the same thing in his own field. His discovery of Lévi-Strauss’s research allowed him to give form to what he was looking for since the 1938 article on the family, that is, a reformulation of the Oedipus complex as the entrance, thanks to the paternal figure, into the universe of the law, of the participation in socio-cultural values, and of the recognition of the subject as full subject, provided he abides by the fundamental prohibitions. That was the only possible salvation for him at that time, in front of the abyss of the Real of primordial times and in front of the specular that protected from the Real while alienating the subject in his inverted double, even in the case of the “paranoiac ego where the change from the specular *I* to the social *I* takes place.” Starting with *Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage* (1953), all the most well-known texts—most of *Écrits*—go in this direction. In short, life would be really good without the Imaginary and the Real, or, at least, if they were entirely domesticated! Unfortunately the ground has been mined. Already in the analysis of the case of Schreber, the supreme explanation is indeed the “foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father” (a deficiency on the part of the Symbolic). However, in a contradictory way, psychosis was attributed to “the intersection of the Real and the Symbolic,” where what is missing is the indispensable function of the Imaginary, as mediation.⁴⁷ Later, in 1974–1975, after a long maturation that began

with the seminars on the ethics of psychoanalysis (1959–1960) and on anxiety (1962–1963), Lacan decided to entitle his seminar *R.S.I.* (Real, Symbolic, Imaginary). He thus gave priority to the Real, this distressful enigma that no speculation could easily master, even if he tried to assert, as a last defense, that this Real was more—or as much—mathematical than corporeal.

Such is the trajectory that we can roughly draw. The terms remain to be defined. The best thing might be to look at the “schema L,” the schema of intersubjective dialectics but also of the constitution and of the functioning of the subject.⁴⁸



We have discussed the Imaginary, represented by the axis $o \leftarrow o'$, when we analyzed the mirror stage and the figure of the ego. Let us recall that, at this level, the relationship of identification is inextricably reversible: the ego identifies with the other as with his image and identifies the other with himself as his image. If, for Lacan, it is primarily a relationship with the counterpart, in time he would nevertheless also put the mother in that place. Sometimes she is caught in a relationship to the imaginary child-phallus, her desired double, as the child identifies with her and identifies her with him to make her his desired phallic double. Only the word of the Father, the true bearer of the phallus, could free them from this truly evil spell. First, he would say to her, “You will not reintroduce your child as product,” which the child hears in echo as “You will not sleep with your mother.”⁴⁹ At other times the mother is caught, at the same time as the child, in an imaginary relationship to the phallus borne by the Father-Man.⁵⁰ Who knows whether these strange theories are the work of the child or of the psychoanalyst—or of the child still present in the psychoanalyst without him being aware of it? In any case, in this imaginary relation, the phallus is either already present as a third term or else there is a confusion between the other of the self (or the self as other) and the phallus. This sheds a different light on primary narcissism in Lacan. Indeed there is a true return to Freud who insisted on the male child’s huge investment in his penis, his valiant representative (and, to reassure himself, he also insisted on the female child’s investment as well), but with Lacan, there is

a displacement of the phallic stage that is posited during more primitive, quasi-fundamental, times.

If the mother figure has difficulties moving from the Real (the anxiety fantasies of the time of birth and of nursing, where Lacan thought, in 1938, that he could locate the pure drive) to the Imaginary, the Father, on the contrary, is first posited on the side of the Symbolic. He would only appear at the decisive moment of the Oedipus complex, when he is recognized as the bearer of the phallus, the representative of the law and of the social pact, and the bearer of the language to which he, alone, can give access. Even before World War II, this Father was already present in Lacan's texts, and Lacan showed a certain nostalgia in the face of the degradation of his role and image in the family and in society. It is this Father, in his power and majesty, that Lacan tried to recreate in the more abstract form of the Symbolic whose reign is sovereign.

In Lévi-Strauss and Lacan's theories the Symbolic can be defined as the ordering function of culture, a culture that separates man from nature, by inscribing him from the start in language, in the founding law whose primordial interdiction is that of incest, and in the structures of kinship that organize the difference between sexes and among generations. In psychoanalysis this is the essential role of the Oedipus complex. The structure is patriarchal since it is the Name-of-the-Father that is the medium and the agent of the human animal's transformation into a subject. More broadly, this structure is masculinist, if I dare say, because Lacan praises Lévi-Strauss for having founded the autonomy of a signifying system on a "generalized theory of exchange in which women, goods, and words seem to be homogeneous." The economic as well as the sexual are thus, from the origin, subjugated to language—"In the beginning was the word [*Verbe*]," which is also the act⁵¹—and have no power over it. Indeed, the symbolic order, in its permanency, is a logical organization that rules individuals' relations to their culture, in their very foundations. "A psychoanalyst must secure his position in the obvious fact that, even before his birth and beyond his death, man is caught in the symbolic chain that has established lineage before history elaborates it . . . , caught as a whole, but like a pawn, in the play of the signifier, and this even before the rules are transmitted to him Such an order of priorities has to be understood as a logical order, that is, as an always actualized order."⁵² To assert that there is an ineluctable invariant presupposes one of the following: either the appeal to the universal structures of man's mind, as in Lévi-Strauss; or the appeal to a transcendence—the "word" of Christian theology of Lacan's Symbol ("man speaks, then, but it is because the symbol has made him man"⁵³); or else the creation of a founding myth, for example, that of Freud's primal horde in *Totem and Taboo*, a myth analyzed by Lacan.

One understands why materialist historians and philosophers such as Henri Lefebvre, Pierre Fougeyrollas, or Jean-Joseph Goux, have, each in his own

way, criticized the partly idealistic and ideological character of these theories.⁵⁴ The fact that the individual is caught in the symbolic order does not mean that mankind—inasmuch as it consists of organized, divided, and conflicted collective groups—is caught in it to the point of never being able to change anything in it. One also understands why feminists have tried to deconstruct this invariant in which women, in particular, have to bear the brunt. This deconstruction leads them to see in this invariant the rationalization of a situation elaborated over a long period of time, but elaborated differently depending on societies and times, a rationalization whose aim would be to legitimize a state of things in order to insure its permanence in the future. One could, in a Lacanian fashion, play on the double meaning of the word *order* to wonder where the constraint comes from.

Lacan stated: “By regulating marriage ties, the primordial law superimposes the kingdom of culture on that of nature where the law of mating prevails.”⁵⁵ The verb *to superimpose* is not indifferent for it presupposes an absence of reciprocal elaborations between nature and culture, even a radical split and a repression—a burying, sometimes a murder—of what Lacan called Nature. The notion emerged of the Real as “outside symbolic” [*hors symbolique*], a Real that is all the more threatening because it eludes all verbalization, all ordering, and all formalization. The Real is thus opposed to *reality* which, on the other hand, is the product of the filtering or the conditioning of the Real by the Imaginary and the Symbolic. In his 1953 conference, Lacan could only inscribe the Real in an algebraic series where it alternated with the Imaginary and the Symbolic in the form of an unknown [*une inconnue*] in the mathematical sense of the term and of an unknown [*un inconnu*] in the psychoanalytic sense of the term, that is, that about which one refuses to know anything. It also took the form of another unknown since the mother and the woman were given the responsibility, by projection, of representing or embodying the Real, although Lacan announced at the same time in the seminar on ethics that the Real is settled at the heart of everybody’s being. Lacan would only dare confront it, and not without difficulties, after having consolidated his foundations in the signifier and in formal logic. Did he not say, after all, that the Symbolic is “the fundamental screen of the Real in the unconscious fantasy”?⁵⁶

We must keep this trilogy in mind as we go through the presentation of the following concepts, for it is the explicit or implicit foundation for those concepts. We might even say that the trilogy functions as an axiom without which everything would fall apart. The last seminars tried, through Borromean knots, string circles, and braids, to tie indissolubly the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary. To cut into one of the circles with scissors would lead to the dissolution of the whole, a true catastrophe for the individual (driven to madness or suicide?), for the theory that would be nothing more than the

dispersed parts of a dismembered body, and for mankind that would sink into barbarism . . .

THE UNCONSCIOUS AND LANGUAGE

In *Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage*, Lacan wrote: "Isn't it striking that Lévi-Strauss, in suggesting the implication of the structures of language with that part of the social laws that regulate marriage ties and kinship, is already conquering the very terrain in which Freud situates the unconscious?"⁵⁷ We should note, in our turn, that it took this encounter with Lévi-Strauss's theoretical principles for the term *unconscious* finally to appear in Lacan's work. Such a fundamental concept in psychoanalysis could, thus, only be approached, for him, through the rereading of the Freudian texts in the light of new concepts borrowed from structural anthropology and, at the same time, from Heidegger's philosophy of language. The 1953 text accumulated, with a certain jubilation, definitions of the unconscious that have remained among the most famous; Lacan even went as far as to speak of an unconscious subject (later, there would be a subject of the unconscious), a notion that is absent from Freud's texts. Indeed, by restoring the unconscious to language as the foundation of man, Lacan was beginning to reformulate it in his own name.

"Speech, subject, language": such was the program proposed by the *Discours de Rome*. *Fonction et champ* was going to be the developed argumentation of the discourse. Since such a program created, even among the analysts present in 1953, both agreement and disagreement, it is worth detailing its main articulations. Deeply rooted in the problems of analytic experience, it invites one to return to "the technical pivot of symbolization,"⁵⁸ that is, to restore the importance of speech in treatment, since therapy "has only a single medium: the patient's speech" and since "all speech calls for a reply."⁵⁹ A dialogue is thus established in which silence counts as a reply as much as interpretation. Gradually the patient moves from "empty speech"—the speech of stereotypes, of the "language barrier," or of the "outpourings" of the subject's "accommodating fancies"⁶⁰—to "full speech" allowed by "the hysterical revelation of the past," leading to "the birth of truth in speech" but an ambiguous truth of "what is neither true nor false."⁶¹ Instead of prophesizing [*vaticiner*] about his own history, instead of exhibiting it through symptoms or inscribing it in unbearable rituals, he rediscovers the "page of shame that is forgotten or undone," the "page of glory that compels"; he deconstructs the screen memories from his childhood as the legends in which he delights himself, enjoying even his suffering. "What we teach the subject to recognize as his unconscious is his history."⁶² Condensed in a brilliant way, many definitions of the unconscious can allow everybody's

agreement (including that of the awful enemies of the S.P.P.). Such is the case, for example, with this sentence: "The unconscious is that chapter of my history that is marked by a blank or occupied by a falsehood: it is the censored chapter. But the truth can be rediscovered." A remarkable summary of the Freudian theory follows.⁶³ The same holds true for this definition: "The unconscious is that part of the concrete discourse, in so far as it is transindividual, that is not at the disposal of the subject in reestablishing the continuity of his conscious discourse."⁶⁴ Can any analyst doubt that "the unconscious is the discourse of the other," when he experiences it every day?⁶⁵ It is the discourse of the other in the self, the discourse of the other or of others, a discourse whose trace remains from childhood, if only in the form of fragmentary bits or of words isolated in flame-colored letters. Since, at the time, Lacan made of language "a subtle body," but a body where "words are trapped in all the corporeal images that captivate the subject," it would be all the more difficult to reject this definition.⁶⁶ Furthermore, he considered that the end of the treatment is the reconstruction, by the subject, of his history, according to the modes of "transindividual discourse," that is, the modes of an intersubjectivity that is broader than that of the analytic situation and that corresponds to the laws of his community. Although what is involved is not a narrow conformism to the requirements of a given society, it is nevertheless an entrance into the "symbolic order," an entrance that can hardly be conceived as separated from the discourses and institutions which, at the time of the analysis, are valid in a historically and geographically located group.

Another aspect of the Lacanian text has also been well accepted: the idea of the "name-of-the-father" (not yet capitalized in *Fonction et champ*) as the "support of the symbolic function that, from the dawn of history, has identified his person with the figure of the law."⁶⁷ This figure had "unconscious effects" that had nothing in common with the imaginary or real father. We might say that the "name-of-the-father" already structured the unconscious on the side of language, as name and as bearer of a forbidding but redeeming speech. Indeed, it ensured the autonomy of the subject with all his rights, in return for the acceptance of the fundamental pact that rules the exchange of women among men and thus puts an end to their imaginary rivalry, in favor of their reciprocal symbolic recognition. The Oedipus complex could be identified here, and, obviously, its universality was solidly established. Moreover, and this is not as obvious, Lacan, following Lévi-Strauss, made of this pact a "signifying convention" and defined "the primordial Law" that ruled marriage ties "as identical to an order of language": "the prohibition of incest is merely its subjective pivot." Thus, at the very heart of the unconscious, there was inevitably the superimposition of the order of culture on the order of nature, a superimposition that we already discussed in relation to the Symbolic.⁶⁸ The unconscious tended to be identified with the field of the Other,

the locus of the pact, the locus of the Father, radically heterogeneous to the subject—but it nevertheless governed him and he had to emerge from it.⁶⁹ When, with the studies on psychoses, the Name-of-the-Father became central, Lacan said that “the Oedipus complex is cosubstantial with the unconscious.”⁷⁰ In 1953, the analyst was told to posit himself in the locus of the Other; he was the “master of the truth”⁷¹ toward which the patient’s speech progresses. “The psychoanalytic experience has rediscovered in man the imperative of the word as the law that has formed him in its image.”⁷² Does it not seem difficult to accept this definition of the Father and of the analyst as Father while refuting that of the unconscious as essentially linguistic?

Indeed, what many analysts present in Rome refused was the danger of assimilating the unconscious into language. What was meant by the term “language” whose ambiguity is obvious in these first elaborations of Lacanian theory? Let us give a few examples: “The symptom resolves itself *entirely* in an analysis of language, because the symptom is itself structured *like* a language, because it is from language that speech must be delivered”; “The unconscious is structured *like* a language”; the only object of the treatment is “the relationship between speech and language *in* the subject.”⁷³ Is it a matter of language [*la langue*] as linguistics defines it? Is it discourse, the linking of sentences, which is always unique in its actualization of language and which cannot be separated from an intersubjective situation? Is it singular speech as opposed to “transindividual” discourse, that is, collective discourse? Or else, is it a specifically human faculty, the ability to speak linked to the broader ability to symbolize, which refers us to the various definitions given by philosophies of language and communication? *Fonction et Champ* already included all these aspects that would be systematized during the following years, without always articulating one to the other.

At that point, many psychoanalysts were struck by the rigor, the precision, and the soundness of the developments on intersubjectivity as foundation, both in man’s development and in the specific experience of the treatment. They approved the fact of restoring their importance to the patient’s speech and to the familial and social discourse that one must learn to identify in order to posit oneself as subject in the community. They appreciated a presentation that could shed light on their daily practices that, indeed, rely on the symbolic efficiency of speech in order to multiply, tie, and untie significations and thereby rediscover the meaning of past experiences, to change them, and to open new perspectives to the patient. This holds true for some passages in *Au-delà du “Principe de réalité,”* written in 1936, as well as for the seminars that succeeded one another from 1953 until 1958, the date of the *Formations de l’inconscient*—not to mention the rereading of the early Freudian texts.⁷⁴ Today in 1986, I think that one can still learn from Lacan on these various points. However, the discontent, which could already be sensed at the time,

was going to get worse and worse: it concerned the conception of the unconscious and that of intersubjectivity, both grounded in a philosophy of being and of language that was not unanimously approved.

During the discussions, three essential questions were raised, first in a confused way, then more and more precisely in time, generating breakups each time that the answers diverged too much. First, if it is true that analysis takes place in the symbolic space of language, can one deduce that the unconscious itself is only an organization of signifiers whose singularity is erased before the laws that govern them? Then, is intersubjectivity limited to this “communication in which the sender receives his own message back from the receiver in an inverted form”?⁷⁵ Is there not some mirror effect, even if Lacan denied it? Ultimately, is man only defined in relation to language? Is he only a *parlêtre*, that is, a subject only in so far as he is founded—and alienated—by language whose power is absolute?^e In other words, does he owe his existence to the word [*verbe*] and to transcendental speech?

Because so many of Lacan's texts deal with the relationship between the unconscious and language, because the notions are so complex and sometimes contradictory, and because the formulations require so many clarifications, all we can do here is refer the reader to Anika Rifflet-Lemaire, Angèle Kremer-Marietti, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, Alain Juranville, and Joël Dor's thorough studies.⁷⁶ Let us merely stress some important aspects.

What about the reference to linguistics? It took two directions: the study of the sign in language conceived precisely as a combinatory of signs; and the study of metaphor, metonymy, and, in broader terms, rhetoric. However, how did the transfer of concepts from linguistics to psychoanalysis operate, a transfer which, in itself, is part of the lively exchanges among sciences? Was it simply a matter of a slight shift in the concepts, indeed their transformation, required by the new field in which they functioned, as Dor, for example, thinks? Or was it a matter of their destruction, as Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy argue? Would linguistics, a related if not an experimental science at the start, finally play the role of a pretext science? Ultimately, Lacan's answer was clear: if, in 1969, “language is the condition of the unconscious,”⁷⁷ in 1970 “the unconscious is the condition of linguistics.”⁷⁸ From then on he would use the term *linguistry* [*linguisterie*] in order to better dissociate his theory from linguistics.^f This way he could avoid accusations and give preeminence to psychoanalysis, which could be promoted, in its turn, to an experimental science.

e. Lacan's term *parlêtre* combines *parler*, to speak, and *être*, both the verb *to be* and the noun *a being*.

f. Lacan creates the term *linguisterie* by analogy with such French words as *plomberie* or *pâtisserie*.

Indeed, he completely disrupted Saussure's theory of the sign. He turned the relationship between signifier (the acoustic image) and signified (the concept or the representation) upside down; the bar that both united and distinguished them—Saussure used the metaphor of the two sides of a sheet of paper—became, for him, on the contrary, a bar that could not be crossed.⁷⁹ To Lacan, the unconscious is like the superposition of two radically separated chains, with the signifiers on top and the signifieds sliding underneath. In order for signification to emerge, these chains must meet sometimes: these are the “anchoring points” [*points de capiton*], a term borrowed from upholstery. However, the only example of anchoring points that Lacan provided is the paternal metaphor, which he described elsewhere as the pure substitution of one signifier for another signifier. . . . If a signified emerges, it can only be a product of the effects of the signifier. In fact, Lacan wanted to destroy the concept of signs that represent something for somebody, in favor of the signifier whose pure combinatory structures the unconscious.⁸⁰ By confusing the signified and the referent (that to which the sign refers in the outside reality), he could assert, “The unconscious is neither primordial nor instinctual; what it knows about the elementary is no more than the elements of the signifier.”⁸¹ From then on, even if he agreed with Lagache that the id is impersonal, he would see it as “aggregates of signifiers” and not “aggregates of object relations.”⁸² In a similar way, psychosis was, for him, only a matter of a “foreclosed body of signifiers” that was projected outside. Psychoanalytic experience could then become “a particularly pure symbolic experience,”⁸³ cut off from drives, from the body, from matter, and from the too real Real. Lacan's theory of the unconscious is grounded in a philosophy according to which “the symbol” is “the murder of the thing.”⁸⁴

Lacan was far from his 1936 statement: “Language, before signifying something, signifies for someone.”⁸⁵ As of 1957 Lacan contested the sign because it is always addressed to someone. He went as far as identifying it with the “preverbal” and including speech in it. Did he not say that his female dog has speech but not language? He added that the caretaker of his building does too, the women he meets in his bed or at parties, and “children in swaddling clothes,” whereas the subject, the *parlêtre*, on the other hand, has language; speech and language are very different.⁸⁶ Against the speech of the body, of the affect, or of demand, Lacan dreamed of a discourse without words [*discours sans paroles*]. This is why he made fun of the supporters of “psychologizing intersubjectivity” and of the “preverbal.” For him, in order to give the subjects a chance to move out of it, the “preverbal” must be conceived as already caught in the verbal.

In *Le Séminaire sur La Lettre volée* and in *L'Instance de la lettre*, the signifying chain is both the agency that commands being and the “insistence of repetition.” Is it deadly? Does it induce tetanic spasms? In any case, it is machinelike. Game theory and cybernetics took over linguistics: “The pri-

mordial and primitive language is that of the machine: 0 and 1"; the unconscious resembles these "modern thinking machines" in which "is found the chain that *insists* on reproducing itself in the transference, and which is the chain of dead desire"⁸⁷; "there is no other master than the signifier" whose displacement alone, on the model of the letter in Poe's short-story, determines everyone's trajectories and places.⁸⁸ Lacan sometimes wondered who is behind the machine, "this director himself directed by it."⁸⁹ It might have been reassuring for Lacan to tell himself that "the psychotic is inhabited, possessed by language," while "the neurotic inhabits language," but there are moments when the Lacanian texts turn the human world into a puppet theater where the puppets are manipulated by the threads of the signifier . . .

The letter that governs the puppets of Poe's short-story is also the phallus: then, what is meant by *signifier* in Lacan's texts? Alain Juranville rightly stresses that it is a matter of thing-presentations as much as of words: Lacan himself admitted, during his conferences in the United States, that what he had called *signifier* was the word and, in *Propos sur l'hystérie*, he talked of a body of words [*corps de mots*], punning on a body of pains [*corps de maux*].⁹⁰ Maybe the signifier ought to be conceived as any element of a combinatory, beyond linguistic definition.

Lacan made another reference to linguistics, this time from the perspective of rhetoric. The unconscious became a discourse, "the discourse of the Other." Lacan borrowed from Roman Jakobson his definitions of metaphor and metonymy as the two axes of language, that is, the paradigmatic axis (substitution of one element to another) and the syntagmatic axis (linkage of one element to the other in the sentence). He established a relationship between these two axes and the processes of condensation and displacement that Freud analyzed in dreams. He transformed each theory through the other, in order to construct his own. For example, instead of understanding condensation as a number of different elements represented by a single figure or word, he restricted his understanding of condensation to the substitution of one signifier to another one that, in the process, fell under the control of repression. Lacan, who constantly played with the connotations surrounding a word, a syllable, or a sound, was well aware that, in analytic practice, things do not work like that. Why, then, did he impose such a definition? Perhaps he did it to establish the essential role of the paternal metaphor, which, according to him, must replace the desire of the mother, in order for the subject's access into culture to take place through the identification with the Father, who was considered to be the only conceivable form of the ideal-of-the-ego. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy's critique of Lacan's use of the term metonymy is very shrewd and subtle. Once again in this case the new notion seemed to function more to support the theory of desire than to follow the different forms of unconscious displacement in the patient's discourse.

It would be wrong to restrict the analysis to the massive body of these early

texts. During the seminar on *Les Quatre Concepts*, Lacan suddenly reminded the audience that, if one did not take into account the drives and the sexuality associated to part objects, “psychoanalysis would be nothing but a mantic.” “The reality of the unconscious is sexual reality—an untenable truth,” which cannot be separated from death.⁹¹ All the passionate passages in which the Master evoked the horror of the Thing and the Real that creates panic converge in this direction, and he even used prosopopeia: “I, Truth, will speak,” like Diana driving Actaeon to his ruin.⁹² Speech [*la parole*], elsewhere discredited, was here the Word [*la Parole*] announcing Truth, or, if it was the Father’s Word [*la parole du Père*], it “humanizes desire.”⁹³ Between statement [*énoncé*] and enunciation [*énonciation*], the subject must search for himself in the “middle ground of speech” [*midire*].⁸

THE PRIMACY OF THE PHALLUS

This theme is undoubtedly the most popular theme of Lacanian theory, along with that of the Name-of-the-Father. It is overused, often in a dogmatic and hence defensive way, which ends up stressing all the more its inseparable reverse side, the obsessive fear of castration. The first reference is usually the text on the signification of the phallus, “La Signification du phallus,” an address delivered in 1958 at Munich but only published in 1966 in *Ecrits*. Although elaborated between 1955 and 1958 during the seminar, the notion only became widespread in a broader audience after 1958. However, as early as 1958–1959, with the analysis of *Hamlet* in *Le Désir et son interprétation*, Lacan modified his position, by putting more emphasis on castration, including the Father’s castration. One must beware of the frequent discrepancy between what is written, in Lacan’s name, about the phallus, and his theory itself. Indeed, throughout the years he never stopped revising his definitions in order to make the phallus a fundamental concept of psychoanalysis. Remember how seldom Freud used the term!⁹⁴

The problematic of the phallus and castration only appeared in Lacan’s work after the Symbolic/Imaginary/Real trilogy, the notion of the “unconscious structured like a language,” and the notion of paternal metaphor had been established. In order to maintain the father’s preeminence as Father, Lacan needed to assert the primacy of the phallus as man’s only emblem. So, if preference must be given to the Father, in individual and collective life, if he is the origin and the representative of culture and of the law, if he, alone, allows access to language, it is because he possesses the phallus, which he can give or deny. Hence, in “D’une question préliminaire” psychosis is clearly attributed, under the concept of the “foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father,” to a failure of the paternal metaphor, which has not allowed the

g. *Midire* puns on *mi-dire*, half-speaking, and *médire*, to slander.

subject “to evoke the signification of the phallus.”⁹⁵ Contrary to the penis, the phallus is a paradoxical object, both an erotic object and an object that has a “symbolic vocation.”⁹⁶ This is why, in the 1958 address, the phallus is not only a signifier, but even becomes “the signifier of signifiers,” the signifier that governs and is thus “meant to designate as a whole the effect of there being a signified, inasmuch as the signifier conditions any such effect by its presence as signifier” (which, of course, does not mean anything in linguistics where differential play is all there is). The phallus becomes “the privileged signifier of that mark where the share of the logos is wedded to the advent of desire.” “The phallus as signifier gives the ratio of desire (in the musical sense of the term as the ‘mean and extreme’ ratio of harmonic division),” the “ratio of the desire of the Other” (and here, it is the mother). Recalling that for Freud there is only one libido and that it is masculine, Lacan concludes that “the function of the phallus leads here to its most profound relation: the relation by way of which the ancients embodied in it both the *Nous* [sense] and the *Logos* [reason].”⁹⁷ Such a celebration of the phallus has obviously launched waves of enthusiastic reactions . . . and fanatical texts.

If narcissism can thus have free rein, it is because what is asserted is the radical separation between the penis, the mere organ, and the phallus, the “pure signifier,” which has no link with anatomy or biology. Against those troublemakers (mainly disruptive women) who, in the name of their social, familial, and individual experience, asserted that such a link exists, the argument always remained that penis and phallus are two separate things, and Lacan even added the idea that women, too, have access to this emblem of mankind. In the cradle, would chances thus be equal? The material and official recording of the facts—gender is associated with the first name given to a baby—would not have any imaginary or symbolic effect on the social and psychic destiny of a newborn. One then wonders why so many men actually have the powers that are associated with the phallus, and why so many women are excluded from such powers. However, Lacan never claimed that the relation to the phallus was the same for men and women: on the contrary, he constantly stressed the profound dissymmetry that defines both sexes. For him, *one* sex has been selected to reach the status of the signifier of sexualization: there is no “signifier of the feminine sex,” not even a “signifier of sexual difference,” “the phallus alone is the sex-unity.”⁹⁸ “Man is not without having it” and “woman is without having it.”⁹⁹ Indeed, the last seminars constantly elaborate on the aphorism, “There is no sexual relation.” Some women and some men can indeed choose (or endure) the position of the other sex, but the positions themselves remain unchanged and, in time, they are presented in the form of apparently irrefutable algebraic figurations.¹⁰⁰ Lacan always ended up speaking clearly when he was looking for the irrefutable argument. Such is the case in *La Signification du phallus*: “One might say that this signifier is chosen as what stands out as most easily seized upon in

the real of sexual copulation, and also as the most symbolic in the literal (typographical) sense of the term, since it is the *equivalent* in that relation to the (logical) copula. One might also say that by virtue of its turgidity, it is the image of the vital flow as it is transmitted in generation."¹⁰¹ Lacan, as a last resource, often resorted to this classical argument.

How can we understand, without appealing to nature or to transcendence, this transformation of the penis into a "signifier," the "absolute signifier," even the only signifier to become the symbol of sexuation, of desire, and of the power to symbolize itself?¹⁰² Goux's analyses, in *Economie et symbolique*, are helpful as they establish a historical logic of "general equivalents."¹⁰³ Just as gold was detached from the body of goods in order to become the only equivalent that decides on their value, the penis would be detached from the body of erotic objects to become the phallus, the standard of value, while the father would become the general equivalent of subjects and the logos the general equivalent of linguistic exchanges. This movement, which dialectizes the orders of production, of reproduction, of patriarchal organization, and of language, would account for a symbolic mode based on Oneness. Goux thinks that such a symbolic mode can be reversed or can reverse itself; women, then, would have a position as full subjects in society. However, Luce Irigaray has been the first to deconstruct, from the point of view of women, this phallo-logo-patricentric logic.¹⁰⁴ Insofar as he pushes to the extreme the thematization of the phallus and puts the exchange of women at the basis of culture, Lacan clearly brings to light the androcentric character of our societies and of their fundamental values. Moreover, Goux's thesis stresses the ambiguity of certain Lacanian formulas, such as "the phallus is both the sign of desire and the object of desire."¹⁰⁵ He also points out the difficulty of clearly dissociating the phallus from the *objet a*—the part object that has become the cause of desire—and from the *agalma*, this brilliant and fascinating form, a kind of fetish that functions between Socrates and Alcibiades, for example, reducing the one who is supposed to possess it to the state of an object.¹⁰⁶ How can one possess the desirable object—or the symbol of the object—and keep, at the same time, one's status of desiring subject? At every dead end, one has to invent.

From an analytic perspective, Lacan articulates the notion of the phallus on different levels: "Between the mother and the child, Freud introduced a third imaginary term, that is, the phallus whose signifying role is a major one," he said in the seminar on *La Relation d'objet*. Thus, he distinguishes three structural moments in the constitution of the subject: the moment of *frustration*, that is, the "imaginary damage [*dam*] done to a real object, the penis as organ"; the moment of *deprivation*, that is, the "real lack created by the loss of a symbolic object, the phallus as signifier"; and the moment of *castration*, that is, "the symbolic debt in the register of the law and the loss of the phallus as imaginary object." The child would thus move from the stage

“to be or not to be the phallus” (of the mother) to that of “to have or not to have it.” The paternal function is thus supported, as we have said, by the phallic problematic. During the seminar on *Les Formations de l'inconscient*, Lacan located the intervention of the paternal metaphor in a primary, quasi-originary, time because of the primacy of the phallus, a primacy instituted by culture. Is this not, in part, what he meant by the “unbroken line” [*trait unaire*] in the seminar on *L'Identification*? “The fundamental signifier is a myth,” he said in *Les Psychoses*, because the Name-of-the-Father is at the same time situated at the moment of the Oedipus complex and withdrawn in the most archaic times. Later, it became a mark or a number (1 or sometimes -1 encompassing 0 and 1). The Lacanian texts gradually moved toward a more and more abstract symbolic logic, that is, mathematical logic.

The primacy of the phallus gives rise to anxiety. “To have or not to have the phallus” becomes “not to be without having it”; the only possible salvation consists of making the phallus not the opposite of castration but its very symbol. Against Jones who talked of “aphanisis,” valid for both sexes, rather than of castration, Lacan maintained that “the only notion that allows us to understand the symbolism of the phallus is the specificity of its function as signifier” and “as *signifier of lack*.” He could thus re-assert the absence of a feminine signifier but also uncover masculine limitations: Punchinello becomes “the winged Phallus [. . .], the unconscious fantasy of male desire’s impossibilities, the treasure in which woman’s infinite impotence [*impuissance*] is exhausted.”¹⁰⁷ From then on, he would create two symbols, Φ and $-\Phi$, and give more and more importance to $-\Phi$. Man would thus be a divided subject, both bearer of the phallus and marked by the lack that makes him a desiring subject. Paradoxically, “the lack of lack” (the absence of $-\Phi$) would be the source of anxiety. At the end of his analysis of *Hamlet*, Lacan talks of “Phallophanies,” brief and dazzling apparitions of the phallus, and he associates them with the moment when Laertes and Hamlet kill each other, amidst a general massacre, in Ophelia’s tomb (he makes of Ophelia’s name a composite of phallus). Should these be called phallophanies or phallomanias accompanied by the depressive phases that cannot be separated from them?

Lacan’s analysis of *Hamlet* in *Le Désir et son interprétation* reveals the deepest source of anxiety to be precisely the castration of the Father, this wandering ghost who died in a state of sin and who suddenly appears in front of his son. For Lacan, the most terrible truth to confront is that “the phallus is unavailable in the Other” and that “there is no Other of the Other,” no guarantor for the Father as symbolic although failing Other. Where can protection be found against the voracious, triumphant, and lethal sexuality of the mother-woman? The Real is there, in all its horror. The next seminar, *L’Éthique de la psychanalyse*, developed with often desperate and prophetic accents the religious theme of *déréliction*.

Later, Lacan raised the question of the *nullibiquité* of the phallus, as lack-

ing symbol or as outside-of-any-system.^h The phallus thus testifies to the fact that *jouissance* is real but cannot be symbolized.ⁱ Lacan then created the notion of “(no) more-*jouir*” [*plus-de-jouir*].^j From the Other, one moves to the other. Then, in 1971–1972, in a reversal that might surprise, he discovered the mistake that would consist in “not seeing that *jouissance* is the signifier and that the phallus is only its signified”. . . . At the same time, “woman not-all” is the woman “who is not entirely contained in the phallic function without nevertheless being its negation.”¹⁰⁹

NEED/DEMAND/DESIRE

The problem of desire is at the heart of Lacan's reflection: he gradually created an original concept that moved away from the Freudian notion elaborated since *The Interpretation of Dreams*. For Freud, desire is linked to the reproduction of the signs that accompanied the first experiences of satisfaction. It is also the psychical movement capable, in the absence of any real object, of investing these signs to the point of re-establishing satisfaction, in a hallucinatory way, in the form of the “fulfilment of desire.” If it is to be distinguished from the need that is directly satisfied by the adequate object (milk for example), desire nevertheless derives from need and retains, as unconscious desire, the indestructible marks of infancy. Unconscious desire is always the basis of dreams, fantasies, the quest for any object throughout life, as well as expressed wishes, in spite of distortions created by the clash with the reality principle and above all with prohibitions.

Articulating the three terms—need, demand, and desire—in the complexity of their relations, Lacan elaborated his theory of desire as the organizing lack of the unconscious. Laplanche and Pontalis try to clarify the definitions: “Need is directed at a specific object and is satisfied by it. Demands are formulated and addressed to others; where they are still aimed at an object, this is not essential to them, since the articulated demand is essentially a demand for love.” Thus, demand belongs to the order of speech and to that of the dependency on the other. On the other hand, desire “cannot be reduced to need since, by definition, it is not a relation to a real object independent of a subject but a relation to fantasy; nor can it be reduced to demand, in that it seeks to impose itself without taking the language or the unconscious of the other into account, and insists upon absolute recognition from him.”¹¹⁰

h. *Nullibiquité* combines *nul*, nil or nonexistent, and *ubiquité*, ubiquity, suggesting that the phallus is everywhere and nowhere at once.

i. *Jouissance* (and the corresponding verb, *jouir*) refer to an extreme pleasure, especially sexual pleasure. Following most translations of Lacan's texts and because of the specificity of the French terms, I have chosen to leave them untranslated.

j. *plus-de-jouir*: *plus de* can mean both more and no more; hence the ambiguity of *plus-de-jouir*, both more *jouir* and no more *jouir*.

This summary given by Laplanche and Pontalis of the *Formations de l'inconscient* (1957–1958) reveals the difficulty of situating desire. Given its imperious character, can it be articulated with castration and with the access into the symbolic? That is, can it be considered, according to Hegelian themes, as an ultimate step that marks the overcoming not only of dependency but also of the fight for prestige and of the confrontation for recognition? It is obviously difficult to relate such a trilogy (need, demand, desire) to the trilogy we pointed out when discussing the phallus (*frustration, deprivation, and castration*) and thus to the three registers of the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic. Lacan often repeated that “desire is born from the gap between need and demand,” an enigmatic expression that we selected from *Le Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*. A passage from the *Hommage à Jones* sheds some light on this statement: “As the need is submitted to the demand, it is the concrete incidence of the signifier that, by repressing desire into the position of being misknown [*méconnu*], gives its order to the unconscious.” The signifier thus functions as a general director; it allows the need to go through the “defiles of speech”—and this is the demand—but at the same time, it takes the place of the desire that is subjected to its mark. This clarifies one of the first aphorisms of *Le Désir et son interprétation*: “desire is its interpretation.” Desire can only be recognized through a long work of deciphering, a work that is endless since Lacan never stopped calling into question the analyst’s own desire. “One must take desire literally,”¹¹¹ he stated, and “desire is lack and cannot in any way be weighed or placed in the balance, except on the scales of the logic”¹¹² of the unconscious, that is, of the signifier.

Therapy should thus allow desire to emerge beyond the patient’s demand, through the recognition of the signifiers upon which desire depends. In the end, the ideal would be to reach a “purified desire” that would open access to “the forever revealed-revealing discourse.” The seminar on transference, *Le Transfert*, which focuses on the relationship between Socrates and Alcibiades, a relationship identified with the relationships between analyst and analysand, is entirely devoted to the quest for this moment when desire is only “its empty place.” Later, in *Encore*, discourse also takes the place of love, this time between man and woman. What is the “purity of desire” that Lacan asserted was so necessary? The answer may be in the *Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache*: “The true subject, the subject of desire, is nothing other than the Thing that is the closest to him but that, at the same time, eludes him the most.” This statement is a repetition of the one made in *Ethique*: “I have put the Thing in the place of sin” and “the complicity between the Law and the Thing is absolute Evil.” Would psychoanalysis be a particularly pure experience of desire¹¹³ because “one puts one’s desire aside in order to preserve what is the most precious, the phallus, the symbol of desire”?¹¹⁴ Is such a desire a pure desire or a “Nodesire” [*Désirpas*] as is said in *La Logique du fantasme*? However purified desire might become, does not

the notion of “(no)-more-*jouir*” [*plus-de-jouir*], elaborated in 1971–1972, bring back the fascination of a *jouissance*, which might be, as it is in Sade, the submission to the imperious command of a terrible superego: “*Jouis!*” Both the other and the self are being put to death in the name of the Other. If the Law thus speaks, Lacan’s statement in *Subversion of the Subject* becomes clearer: “It is not the law that bars the subject’s access to *jouissance* but pleasure,” that is, life. The ambiguity of the conclusion also becomes easier to understand: “Castration means that *jouissance* must be refused, so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder [*l’échelle renversée*] of the Law of desire.”

The graphs of desire were constructed in order to repress the antagonistic forces that burst out into discourse. Aphorisms often emerged as the result of combinations stemming from compromise. For example, “the desire of the subject is the desire of the Other” refers all at once to the hysterical desire of the *Belle Bouchère*/*belle bouche erre*,^k to the Hegelian formula of the fight till death, and to the desire of the Other, locus of the code, of the Law and of the Father, or locus of the mother as Other who desires the phallus. Another example, the definition of desire as “metonymy of the lack-to-be” operates at the same time in the field of the symbolic, in that of the signifier that divides and bars the subject for ever, and in that of castration.¹¹⁵ Let us not forget the definition of fantasy, where the object of desire becomes the *objet a*, the cause of desire. The fascination of fantasy is then attributed to the suspension of desire and to the eclipse of the subject who becomes “the cut that makes the part object shine in its inexpressible oscillation.” According to Lacan, the *objet a*, the object of psychoanalysis, functions both in the registers of demand and of desire, and it functions according to two different positions, which leads to four combinations: the *objet a* of the demand on the part of the Other [*Demande à l’Autre*] is the breast; that of the demand of the Other [*Demande de l’Autre*], feces; that of the desire on the part of the Other [*Désir à l’Autre*], the gaze; and that of the desire of the Other [*Désir de l’Autre*], the voice.¹¹⁶

Thus, it is not all that easy to divide demand and desire between mother and Father. It is not always as pacifying and reassuring as one might think. The imperious voice of the Other may be the voice that persecutes the paranoiac or constructs the perverse . . .

Still, in *L’Éthique* Lacan stated that “one must not give in on one’s desire [*céder sur son désir*]” and this injunction caused much ink to flow. Does it authorize everything, or does it imply that one has to accept death and even sacrifice in the name of the chosen values? Socrates drinking the hemlock, Moses dying on the brink of the promised land, Antigone walled up alive: for

k. *Belle Bouchère*, Beautiful Butcher’s Wife, sounds like *belle bouche erre*, beautiful mouth wanders.

Lacan they became heroes in the “in-between-two-deaths,” in between the death of the infamous judgment and actual death.

“THERE IS NO SEXUAL RELATION”

Although this assertion became well known mainly through the published texts, notably *Encore* (1972–1973), it was repeated over and over again during eight years of seminars, starting with *La Logique du fantasme* in 1966–1967 until *Les Non-dupes errent* in 1973–1974. However, it functioned on various levels: the discourse of psychoanalytic experience and theorization, logic, and mathematics with the “quantic formulas” presented in *Encore*.¹¹⁷ Repetition alone established a link among these levels. As in music, the almost unchanged repetition of the various themes combined them by associating them. However, a more ambitious project was gradually sketched: first to turn this assertion into the truth of empirical observations, then to make it the keystone of analytic theory, and finally to ground the truth of theory in the rigor of logical categories and, in the last instance, of mathematical writing.

Lacan’s starting point is a banal observation upon which he elaborated, depending on his mood, in either a misogynous or a misanthropic fashion: “the real truth is that between men and women it does not work,”¹¹⁸ or else, “in analytic discourse one talks about fucking—to fuck¹—and says it doesn’t work.”¹¹⁹ Why? The answer is given in *La Logique du fantasme*: “The big secret of psychoanalysis is that there is no *sexual act*, all there is is sexuality.” An act requires a “doubling in the signifier,” both a speech and a commitment, which is what institutes a subject; but sexuality does not involve an act. During a discussion in the Master’s absence, one of the participants drew the obvious conclusion: to fuck is not an act, but to get married is one. . . . Lacan, on the other hand, moved toward other explanations: “In psychoanalysis, as well as in the unconscious, man knows nothing of woman, and woman nothing of man. The phallus epitomizes the point in myth where the sexual becomes the passion of the signifier.”¹²⁰ The sexual would thus be subjected to the inescapable mark of the fundamental signifier: but the phallus, because it is the “sex-unity” [*unité-sexe*], plays the role of a third between the two sexes, not that of a middle term that would make meeting or exchange possible. To make the situation even worse, there is another third term between man and woman, the *objet a*, which is simultaneously the cause of desire, the support and medium of the fantasy and also of the “truth of alienation,” and the Real that cannot be symbolized. Each partner, in his/her own way, treats the other as *objet a*.¹²¹ Hence the conclusion: “there is no sexual relation;”

1. In English in the original text.

and “if there is no relation between the two, even in the sexual act, each partner remains one.”¹²²

Another consequence emerges. If there is no sexual relation because of the absence of a signifier of sexual difference and because of the sole presence of the phallic signifier, then the statement “the sexual becomes the passion of the signifier” takes on a different meaning: to talk “supplements the lack of sexual relation.” This theme, which appeared as early as 1966–1967 was developed at length in *Encore*. However, Lacan was slightly embarrassed by this assertion, which would imply that one talks instead of making love: the sentence could be taken as an entirely personal denial [*dénégation*]. He defended himself in *Le Savoir du psychanalyste*: “I am not saying that speech exists because there is no sexual relation. This would be absurd. I am not saying either that there is no sexual relation because speech is there. But there is no sexual relation because speech functions on that level that analytic discourse reveals to be specific to speaking human beings, that is, the importance, the preeminence of what makes of sex a semblance, the semblance of men and women.” This seems complicated but it actually comes down to a fairly common view of castration in psychoanalysis: “what is at stake in a serious love relationship between a man and a woman is castration” and “castration is the means of adaptation to survival. . . .”

After that, something else was needed. It was necessary to move from letters to numbers, from the phallus to the 1 that symbolizes the incommensurable. “There is no sexual relation” because it cannot *be written* in algebraic terms. “It never stops not being written.” The seminar *D’un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant* (1970–1971) attempts to elaborate this new notion of writing by condensing two signifying systems, the linguistic and the mathematical: “There is no sexual relation that can be written-said.” However, according to Charcot, Freud, and Lacan himself, the retort is that “it does not prevent us from existing!” It is in response to this argument that the master appealed to logical categories: the possible, the impossible, the contingent and the necessary, and he added impotence [*impuissance*] (to write or to be written). With much erudition, Juranville elaborates on the novelty of this logical reflection.¹²³ Perhaps what is most important is to grasp the stakes; what must be proved through logic is that only what can be formalized exists. The definition of the real as the impossible thus becomes clearer: the impossible is sexual relation. Psychologizing or sociologizing explanations of the dead ends of sex can be trashed, Lacan wrote, since “incompletion belongs to the order of logic.” If Lacan dreamed of “a discourse without words,” it is a matter of formalization, with “small letters” and a few signs.¹²⁴ The matheme becomes the height of desire for logic pushed to its limit.

In *Les Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, Gérard Guillerault discusses the “quantic formulas” and points out that they do not operate in mathematics

(just as the relationships between the signifier and the signified established by Lacan do not operate in linguistics).¹²⁵ Incidentally, this only strengthens his admiration for the Master. The formulas clearly prove the absence of relationship and the human incapacity to establish the fact of sexual relation. . . .

“To say” [*le dire*] (the very act of saying, this “empty place” in language that Lacan marked with ellipses in his seminar . . . *Ou pire*) can “be summarized in one single proposition: ‘there is no sexual relation.’” Ultimately, the Master did indeed locate the source of speech in the absence of sexual relation. For many years this assertion provoked many speeches—speeches made of obscurities, rehashes, abrupt jumps in register and in reasoning, but also of discoveries. In the end, woman alone is no longer the enigma of sex: “. . . after seventy years [of psychoanalytic theory], still nothing has been formulated about male man.”¹²⁶ Man is sort of located on the side of some universal: “*Ya d’l’Un*”^m because “*l’Aumoizun*” exists (*l’au-moins-un*, “the at least one”), which escapes castration. But is this not a myth? As for woman, if “she is not-all” (she does not exist in the universal), she is precisely “the one who is not contained in the phallic function without nevertheless being its negation”—and that might be fortunate for her. The seminar *Encore* is the desperate, desiring, and aggressive pursuit of this woman whom Lacan wanted to define at all cost and who slipped out of his discourse.

THE FOUR DISCOURSES

In 1967 Lacan declared, “I have other little tricks up my sleeve.” These four fundamental discourses were indeed a new trick, as they are supposed to orient, without our knowing it, all our utterances: the Discourse of the Master, the Discourse of the Hysteric, the Discourse of the University, and the Discourse of the Analyst.

For the most part, this new theoretical proposition was elaborated in 1969–1970 during the seminar on *L’Envers de la psychanalyse*. Lacan clarified it in *Radiophonie*, an interview recorded in 1970 and published by the journal *Scilicet* in the issue n.2/3. A note clearly explains the definitive diagrams. However, more important than the algebraic formulas themselves are the numerous commentaries that accompanied them until, and even after, the seminar *Encore* (1972–1973). How should they be understood? One can choose to articulate a coherent definition of these discourses, of their relationships, and of their differences. One would then analyze why these discourses are necessary, so as to establish the continuity and the rigor of the theory itself. This would finally lead to a discussion of the four discourses in terms of the broader philosophical and epistemological field. Such, for example, is the choice made by Juranville whose presentation is very enlightening.¹²⁷ One

m. *Ya d’l’Un* sounds like “there is something of One.”

can also choose to follow the twists and turns of the Lacanian word, considering that the paradoxes, hesitations, uncertainties, and contradictions are fruitful. Such is usually the attitude of psychoanalysts, who try to test this theory of the four discourses against their practices and their own reflections.¹²⁸ Finally, one should not forget the historical conditions in which Lacan elaborated these notions.

In 1969–1970 there was a crisis within the E.F.P. around the questions of the *passé*, the institutional functioning, and the teaching of psychoanalysis. Lacan's *Allocution prononcée pour la clôture du Congrès de l'E.F.P.*, which he delivered on April 19, 1970 as director of the *école*, relied on the four discourses, which were too neglected, he said, in his *école*.¹²⁹

On a broader level, 1968 was a time of crisis: university discourse, the institution itself, as well as the transmission of knowledge were contested; the collusion between knowledge and power was denounced; and more profoundly, knowledge itself was called into question by a violent rejection of all totalizing theoretical systems and even of all theoretical approaches to experience, in the name of a freer speech, even if it was a stammering one. Lacan had to leave the Ecole Normale Supérieure (E.N.S.). However, the university of Paris at Vincennes opened itself to the E.F.P. and invited Lacan to give a series of lectures. In the very first meeting, he had to face the hostility of a large number of students, even though that meeting was devoted to a critical analysis of university discourse. The *Magazine Littéraire* published later, under the title of "L'Impromptu de Vincennes," the account of this memorable event, which convinced Lacan to reserve his teaching for his own seminars whose successes, on the other hand, were stunning.¹³⁰

His position toward teaching was clear. He reaffirmed that he *taught* psychoanalysis and that that teaching was *transmissible*. However, he was an analyst and "when offering itself to teaching, analytic discourse puts the analyst in the position of an analysand, that is, in the position of not producing anything masterable, except as symptom." Finally, he said, "truth may not convince, but knowledge, on the other hand, is transmitted in an act." So "what saves [Lacan] from teaching is the act" (here, the psychoanalytic act that takes place in therapy), as well as "that which testifies to the act" (the theoretical elaboration of psychoanalytic discourse).¹³¹ Lacan's use of the terms truth and knowledge, which does not coincide with the definitions in use at the time, complicates things even further. For him, psychoanalysis is not "a subversion of knowledge." "On the contrary, knowledge makes the truth of our discourse," he said. From then on, for him, *knowledge* (and not or no longer truth alone) is on the side of the *unconscious*.

The formulas of the four discourses rely, as their starting point, on the fundamental ingredients of Lacanian theory. Four terms, four "letters," are at their basis: S1, Signifier-master, which belongs to the field of the big Other; S2, "the battery of signifiers that is always already there when one wants to

determine the nature of a discourse, that is, the status of what is enunciated" (in fact, it is a matter of "the network of an [unconscious] knowledge"); $\$$, the subject divided by the signifier, slashed from the origin by the "unbroken line" [*trait unaire*]; and the *objet a*, the fallen object, the object that was lost when the initial division of the subject took place, the object that is the cause of desire but also of the (no)-more-*jouir* [*plus-de-jouir*]. Everything that Lacan had taught for years was there in a condensed form. These four terms are fixed elements and the permutation of their positions creates the different discourses. Thus, it is a sort of algebra:

$$\text{The Discourse of the Master} \quad \frac{S1}{\$} \rightarrow \frac{S2}{a}$$

$$\text{The Discourse of the University} \quad \frac{S2}{S1} \rightarrow \frac{a}{\$}$$

$$\text{The Discourse of the Hysteric} \quad \frac{\$}{a} \rightarrow \frac{S1}{S2}$$

$$\text{The Discourse of the Analyst} \quad \frac{a}{S2} \rightarrow \frac{\$}{S1}$$

The circular permutation of the four elements thus creates the four types of discourse that organize one's enunciation (one's mode of speech). But we never stop shifting—"by a quarter turn"—from one type of discourse to the other. Indeed, the algebraic formula also indicates positions, which are fixed:

$$\begin{array}{cc} \frac{\text{The agent}}{\text{truth}} & \frac{\text{the other}}{\text{production}} \end{array}$$

Thus, it is possible to play both with fixed elements and with permutative changes, which are themselves limited and ordered on multiple levels: is this a complicated version of one of the games of our childhood? In any case Lacan never stopped playing with it, to the point of indefinitely varying his definitions of the Master, the Hysteric, the University, and the Analyst. Sometimes he kept the usual meaning of the terms, sometimes he went back to the meaning he had given them before, sometimes he created a new paradoxical meaning. Obviously, the Discourse of the Analyst is in a crucial position. However, Lacan refused to turn it into a discourse of totality that would have the last word, thereby stopping the movement. "The discourse of the analyst loops the dizzying loop of the three other discourses but does not resolve it."¹³² It is a discourse meant to deceive the audience, to make them dizzy too, and to disorient or perhaps disqualify from the start any interrogation

about it. It is not a surprise that it is not understandable. This is not meant to be understood, Lacan himself said, it is meant to be used. . . .

We find ourselves confronted with the same alternative as the one Lacan forced on the reading of his *Écrits*: “. . . one either takes what they formulate or one leaves them.”¹³³ But, even if one takes them, one still feels the need to test them. Lacan thus left to others the task of verifying their operating value. Three questions immediately arise. Who is in charge of the verification? Is it analysts, logicians, epistemologists, mathematicians, or anybody who listened to Lacan or who reads him? It seems that it could hardly be everybody at once. What kind of verification is involved? Is it an empirical verification, a scientific “falsification,” or some consistency with other theories? There again, the three could hardly go together. Finally, what is the object of verification? Is it the algebraic formulas themselves or the considerable amount of written or spoken commentaries, an amount that compels eclecticism, that is, focusing on a specific sentence, according to circumstances and moods? On that matter, Lacan never committed himself. In fact, both his discourse and its effects run the risk of being turned into everything and nothing. Although he wanted to inscribe his rigor (his rigor at a given moment) at the heart of all abysses, abysses open up at the heart of his displayed rigor.

For example, consider the Discourse of the Master. The agent, accepting the truth of his castration as subject, would be erased so that in his place the Signifier-Master could emerge; then, quasi-automatically, the battery of unconscious signifiers would occupy the locus of the Other, and the *objet a* would be the unknown source of the production. Now, in the commentaries, the Discourse of the Master refers at the same time to different series of heterogeneous situations: Hegel's parable of the master and the slave; the couple of the analyst and the hysteric, the woman who, through her desire of an unsatisfied desire and her desire as desire of the Other, “makes [constructs] man” as “man driven by the desire to know” and transforms him into a Master-supposed-to-know; the philosophical quest grounded in the belief in the possibility of possessing truth; scientific discourse, in the sense given in *Science et Vérité* (“a successful paranoia is the closure of science”)¹³⁴ and, since 1969, political discourse in its essence—a capitalist, imperialist, or totalitarian discourse. However, behind the analyses referring to the discourse of obsession or paranoia, the analysis of perversion (of *père-version*) (“the version of the father”) is implicit, which hinders the movement of the subject toward sublimation. But then, is not the theoretical discourse of psychoanalysis, as Lacan conceived it, established, for the most part, according to this very position?

There is not enough space to analyze in greater depth each model of discourse. Note, however, that the passage from the Discourse of the Academic [*Discours de l'Universitaire*] to the Discourse of the University [*Discours de l'Université*] is not indifferent. The Academic would be the one who takes the

Signifier-Master as an identificatory model, but it is only through the Masters, whose works he comments upon, that he would relate to the Letter. The relationship that could be interpreted as the recognition of a debt and of a filiation which, in turn, initiates new generations to symbolic castration, is interpreted by Lacan as a reference/deference to absent Masters whose guard dogs one becomes. For him, any true transmission of knowledge is prevented by "the gap [*béance*] in which the subject sinks because he has to suppose that knowledge has an author."¹³⁵ In order to oppose this type of knowledge to the knowledge of the Master and of Science (which is suddenly promoted to the rank of "true knowledge" situated on the side of hysteria), Lacan has to assimilate the Academic [*l'Universitaire*] to the University [*l'Université*], the bureaucratic and clerical system that gives free rein to hatred. In fact, all these apparently objective analyses confuse science, thus defined, with Lacanian psychoanalysis, as opposed to a psychoanalysis that would be the "Discourse of the University," the psychoanalysis of those who, on the other hand, were gathered in official societies belonging to the I.P.A. What should we think of these analyses done at a time when Lacan was increasingly occupying the position of Master in a school that was turning into the bureaucracy and clerical system it had so violently denounced, and at a time when a split was taking place? What can we think of them today, after the dissolution and the creation of the Ecole de la Cause Freudienne, the only institution to be the official custodian of the knowledge of an absent Master who, as he had wished, has finally become "the Other"? Is it possible to argue that hatred never governed in these institutions?

At that time, Lacan suggested "a hystericization of discourse" in therapy and also in the functioning of the institution.¹³⁶ One could perhaps see the *passé* as a form of "hystericization" of the *passant's* discourse, a sort of rite of passage to the status of analyst of the école.ⁿ However, to want to hystericize discourse within an école that seemed more and more to structure itself according to a paranoid model and within a theory that tended to become a dogma, did this not run the risk of provoking catastrophic effects for patients or analysts in training?

Finally, how did Lacan reconcile the choice of mathematics to found his theory and the choice, in order to teach it, of the position of analysand, not producing "anything masterable except as symptom"? Because it is located at the end of the trajectory, the Discourse of the Analyst opens onto the Discourse of the Unconscious and grounds its authority in it. For the Discourse of the Unconscious, there is precisely no algebraic formula: "The unconscious [. . .] is only the metaphorical term designating the knowledge that only sustains itself by presenting itself as impossible, so that it can conform by being real (that is, real discourse)."¹³⁷ This is the ultimate discourse, the

n. The *passant* is the one going through the *passé*.

one that would not be a semblance [*qui ne serait pas du semblant*].¹³⁸ This discourse would be beyond the semblance, which is not the opposite of truth but its correlative, and thus it would constitute “the point by which to organize the four discourses.”¹³⁹ For Lacan, the unconscious is not defined in terms of what is sayable or unsayable but in terms of what is said or unsaid. It has to do with repetition and *jouissance*; it does not speak, except in the “middle ground of speech” [*mi-dire*] of psychoanalytic experience, “finding its center in its effect as impossible.”¹⁴⁰ It is not a form of “knowledge”; the unconscious and “knowledge” have nothing to do with each other. Hence Lacan declared: “My experience only concerns being [*l'être*] insofar as it is born from the gap that the existent [*l'étant*] produces by speaking itself.” In Heideggerian terms, psychoanalytic discourse remains the only place where the annunciation of being and its assumption could finally happen, in spite of everybody's deficiencies and insufficiencies.

The netherside of psychoanalysis, which is the title of the seminar *L'Envers de la psychanalyse*, is thus neither the Discourse of the Master nor the Discourse of the University. It is the unconscious. Between the Discourse of the Unconscious (the knowledge of *jouissance*) and the Discourse of the Analyst, there is a constant passage, like on a Moebius strip, from the right to the wrong side, and from the wrong to the right side, with no border to cross.

MATHEMES AND TOPOLOGY

Lacan's use of mathemes and models borrowed from topology in order to ground rigorously the structure of the subject, the unconscious, sexual difference, and all psychoanalytic concepts, has generated passionate debates. Such debates have been even more violent concerning his project to construct a single matheme of psychoanalysis. In Seminar XX, he reaffirmed: “Mathematic formalization is our goal, our ideal. Why?—because it alone is matheme, that is, capable of being transmitted in full.”¹⁴¹ Debates arose around three main questions: did Lacan really perform mathematical formalization and topology, or did he only use them as mere illustration, indeed as the apparent guarantee of his theoretical rigor? Did he not transform drastically these formulas or figures—to the point of destroying them—as he did with linguistics? If such were the case, he would be doing something completely different from mathematics, logics, or topology. Finally, by formalizing the unconscious, did he not disfigure psychoanalysis, which would have devastating effects on practice itself?

First we should admit our ignorance: some vague knowledge is not enough to elaborate a serious critique of Lacan's use of algorithms, quantic formulas, the magnetic torus, the crosscap, the Moebius strip, Klein's strip, Klein's bottle, Euler's circles, the Borromean knots, open sets, etc.

However, it is possible to determine what role he assigned them in his

theoretical elaboration and to judge their validity in relation to analytic experience.

Lacan's passion for logic can be detected very early, as early as 1945–1946 when he wrote *Le Nombre treize et la forme logique de la suspicion* and *Le Temps logique et l'assertion de certitude anticipée*, in which he constructed an intersubjective logic ordered in three steps: “the instant of the gaze,” “the time to understand,” and “the moment to conclude.” When he wanted to specify how to conduct therapy, he always came back to these three moments. Until the *Séminaire sur la Lettre volée*, his formalization relied on game theory, and then he turned to cybernetics. In two articles published in *Ornicar?*, Nathalie Charraud very clearly explains the elaboration of his thinking.¹⁴² After the seminar on the *Purloined Letter*, the unconscious was defined in terms of a play of signifiers according to a combinatory that could be described in algebraic formulas. Such signifiers became letters, and then the “small letters” of mathematical writing. Formal logic appeared and, starting with *La Logique du fantasme*, would increasingly govern Lacanian theorizations. According to the philosopher Juranville, Lacan performed a true revolution, not only of Aristotelian theory, but also of the basic four propositions of formal logic, referring to Gödel's theorems. Specifically, his re-writing of the “negative universal” and of “the affirmative particular” showed the limits of the logical field, forced him to reintroduce the subject, and led to a new conception of negation.¹⁴³ Indeed, the seminar . . . *Ou pire* is almost entirely devoted to an ordering of the subject, the world, and human experience according to the categories of the possible, the necessary, the contingent, and the impossible, categories to which Lacan soon added that of the impotence [*impuissance*]. Thus the quaternary diagram of the fundamental signifying structure of the unconscious was grounded in logic, organizing the subject's relations to the Name-of-the-Father, the phallus, and the object. As for the impotence, it referred to the absence of sexual relation that, in turn, was expressed with quantic formulas.

Juranville, therefore, considers that Lacan succeeded in the project he articulated in 1966–1967: “to formulate decisive formulas about the unconscious, that is, logical formulas” on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to construct “a logic that is not a logic. An entirely new logic that I have not named yet, for it needs to be instituted first.”¹⁴⁴ Indeed, this logic was to relate truth to desire and later to *jouissance*. However, Lacan himself did not seem quite sure that he could present everything in terms of “logical calculus.” He even needed to talk of an “elastic logic” in order to be able to go on; he evoked Cantor's madness; he was often frightened by failure, and by the delirious nature, or even worse by the inanity, of his research.

However, other points of view must be taken into account. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy deconstruct the algorithm and show that the formulas do not truly belong to logic because they do not involve or authorize any calculation. They

always need to be translated.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, the mathematician Guillerault, who is in favor of Lacan, shows that the “quantic formulas” of the two sexes, which aim at defining the absence of sexual relation, are blocked: they cannot function in any way. However, one does not need to be very learned in the matter to discover, upon reading the *Écrits* and then the seminars based on formalization, that some of these algebraic inscriptions simply have the value of enlightening syntheses, useful for memorization, or of illustrations meant to serve as the reassuring support of a theoretical discourse that recognizes its uncertainties and contradictions.

What was Lacan's goal, if not that of an always purer signifier? For him, writing is a symbolic inscription purer than verbalized signifiers: the body, in the form of the voice, erases itself to leave a place to the pure materiality of the letter. Mathematical writing is purer than phonetic writing because it is marred neither by signifying overdeterminations nor by connotations. Isn't it wonderful, “the algorithm does not have any meaning”!¹⁴⁶ *Radiophonie* puts forth the structure of the “body of the symbolic” and thanks the Stoics who “were able, with the term *incorporeal*, to mark how the symbolic relates to the body.” “The function, which at once makes the reality of mathematics, the use of topology whose effect is similar, and analysis in a broader sense for logics, is incorporeal.” And also: “It is as incorporeal that structure creates the affect [. . .] thereby revealing that it [the affect] is *second* to the *body*, be it dead or alive.”¹⁴⁷ What needs to be eliminated is indeed the body of experience, the body in pleasure or in pain, the body experienced in the most ordinary pleasures and functions—one's own body as well as the other's body.

To say that incompleteness [*incomplétude*] belongs to the order of logic and not of feeling, as Lacan did when he concluded the workshop on child psychoses, is a rejection of all that belongs, for him, to the order of stain and impurity.¹⁴⁸ Is it not a display of the horror of the Real to state in 1968, as he did in 1958–1960, that “structure is the Real.”¹⁴⁹ Ultimately, it is not surprising that Lacan's unconscious no longer has much to do with Freud's, or with the unconscious that one experiences, sometimes with pleasure, sometimes with pain, in life and in analysis. When the clinical section at Vincennes opened, the Master declared: “I would say that, up to a certain point, I have straightened out what Freud said.”¹⁵⁰ As soon as he considered language to be “the cause of the subject”¹⁵¹—pure signifier, pure letter, pure writing, pure equation, etc.—he could consider himself the discoverer of “his” unconscious, if not the only true unconscious, as his disciples think.

However, because topology studies the properties of space in their qualitative aspect, the appeal to topology corrected the radically abstract nature of mathematical formalization. Volumes, surfaces, movements, and transformations could emerge, even if their only consistency lay in the materiality of the line and grounded itself in algebraic calculus. The very notion of an “open set” contrasted with the closure of algorithms such as that of fantasy, $\$ \diamond a$,

for example. Besides, as early as 1961–1962 in the seminar *L'Identification* and increasingly throughout the years, Lacan kept making topological connections, which even surprised him, with figures of embryology. Mobilizing an entire imaginary around the body and space, Lacan and his disciples spent session after session manipulating changing forms on the board, pieces of paper, scissors, pieces of string, etc., with a pleasure close to the pleasure of the child who knows without knowing what he symbolizes, a pleasure that belongs to the order of *jouissance* or forbidden knowledge. The “topological games” offered, along with scholarly essays, by a number of current magazines are always more concrete and more material than mathematical games.¹⁵² Of course, unlike Françoise Dolto’s “flower-puppet” [*poupée-fleur*], these games have rules, but they still leave some room for invention. One can regress to the age of elementary school. . . . This alone is something since the body is not completely absent.

I do not claim here to validate or invalidate Lacan’s topological theory of the subject or of the unconscious. I am incapable of doing it and, therefore, refer the reader to the numerous articles in Lacanian journals, and to recently published books such as J. Granon-Lafont’s *La Topologie ordinaire de Jacques Lacan*, and J. M. Vappereau’s *Psychanalyse et topologie du sujet: Essaim*. Still, what strikes me upon reading the seminars is the fact that the psychoanalytic commentaries of topological figures are luxuriant, digressive, often unrelated with the figures, and in any case exceed them from all sides. This is where I find funny, revealing, sometimes enlightening, elements. I am, therefore, not sure that topology in itself makes a decisive contribution to psychoanalysis . . . or that psychoanalysis makes a decisive contribution to topology. Rather, it seems to fulfill the intellectual need to support one theory with another, to make them communicate, and thereby to enter a broader field of knowledge. Lacan never really answered François Wahl who, in 1964, asked if, for him, topology was a method of discovery or of exposition.¹⁵³ He would always hesitate; sometimes he would talk of mere analogy, sometimes, on the contrary, he would assert that he was elaborating a “rigorous construction” around the *objet a*, which is the object of psychoanalysis.

THE REAL AS IMPOSSIBLE

The following statement, written in 1966, summarizes the core of Lacan’s position: “If everybody, even stupid enough not to acknowledge it, admits that the primary process does not meet anything *Real* other than *the impossible*, which in the Freudian perspective remains the best definition that can be given of the primary process, we need to know more about what it meets of the *Other* in order to be able to deal with it.”¹⁵⁴ First of all, as we have already seen, the Real is not reality since reality depends on the intervention of the Symbolic and the Imaginary. Going even further, Lacan agrees with

Levi-Strauss that "in order to reach the Real, one needs first to push experience aside."¹⁵⁵ The primary process, which characterizes the unconscious, meets the Real as that which is impossible, in the logical sense of the term, that is, impossible to symbolize, mediate, say, or write. The Real is that which does not speak and that which has no name. However, one could argue that it indeed receives the name of Real and that it is part of the three fundamental categories of the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real. In fact it receives a name because the Symbolic is "the fundamental screen of the Real," a protective screen.¹⁵⁶ Thus "logic saves us from the Real in order to open access to it in the form of the impossible."¹⁵⁷ The primary process has to meet the Other—locus of the Symbolic, of the Name-of-the-Father, etc.—in order for man to emerge. The Real is thus the limit of thought but also of the unconscious, somehow conceived by Lacan as an unthought: in that sense, the Real is truly "the irreducible."

Lacan's statement also reveals an important aspect of his methodology: first to analyze the Imaginary and the Symbolic before being able to confront the Real. This methodological movement globally characterized his work. However, two reservations should be made concerning Lacan's confrontation with the Real. Before the war, he had embarked on the study of archaic times, the times of "horror" and "passive beatitude" where he thought he could locate "the primitive drive in its pure state."¹⁵⁸ He gave this up very rapidly and became interested in the mirror stage and then in language. So, was there something like an inability to think on that subject? The second reservation concerns the fact that he remained haunted by the Real until he managed to find a framework in which to inscribe it, thereby putting it at the center of his reflection. The threat of being engulfed, invaded, or exceeded by the Real, which he often associated with nightmare, seems to have constantly weighed on him. Hence three attitudes coexist in his texts or speeches: to dare to go toward the real, even indirectly, since the real always awaits him, suddenly as if around the corner; to avoid it; and to turn it into the Real, that is, to cage it in definitions that would finally give it a place, and only one, so that it could be located.

What is the Real? "It is not an object," it is "this something in front of which words stop." For example, the analysis of the dream of Irma's injection shows us Freud's epic as he ventured to "the ultimate Real," i.e., the woman's open mouth (genitals).¹⁵⁹ It is also "the little girl's slit" in the painting *Las Meninas*, the "gap in which there is *nothing to see*" but "where *it looks at you*."¹⁶⁰ It is "the thing" of the seminar on ethics, the oppressing presence of that which is too much there: the maternal body or breast whose imminence (and not whose lack) creates anxiety, "the lack of lack," and leads to suffocation.¹⁶¹

Panic thus arises in the subject, either before an emptiness imagined as absolute castration or as engulfing abyss, or before what emerges in its opaque

existence; it resists him, overcomes him with “its foreign *jouissance*,” presents itself as “questioner,” as the (woman) Sphinx of archaic times who puts in danger his very existence. In *Les Quatre Concepts* Lacan stated that “the reality of the unconscious is sexual reality—an untenable truth.” It is thus the reality of a primary sexuality that always inhabits us (more precisely the reality of *jouissance*) as much as it is the reality of sexual difference experienced as unbearable castration or as intolerable presence of the feminine sex. In Lacan’s texts, whenever the real emerges in this extreme form, it requires metaphorical or prophetic style, declamation, imprecation, or derision.

The only defense against the Real is the appeal to the pure Symbolic, which is embodied in the Name-of-the-Father thanks to which it is always possible to distinguish identity and alterity. Finally the Real becomes the impossible as opposed to the possible of man who meets the Father in his “necessity” and the object in its “contingence.” To reduce this irreducible thus consists in making the real and the intelligible coincide, by stating that “structure is the real.” At the colloquium in Royaumont, Lacan came into conflict with Lagache who defined structure as “a theoretical model” constructed from experience and going back to it in order to test itself. Lacan, on the other hand, presented it as “an original machine”; like Lévi-Strauss, he thinks that theory *is* the reality that it analyzes, because it produces it, while constructing it, according to the universal laws of the human mind, which are at its origin. We must take literally the expression, “the symbol is the murder of the thing” (and elsewhere “the word must kill the thing”). Otherwise, language, the signifier, the letter, logic, the phallus, the Name-of-the-Father etc., all become superimposed on the Real and send it back to the position of the inaccessible. Moreover, can the Real ever be forgotten? Lacan never committed himself to a firm answer: “Truth has to do with the Real and the Real is doubled by the Symbolic.”¹⁶² This may be one of the definitions of the *middle ground of speech* [*mi-dire*], the speech of the unconscious in psychoanalysis.

What is in question in Lacan is thus not the Freudian “anaclysis” of infantile sexuality on needs, or of language on corporeal and historical experience, nor is it a question of psychoneurological maturation (stages of development), or of the slow and precocious learning caught in intersubjective relations. There is a radical break between nature and culture, between body or drives and language, between prehistory and history of the individual and of mankind, between mother and Father (a “second birth in the order of language and universal discourse” nullifies the first one).¹⁶³ Break and juxtaposition; during the conferences in Italy, psychoanalysis was defined as “the assertion of the inaptitude of knowledge to join itself to anything but a hopeless opacity.”¹⁶⁴ *Le Savoir du psychanalyste* clearly specifies that “the junction between the maternal [material] and mathematics [the Real written]” does not articulate one with the other. Similarly, it is necessary that there is no “sexual relation,” etc. However, can the contamination of the pure Symbolic by the

Real be avoided? An analyst such as Lacan could not confine the unconscious to language alone: the Real is its “throbbing gap” [*béance palpitante*].¹⁶⁵ All that he could hope was that praxis put “man in a position to be able to treat the Real through the Symbolic.”¹⁶⁶ The theoretical elaboration seems to be constructed on a series of compromises that were always put into question. For example, the *objet a*, which falls because of the subject's encounter with the first identification with the signifier, is superimposed on the Thing, partly closing up the real. But, in turn, the object threatens; it is “a lack for which the symbol does not substitute,” “a real deprivation,” “an insect on the Möbius surface” whose additional presence creates anxiety.¹⁶⁷ Similarly, when it is the object lost at birth, it creates an empty hole within the self, but it refers to the placenta, to the *hommelette*, as the subject's double, reminding him not only of the mother's or of the woman's “manifest carnality” but also of his own.^o Then Lacan will have to grant the *objet a* a “purely topological reality.”¹⁶⁸ The phallus, when it comes in the place of the *objet a* is, in turn, contaminated. To write *l'-a-chose* instead of *la chose* does not constitute a solution.^p

The nicest Lacanian allegory of this insolvable contradiction is that of the hunter following Diana, who suddenly becomes the prey of his devouring dogs. The psychoanalyst, “master of Truth,” “practitioner of the symbolic,”¹⁶⁹ intrepid adventurer in the real, is also the man inhabited, despite himself, by the mute Thing that paradoxically says: “I, Truth, will speak.”¹⁷⁰

o. *Hommelette* is created by combining *homme*, man, the suffix *ette*, little hence little man, and *omelette*, omelette, referring to the placenta.

p. *L'a-chose* and *la chose*: “the a-thing” and “the thing,” which are homophones.

Lacanian Landscapes

In *Voyages extraordinaires en Translacanie*, François Perrier invites us to travel in Translacania.¹ For my part, I invite you here to take a few trips to Lacania. Previously visited sites will prove to have many surprises in store. What these trips will reveal is an entire mental landscape; depending on the itineraries, this landscape varies. Imaginary configurations, deep beliefs, a style of behavior, particular ways of reading, of listening, of speaking, and of writing, slowly take shape. Obviously, I only offer here my own explorations: others have very different interpretations. However, written documents as well as the first transcriptions of the *Séminaire* are available: after reading our dossier (and this third chapter represents a free commentary about it), the readers will have the option to go back themselves to the sources.

A center, which becomes invisible because it is so obvious, organizes de facto our headings: Lacan put everything into perspective from the point of view of the son made man, main subject and object of his reflection. In that respect, his rivals did not really question him because he conformed to the Freudian perspective that, except for rare exceptions, everybody also conformed to. Lacan wanted to be the severe guardian who called to order whoever left the main road and adopted another point of view, even if only temporarily. While psychoanalysis came out of the great hysterics' speech, the hysterics whose disappearance Lacan regretted with such lyricism, his own doctrine revolved around the Oedipal myth. To the question asked by the female Sphinx, Oedipus answered, man [*l'homme*]. One could possibly hear, both in the question and in the answer, human being. However, because it was addressed to a son, patricidal and incestuous against his will, the enigma was limited to male-man (Lacan's "man-he," *homme-il*) promoted to the rank of representative of mankind. The "who are you?" becomes a "who am I?," a question that a champion of knowledge who wondered about his origins, his desires, his power, and his fate within an androcentric society tried to answer. Such an epic became the mythic foundation of psychoanalysis. Freud himself achieved mythic status in the eyes of the following generations. As Freud had returned to Oedipus, Lacan returned to Freud, this modern champion of knowledge: "He dared to attach importance to what was happening to him, to the antinomies of his childhood, to his neurotic problems, to his dreams. That is why Freud is for us all a man beset, like anyone else is, by all the

contingencies—death, woman, father.”² Whatever theoretical refinements were brought to the Oedipal complex, the old traces remained. The history of psychoanalysis was doomed to be nothing other than variations on this initial as well as initiatory theme.

Starting from such a point of view, our analysis aims at articulating the sometimes violent conflicts that tore Lacan’s thinking, practice, and institutional role. This may, however, lead us to wonder whether the incredible richness of psychoanalytic experience, a richness that is undeniable in our society, does not go infinitely beyond its theoretical scope.

THE FATHER’S WAY

Lacan’s itinerary has shown us the essential importance of the paternal metaphor (the Name-of-the-Father, and the symbolic Father), which stands out as one of the main aspects of his theory. Even before the war, he saw the father, in a society that existed only because it was “paternalistic,” as the representative of culture pacifying nature, a nature wild in its essence and synonymous with frantic coupling and violence. Furthermore, the father embodies two combined functions, that is, to forbid and to love, in order for the subject to be able to reach sublimation by identifying with him. At that time, Lacan already deplored the fact that, in the real world, the father only assumes very imperfectly such a role, which is nevertheless the only protection against “discontent in civilization.” The dissociation between the real father and the idealized paternal function finally lead Lacan to hide the father behind a Name that functions as origin. At the origin of history, the dead Father, source of the fundamental pact. At the origin of the subject: the Father as pure Signifier that functions as a mark given even before birth, the paternal word that functions both as a commitment and as the guarantee of the commitment, and the Other as locus of the law. Ultimately, the presence or the absence of the real father is not important; on the contrary, the more he is absent—glorious body of pure signifiers—the better it is, because he is no longer involved in the low materialities of breeding, including the awful “babyish-talk” [*parler-babish*] that is thus reserved to the mother.

Such a Father can only be the object of an “act of faith”: “there is no Other of the Other” to guarantee him. For Lacan, this problem remained the same whether he talked about the phallus, the only signifier that can function as first symbol for mankind, about God, or about the logic that, nowadays, would have replaced the question of the existence of God. Until the end, he would assert that the Name-of-the-Father is the only defense against a delirium like Schreber’s. At the end of his life, he would use the model of the Borromean knots to make of the Name-of-the-Father the fourth element holding together the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic. Without the Name-of-the-Father, everything falls apart. In the last years of his life, the quest for

a new signifier was a quest for an always purer signifier. . . . What desires and what anxieties did such a movement of theoretical quest and escape provoke? Isn't what is at stake a huge fantastic machine that only patriarchal ideology could hold because it is commonly shared?

A dream haunts Lacan's works: that of the Christian trinity, where the Holy Spirit would figure the "exquisiteness" [*l'exquisitè*] of the Son's love for the Father and of the Father's love for the Son. What threat weighs on this marvellous and closed universe of counterparts? One might answer, the mother. Indeed, from 1958 until 1960, Lacan developed this theme of the danger encountered by the child because of his absolute desire for the mother—his fancy—a desire that the Father alone could contain. It is mainly among Lacan's disciples, in child and psychotic psychoanalysis, that such a theme has flourished, in an ideologically reassuring mode that Catherine Baliteau denounced in 1975 in her article in *Temps Modernes*.³ She called into question the fact that the mother is put in the position of merely being the matter in which the masculine can reproduce itself, while this masculine, on the other hand, is placed in the position of subject inscribed in the purely paternal signifier (and this is what Luce Irigaray has analyzed in the philosophical tradition from which psychoanalysis takes its inspiration).⁴ Moreover, Catherine Baliteau develops a critique of the functions, granted to women and mothers, of preservation and maintenance of the masculine labor force (both manual and intellectual labor) and of pure transmission of the paternal word-law. Such functions are in strange accord with a type of social functioning that needs to be preserved at all cost. However, Lacan's question is fundamentally different: who will protect us from the father? The appeal to the Father in order to be protected from the father reveals one of the dead ends of a culture that, by putting women aside, thought it had solved its major problems, at least for its masculine subjects.

As expected, one finds throughout Lacan's works the theme of the failing father. This father is seduced by his wife's lies, the words of the woman who does not hesitate to sacrifice him to her voracious sexuality. This father is killed by her as much as by the rival lover. He is betrayed at the very moment when he gives in to temptation and dies because he has "given in on his desire" to the benefit of the desire of the other (Other)-woman. He dies in a state of mortal sin and consequently wanders, seeking the immortality that can only be achieved through his son's vengeance. Such is Lacan's reading of *Hamlet*, where the son must pay dearly for the fault of the father whom he reveres. Indeed, where is it possible to find solid identificatory bearings when the Law compromises itself with the maternal Thing? *Hamlet* would be the tragedy of the impossible desire to exist as desire, if not as dead desire or as desire for death.

Panic arises when the father's categorical imperative proves to be the kind of temptation that leads to loss. Lacan used Saint Paul's words: "The very

commandment [You shall not covet] that should lead to life has proved to be death to me. For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, seduced me and by it killed me." The Law becomes seduction. The desire of the Father then becomes *incomprehensible*. It persecutes the paranoiac and creates the perverse, who is the "instrument of the *jouissance* of a God" who gives him the commandment, "*Jouis!*" Paternal cruelty can be without limits: it takes the form of Luther's God with "his eternal hatred against men [. . .] a hatred that existed even before the world was born"; it takes the form of the Father of *Totem and Taboo*, the father of the primal horde, who is "all *jouissance*," the Father who comes before history, "the obscene and ferocious figure of the primordial father, unable to redeem himself in the eternal blindness of the Oedipal configuration." Such *jouissance* must be killed, but this means that one falls into mortal *jouissance*: "The death of the father is the key to supreme *jouissance*, which is then identified with the mother as the design of incest." A face to face encounter—without any other; this would be the first fundamental experience. What help might there be against this father who belongs to the unbearable real? Would it help, after the murder that frees from him, to resuscitate him in the form of a dead father who can be loved? Would it help to throw Noah's coat over him? Above all, in order to restrain both the father's and the son's *jouissance*, would it help to build a "society of masculine protection based on homosexuality," that is, a sublimated society? The figure of Socrates shying away from Alcibiades' desire is a solution. Another solution lies in exchanging women according to rules established among men; after all, how well is the world going this way?

However, Lacan sought salvation by identifying with another figure, that of Christ, the perfect Son, the pure victim both of the desertion and of the cruelty of the Father-God. The Son-God, made Man by the Father, is doomed to betrayal, ignominy, and death. Where is God's justice? The Son accepts the unfathomable ways of God: "Thy will be done!" (which could also be the words of the perverse in Sade as reread by Lacan). The Son will then, again, find his place to the right of God and he will receive the Father's pure love that will match his own pure love, a union symbolized by the Holy Spirit. Christ becomes the mediator who links men with God. According to Lacan, in the Bible "an identity of body links the Father of all times to all those who descend from him," which becomes a "mystical body" and a pure signifier of love in the Christian tradition. In Christ's glorious body and in his word, all men receive communion; he is the Redeemer.

Dark areas in the Lacanian texts protect this love/hate relationship [*hainamoration*] between father and son. The paternal figure does not emerge clearly from the mirror stage, with its jubilation and above all its limitless aggressivity, and from the "paranoiac ego," which is for Lacan the model of the human ego.⁵ This figure inherits its characteristics from the duo and duel that interminably takes place between doubles. Would the solution lie in

patricide or infanticide, allowing the victim to become the emblem of sacrifice and sacred bond? A signifier would then come into being as a pacifying third between counterparts. Any other solution, which would introduce the mediation of the other sex or of the relation between father and mother, is not conceivable. Lacan constantly repeated that there is no feminine signifier and no signifier of sexual difference, and that there cannot be any.

The phantasy of a world without any other is undermined by the Son's hidden femininity: Paul Claudel's trilogy is a guiding thread for Lacan's thinking. According to Lacan, the character Sygne de Coüfontaine is the pure figure of the crucified Christ who must put the Father's will before the respect of values that He should nevertheless guarantee. The most terrible trial that can be is that of repudiation. The son, who has been placed in the position of the daughter-wife, hopes to get his reward: the father's exclusive love.

What about such a phantasmic construct? What about its effects on Lacan's idea of psychoanalysis? On the one hand, he admitted that he talked about a dead God because he could not free himself from a dead Freud. He would be the only heir who would know how to bury him while keeping his memory alive. On the other hand, in 1963, the seminar on the Names-of-the-Father testified to the drastic change that was taking place in his life: from then on, he would not be able to believe that he was the Son any longer; he had been put in the position of the Father-to-be-killed. In fact, in what position did he put himself, if not in the position of the one who could occupy all positions as he pleased? His favorite position, that of the Symbolic Father, had been denied to him—or stolen from him—by his own disciples . . .

THE MOTHER'S WAY

The maternal theme in Lacan's works is as sparse as the paternal theme is abundant. It might be because, for him, the mother as origin is inconceivable.

The mirror stage had already put the relation to the counterpart, in jubilation and aggressivity, in the foreground. The 1964 seminar developed a strange notion of birth, a notion that reemerged here and there throughout Lacan's works, almost always furtively: the son separates himself, not from the mother, but from the placenta, from the "envelopes of the egg," the embryo's protective double inside a mother who is merely host to the parasite. Man thus immediately loses the *hommelette* (and note that Lacan used the term in the feminine), and such a loss makes him man. What is lost is also the "lamella," the membrane that becomes the libido—and, as one knows, the libido is one and masculine—and that is an organ associated with the drive, an "uncorporeal in sexed human beings." Very close to an infantile theory, such a theory sets the mother aside. Everything happens as if the procreative father encompassed the mother while excluding her. One of the

reasons for the ambiguity of the relationship between father and son might lie in this theoretical Imaginary.

Moreover, commenting on the case of Schreber, Lacan stressed that procreation and death are outside any possible symbolization. They mark the borders of symbolization, opening onto the abyss of the real. However unreachable a territory, Lacan tried to conquer it when he asserted the “co-naturality of writing and procreation.”⁶ The father alone truly begets and gives true death, human death. It is noteworthy that, in two cases, Lacan used the term “instinct,” which he otherwise strongly rejected—“maternal instinct” and “death instinct.”⁷

Not surprisingly then, the discourse on the mother is only the result of clinical necessity, especially in child psychoanalysis. Hence the categorical imperatives addressed to her. Passing on the word and the Name-of-the-Father is the only role that can make her bearable, since her presence, at least for a certain time, cannot be avoided. A certain number of texts, especially around 1958–1960, developed this issue. They never varied very much and were in perfect accord with the requirements of a patriarchal society whose eternal values Lacan reiterated on all occasions. Setting himself in opposition to English psychoanalysts especially, he presented himself as Freud’s champion while forgetting many of the Freudian texts.

Another, more disturbing aspect of the mother emerged: the woman within the mother who desires the father, who desires any man, who turns her desire into a law and affirms it shamelessly. Hamlet thus remains speechless when the queen opposes a tranquil refusal to his rebukes: she does not recognize the values that he offers her in order to justify the sacrifice of her *jouissance*. She does not embody “desire but voracity, indeed a gluttony” that is an engulfing, Lacan said. . . . Through her what is justified is the “horror of femininity,” which consequently falls as a curse on the virgin Ophelia.

I would say that, in Lacan’s work, the mother is impossible, in all senses of the term. It might be that Lacan’s thinking about the mother relied on two attitudes, both of which constituted a blind spot of his theorization: the attitude of the “I do not want to know anything about it,” associated with that of the “I do know but still.”⁸

However, there is one thing that Lacan forgot. A woman is sure that *she* is the mother, whereas a man defers his paternity to an “act of faith.” As for the child, he has to make a double act of faith: except for the maternal word, how can he be sure that he is this woman’s child? This proves that maternity is as symbolic as paternity, although in an obviously different way.⁹

THE WOMAN’S WAY

Without repeating the analyses of Lacan’s theory of sexual difference developed in the previous chapter, let us just recall their consequences. Lacan was

well aware of the “subjective dead end” to which women have been condemned in a phallogentric system and in a patriarchal and androcentric society. However, according to him, this was just the price to pay for civilization. As early as 1951, commenting on the case of Dora, he insisted on the necessity for women to “accept themselves as objects of man’s desire,” which lead to the painful necessity of abandoning any position as a subject. In the seminar on psychoses he declared that the feminine position “is problematic and, up to a certain point, cannot be assimilated.” One can now understand better this “horror of femininity” that women would ultimately have to share with men. Woman, he wrote later, must assume the position of “absolute Other” granted to her by “phallogentric dialectic.” “Man acts as the relay whereby woman becomes this Other for herself, as she is this Other for him.”¹⁰ Finally, Ophelia—still a virgin—is the most moving figure in the “drama of the feminine object caught in the snare of masculine desire.” She is at once *objet a* (object—small *a*), cause of man’s desire, and emblem of the phallus circulating among men. Amidst masculine conflicts, where can she find her place if not in death? Does woman as woman have to be killed? Or does she have to kill herself like the female Sphinx and Jocasta?

It was not really until the seminar *Encore* that woman received another function in the theory, the function of “not-all” in the phallic *jouissance*, which allowed her to exist and take pleasure [*jouir*] somewhere else. She then appeared as a “supplement” to the phallic world, encompassing and nourishing it with her “infinite,” which became a figure of the infinite. In fact, *Encore* systematized many of the previous analyses. Faced with its own dead end, Lacanian thinking tried to find an elegant solution. Woman eluded Lacan’s conceptual mastery; however, in a new effort, he still managed to assign her a defined place, that of the mystical *en-corps*.^a Actually, this strategy was not new. Lacan had always oscillated between the saucy and contemptuous version of woman on the one hand and the courtly or mystic version on the other. Derision and exaltation are two well-known defenses against anxiety.

Although not fully developed, other aspects of the Lacanian texts are more interesting. The fable told by Diotima, in *The Symposium*, opposes *Penia* (Lack) on woman’s side with *Poros* (Resources) on man’s side. The fable puts woman in the position of active subject of desire, and man in that, if not of object, at least of owner of the coveted object. He is the one who is desired. How is it possible to get out of such an embarrassing situation, especially when, later, Lacan affirmed the covetousness of the university (*Penia*) towards analytical discourse and properly Lacanian speech (*Poros*)? Does the way out consist in making of Diotima a voice for Socrates himself, that of the feminine in him? Or does it consist of reserving the analysis of transference-love and

a. *En-corps*, in body, which sounds like *encore*, still.

of plain love for masculine homosexuality, because between men and women it would be “too complicated”? Lacan seemed to dodge the issue in order to maintain man in two places that do not seem to be compatible: that of subject of desire as lack; and that of owner of the privileged object of desire, indeed of its emblem. One should not be surprised then that what is finally at stake in the seminar on transference, *Le Transfert*, is to give up the fulfillment of desire and to give up desire itself in order to maintain the phallus, the most precious guarantee of narcissism. Is this castration or something like Jones’ *aphanisis* (disappearance of sexual desire)?

Should one protect the phallus by desiring an unsatisfied desire? The fact that the hysteric’s desire—Dora’s or the Beautiful Butcher’s wife—would be Lacan’s model of human desire is revealing. Would women, caught in the patriarchal system, be the best keepers of the phallus? Lacan often asserted it.¹¹ How should we understand the sentence “desire is the desire of the Other” if we also remember the obscure relations at play between father and son? Is it obsession, paranoia, or perversion?

However, the best way of protecting the phallus is still to elaborate a theory that situates femininity at the very borders of the psychoanalytic field itself. In 1960, talking about the mother and the woman, Lacan said, “The fact that everything that can be analyzed is sexual does not entail that everything sexual is accessible to analysis.” He concluded that one should only analyze women from a phallic perspective. Woman would thus be impossible to analyze because she would not be within psychoanalysis’s reach. If, in 1972, woman embodied infinite *jouissance*, beyond phallic *jouissance*, the women concerned could, however, not say anything about such *jouissance*. The territory of psychoanalysis in the masculine was thus very strictly marked. Besides, “woman” could only discover herself in *père-version* as in the version of the father.^b All she could possibly achieve is the status of “born-psychoanalyst” who does not know what she knows and does.

Readers often overlook Lacan’s praise of the homosexual woman^c as the only woman to realize a true itinerary as a subject (even if failure is the ultimate outcome). Such praise could already be detected in the analysis of the case of Dora but it became very explicit during the congress on feminine sexuality. While Lacan maintained that we would never know anything about woman in a heterosexual relation (“vaginal orgasm keeps the darkness of its nature inviolate”), he felt freer—less threatened—in front of the homosexual woman who, he admitted, dissociates femininity and passivity. According to

b. The *père-version* (father version) sounds like perversion, hence the idea of paternal perversion.

c. The French text reads *l’homosexuelle*. The association in English between *homosexual* and *woman* may sound awkward but conveys the feminine gender of *l’homosexuelle*, the feminization of a masculine paradigm.

him, feminine homosexuality is “the effort of a *jouissance* wrapped in its own contiguity (and all circumcision may represent its symbolic rupture) in order *to be realized through envy* of the desire that castration releases in the male by giving him its signifier in the phallus.” Note that the model Lacan gave for the homosexual woman’s evolution is that of man. She only realizes herself “through envy” of masculine realization, the modernist version of penis envy. However, through his defensive system, Lacan perceived that, for the homosexual woman, there might be a symbolization of her sex through the figure of another woman. Toward the end of his life he came back to that theme (the development of the women’s liberation movement was certainly not irrelevant to his evolution); for him, the homosexual woman has her own access to *jouissance* and has access to the discourse of love (which is a big concession) but, in return, she can only occupy, within psychoanalysis, a stammering position in speech (on the couch or in theory).¹² Is this a case of negation or of denial? In any case, theory stumbles here.

What was most important for Lacan was to preserve the power of speech. As early as 1958–1960 he said, “We start with the man so as to measure the reciprocal position of the sexes.” Only afterward could one raise questions concerning women because “it is doubtful that we can learn anything if we take woman as a starting point,” that is, “the feminine part, if the term has any meaning, of what is played out in the genital relation, in which the act of coitus occupies, to put it no higher, a limited and local place.” The seminar *Encore* was meant to talk *of* woman, *about* woman, at the very moment when *some* women were putting forward claims and speaking up in France, including in the Ecole Freudienne, Lacan’s own school. He could not bear being contradicted by them; he could not bear the fact that they said something different; he could not bear the fact that they talked or wrote along the lines of his own thinking! This seminar contains the most violent attacks against women and feminists. It denies that they could teach something to men, hence change the modes and contents of the community’s discourses, and thus partake in a dialogue. Decidedly, “they” have nothing to say, while woman, who is “not-all,” reveals so many things about the infinite to the man who keeps asking for more. . . .

THE ETHICS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

Lacan put the concern for the cure at the origin of the Freudian discoveries for only a very short period of time. Very soon psychoanalysis was assigned two missions: to constitute a science—that of man as subject—which would transform the entire field of knowledge by its radically different approach; and to initiate men to truth, that is, to redefine the true ethical foundations of psychoanalysis, which would finally lead to “an ethics for our times,” an ethics capable of responding to the tragedy of modern man and to the crisis

of civilization. Such are the major themes first developed in the seminar on ethics, *L'Éthique*, and then discussed again in a number of conferences and in the *Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache*. However, they could already be detected in the first texts and would appear until the teaching of the last years. Are the two missions granted to psychoanalysis compatible? For a long time I thought that they were not. Then, I realized that, for Lacan, science is just the privileged way of purifying both desire and knowledge. Thus, the term science in his texts has nothing to do with its usual meaning and usage. Science serves his deepest goal, which is linked to his concern for ethics.

Lacan rejected altogether the idea of “doctor love” (Nacht’s “benevolent neutrality” for example), the philosophy of hedonism (including the humanism of somebody like Merleau-Ponty who advocates a reconciliation with the body of the other), the demand for happiness, the obedience to a duty of altruism that only barely hides narcissism, the (almost Sadian) libertine philosophy that does not recognize the voice of the Father inscribed at the heart of the commandments that the libertine imposes on the other while thinking he is free, and even the philosophy of the mystic who does not know around what Thing his nostalgia for God revolves.

Lacan clearly chooses the strictest Christianity—that of Saint Paul, Luther, the Cathars, and the Jansenists. At the root of ethics is *desire* and desire does not come without *fault*. The crime consists in not being aware of the absolute evil of the union between *the Law* and *the Thing* (matter, body, the unnamable in itself, etc.), and in hoping for some bearable compromises. On the contrary, one ought to tend toward an always greater purification of desire. The truth of desire, in its absolute nudity, is lack. Lacanian ethics thus advocates lack as the ideal, which alone is capable of allowing us to escape from crime by accepting the loss. “I have put the Thing in the place of sin,” Lacan says. It lives in us as the worm lives in the fruit, but it is after all possible to make a clean sweep and to create a vacuum [*faire le vide*]. Then, the forever “revealed-revealing” word can come; there will be a space to welcome it. Lacan’s teaching reproduced the annunciation scene with Lacan playing all the parts. Sometimes he was the space that welcomes the word; sometimes, as Christ born from the Virgin, he transmitted it; sometimes, as man-God, he sowed it in others. Heidegger’s influence on Lacan has often been noted. One thing is sure, they have the same notion of the seminar based on the same etymology! If Lacan joked about the idea that Françoise Dolto could be in his own place of theoretician revealing the Truth—instead of remaining the practitioner who does not know the ins and outs of her act—it is precisely because he could not imagine a woman in his place, unless she were a Pythia, a prophetess, indeed a sorceress. What a contaminating image for the Lacanian verb that constantly gives existence to what it names!

A true obsession with purity inhabits his oeuvre: the pure signifier, indeed

the purest one; the symbol in its purity; the purity of logics or of mathematics as pure writing; analytic experience as pure symbolic experience (then as the purest one) and as pure experience of pure desire; training analysis as pure psychoanalysis; the pure Freudian position, etc. He criticized the Christians' "love of their neighbor" because they are oblivious to the narcissistic lure inscribed in the commandment itself ("Love thy neighbor as yourself"). Lacan laughed but he forgot the end of the commandment, "in the name of my love," which positions Christ as a third party between humans. To love one's neighbor, in Lacanian terms, can only mean to recognize in him, as in oneself, the Thing in all its horror. Flesh. Ultimately, death alone can embody purity, as opposed to the impurity of life. Man learns nothing but his "being-for-death," an expression taken from Heidegger but interpreted through a long theological tradition. The obsession with death is thus as strong as that with purity. They might be impossible to separate.

So, what model does Lacan offer us to end an analysis? The first model is that of desire metamorphosed into a pure desire for knowledge, "beyond fear and pity." Such an ideal can be reached in the "in-between deaths," which heroes who have managed "not to give in on their desire" have experienced. Hence Socrates, the master of desire, chooses truth but sacrifices love and sexuality; he pays for it with his life. However, he is like the master of death, since, between the ignominy of condemnation and real death, he posits himself beyond the laws of the city by accepting them in spite of their injustice. By killing himself, he, in fact, saves the principle of Law, which is rooted in Truth. Other figures also have their place in such a gallery of heroes: Oedipus, Antigone, Moses, Freud, etc. However, the main figure—although buried deeper—is that of Christ dying in infamy. Through his obedience to God's incomprehensible will, he affirms the absolute value of the divine word, and he saves mankind. In turn, Lacan also included himself in such a genealogy. He rejected the *primum vivere* (first, to live), which, according to him, would be the ideal of too many analysts, but at the same time he declared inane the medical precept, *primum non nocere* (first, not to harm). Indeed, the cautiousness of the "not to act" would prevent him from "finding, in the very dead end of a situation, the intense strength of the [redeeming] intervention."

Any act entails unavoidable risks, for the other and for oneself, all the more so when what is at stake is an operation of truth. For Lacan, the end (in the two senses of the term) of analysis consisted of access to the desire for (unconscious) knowledge. "All knowledge is instituted in a horror that cannot be overcome and concerns the place that hides the secret of sex," a secret linked with death.¹³ The analysand must agree to pay such a price, just as the analyst, "in order to intervene in an action that goes to the heart of being, must pay with what is essential in his most intimate judgement" and he "also pays with his person."¹⁴ When the analysand succeeds in paying such a price, he, in

turn, becomes an analyst. As the most perfect initiatory trial, “psychoanalysis’s effect is to separate the analysand from the herd.” The initiated in turn initiates. Ultimately, logics and mathemes are also spiritual exercises, that is, a strict discipline that purifies analysis from its original sin, that is, to resort to biology, neurology, or physics, and to take into account the body and instinctual maturation. More importantly, however, Lacan was trying to purify psychoanalysis from its true “original sin,” that is, “Freud’s nonanalyzed desire.”

The second model offered by Lacan of the end of analysis is that in which the subject accepts his “unbeing” [*désêtre*] and his “subjective destitution.” This model can only be understood in the context of the grandiose vision of human destiny that Lacan expressed with inspired expressions. Such a vision testifies to the passage through ignominy, which makes heroes. Both the psychoanalyst, after each analysis he conducts, and the analysand, at the moment when he becomes an analyst, are no longer on the side of the “subject-supposed-to-know” (who, incidentally, knows that he knows nothing, like Socrates). They are reduced to being the *objet a*, the cause of the desire of the other. But the *objet a* is nothing but waste, trash, an object of disgust. The analyst must agree to be—and when Lacan said this he repeated Saint Thomas’s expression, *sicut palea*—“like muck.” This echoed his quotation from Luther: “You are all turds fallen from the Devil’s anus.”

Through the “darkness” of the passage from the position of analysand to that of analyst, what secret did Lacan want to bring to light? What did he want to see, hear, and know vicariously? Did he really want to discover what he did not know? When he instituted the *passe*, an actual “trial,” in his école, was he not already giving it its form and meaning, namely, to testify to the *désêtre* and to “subjective destitution,” in short to the “decay” by which the subject agrees to become trash for the other? To die to oneself, to die to the world, and to die to the other: is such a death a symbolic death, an imaginary death, or a real death? Let us not forget that Lacan stated, very early, that, “at every moment [man] constitutes his world by his suicide.”¹⁵ Furthermore, at the end of his life, he was thinking of death as that which would finally make him *the Other*. The only hope left is God’s mercy, and it is given to whomever He wants, as Saint Paul, Luther, and Pascal have said, and Lacan undoubtedly liked them better than the Jesuits who raised him.

One could share such a vision of man without being a psychoanalyst. One could be a psychoanalyst without sharing such a vision. Still, Lacan linked it with the principle of analytic ethics. The appropriate term here is indeed Lacanianism—and it is appropriate whether or not one is taken by the conviction animating the Lacanian verb. The Master may try to situate Freud in the genealogy of the great moralists, the great prophets, and the great theologians he likes, still there are other ways of reading Freud. There are other forms of ethics to support analytic practice. I would add, fortunately. These alterna-

tives exist in the other societies that Lacan never stopped anathematizing. They exist in his own école with Octave Mannoni, Maud Mannoni, and Françoise Dolto for example. However, the strongest and most subtle refusal to “go on with Lacan,” in the name of values based on the respect of the other, is Jeanne Favret-Saada’s refusal. In 1977, after the suicide of one of her friends, she published her letter of resignation in *Les Temps Modernes*: “Excusez moi, je ne faisais que passer.”¹⁶

The Lacanian word is haunted by such an apocalypse. This helps to explain how Lacan came to be called a Master, a Saint, a Perverse, a Sadist, and a Paranoiac. Could one read in Lacan’s theoretical construct an immense suffering, the insistent—and unbearable—presence of a loss or of a renunciation whose mourning never took place? Such a suffering persists to the point that, in order to survive, it must be transformed into a general *déréliction* and transmitted—or transferred?—to others who, in turn, must bear it like a cross. In any case, there remains an enigma, the enigma that any prophet, true or false, confronts us with: how can one explain the passion of the followers, their belief and unconditioned adherence, and the games played by the cynics who move in these circles?

THE STRATEGIES FOR INTERVENTION

Whether for clinical practice, theory, teaching, or the institution, Lacan was a man of intervention. We shall only say a few words about his strategies because we have seen them at work throughout our analysis and it would take an entire volume to analyze them in detail.

In *Écrits* Lacan said, “Style is the man, shall we agree with this expression provided we can add to it: the man to whom one is speaking?” This expression applies to all fields because it is always in relation to the other that Lacan acted—an other whom one seduces, threatens, convinces, respects, and despises, an other to whom one lies and tells the truth; an other whom one calls to witness. However, in spite of the broken lines and the necessary detours, the goal was never forgotten: was it power, survival, *jouissance*, or truth? Solid fortifications surround the secret. The best example is the fact that the huge theoretical apparatus is constructed around a silence: no narratives of treatment, no analyses of cases that Lacan would have been personally responsible for and that could show in the open his actual psychoanalytic practice.

In fact, his actions, like his texts, were based on the challenge of others as well as of himself—and who else beyond that? There was even a jubilation in this challenge. An entire system of moves forward, of withdrawals, of attacks, and of defenses, functioned so that the challenge could be met, even only for a moment. Such a challenge generally relied on an action, rapid in its audacity. Whether it had been prepared for a long time or whether it was impro-

vised, it always consisted in grabbing the opportunity when it arose. He always had to catch the other by surprise. Hence, Lacan linked his practice of short sessions with three logical moments: “the moment of the gaze,” “the time to understand,” “the moment to conclude.” Such a relation to the other also functioned in his institutional life and in his teaching. Would the threat for him consist of being surprised himself? Questions were always raised in terms of confrontation, and they were always ultimately a matter of life and death. If, at one point, Lacan failed, he erased the traces, multiplied opposite actions, made the other feel dizzy with an accumulation of gestures, words, and letters. Or else he called on others to start over again. If the issue was doubtful, he examined the power relations and held on firmly to his positions, without moving an inch, so that the other got tired, gave up, and shut up.

Such a strategy is very clear in his art of discourse. There the challenge was generally condensed in an assertion that shattered the other, for example, “there is no sexual relation,” “language is the condition of the unconscious,” “the unconscious is structured like a language” (and I have only chosen apparently clear sentences). As Lacan himself said, “take it or leave it.” It works; one is for, one is against, one analyzes the sentence in order to look for its meaning, and one recites it so as, in turn, to impress others. In any case, one is already caught, whether one wants to be or not, in the Lacanian territory, a territory that has become, in France, a mandatory place of passage for intellectuals or professionals of mental health. Proof is that here I am, writing this book, and wondering what its real stakes are.

Discussion was impossible, as the conflict with Laplanche concerning two opposite formulations of the unconscious showed. “The unconscious is the condition of language,” Laplanche said, in order to correct “the unconscious is structured like a language.” No, replied Lacan, “language is the condition of the unconscious.” Then, when he felt vulnerable in linguistics, he added that “the unconscious is the condition of linguistics”—and moreover, I, Lacan, have created “linguistry.”

Thus, it was useless to try to catch him in the wrong; he always won. It was better to change territory and examine his territory from another place. Besides, everything was already planned. How is it possible to orient oneself in the constant transformation of the *cogito ergo sum*, in the transformation of the “you are the one who will follow me” [*tu es celui qui me suivra(s)*], or in the topological figures? Lacan was never where one might expect him to be. If one admitted to not understanding, his answer was always ready: “It does not matter because it is not meant to be understood, it is meant to be used.”¹⁷ What happened when one used it? He made ironic remarks or flung imprecations about how his concepts were misused. What happened when one chose to abstain? He complained.

However, such a whirl of argumentation relies on a passionate desire for knowledge. “The main thing,” he said one day, “is for me not to break my

neck.” With the pleasure of thinking came the pleasure of nearing danger, and always in a different way. Everything had to be preserved, and everything had to be erased, in order to let the ultimate truth come out; such a contradiction explains the inconsistency of his assertions throughout the years. It also explains that he never wrote his seminars. It might explain his choice of speaking rather than writing; the presence of the other in front of him stimulated inventiveness. In this sense, Lacan was indeed an *enseigneur* and a Master with disciples eternally attached to his person, unless they became Judas.

An anxiety, however, tormented him: resistance to analysis, he said—and maybe he was thinking of himself—lies not so much in sexuality as in “this abyss opened up at the thought that a thought might make itself heard in the abyss.” What voice had to be covered? The eternal pursuit led him to repetitions and rehashes, to empty statements, and to a discourse that sometimes talked by itself. . . . But then the machine started again: he discovered a new “trick” up his sleeve.

LACAN THE LITERARY CRITIC AND THE WRITER

I do not think that Lacan was really a literary critic nor that he created another form of psychoanalytic criticism. I think he was a passionate and careful reader [*liseur*] who gave a very new point of view on a text. He was a reader [*liseur*] who often wrote about his own reading in a very successful way, freer than in his theoretical texts. Lacan did not have any methodological bias, as he showed by praising Jean Delay’s book on Gide, a book that is a psychobiography. He said, “the lesson is striking because we can see the gradual organization, in its very rigor, of the constitution of the subject.” The book is not about “applied psychoanalysis” but about the search for “a psychoanalytic method of reading.” Lacan himself wrote several enlightening pages both about Gide and about his own notion of the subject.

Literary criticism in itself did not interest him, but literature did. Literature made him think, as did philosophical, religious, or scientific texts. It made him invent. The seminar on Poe’s *Purloined Letter* (*Le Séminaire sur La Lettre volée*), the introduction of the paperback edition of *Ecrits* in which he came back to this seminar, *Jeunesse de Gide*, *Hommage à Marguerite Duras*, *Kant avec Sade*, *L’Eveil du Printemps*, are all texts that are a pleasure to read while allowing us to discover, in an accessible way, the main elements of his theory. The same is true of his spoken talks on the *Symposium*, *Hamlet*, or Claudel.

Therefore, I disagree with Paméla Tytell when she says that, thanks to his reading of the novel “*Aimée*,” Lacan almost became the founding father of a new method of psychoanalytic criticism.¹⁸ On the contrary, in this text, his attitude is still that of a psychiatrist who tries to understand his patient’s case through the book she has written. He was benevolent, indeed, but he

quoted her more than he analyzed her work, and his comments were in accordance with those of the cultural circles at the time. If Lacan offered a new method of reading, it was rather along the lines of a structural reading: *Le Mythe individuel du névrosé*, as well as his analyses of Poe's story, of *Hamlet*, and of *Le Ravissement de Lol V. Stein* are examples of such structural readings. However, in that respect, Charles Mauron alone has truly offered a method of reading.¹⁹

Lacan's personal readings were constantly present in his texts, written as well as oral. His texts are said to be difficult, and they are indeed. The multiplicity of implicit or explicit references explains the difficulty. His texts are full of Latin and Greek words, rare terms, unknown names and texts, quotations distorted for his own purpose, style borrowed here and there (vocabulary and expressions from Heidegger, Mallarmé, or Bataille whose name he almost never mentioned). Lacan's style is first of all a patchwork of very heterogeneous elements, a patchwork whose result is very surprising, and indeed surprise is what he aimed for. Lacan is often disconcerting because he changes reference or register without warning. In fact, his own style might be covered under the weight of this immense tradition he would have liked to master completely. Reading him makes us feel overwhelmed and dizzy when the references are too heterogeneous. One loses appetite for reading as a result of a bulimic binge for knowledge.

Lacan's writing style belongs to the great oratorical tradition. The structure of his sentences is that of Latin discourses, of sermons, of seventeenth-century sermonizing discourses: long oratorical "periods" with subordinate clauses at the beginning, interrupted by flights of oratory, and reinforced by long, drawn-out comparisons. A cultural discrepancy thus makes these texts difficult for contemporary readers. Lacan's writing is influenced by his Jesuit education, and also by his personal tastes. His argumentation is often tight, as is the art of casuistry. It must encompass all points of view, while style must persuade in order to convince. Even paradoxical reversals belong, in part, to this cultural context which produced the oratorical tradition. With this general perspective in mind, one can read Jean-Baptiste Fagès's precise analysis of rhetorical figures in Lacan.²⁰ But do not forget the influence on Lacan of the German sentence, an influence that both reinforces and goes against the Latin-French tradition. Ultimately, Lacan also wants "to wring the neck of rhetoric" [*tordre le cou à la rhétorique*]. For that purpose, he borrows from Mallarmé's practice of syntactical ruptures, but most importantly his use of ellipsis, that is, the suppression of words or of parts of sentences that might support the continuity of meaning. Does this make him a poet? That is a different matter.

Our time has its oratorical poets: Claudel and even Saint-John Perse. One can immediately measure the difference in poetic invention between them and Lacan. Although Lacan has metaphorical strokes of inspiration, they are

never sustained. Poetry today is constructed on a succession of metaphors; Lacan, on the other hand, inserts his metaphors in a large argumentative or rhetorical framework. His use of aphorism, which corresponds to the most advanced element of his thinking, is certainly his most successful use of figures. What really happens in aphorisms is the condensation and overdetermination of meaning. Aphorisms belong to the great tradition of moralists; they are assertions condensed in few words, which need to be examined in all senses.

There remains the question of the puns, which led people to say that Lacan was a surrealist. First, such puns appeared rather late in his work, at a time when advertisements themselves could have claimed to be surrealist. Then, they coincided with his analytic practice of discourse, in accordance with his theory of the signifier, more than with a search for the dazzling encounter that characterized the surrealists. Some are happy puns because they make one think or smile: *la Belle Bouche erre* (the beautiful mouth wanders) for *la belle bouchère* (the beautiful butcher's wife, Freud's hysteric), the *poubellication* of his work (pun on *poubelle*, trash, and publication), the *parlêtre* that condenses his theory of the human subject (it condenses the words *parler*, to talk, and *être*, being and to be), the *père-version* (father-version) for "perversion," etc. However, with many of the puns, it seems as though a large machine got carried away: they do not bring anything either to thinking or even to the pleasure of playing with words. For example *Y A D'L'UN* (which sounds like "there is something of One") does not say much. The same is true of *Stécriture* (which sounds like *cette écriture*, this writing), and *L'Aumoinzun* for *l'Au-moins-Un* (the-at-least-one), unless, sometimes, there might be a touch of derision for himself or his own theory. The title of the 1976–1977 seminar, *L'Insu que sait de l'une bévue s'aile à mourre*, inevitably brings to mind Molière's Trissotin.⁴ François George entitled his pamphlet *L'Effet 'Yau de Poële de Lacan et des lacaniens*.²¹ He shows that it is possible to make a serious critique of Lacanian ideology based on a study of the puns.

Lacan was a thinker and a theoretician, and there lie the true sources of the originality of his style. Why deny it? As far as I know, it is not a flaw. He liked to think with others but mainly against others. The verve of his style, satire, polemic, derision, forceful expressions or insults that destroy the other, and his art of finding nicknames often created most successful pages, no matter what one might think of the content. Finally, Lacan was a man who deeply felt that he was invested with a mission. His preaching style is the most beautiful, the most moving, and its forcefulness is unquestionable.

He declaimed, he drew pictures so as to strike the imagination and convert better, he addressed sharply, he hurled imprecations, and then, appropriately,

d. *L'Insu que . . .* roughly sounds like "ignorance that knows the blunder." Lacan claimed that *l'une-bévue* is a good translation of Freud's *Unbewusst*.

he allowed a fleeting glimmer of hope to appear in the remote distance. Although he violently dismissed the affect, in order to get his message across, he played with all possible registers capable of generating the most violent emotions. Was he not caught in his own heavy swell of words? Could Lacan be a visionary, in spite of all the mathemes, indeed in the very work of the mathemes?

The Lacanian adventure is inscribed in the history of French intellectuals under the regime of the fifth Republic instituted by de Gaulle. The 60s and the 70s were characterized by a terrorist practice of thinking; think of structuralism, communism, Maoism, and Lacanianism. Abstractions pushed to the extreme were spinning on themselves, without any concrete grasp on reality. Such an abstract level of thinking could hardly hide the frozen irrationality of an elite who despised both the masses who had turned into bourgeois and the living anarchism of 1968, although such an elite spoke in both names. In this context, one could adhere, by mortifying oneself through the trial of submission, or agree to endure interpellations full of hatred and sardonic laughs, and to be brutally rejected into nonexistence.

In 1964, when Lacan began his teaching at the rue d'Ulm, he met an audience who made him as much as he made it. In this sense, he managed to transform the paths opened by Freud into a "French-style garden." His teaching was truly without rival, both nationally and internationally. Was it because he was "the only one who talked about psychoanalysis"? That is a different matter. A remarkable manipulator of ideas and crowds, the propagator of everything that was thought at the time, attracting to his seminar the "thinking heads of his time," he dreamed of making his école a school of life and psychoanalysis a new social link. Did he succeed? The dissolution of the école was an answer. Was Lacan the French Freud? Some say yes, those who have put him in the position of the Master. Those who say no simply situate him in the immense psychoanalytic field.

The Fondation Freudienne Internationale (130, rue de Clignancourt, 75018 Paris), or International Freudian Foundation for New Perspectives in Psychoanalytic Research, was created at the end of 1985. It gathers practitioners from New York, Europe, and South America, "beyond institutional schooling and ideological preferences," and it promotes exchanges. The symposium, which took place in Paris in June 1986, had a significant title: "Spontaneous Clinical Exchanges." The coordinator in Europe, Dr Alain de Mijolla (S.P.P.), is surrounded by practitioners whose itineraries and schooling are most varied. By refusing monolithism, psychoanalysis proves its vitality as much as its abilities to renew itself. It goes on . . .

PART II



Dossier



Chronology

There are several reasons why a biography is out of the question. Not enough time has elapsed to implicate directly people who are still alive. Moreover, testimonies, including those concerning official and datable events, are contradictory and often doubtful. This results, in part, from the uncertainties of human memory but also from the fact that it is impossible to untangle what many witnesses want you to write and what they hide from you, whatever their reasons might be. It is very difficult to untangle things that they cannot stand to know themselves and constructions that they create in order to survive these years of analytic history that they have lived as well as they could. Many analysts do not hesitate to chat and to be judgemental at a dinner party, but they become mute when you tell them that you want to interview them for a book: one does not want a tape-recorder; another does not even allow any notetaking; most of them want to check everything you will write and take notes themselves on what they say; some flatly refuse, by not answering your letter—at least that's clear!—while others try to overwhelm you with the most worn-out platitudes. What corpses are buried in the institutional history of psychoanalysis? Why does the psychoanalyst feel threatened when he switches from the status of listener to that of speaker? What paranoid image of his partner does he construct? Although his interviewer has been duly introduced and accredited, he finds himself in a situation of dialogue that eludes both the analytic situation and the rite of scholarly exchanges he is well used to. All this seems to reinforce both the romantic image of the unrecognized, or rather “misunderstood,” thinker and also the belief that analytic societies are radically different from others and that their events are incomprehensible to anyone who is not “in” [*n'en est pas*].

When the second volume of Elisabeth Roudinesco's book, *La Bataille de Cent Ans, Histoire de la psychanalyse en France* comes out, it will certainly provide us new information.¹ In the meantime, let time take its course! Loads of documents from the time are still unknown: don't forget, for example, that the fact that Freud analyzed his own daughter, Anna, was made known only very recently. Silences were understandable at a time when psychoanalysis was violently put into question, but is it still necessary today to maintain at all costs an idealized image that, in the end, works against psychoanalysis? In this play of double discourse and double practice, what is the ideological

function of this image of the analyst, cut off from his/her institutional life, which is itself considered to be an integral part of his/her private life?

All we will do here is give verifiable information and contextualize Jacques Lacan's career in a broad history, not only in the history of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, but also in that of his society and of the times in which he lived, taught, and practiced. We will provide information about the series of events and generations that successively shaped his itinerary. Thus the history of a position and of a practice in relation to the development of a theoretical discourse will take form. Neither the gaps in knowledge nor the remaining questions will be hidden. Lacan's childhood, his personality, his history, and his theory are undeniably linked. However, we are not in a position to define such links. Through the texts (second half of our dossier) we try to understand the values, the beliefs, the refusals, the hatreds, the preferences, the ideals, the mythologies, and the fashions that made Lacan Lacan. Needless to say, there was also an entire part of the society of the time that contributed to make Lacan Lacan! We have tried to avoid making accusations of beatification or of sorcery, and instead information has been organized in sections covering large periods of time.

1901–1932: THE YEARS OF FORMATION

Jacques-Marie-Emile Lacan was born in Paris on April 13, 1901, to a bourgeois family of provincial origin (the paternal lineage is that of vinegar-makers from Orléans) and of solid Catholic tradition. Sent to study in the humanities at the Collège Stanislas, one of the most famous institutions directed by Jesuits, he was trained in the same classical tradition as all his schoolmates from secular high schools: Greek, German, rhetoric, philosophy, and mathematics. At the time this classical education opened the door to all high positions, including medicine. At a time when France was still shaken up by the Dreyfus affair and torn by the quarrels over the separation between church and state, he was nonetheless taught all the religious, social, and political values of the conservative Catholic and bourgeois elite. Lacan never speaks of his childhood and family—his parents, his brother Marc, and his sister, Madeleine, who was already married when he defended his thesis in 1932. Nor does he speak of his wives and children, except sometimes in the turn of a sentence. Once however, in 1961, during the seminar on *L'Identification*, he suddenly mentioned, with exceptional violence, the figure of his paternal grandfather, Emile Lacan: “‘My grandfather is my grandfather’ means that the execrable petit-bourgeois that the aforesaid fellow was, this awful character thanks to whom I started cursing God at a very precocious age, this character is the one who, on the state registrar, is shown to be, by marriage ties, the father of my father.” The tragic split of the paternal figure, present throughout Lacan's works, is already inscribed in these few lines.

However, there must have been the influence of several models to oppose this Catholic middle-class that he despised. In any case, there was the faith of his brother who took his orders very early and whose name appears before those of his parents in his thesis dedication. A Benedictine, dom Marc-François Lacan still lives today in the abbey of Hautecombe, on the bank of Lake Bourget. According to certain testimonies, he has always been interested in his brother's works. He himself published several homilies and a study of religious vocabulary.² For decades, he has been teaching the Catholic youth in his area. A correspondence between the two brothers—if there is one—might illuminate some aspects of Lacanian thought.

Like Raymond Queneau, like Michel Leiris, the writer and ethnologist, like the psychiatrist Henri Ey, like the psychoanalysts Sacha Nacht, Marc Schlumberger, and Daniel Lagache among others (their names will often recur), Lacan belongs to a generation who grew up during the 1914–18 war. This is important because this generation, although brought up with the exaltation of virile and national, if not nationalistic, values, was remote from the fighting. Of course, 1918 marked the victory, but it also made evident the extent of the disaster: one fifth of the male population between twenty and forty had been killed in action, and it was impossible to count the disabled, the gas victims, the men worn out by the trench warfare, bitter or rebellious, and those coming back psychologically destroyed. Epidemics had struck the soldiers as well as the civilians, and the slaughter had struck the elite as well as the farming communities. The young men who had been spared thus constituted the hope of a society where everything had to be rebuilt. The question was whether things were going to be rebuilt as they were in the past or completely anew.

Lacan chose to pursue medical studies (he undertook periods of training notably in hospitals such as Saint-Louis, Laennec, Trousseau, and La Salpêtrière). Then he specialized in mental diseases: in 1927, he was appointed to an internship at the Asiles hospital. There was plenty of work to be done in those post-war years and it was possible to be innovative. To be a specialist in mental illness no longer meant being doomed to the ghetto or to suspicion: in psychiatry as well as in surgery or in neurology, “the war turned out to be a midwife of progress,” as Lacan himself later said about World War II.³ From then on, until he was thirty-one and became doctor of medicine, Lacan followed a classic and brilliant career in the most prestigious Parisian hospital services. His curriculum vitae, the list of dedications (sometimes commented upon) to big names in the medical institution at the beginning of his thesis on paranoia, and his involvement in scholarly societies and journals in his specialty testify to the success of his career.⁴

In 1927–1928, he worked at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne in the second section for women [*seconde section des femmes*] and in the Clinic for Mental and Encephalic Diseases [*Clinique des Maladies Mentales et de l'Encéphale*] directed, at that time, by Professor Henri Claude, one of the most influential

personalities in psychiatry between the two World Wars. In 1928–1929, he worked in the Special Infirmary Service [*Service de l'Infirmierie Spéciale*], near the Paris police headquarters. Clérambault had a practice in this service and, at that time, all of Paris rushed to watch the cases of patients that he presented. Both Georges Heuyer, with whom Lacan learnt “the quick psychoanalytic observation,” and Doctor Logre, who was to be the expert in the famous trial of the Papin sisters, also worked there. Between 1929 and 1931, Lacan spent two years at the Hôpital Henri-Rouselle directed by a physician, Doctor Toulouse: he worked in the Institute of Psychiatry and Mental Prophylaxis [*Institut de Psychiatrie et de Prophylaxie mentale*] where he met up with Georges Heuyer again. In August and September 1930 he studied in Zurich in Professor H. Maier's service at the Burghölzli clinic, which is famous for the works of Eugen Bleuler—Freud's rival—on schizophrenia and “fundamental language,” the works of Jung, and the works of Binswanger, the instigator of existential psychoanalysis. Many psychiatrists who went through this clinic later set up a practice in France or, after an analysis with Freud or at the Berlin Institute, helped introduce psychoanalysis in France. Finally, in 1931, with his diploma of forensic surgery, the young psychiatrist came back to Sainte-Anne; he was appointed a senior hospital lecturer [*chef de clinique*] and Professor Claude chaired the defense of his thesis in 1932.

Throughout this period, Lacan was actively involved in the Société Neurologique, the Société de Psychiatrie, the Société Clinique de Médecine Mentale, and the Société Médico-Psychologique. His active involvement shows that he was perfectly integrated in the official circles of neurology and psychiatry. From 1926 to 1932, under the authority of Théophile Alajouanine, Trénel, Claude, Heuyer, Courtois, J. Lévy-Valensi, Paul Schiff, etc., he co-signed no less than thirteen articles often published simultaneously in various scholarly journals. If today we mainly remember texts such as “Abasie chez une traumatisée de guerre” (with Trénel in 1928), “Roman policier” (with Lévy-Valensi and Meignant in 1928), “Folies simultanées” (with Claude and Migault in 1931), and “Ecrits inspirés: schizographie” (with Lévy-Valensi and Migault in 1931),^a it is because these writings concern hysteria, hallucinations, language disorders, family relations, and paranoia, that is, the problems of pathological psychology that, as Lacan himself said in 1933, are at the core of his thesis and that were gradually going to lead him towards psychoanalysis.⁵ In 1931, he alone, signed an article on “the structure of paranoiac psychoses” in *La Semaine des Hôpitaux*. However, let us not forget that most of these texts concerned neurological disorders or postencephalitic aftereffects, which were major topics after the terrible epidemic at the end of World War I. Lacan's research will bear the traces of this training until 1953.

a. “Abasia of a woman traumatized by war,” “Detective novel,” “Simultaneous madness,” “Inspired writings: schizographia.”

At the Hôpital Sainte-Anne, Lacan made “two friendships that I owe,” he said, “to the fraternity of our thoughts and of our studies in psychiatry, Drs. Henri Ey and Pierre Mâle.”⁶ In spite of the theoretical differences and of the sometimes violent conflicts that would set them in opposition after 1945, Lacan evoked in 1946 “the three friends, at the beginning of the internship period, all on the same side of the fence.”⁷ Later he evoked them again, especially in *Le Savoir du psychanalyste (ou Entretiens de Sainte-Anne)* in November 1971 (when he was seventy years old). He evoked with emotion these shared years spent in the staff waiting room, and he paid tribute (a tribute whose ironic tone he denied) to Henri Ey, the “civilizer” of the psychiatric ignorance of the time. These young men, launched into the experience of the asylums in 1926–1927, must have had passionate discussions and exchanges. They had meetings with some young psychiatrists who were often hardly older and who had just founded a group open to the confrontation of new ideas, the Evolution Psychiatrique (E.P.). Around the same time, the Société Psychanalytique de Paris (S.P.P.) was created in 1926. Many who belonged to both societies were at Sainte-Anne, under Professor Claude’s leadership. Whatever one might think of Claude’s positions concerning psychoanalysis, he accommodated psychoanalysis despite Professor Dumas’s violent hostility towards it. He entrusted Laforgue with psychoanalytic consultation at Sainte-Anne and he had, before Lacan, numerous *chefs de clinique* who became psychoanalysts: Adrien Borel, Michel Cénac, Henri Codet, Paul Schiff (the year Lacan started his training period as an intern), all of whom were at the origin of this renewal of the notion of mental illness. Claude introduced in France works on schizophrenia from Germany and Zurich (Lacan’s thesis owes him a lot). He helped to bring to France doctors trained at the Burghölzli clinic. He made room for psychoanalytic conferences (in an eclectic manner since Stekel, one of Freud’s dissidents, gave a talk in 1932). He offered his offices for the conferences organized by the association of French speaking psychoanalysts, the “Conférences des Psychanalystes de Langue Française.” He even participated, with some of them, in the elaboration of concepts, notably that of “schizonoïa.” Moving in these new circles, on the fringe of the official institutions, the three friends were not outlawed from the official circles. For example, Lacan presented some of his hypotheses on paranoia at the Evolution Psychiatrique, and published in the *Revue française de psychanalyse* his translation of Freud’s article “On Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia, and Homosexuality.” Both Henri Ey and he were present in October 1931 at the sixth “Conférence des Psychanalystes de Langue Française.”

However, the three friends’ involvement in these circles did not necessarily entail a complete adherence. Although all three joined the Evolution Psychiatrique very early, Henri Ey was going to remain a psychiatrist. However, at the same time, he wished for a confrontation with psychoanalysis, and for

that purpose, he was going to create the concept of “organo-dynamism.” Pierre Mâle joined the S.P.P. in 1932, which implied that he had already begun a training analysis. As for Lacan, who became a member in 1934, it is unknown whether he had begun his analysis with Rudolph Loewenstein in 1932 or 1933. All three—with Sacha Nacht, Marc Schlumberger, Daniel Lagache, and others—belonged to a second generation of members in these new societies that had been founded by others, some of whom, slightly older, had experienced the shock of the war directly.

Lacan certainly began to see the surrealists, but it seems that it was more on a personal basis than in collective meetings. His interest in surrealism was apparent at the end of “*Ecrits inspirés*” where he wondered about the links and differences between madmen’s writings and surrealists’ subversion of language. In any case, he did not cosign any collective text and he did not partake in any of the spectacular and provocative actions.

The crowning of these training years was the defense, on September 7, 1932, of his medical thesis: *De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité*. In the original edition, we find the signatures of Professor Claude who chaired the committee, of the dean, and of the *agrégés*^b Alajouanine (neurology and psychiatry) and Vallery-Radot (medical pathology). The list of dedications is instructive: Dr. Pichon, who was going to play an important role in the S.P.P., was already present. One name stands out by its absence: Clérambault’s. It was indeed because of their differences that Lacan failed his *agrégation*. In 1933, in the “general presentation of our works”—a sort of traditional presentation of candidacy—Lacan declared, even more openly than in his thesis, that he was against “mental automatism,” Clérambault’s theory. It was only much later that he would recognize the theory and would then speak of Clérambault as his master. From then on, Lacan did not receive any more honors and the fact that, on that level, his career was blocked may be significant in understanding the direction he took toward psychoanalysis. Lacan sent a copy of his thesis to Freud; all he got back was a banal postcard that was later copied by the journal *Ornicar?*⁸ The two men never met, not even during Freud’s brief stay in Paris during his trip from Vienna to exile in London.

1933–1939: FIRST ORIENTATIONS

Lacan was thirty-one years old when, equipped with his thesis, he fully entered professional life, knowing that he would never reach the highest level—the level that only the *agrégation* could have opened up for him. This relative failure, his passionate curiosity, and the changes taking place in psy-

b. The *agrégation* is the highest competitive examination for teachers in France and the *agrégé* is the person who has passed such an examination.

chopathology in France, impelled him to multiply his activities. Because of his thesis he became a specialist in paranoia. The richness of his text and the multiplicity of its aspects appealed to a number of very different circles. Its strongest and most appealing aspects were the analysis of the case of Aimée; the concern to devote himself to a concrete and exhaustive phenomenological study; the extraordinarily clever erudition in which, for example, Freud was no more privileged than Janet, his French rival; the notion of mental disease as "disease of the personality" both in its structure and in its dynamic evolution; and the connection between that disease and conflicted social environment, without neglecting organic predispositions or the role of childhood. As for the vast project of a "science of the personality," a science that had to be elaborated in which psychoanalysis would only be one component, it fitted with the general way of thinking of the time, including the way of thinking of many members of the S.P.P. Psychiatrists, as well as psychoanalysts, surrealists, and university-recognized psychologists thus recognized their ideas in Lacan's project, although somewhat mistakenly. It is safe to say that, throughout this period, Lacan was a convinced psychiatrist who was gradually discovering psychoanalysis and becoming more and more actively involved in the intellectual avant-garde life. For a long time these experiences left on his research the mark of a theory of his own.

Pursuing his hospital career, he took part in international congresses on psychiatry and published several very specialized articles with Henri Claude but mostly with Georges Heuyer, a liberal *patron* who opened his service to Sophie Morgenstern, a Polish Jew and a nonphysician child analyst. In 1934, appointed doctor of the Asiles, Lacan married Marie-Louise Blondin, his first wife who was the daughter of a medical patron. In 1936 he received the title of Doctor of the Psychiatric Hospitals [*Médecin des Hôpitaux Psychiatriques*].

The small group of the E.P. had offered him a forum in which to present his first hypotheses on paranoia. This small society, the most innovative of the time, was founded in 1925 by René Allendy, Adrien Borel, Michel Cénac, Henri Codet, Mrs Codet, Angelo Hesnard, René Laforgue, Eugène Minkowski, Françoise Minkowska, Edouard Pichon, Gilbert Robin, and Paul Schiff. It "originally defined its activity on the borders of psychiatry and psychoanalysis."⁹ Laforgue was the most active agent in this foundation, as well as in that of the S.P.P. in 1926. The diversity of members forming its core made the S.P.P. a very flexible group. For the young generation, the E.P., although very soon to be reserved to physicians only, became, as has been rightly said, a "breeding ground for psychoanalysts," all of whom had been trained as psychiatrists. Such was the case for Lagache, Mâle, Nacht, Blanche Reverdon-Jouve, and of course Lacan; very rapidly all of them obtained tenured memberships. The E.P.'s interest in psychoanalysis was not surprising since seven of the founding members of the S.P.P. belonged to the

E.P. and since the E.P. held its meetings in 1934 in the offices of the Institut de Psychanalyse, before moving in 1937 to the Boulevard du Montparnasse. Lacan assiduously attended the Tuesday meetings, and often participated in the discussions that followed the presentations (for example, concerning "Passions et psychoses passionnelles" ["Passions and psychoses of passion"] by Lagache in 1935). In 1935 he published in the E.P.'s journal, *Evolution psychiatrique*, a review of his friend Ey's book, *Hallucinations et délires*. The same journal published the paper given by Schiff on February 2, 1935 in the amphitheater of the Clinique des maladies mentales during the IXth Conférence des Psychanalystes de Langue Française. The presentation, "La paranoïa du point de vue psychanalytique" ("Paranoia from a psychoanalytic point of view"), was the first presentation dealing with paranoia from a psychoanalytic perspective. During the discussion, Lacan—who is cited in the bibliography—was insistent about the role that "social tension" plays in triggering the crisis, but he did not consider the limitation of social contact for the paranoiac. His comments suggested more in-depth study of the structural formations during the different psychoses. Links were thus tight between the two societies. When, in 1936, the statutes of the E.P. were modified, a position of vice president was created and immediately given to Lacan. The position of secretary of the proceedings (a permanent position) was given to Ey who had been actively in charge of the journal since 1932 and who, throughout the years, would become the real driving force behind the group. He was among those who chose to confront psychoanalysis while clearly dissociating himself from it. After the war the clash with Lacan would be violent, but several times, Ey would offer him a forum in which to present his ideas. Finally it was in E.P.'s special issue, "Etudes Freudiennes," organized for Freud's jubilee, that Lacan published "Au-delà du 'Principe de réalité.'" This represented a revenge against the silence imposed upon his "mirror stage" at the International Psychoanalytic Congress in Marienbad (1936). It was a real declaration of principles, and made way for a research program for the new generation. In 1938–1939, the E.P. included forty-eight members, who were editors for the journal or tenured members, and four foreign correspondents. However, its audiences largely exceeded this number.

What were, before the war, Lacan's relations with the S.P.P.? Already complex, to say the least. Let us recall some facts. The S.P.P. was founded in 1926–1927 by the twelve founding members, at the initiative of Laforgue who undertook a long correspondence with Freud, and thanks to Marie Bonaparte who underwent analysis with Freud. The founders included eight physicians: René Allendy, Adrien Borel and Henri Codet (both students of Professor Claude), Angelo Hesnard, René Laforgue, R. Loewenstein (who arrived in Paris in 1925), G. Parcheminey, and Edouard Pichon. Many of them were very active in the E.P. The founders also included two women who

were nonphysicians. One of them, Marie Bonaparte, also called the Princess, was in a very solid position thanks to her social situation and to her privileged relations with Freud. The other, Eugénie Sokolnicka, was sent to Paris by Freud in 1921 but was never very well accepted by the medical circles, except for Georges Heuyer who opened a consultation office for her at Sainte-Anne, soon to be taken away from her in 1924 by H. Claude who offered it to Laforgue, a physician. She was better received by the literary circles since it was Paul Bourget who introduced her to Dr. Heuyer. For us today she is remembered as Gide's analyst, and he represented her in *Les Faux monnaieurs*; however, she remains unrecognized. We tend to forget that, after working at the famous Burghölzi clinic, she underwent analysis with Freud and worked in the equally famous psychoanalytic polyclinic of Berlin. Then, in Paris she was Laforgue's, Pichon's, and Sophie Morgenstern's first analyst, before she specialized in child analysis and then committed suicide in 1934, on the verge of poverty and solitude. Two Swiss psychoanalysts joined those ten: Raymond de Saussure, the son of the (now) famous linguist, and Charles Odier, trained in Berlin and analyzed by Franz Alexander. The founders' origins, their training, their cultures, and the choices they had made were thus very eclectic. Indeed, the founders included Jews from central Europe and Swiss analysts educated in the literature and psychoanalytic practice of German speaking countries, most of whom were members of the I.P.A. and had Freud's support; Marie Bonaparte, Freud's representative in Paris; Laforgue, an Alsatian torn between two worlds; and somebody like Pichon, a follower of Murras and, like Hesnard, a fierce advocate of a very anti-Germanic and "French style" psychoanalysis. The split between physicians and nonphysicians thus intersected with many other splits. Lacan, a young beginner, was going to be very wary of not taking any official position. Although he never explicitly stated it, he might even have been in favor of the nonphysicians' therapeutic practice. As for his first works, as we shall see later, they fall into line with those who, in France, wanted to create new terms and new concepts.

Lacan decided to orient himself towards psychoanalysis. In 1934 he was appointed an adherent member^c of the S.P.P. The same year, thanks to Marie Bonaparte's generosity, the S.P.P. endowed itself with an Institute for Formation and Exchanges [*Institut de formation et d'échanges*], on boulevard Saint-Germain. Others among his slightly elders or his contemporaries had joined before him. In 1933, the S.P.P. included twenty-one tenured members and fourteen adherent members. Cénac and Nacht were tenured as early as 1929, Schiff joined in 1928 and was tenured in 1930, Blanche Reverchon-

c. There were two kinds of members: the *membres adhérents* (adherent members) who, once they had proved themselves, could become *membres titulaires* (tenured members).

Jouve joined in 1929 and Mâle, her fellow student at Saint-Anne, in 1932, Schlumberger in 1938 etc. Except for Lagache, all those who would constitute the strong core of the S.P.P. after the war were already there. According to the rules at the time, Lacan's membership in 1934 implied that he had already undergone a year of analysis. But was it in 1932 as Jacques-Alain Miller says or in 1933 after his thesis and his disappointed hospital ambitions? Lacan chose to do his analysis with Loewenstein, one of the four training analysts of the société (the three others were Laforgue, Saussure, and Odier). Loewenstein, a Russian Jew, analyzed by Hanns Sachs (and not by Freud as is often said to ennoble the Lacanian genealogy), had worked for a long time at the polyclinic in Berlin. He kept starting medical studies in one country after the other (this medical training allowed him to be accepted at the E.P.), and started them once again when he had to leave France to go to the United States in 1942. A solid and orthodox practitioner and theoretician, he was also the analyst of a large part of the second psychoanalytic generation in France: Cénac, Nacht, Schiff, Lagache, etc. Lacan's analysis seems to have been exceptionally long for the time and probably difficult. It ended unfinished, if one may say so, either in December 1938 when Lacan was tenured in exchange for his promise to continue his analysis (a promise that he would not honor) or in 1939 because of Loewenstein's departure for the war.¹⁰ Was his analysis truncated? Was it difficult, as we have already said? According to Roudinesco, the small age difference spurred the jealousy or rivalry of the analyst who already perceived his analysand's theoretical superiority. It seems to me that such a version is too unilateral. It is also possible to think (and the two interpretations are not mutually exclusive) that Lacan had a difficult time putting up with such a situation and with the interference into his unconscious life. Let us not underestimate how difficult the analytic situation must have been for both of them since each had such a different history, culture, conception of mental life, of work, and perhaps of life.

Concerning Lacan's analysis, our comments here stem from the reading of the texts Lacan wrote at the time: several pages of *Au-delà du "Principe de réalité"* show that he had discovered the originality of analytic experience compared to psychiatric practice. What is striking is that he talked about it from the analysand's perspective, from the analyst's perspective, and from a so-to-speak overhanging perspective, that of the theoretician. Do not forget, however, that the text was published in the E.P. journal.

Lacan participated actively in the presentations and congresses of the S.P.P. His comments were often brief and sometimes funny because whatever subject was discussed, he would generally come back to paranoia, narcissism, and the mirror stage, his main preoccupations. This leads us to the two talks that inscribed Lacan in the psychoanalytic world. The first one on the mirror stage was planned for the International Psychoanalytic Congress in Marienbad

in 1936. In *Ecrits* Lacan tells with humor how President Ernest Jones interrupted him after the first few minutes. For what reasons? The mystery remains intact especially because, although the text was indexed in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (I.J.P.) under the title “The looking-glass-phase,” it was never published by the S.P.P. journal, the *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* (R.F.P.) and was lost by the author himself. Without launching here into interpretations, let’s just note that this failure on the international scene must have been bitter.

The second talk was the one Lacan gave at the S.P.P. when he was tenured in 1938, “De l’impulsion au complexe.” Lacan himself wrote the summary of this interminable presentation. He argued for a “primordial structural stage” called “stage of the fragmented body in the development of the ego”: at this stage “pure drives” [*la pulsion à l’état pur*] would appear in states of “horror” inseparable from a “passive beatitude.” To defend this thesis, he presented two cases of patients at length. The discussion following his presentation is fascinating because of the ambiguity of its tone. For example, Borel asked (with humor?) if Lacan, after his mirror stage, was not trying to create another, more archaic and saturnine, stage; in short, Lacan would be redoing (and renaming?) classical Freudian stages while (apparently) ignoring Karl Abraham’s and Melanie Klein’s works. Heinz Hartmann, who was in Paris to undergo “fragments of a training analysis” [*tranches d’analyse didactique*] and supervisory controls in the S.P.P., called into question the “primitive nature of the drives in question.” This discussion must surprise Lacanians today, but do not forget that, after the war, Hartmann, as the founding father of ego psychology, was going to be Lacan’s favorite target.

In May 1939, the S.P.P. included forty-six members of whom twenty-four were tenured; Lagache who joined in 1936 was tenured before Lacan, in 1937. Françoise Marette (Dolto), analyzed by Laforgue and one of Pichon’s favorite students, joined in 1938. Either because of internal oppositions, or perhaps because he had not yet moved from the psychiatric mentality to the psychoanalytic mentality, Lacan was still only one among all the others in the group. Pichon alone relied on him to materialize his dream of a truly French psychoanalysis. In March 1938, when Freud, his wife, and his daughter stayed in Paris with the Princess before going to London, the two men did not meet. Freud was interested in very few psychoanalysts, and Lacan was not among them.

Paradoxically, it was among the surrealists that Lacan became famous; he had given to his “dear friend Crevel” pages written by Aimée. Crevel, in turn, had circulated them in the group. When Lacan’s thesis came out, there was an explosion of enthusiasm in the group; finally a psychiatrist after their own heart! Crevel immediately wrote a review in issue 5/6 of *Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution*, an issue that also included, hot off the press, the story

of the crime of the Papin sisters who, together, had killed their lady employer and her daughter. Asked for a contribution, Lacan published, in the first issue of the journal *Minotaure*, an article on “the problem of style and the paranoid forms of experience.” (Incidentally, although Bataille was one of the founders of the journal and gave it its name, he would nevertheless be fired.) Dali published, in the same issue, “L’Interprétation paranoïaque-critique de l’image obsédante: l’Angélu de Millet (“Paranoiac-critical interpretation of the obsessive image: Millet’s Angelus”) where he referred to Lacan’s thesis, in his own perspective, of course. In issue 3/4 of *Minotaure* Lacan was given the opportunity to write about “the motives of paranoid crime” concerning the trial of the Papin sisters, which, at the time, fascinated all of France and particularly the intellectuals. He stood firmly as a psychiatrist, defended the position of the expert, Dr. Logre, whom he had met at the Infirmerie du Dépôt, refused to attribute this type of crime solely to society and class conflicts, and stressed the responsibility—even the desire for responsibility—of such criminals, as well as the important role of social sanction in their case. Besides, he dedicated his text to Dr. Georges Dumas, Professor at the Sorbonne, who also presented cases of patients at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne, in a violently antipsychoanalytic spirit. This is where Lacan’s collaboration with the surrealists ended, even if he maintained friendships with some of them. Never did he answer any of their questionnaires, never did he participate in any of their actions.

Similarly, his friendship with Bataille never led Lacan to commit himself to the multiple groups that Bataille founded. He was interested neither in *Contre-Attaque* (1935) where, for a while, communist sympathizers, surrealists, and Bataille met in order to analyze the world political situation, nor in the Collège de Sociologie (1937), although he enjoyed many hour-long discussions with Bataille and Caillois whose ideas influenced him. He was even less interested in the secret society of L’Acéphale. He even stayed out of the Société de Psychologie Collective founded in 1936 by Dr. Allendy, Bataille, Dr. Borel, Leiris, and Dr. Schiff, in a common concern about fascism and nazism. Except for his mandatory participation in some professional societies, Lacan liked to be a lonely man. Thus, although it was through Bataille that he became interested in ethnology very early, it is difficult to say whether he went with Bataille, Monnerot, and Leiris to Marcel Mauss’s courses. Only one thing is certain: Between 1933 and 1939, he took, with Queneau, Bataille, Jean Wahl, and many others, Kojève’s course at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, an “Introduction to the reading of Hegel.” But there is no evidence that he attended the course since its beginning or that he attended very regularly except during the last years.

However, he was probably seen a few times at Pierre Janet’s course at the Collège de France. Janet, Freud’s unsuccessful rival whom Lacan admired

greatly at the time, praised his thesis in 1935 in the *Annales Médico-Psychologiques* concerning the “troubles of social personality.” Moreover, the concept of the mirror stage testifies to the importance for him of Wallon’s courses (Wallon was a psychologist and a physician, a laboratory director at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in 1927, and a professor at the Collège de France in 1937). The influence on Lacan of the ideas that Wallon developed in “Conscience et individualisation du corps propre chez l’enfant” (1931) and in the book published in 1934, *Les Origines du caractère chez l’enfant*, is obvious.^d The two men certainly respected each other since Lacan’s most important contribution in these years 1933–1939 had been solicited by Wallon, namely, the important article on “La Famille: le complexe, facteur concret de la psychologie familiale. Les complexes familiaux en pathologie” (published by Larousse in Monzie’s *Encyclopédie Française* in 1938). All of Lacan’s fundamental ideas about the individual’s development, the function of the family and mainly of the father, and about societies’ decadence were already present in this article. Although Pichon’s response in his essay published in *R.F.P.*, “La famille devant M. Lacan,” was somewhat ironical, the two men nevertheless shared fundamental ideas.¹¹

Pichon seemed to project onto Lacan the hope of finally founding a “French psychoanalysis,” free from the Freudian orthodoxy of the I.P.A. As for Lacan, he admired Pichon’s passion for language and nomination: Janet’s brother-in-law (he sometimes invited Janet to the S.P.P. sessions), Pichon also devoted himself, with his uncle, to the famous Damourette and Pichon Grammar. Needless to say, he was advocating the creation of a psychoanalytic vocabulary that would be renovated by being Frenchized. “Mr Lacan is right to say that the concept is born with language,” he said.¹² To a certain extent, Lacan was really his heir. Indeed, Lacan paid him a vibrant homage at the Congress in Rome in 1953, attributing his “divination” of theory and of people to his “practice of semantics.”

While this still heterogeneous group experienced its internal conflicts, and tolerated national, racial, cultural, and political differences among its members, history was following its course. As opposed to a number of writers (Gide, Martin du Gard, the surrealists, Bataille, Leiris, R. Rolland, Malraux, or Drieu la Rochelle), nothing seems to have troubled them, at least as a group: neither February 1934; nor the Popular Front; nor the development of antagonistic ideologies in France; not even the reports on U.S.S.R., fascism, nazism, or on the Spanish war. Perhaps Munich did. In 1946, in a communication at the E.P., Lacan declared that, after the Marienbad Congress in 1936, he had attended the Berlin Olympiads and had denounced, when he came back, the threat that the German army represented by its mode of organization

d. “Consciousness and individualization of the body proper for the child.”

and by its spirit.¹³ It was not much. Did psychoanalysis appear to them, in its very marginality, to be a kind of international community, in accordance with Freud's wish materialized in the I.P.A.? Were they thus reinforcing the widespread idea that all scientific communities—here psychiatry or psychoanalysis—have no links with politics, which is reserved to everybody's private life? But let us not forget Pichon's involvement in La Liguè de l'Action Française,^e the support he gave to the events of February 6, 1934, his refusal of a too egalitarian Republic, his violently racist speeches later published in Maurras' press. However, he behaved like a friend with Minkowski, and he had helped Eugénie Sokolnicka, a Polish Jew and a nonphysician, when she was lonely and living in poverty. After her suicide, he wrote his former analyst's obituary. Elisabeth Roudinesco's expression, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, might be appropriate here.¹⁴ Maybe for him, like for the other members of the group, only those barbarians beyond the Rhine could conceive of burning Freud's books and denouncing psychoanalysis as a "Jewish science." Or else, did all of them—Jews exiled from Central Europe, French Jews, French of old stock, nationalist patriots, deeply antiracist liberals, or, like Laforgue, Alsacians who fought World War I on the German side before being French again—feel protected for various reasons by the image of France as a country of universal liberties and of democracy? Most of them probably understood the seriousness of the situation when, after intercessions and financial retributions, Marie Bonaparte had to rescue Freud, his wife, and his daughter Anna from the Nazis settled in Vienna. In March 1938, the S.P.P. protested against the "persecutions against Professor Freud" and immediately made him an honorary member of the society, together with Anna Freud and Ernest Jones. The society was welcoming more and more expatriates, and Paul Schiff tried to create for them the status of "associate member," which would allow them to work in France. Moreover, at the International Congress held in Paris in August 1938, it seems that the war to come was more talked about than the still crucial conflict between Americans and Europeans about the question of nonphysician analysts.

However, even if they thought about the war, could they conceive what the *drôle de guerre* was soon going to be, driving the expatriates even further away.^f To think about those times and those events that one experienced blindly, often judging them "foreseeable" retrospectively should, in turn, make us feel humble. At the time when Freud died in London, World War II was going to disrupt not only the still very fragile S.P.P. but also the entire geographical and cultural equilibrium of psychoanalysis, hence its theoretical and practical stakes.

e. A right-wing French organization that supported fascism.

f. The *drôle de guerre* is the name given to the war period that preceded the German invasion of France (Sept. 1939–May 1940).

1939–1944: THE YEARS OF SILENCE

There is little verifiable information concerning this period of Lacan's life: the second volume announced by Roudinesco on the history of psychoanalysis in France will certainly supply unpublished documents.¹⁵

Lacan was mobilized at the Hôpital du Val-de-Grâce where, in 1940, he was appointed to the special service of officers, about which he later said, "this unforgettable succession [. . .] of subjects half awoken from the warmth of their mother's or wife's skirts" or else, "the degradation effect of the virile type," "on a collective scale." Such an effect was linked, according to him, to "the degradation of the paternal Image,"¹⁶ a degradation which he had already denounced in his article on family, *La Famille*, in 1938.

During the German Occupation, he did not partake in any official activity, not even in the meeting of psychiatrists organized by Henri Ey in Bonneval in 1943. He explained himself in 1946: "For several years I have kept myself from expressing myself. The humiliation of our time under the subjugation of the enemies of human kind dissuaded me from speaking up, and following Fontenelle, I abandoned myself to the fantasy of having my hand full of truths so as to better close it on them. I confess the ridicule of this fantasy because it marks the limits of a person at the moment when he/she is going to testify."¹⁷ Did he continue his hospital practice? I have not found any traces that would confirm it, at least not official ones. On the other hand, it seems that he continued his private psychoanalytic activity (therapeutic and training analyses). John Leuba testified to it in front of Alain de Mijolla and several other testimonies confirm it.¹⁸

He also went to the south of France, near Nice, to meet the Maklès family, a Jewish family who had fled Paris for the free zone. Their three daughters were very close to the surrealist and avant-garde circles. The first one, Sylvia Bataille, had married Georges Bataille in 1928, had a little daughter, and remains well known today for her roles in Renoir's movies. One of Sylvia's sisters had married a friend of Bataille, Jean Piel, who inherited from Bataille, when he died, the direction of the journal *Critique*. The third sister, Rose, the painter André Masson's wife, would soon leave with him for the United States, like Breton and others. . . . It could be because Lacan spent time in the south of France that some people say that during all these years of war he was away from Paris, cultivating his mind and studying Japanese (according to Lacan, if he was studying, it was rather Chinese). Another anecdote says that Lacan supposedly grabbed from the police headquarters the written statement of Mrs Maklès's, Sylvia's mother, Jewish identity. Then, he is supposed to have said, "They even made me wait." Such a courageous and individualistic act was true to the character (Lacan may also have helped several other persons), but it did not entail any collective commitment.

Lacan's attitude during the war must be analyzed within the broader context

of the dispersion or the disappearance, at least officially, of the two societies to which he belonged. In May 1940, the S.P.P. had to close its Institute of Psychoanalysis and to store archives and books in safe places; of course the journal stopped being published. The E.P. was less threatened because psychiatry was not immediately identified as a Jewish science; nevertheless it too interrupted the publication of its journal. However, the E.P. did not stop organizing meetings and discussions that would be recorded in the first issues published after the Liberation. The fact that many members belonged to both societies forces us to qualify our statements and to follow individual itineraries, as Roudinesco does for some of these individuals.¹⁹

The situation of the S.P.P. was more tragic than that of the E.P. Sophie Morgenstern committed suicide the day before the Germans entered Paris. Codet, Pichon, and Allendy died young during the war. Loewenstein, who had become a naturalized French citizen, fought the war at the front line, then took refuge in Marseille, and then left for good for the United States, following Spitz and Raymond de Saussure. After staying in Saint-Tropez for some time, Marie Bonaparte decided to go back to Greece. Nacht and Schiff were the only ones who joined the Resistance, Schiff only until his strength failed him. However, Cénac saved Eugène Minkowski and Françoise Minkowska, both nonanalyst psychiatrists, from deportation to a concentration camp. As for Laforgue, although, for a long time, some held his trip to Germany against him (a trip organized in 1941 for French intellectuals by Arno Breker, Hitler's favorite sculptor), others said that he hid members of the Resistance and helped Jewish friends survive in Paris. After the war, when black-or-white judgments were delivered, the question can arise whether he was a victim of his Alsacian origin or whether his unwise attitude during the war was used as a pretext to solve problems of power within the S.P.P.

Georges Parcheminey was in charge of reorganizing the department of psychoanalysis at Saint-Anne. In the very first meeting of the department, he talked about Freud. At Sainte-Anne, John Leuba (the first president of the S.P.P. after the Liberation) and Philippe Marette, Françoise Dolto's brother, were responsible for patients' consultations. Jean Delay, a former student of Janet, carried on his former professor's politics. Although Laforgue was living in the provinces, those who had been analyzed by him met in Paris: Reverchon-Jouve, Berge, Dolto, Favez-Boutonier, Mauco. Schlumberger and Leuba joined them, but Lacan apparently never did. In order to help Ey, who was trying to maintain a network of connections around his hospital in Bonneval, Daniel Lagache, who had moved to Clermont-Ferrand with the University of Strasbourg, created there a medical-psychological consultation center for handicapped children and teenagers, and continued teaching his courses on "clinical psychology." Psychiatrists such as Lucien Bonnafé and François Tosquelles (who belonged to the E.P. and who later joined the Lacanian circles) were trying new experiments at the Saint-Alban hospital (they

later said that Lacan's thesis had been very helpful to them). Do not forget Maud Mannoni's narrative of her apprenticeship in Belgium during the war.²⁰ People were thus working underground, and the results of their work would be visible after 1945.

During this period, Lacan was the big lone wolf standing still in supreme refusal of both commitment to a common struggle and participation in professional activities that could be taken as compromises with historical reality. His attitude remains an enigma to me. Was Lacan a fierce individualist? Was he a man who needed a stable law on which to base his own marginality? Was he a man who felt uneasy in situations socially and ideologically uncertain or desperate? In any case, his solution was silence—a courageous position (for his material life was then difficult), but also a position limited to waiting.

1945–1952: FROM PSYCHIATRY TO PSYCHOANALYSIS: THE COMMITMENT TO THE S.P.P.

In 1945, France experienced a sort of resurrection, while, on the international scene, the Yalta Conference, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki all took place at the same time as the creation of the United Nations. War began in Indochina in 1946; in 1947 the Communists left the government, and the Marshall plan found a counterpart in the creation of the Kominform; in 1948 it was the coup in Prague, the blockade of Berlin, and the difficult birth of the State of Israel; in 1949, the official partition of Germany and the birth of the People's Republic of China; in 1950, the Korean war, etc. Nevertheless people were euphoric, everything seemed possible again. A thousand journals and magazines were created and groups, as they were re-formed, revealed a new generation of thinkers: *Les Temps modernes* was founded around Sartre in 1945, *Critique* was founded by Bataille in 1946 and published articles on Nietzsche, Heidegger, Mallarmé, and Sade (this was not common practice at the time). As for the Communists, Aragon worked for *Lettres Françaises* and Kanapa for *La Nouvelle critique*. *Esprit* was created by left-wing Christians. While Gide got the Nobel Prize in 1947, other names became suddenly well known: Jean-Paul Sartre, of course, Albert Camus, Simone de Beauvoir, André Malraux, Raymond Aron, Maurice Merleau-Ponty (appointed to the Collège de France in 1943), Jean Hyppolite who was in the process of finishing his translation of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* and was later to become the director of the E.N.S. (Ecole Nationale Supérieure) at the rue d'Ulm, and Raymond Queneau who published in 1947 the *Leçons d'introduction à la lecture de Hegel* taught by Kojève before the war. Jean Wahl became the dynamic force behind the Collège de Philosophie at the Sorbonne (Lacan was going to lecture there in 1953). Later he renovated and gave new lustre to the Société Française de Philosophie by inviting, up to the 60s and 70s, the avant-garde celebrities of the time (Lacan was invited once). Levi-Strauss who, like Merleau-Ponty,

was younger than Lacan, came back from the United States (and so did Breton, Masson, and others). He had worked with Jakobson, which led him to introduce in France a new anthropology, first at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (E.P.H.E.) and then at the Collège de France. Lacan was fascinated!

Two reasons justify this simplistic and breathtaking survey. The first one is that Lacan did not break his silence in scholarly journals but in the *Cahiers d'art* with two texts on logic (1945 and 1946), texts close to game theory, which immediately inscribed in him in the broader cultural movement. The second reason is that euphoria would soon be replaced by conflicts and anathemas in all the intellectual and cultural circles. While the S.P.P.'s analysts would very much like to have seen the society's dramas as the cursed mark of their own election or as the remainder of impurity of their ideal image, the above survey should introduce an element of relativity in the S.P.P.'s conflicts.

Where did the E.P. stand after the Liberation? In spite of those who died (including Schiff in 1947) and to whom the first issues paid homage, the journal rapidly resumed its activities thanks to Ey as well as to the hospital structure that maintained contacts among generations. Starting in 1945, Lacan, like the others, gave regular courses and lectures. Two of his articles appeared in the very first issue of the journal: *La Causalité psychique* and *La Psychiatrie anglaise et la guerre*. That the first one was included in *Ecrits* while the other one fell into the oblivion of Lacanian history is an interesting symptom.

As a matter of fact, in September 1945, Lacan spent five weeks studying in London: he investigated the English psychiatrists/psychoanalysts' experiments conducted on soldiers during and after the war. His admiration for a country that managed to resist the enemy was limitless (probably in painful contrast with his experience at the Hôpital du Val-de-Grâce). Lacan was sensitive to the efficiency of both English and American methods of group therapy, which succeeded in reintegrating men in the country at war in a useful way, without coercion but rather through the transformation of the individual in a specific community. He also admired the centers for reconversion into civil life and he anticipated an entire future where psychiatrists/psychoanalysts would play a fundamental social role at all ages of life. This text on *La Psychiatrie anglaise et la guerre*, which we discuss in our presentation of Lacan's works, sketches admirable portraits of Brion, Richmann, and Major Doyle. In short, upon reading this text, it seems that Lacan was very close to becoming the organizer in France of a massive enterprise to take care of the population. In the discussion that followed Lacan's talk, Ey and Schiff expressed reservations against this extension of psychiatry/psychotherapy to the entire social world. As for "my dear friend," Dr. Major Turquet, present in

the room during the talk, he would later be ridiculed by Lacan during the conflicts with the I.P.A. . . .

On the other hand (and it is not contradictory), Lacan, invited by Ey to talk in Bonneval at a colloquium on “the psychogenesis of neuroses,” gave an extremely violent, staggering talk against Ey’s “organo-dynamism.” He asserted without any possible doubt that “madness is lived *entirely* in the register of meaning.” For Jacques-Alain Miller, this talk marked Lacan’s true entrance into the psychoanalytic world: that it took place apropos of “madness,” a term that is too generic to be scientifically valid, is not indifferent. Lacan’s extreme position was obviously a provocation. Ey answered no less violently, opposing “city psychiatry” to “country psychiatry,” and criticizing Lacan for being at the same time still fascinated by Clérambault’s “sterile mechanism” and irresistibly attracted by metaphysics (Heidegger, Hegel, and “beyond Hegel, the *logic of madness*”).²¹ During the meetings of the Société, discussions, in which Ey wanted to dissociate psychiatry both from neurology and from psychoanalysis, were always animated. Lacan attended the meetings very regularly for he had even more contempt for the “analytic seraglio” than distrust for Ey’s “organo-dynamism”! In 1947, he was a member of the editorial board of the E.P.’s journal, as well as of the editing board of the series entitled *La Bibliothèque neuro-psychiatrique de langue française*, published by the Editions Desclée de Brouwer. It would be wrong to see Lacan as a purist cutting himself off from the psychiatric circles, or to confuse his presence at the E.P. with the problems at the S.P.P. Lacan would remain a member of the E.P. until the end and (revealing detail), in 1964, a full page of *E.P.* announced the creation in Paris of the Ecole Freudienne.

The history of the S.P.P. is more turbulent. It resumed its activities in 1946 with John Leuba as its president. Marie Bonaparte was the only remaining founding member and was still alert, influential, and active. Angelo Hesnard was practicing in Toulon and, surprisingly, he would be admitted to all the splitting groups, including the E.F.P. Georges Parcheminey was already feeling old and tired, and René Laforgue was kept out of the society. However, tenured and adherent members from before the war gradually came back, and new appointments were made. Very rapidly the number of active members was the same as in 1939 and soon exceeded it. The group reorganized itself around the second generation of French psychoanalysts. Three names stand out—Nacht, Lacan, and Lagache—all three Loewenstein’s former analysands. While other members were only in charge of training analyses and supervisory controls, these three had, on top of these same responsibilities, a theoretical and institutional role. As for Bouvet, an original theoretician, he would die too young to be able to realize his promise. At that time, three tasks were essential: to resume scientific activities and contacts with foreign countries; to reorganize the société, rewrite its statutes, and find

a location to gather all its activities; to ensure the training of candidates who were either waiting in line to be admitted to the société or who were solicited by the société when they were practicing psychiatrists. Lacan was very active in this movement to reconstruct and reconquer; he played a scientific, institutional, and formative role.

He was neither contested nor hindered in his theoretical production and in his relations with the whole psychoanalytic circles. Rather, people relied on him to revive French theory. He participated a lot in the scientific life of the S.P.P. (see, for example, his comments about Françoise Dolto's "flower-puppet"). He was often chosen to be the reporter in the numerous Conférences des Psychanalystes de Langue Française. In May 1948, at the XIth Congress on aggressivity in psychoanalysis, he was in charge of the theoretical report while Nacht took care of the clinical report. In June 1949, at the XIIth Conference on narcissism, a conference attended by Mélanie Klein and Professor Henri Flournoy from Geneva, the reporters were John Leuba and Van der Waals from Amsterdam. Lacan's comments were noticed and, in its October issue, the *R.F.P.* included the texts and discussions of this conference after the text of Lacan's address on the mirror stage, delivered at the XVIth International Congress in Zurich (July 1949). At the XIIIth Conference (1950) Lacan presented with Cénac *L'Introduction théorique aux fonctions de la psychanalyse en criminologie*, preceded by a short speech by Nacht on *Psychanalyse et criminologie*, and followed by the clinical report provided by Lebovici, Mâle, and Pasche. The responses to the questions and comments that followed the presentation clearly showed that Lacan was the main architect of this contribution. In 1951, Lagache and Schlumberger were in charge of the XIVth Conference but Lacan made a long speech that he later turned into a written article that was published by the *R.F.P.* along with the official reports of the conference. Even during the period of open crisis at the S.P.P. (1951–1952), the responsibility for the report on the 1953 conference in Rome, *Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage*, was still assigned to Lacan. It was only after the split—the resignation—on June 16, 1953 that the S.P.P. refused to let him speak in his own name and even to just let him speak, because the I.P.A. considered that he had resigned and did not recognize the new S.F.P. Thus, before the split, he was considered to be the most productive and original theoretician of the group, all the more so because he always used the classical terms of the Freudian orthodoxy of the time when he spoke up within the S.P.P. The problems in the S.P.P. must, therefore, not be formulated in terms of theoretical oppositions. However, the opposite could be argued because, in his account of the huge 1949 I.P.A. Congress in Zurich (350 participants, 22 European, American, and even Indian countries), Henri Flournoy (a member of the S.P.P. before the war who was living in Switzerland since then, the famous hypnotizer's son, and the brother-in-law of Raymond de Saussure, the linguist's son) left out Lacan's name although he

talked of Leuba, Lagache, Nacht, and Marie Bonaparte. The *Stade du miroir* was nevertheless summarized in the *I.J.P.*, then published in the *R.F.P.*, and it earned Lacan an invitation from the British Psychoanalytical Society in 1951. (Lagache was also invited at the same time.)

Decisive questions in the drama would concern the analysts' training and the société's objectives. A committee on teaching [*commission d'enseignement*] was created in 1948 with Nacht as its president, and Bouvet, Lacan, Lagache, Mâle, Parcheminey, and Schlumberger as its members. The regulations and doctrines they wrote down functioned, for the various didacticians, as a sort of synthesizing text in which typically Lacanian formulas can be identified at several points. They all agreed, Lacan as everybody else, that the analyst-to-be should be "entirely in [his] analyst's tutelage" and "should commit himself not to practice psychoanalysis without his analyst's consent." Practical modalities were even unanimously voted: four to five sessions per week—at least three—of 45 minutes each and during at least two years. They also voted on the status of the education advisors [*conseillers et conseillères d'éducation*] recognized by the S.P.P.; there again, Lacan took part in the elaboration of the document. He was thus perfectly integrated in the institutional life of the group.

In 1949, Nacht became president of the société. Members had to stick together against attacks from both outside and inside: since 1947 the Communist party was campaigning against psychoanalysis, a bourgeois science that played the game of the United States. (Remember that the Communists had left the government and that the cold war was starting.) In 1949, in *La Nouvelle Critique*, a text appeared on *La Psychanalyse comme idéologie réactionnaire* (*Psychoanalysis as Reactionary Ideology*) signed not only by psychiatrists but also by members of the S.P.P. such as Lebovici (analyzed by Nacht) and Kestemberg (analyzed by Lacan). Even if these analysts finally left the Communist party (with all the personal trauma that such a move must have involved so soon after the war), the discord was very serious within the S.P.P. In 1950, it was the turn of the Catholic journal *La Pensée Catholique* to attack. Nacht managed to be reelected president from year to year in the name of the threats against the S.P.P., of its difficulties with the medical association (the trial against one of the société's nonphysician analysts for illegal practice of medicine was a source of worry, even if the verdict had been not guilty), or simply of the precariousness of the material situation. After first being accommodated by Bachelard (who was rather Jungian) at the annex of the Sorbonne, the société wandered from apartment to apartment, from rooms to rooms, lent here or there by the medical association or by a hospital. Nacht gathered funds abroad, and requested the tenured members' financial participation in order to recreate the institute that was in function before the war. In 1950, Nacht was president, Cénac vice-president, Lacan assessor, and Bouvier treasurer. In 1951, Nacht remained president, Bouvier

disappeared from the executive committee instead of becoming president, Lacan became vice-president, and Lagache became assessor (probably because of his violent protests). In 1952, the situation remained the same. Nacht was called "the Satrap" because of his authoritarianism and his lust for power, but everybody recognized his qualities as analyst and organizer.

Thus, things were moving along, and real work was being accomplished concerning the analysts' training: the report sent to the I.P.A. in 1951-1952 put forward seventy students, one hundred supervisory controls, and the regular meetings of three seminars (one by Nacht on technique, another by Lacan on the Freudian texts, and the third one by Lebovici on child analysis). Lacan's appointment as president in 1953 seemed settled, supported as it was by Nacht himself. Indeed, the stakes of power had been displaced. The direction of the institute-to-be was now going to be the true place of power. Nacht lit the powder keg in June 1952 and he was going to proceed in several steps.

On June 17, 1942, he managed to have the regulations of the institute ratified and to be immediately elected director for five years with Bénassy and Lebovici, who had been analyzed by him and were his followers, as his secretaries. To the position of administrative secretary he appointed Sauguet, whom he had analyzed and who was not an adherent member yet but was a good organizer. Lagache protested in vain. Nacht had found a location, 187 rue Saint-Jacques, he had fixed it up, and then it was the summer vacation. Nacht got remarried that summer, Lacan was his witness and Sylvia Bataille was Ednée Nacht's; the wedding took place at the house of Sylvia's brother-in-law, the painter Masson whom Lacan already called his "brother-in-law" (the official wedding between Lacan and Sylvia Bataille would take place in 1953). All this shows how strong the friendship between Lacan and Nacht still was.

It was in November 1952 that the crisis broke out into the open, when Nacht presented at the same time the statutes of the institute and the teaching program. Two points generated opposition: the presentation of the reasons for subjecting psychoanalysis to neurobiology and the decision to obtain official recognition for the diplomas. Such a strictly medical conception of psychoanalysis worried the nonphysicians, mainly Marie Bonaparte, who had always supported lay analysis, and also Bouvet and Lagache, even though they were physicians. Everybody suddenly discovered to what extent Laforgue's former analyzed patients (Berge, Dolto, Favez-Boutonier, Reverchon-Jouve) had been kept apart and had been made to feel uneasy in the institutional life of the S.P.P. Lagache himself, who was working in Strasbourg and who was mainly an academic in spite of his medical degree, felt isolated from Nacht's solid clan and from the friendship between Nacht and Lacan. Therefore, all those who felt excluded united their forces, and formed the "liberal clan," hostile to the bureaucratization of the société and to the proposed hierarchical

and rigid system, and also hostile to the strictly medical conception of psychoanalysis. Nacht's (quasi-delirious) tactlessness did not make things any easier: he kept for himself all the previous-year courses; he gave to Lagache a seminar on "vocabulary and bibliography in psychoanalysis"; and he gave to Lacan a seminar on texts for first-year students as well as some "courses on the mechanisms of the ego, sexual perversions, personality neurosis, and paranoia" and "an extraordinary conference on the theme of psychoanalysis and folklore, which, given the circumstances, will probably be spicy."²² As for the others, they got the crumbs. Talk about autocracy! With the support of Marie Bonaparte, Bouvet, Cénac, and Odette Codet, the liberal clan obtained the majority. To make a long story short, Lacan was elected director of the institute in December 1952. He committed himself to elaborating new statutes and to fulfilling this function only for the time needed to reconcile the antagonistic positions; to do that he became a mediator. However, he was elected in a very precarious manner, only in a second ballot and by nine votes against eight and one blank vote. . . .

THE YEAR 1953: THE FIRST SPLIT AND THE FAMOUS DISCOURS DE ROME

In January Lacan sent his project for the statutes of the institute to all tenured members, and he specified that his aim was "agreement and not compromise." Instead of the reference to neurobiology, he used as an epigraph Freud's text describing the ideal "analytic faculty" where, besides psychiatry, which is necessary to psychoanalysts, all the things that the physicians do not know would be taught, that is, the so-called literary or cultural subjects (mythology, history, psychology of religions, literary criticism, etc.). In order to avoid the "personal policy of leadership," Lacan suggested maintaining shared powers. Finally, refusing "the formalization of studies," he organized the curriculum around four types of seminars: commentaries of the official texts, particularly Freud's; courses on controlled technique; clinical and phenomenological critique; and child analysis, "which confronts the analyst with a conquest of the most unknown." However, a large amount of freedom of choice was left to students in training, the idea being that requirements of attendance and examinations reduce rather than secure the standard of education.²³

In fact, one may wonder whether the text really mattered because the small circle of tenured members was given over to factions, hallway dealings, games of influence, occult alliances, and nonexplicitly stated stakes. Anyone who has been involved in whatever kind of group (political groups, unions, associations, professional groups, work's councils, etc.) would easily recognize this passionate climate. Everybody knows the fateful date: on Janu-

ary 20, 1953, the election of the executive board of the société, the vote for the statutes of the institute, and the election of its leading committee would take place.

Meanwhile, Marie Bonaparte circulated amendments to the proposed statutes, and Nacht, revising his own text, gave in on certain points in order to win on others. However, Lacan's real weakness was also central to the negotiations; since 1951 he had been told to conform to the norms of didactic training for which he himself had voted in favor. He had promised to conform but had not changed anything in his practice of short sessions for both training analyses and supervisory controls (however, Lacan's practice was never mentioned when the question of didactic training was discussed). Very cleverly, on January 10, 1953, the committee on teaching brought up for discussion the problem of the frequency and length of the sessions in training analysis. The vote was unanimous; therefore, Lacan had voted against his own practice—and everybody knew it. Indeed, he alone had one third of the training analyses, plus the supervisory controls, his seminar, the S.P.P. and E.P. meetings, his talks, and everything else. . . . Anyone could add hours and days! Therefore, he did not appear very reliable; he voted the norm but exempted himself from it. Would he not do the same thing were he in power? The Princess's decisive change of mind when she stopped supporting Lacan's candidacy as president of the société may not have been due exclusively to the fact that he forgot to appoint her honorary member of the institute, as Lacan and then Jacques-Alain Miller said.²⁴ She did not like his ungraspable personality any more than she liked Nacht for his medical autocratism. She suggested Cénac instead of Lacan for the presidency of the société. Three ballots were needed to decide between the candidates. Finally Lacan was barely elected—and in Nacht's absence (he had had an accident). From then on, the société was divided in two groups without any real majority. The Princess and her followers' changes in alliance were immediately effective. Slightly amended, Nacht's statutes for the institute won the majority, and so did his team with Marie Bonaparte as honorary president for life. The institute's scientific secretaries automatically joined the committee on teaching. Thus, Nacht had the students' curriculum well under control, and therefore, he had control over the goals and the future of the société. On the other hand, the executive board of the société only had cardboard powers since the société was no more than a "scholarly society," with Lacan as president, Lagache as vice-president, Mâle as assessor, Marty as secretary, and Bouvier as treasurer. The society was thus radically divided. In one camp, the risk of a deadly paralysis of the society was put forward; in the other camp, the no less deadly risk of dictatorship was stressed. Both camps were right. On February 3, 1953, the committee on teaching, once again called into question the practice of short sessions apropos of the accreditation [*habilitation*] of three candidates who had been analyzed by Lacan. Nacht again secured a unanimous vote

(hence with Lacan's vote) in favor of the previous norms. Lacan's attitude was indeed enigmatic. It would give rise to many interpretations that have been analyzed in the introduction to this volume. As for the situation of the S.P.P., it was paralyzed because the energies invested in those quarrels were such that they threatened scientific activities and exchanges.

The analysts-in-training precipitated the movement. Many of them already had long experience (especially in this after-war period). They refused to be infantilized by being divided in classes on the basis of their year of study and by having to attend mandatory courses. They also refused to sign again a contract that they had already signed. They protested against the sudden change in the curriculum, which was not in accordance with their previous contract. Moreover, the exorbitant cost of the training filled them with indignation. Jenny Roudinesco (Jenny Aubry), who had been analyzed by Nacht, started the fight with a courteous letter sent both to Nacht and Lacan on May 15, 1953. A group met, which included a little more than half of the analysts-to-be. On May 31, Lacan unwisely rushed to one of their meetings, where Nachtsians and Lacanians confronted each other, and he discussed matters with them (hence with his own analysands) at the rue Saint-Jacques. Such a move provided a good opportunity to stress the transgression, by the president of the société himself, of the golden rule of the analysts' discretion (or reserve) toward their patients, especially in training analysis. On June 2, Cénac asked for the withdrawal of Lacan's presidential mandate. Nacht reopened the question of short sessions; Lacan answered that, "since January, all [his] training analyses (except for one) had been regularized as far as the length of the session. As for the frequency [he had] never made any commitment." In his article, A. de Mijolla quoted the official minutes of the société, written by Pierre Marty: "Lacan recognizes that he has been unwise. He took more than dangerous liberties." Lacan recognized his guilt and stated that he had only one desire: "that the institute lives," where he wants to work. He asked for an arbitration committee, which leads A. de Mijolla to think that Lacan did not provoke the split and did not even wish it.²⁵ However, on June 16 this motion was rejected by Lagache, Dolto, and Favez-Boutonier; they were preparing another, "freer" society whose model would be as much academic as medical, more adventurous and more inventive.

On June 16 the tragic meeting took place. Odette Codet suggested that the vice-president undertake the presidential functions until the new elections. Following the distrust vote, Lacan resigned and Lagache, who was vice-president, replaced him and declared, "The undersigned, members of the Société Française de Psychanalyse in the Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherche Freudiennes, resign from the S.P.P." (J. Favez-Boutonier, F. Dolto, D. Lagache). Mrs. Favez distributed a three-page explanatory note to the assembly. Lagache invited Mâle to preside over the assembly and left the room with Mrs. Favez, Dolto, and Reverchon-Jouve (who had signed the resignation text

in the meantime). "At that moment, Lacan, standing in the room, declared that he resigned from the S.P.P. Mâle then suggested that the most senior member, Parcheminey, be appointed to the presidency."²⁶ Depending on the version, Lacan either had been warned the day before or he acted on the spur of the moment and joined the splinter group—indeed imposed himself upon it—in the tragic disarray of that evening. Whatever the case, he said in the 70s that he had judged wise to find out about the consequences of his resignation but that the letter had already been mailed. Was this the truth or a story reconstructed after the fact? A mystery still hangs over Lacan's place in the creation of the S.F.P.

In any case, because of their excellent relations with important members of the I.P.A., all the dissidents thought that they (and the S.F.P.) would be immediately accepted by the I.P.A. as an autonomous group. But, on July 6, they were informed that they were excluded from the meetings of the I.P.A. Congress in London, where their fate was to be decided on July 26. They had not realized that their resignation from the S.P.P. and the creation of the S.F.P., both done without previously contacting the board of the international society, entailed their resignation (or removal) from the I.P.A. The Princess was not going to make things easier for them. Lagache wrote a memorandum asking for their affiliation with the I.P.A. Interestingly, he devoted a long paragraph to the touchy problem of "technique" and of "Lacan's personality" so as to assert Lacan's absolute orthodoxy. He mentioned, in a tactless manner, the position and action of the Princess, whose real power at the I.P.A. was well known.²⁷ Lacan wrote numerous letters, to Balint, to Loewenstein, his former analyst, to Heinz Hartmann, and to Dr. Perrotti, the organizer of the XVth *Conférence des Analystes de Langue Romane*, a conference that was to take place in Rome. The long letter addressed to Loewenstein deserves not only to be read but also to be analyzed, for it could not be more revealing about Lacanian invention in desperate situations.²⁸ In London, the I.P.A. decided, before recognizing anything, to create an inquiry committee. The committee consisted of Drs. Eissler, Greenacre, Lampl-de-Groot, Winnicott, and of Mrs. Hoffer. Meanwhile, Loewenstein was calling for peace and pleading in favor of the affiliation. From then on, the S.F.P. spent ten years in a poisoned climate trying to obtain recognition from the I.P.A. The analysts-in-training who had joined the group did not know (and even less than their professors) that they would be doomed to isolation from the international scene. The 1963–1964 crisis was going to be closely connected to the 1953 one; the second split was to take place under even more deplorable circumstances.

At that point in time, going through the breakup was hard on the analysts-in-training: not all of them were as confident about their decision as Jenny Roudinesco-Aubry. Some joined the S.F.P. because of the liberalism of its statutes, which made provision for the creation, by the analysts-in-training,

of an independent Groupe d'Etudes de Psychanalyse, and they trusted Lagache's liberalism. Others joined it because of Françoise Dolto or to follow their analysts. No doubt then that, given the number of his training analyses and the success of his textual seminars, Lacan brought many followers with him. However, joining the S.F.P. entailed many painful choices: one might have enjoyed taking Lacan's seminar without wanting to be analyzed or supervised by him. One might not have wanted to leave Lagache but might not have trusted Lacan. One might have wanted to stay in the S.P.P. but might have suffered from the departure of an analyst, a supervisor, or a teacher. One might have wished for a freer status (that of the S.F.P.) without wanting to lose the clinical training with Nacht or the analytical subtlety of Bouvet and Schlumberger, etc. In his letter to Loewenstein, Lacan lied about the number of students who had followed him. In fact, according to the documents of the S.F.P. itself, barely more than half joined the S.F.P.²⁹

In July 1953 the temporary executive board of the S.F.P. included Lagache (president), Favez-Boutonier (vice-president), Dolto (secretary), Lacan (treasurer), while the study group (thirty-nine members) elected Anzieu, Durandin, Liebschutz (Serge Leclair), Perrier, and Schweich. The first scientific meeting took place in the amphitheater of the Hôpital Sainte-Anne on July 8, 1953. At that meeting Lacan gave a conference on *Le Symbolique, l'Imaginaire et le Réel*.³⁰ It marked the beginning of a new theory, which the speech at the Congress in Rome confirmed.

The correspondence between Lacan and Professor Perrotti finally resulted in allowing the S.F.P. to be present in Rome and Lacan to give the S.F.P.'s report, although Pasche rather than Lacan himself was responsible for the S.P.P.'s report. Some believed that this was the sign of an international recognition, and exaltation reached its peak. Lacan had circulated his report *Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage*. However, on September 26, 1953, he was carried away by enthusiasm and he launched into an improvisation that galvanized the room. This famous "Discourse in which, for once, he is in no way Mallarmean," as Lagache described it with humor, remained for a long time in the audience's memory, but the discussion that followed mainly concerned the essential theses of the report itself. J. Favez-Boutonier's letter, read to the assembly, gives an idea of the general tone: it considered the report to be both "the first international manifestation, I should say, *the manifesto* of the Société Française de Psychanalyse" and the starting point of long discussions to come. All the participants expressed their agreement, their reservations, and their disagreements. Even Françoise Dolto, who presented herself as the "small Dragon" next to "big Dragon" Lacan and "big Dragon" Lagache, vigorously rose up against Lacan's contempt for "the mythology of instinctive maturation." "I cannot accept that such a hypothesis be discredited," she said. Lagache was the most careful in his analyses and Anzieu the most clearly opposed to Lacan's notion of language and to the idea

that “language be everything in psychoanalysis.” Was this discussion evidence of the freedom of thought, hence of invention and fruitful exchanges in the new société? Or was it a sign of the beginnings of unsolvable theoretical oppositions from the very foundations of this group, more heterogeneous than it seemed?

FALL 1953–AUGUST 1963: THE FOUNDATIONS OF LACANIAN THEORY: THE FIGHT FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

This period was characterized by a real expansion of Lacanian thinking. The positive reception of the expression “the return to Freud” (an expression which became a rallying sign) and of Lacan’s report and discourse in Rome seems to have given free rein to his desire to reelaborate all the analytic concepts. His critique of analytic literature and practice spared almost nobody. Lacan returned to Freud but this return was a re-reading in relation with contemporary philosophy, linguistics, ethnology, cybernetics, and topology.

For the first time, he opened his seminars to the public, which increased his audience in broader circles. The flexibility of the S.F.P., which had chosen a liberal mode of functioning, also helped increasing his audience. The société included psychiatrists as well as academics and psychologists, and found it normal to open courses and seminars to the public. The S.F.P. was well established in two privileged places: the university with D. Lagache and J. Favez-Boutonier; and the clinical section of the Hôpital Sainte-Anne directed by Professor Delay, a former student of Janet interested in psychoanalysis and literature (his book on Gide’s youth, *La Jeunesse d’A. Gide*, was well known and Lacan wrote a brilliant analysis of it in *Critique*). For ten years, Lacan regularly held his seminars at Sainte-Anne every Wednesday and presented cases of patients on Fridays.

These first ten seminars elaborated fundamental notions about psychoanalytic technique, the essential concepts of psychoanalysis, and even its ethics. Because students were free to choose their courses they went from one course to another, and there was an intermingling between, on the one hand, the small group of those who had taken the first closed seminars at the S.P.P. since 1951 (seminars on Dora, the Wolfman, and the Ratman) and, on the other hand, those who were taking Lagache’s course at the Sorbonne. Lagache occupied the chair of psychopathology at the Sorbonne (after succeeding to him in Strasbourg, J. Favez-Boutonier would also succeed to him there). He organized an introductory course on psychoanalysis for the *licence*^s in psychology, he created a laboratory in social psychology, and, for several years, he participated in the Institute of Criminology [*Institut de Criminologie*]. Moreover, the Claude Bernard medico-social center was, for

g. The *licence* is the degree that concludes the first three years at the university level.

a long time, directed by G. Mauco (who was not a physician), while J. Favez-Boutonier and later Berge were the center's medical directors. It was in this medico-social center that F. Dolto had her practice. Thanks to her and to J. Roudinesco-Aubry in particular, the S.F.P. established itself in hospital services for children. Finally, many members of the Centre d'Etudes des Sciences de l'Homme, directed by Maryse Choisy, which published the journal *Psyché* created in 1946, joined the S.F.P. (encouraged by the fact that Lagache, O. Mannoni, Reverend Father Beirnaert, and others were already members). This fact is not very well known and A. de Mijolla is the one who mentions it.³¹

Distinguished celebrities were invited or attracted to the seminar's room; Hyppolite's analysis of Freud's article on *Dénégation*, given during the first seminar, is a well-known example. Until the end of 1955, the participants were very active and critical: O. Mannoni, Hyppolite, Clémence Ramnoux (an hellenist philosopher), Colette Audry, Pontalis, Leclaire, Reverend Father Beirnaert, Pignet the mathematician, and also an unknown person apparently more knowledgeable than Lacan on rabbinic tradition. When they disagreed with the "midwife of modern thought," they said so. But starting with the seminar on psychoses, *Séminaire III: Les Psychoses*, it seems that the audience gave up showing reactions. Students who, since then, have become well-known psychoanalysts, gave presentations but it was mainly the Tuesday night conferences that fed, on Wednesday, Lacan's commentaries. Among those invited were Koyré (on Plato), Lévi-Strauss (who was at the Collège de France in 1959), Merleau-Ponty (who was at the Collège de France since 1953), Professor Delay, Griaule the ethnologist, Benvéniste the linguist, and in psychoanalysis, Balint from London, Moreno from New-York, and Spitz who came several times. However, the contacts between the S.F.P. and other psychoanalysts remained personal, without real effect on the situation of the S.F.P., still excluded from the I.P.A.

It was also during that period that Lacan wrote, on the basis of his seminars, conferences, and addresses in colloquia, the major texts that were to be found again in *Ecrits* in 1966. They were published in a broad variety of journals: *L'Evolution Psychiatrique* (which refused to take into account the S.P.P./S.F.P. conflict), *Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie*, *Etudes Philosophiques*, *Encyclopédie Médico-Chirurgicale* (the article that, thanks to H. Ey, Lacan was going to publish was later taken out of the journal under the pressure of enemies from the S.P.P.), *Critique*, and *Les Temps Modernes*. J. B. Pontalis, Lacan's student, published with Lacan's consent the accounts of the *Séminaires IV, V, and VI* in *Bulletin de Psychologie*. However, many seminars were not published until 1981, and only on the fringe of the official edition. Some conferences only came to be known with the publication of *Ecrits*. What is worth noticing is the cultural eclecticism of the places where Lacan published, and above all the absence of a specifically

psychoanalytical forum of expression; in that respect, only the creation of its own journal, *La Psychanalyse*, provided a forum of expression to the S.F.P. It did not start until 1956 and included only eight issues. This feeling of isolation, in France and on the international scene—a feeling based on concrete reality—was to be one of the causes of a certain discontent and of a desire for the I.P.A.'s recognition, a desire shared also by the youngest members of the third psychoanalytic generation.

Whether one looks at the distribution of courses taught or at the allocation of power within the société, a certain balance seems to have been maintained. D. Lagache and J. Favez-Boutonier taught courses, Lacan gave his seminar and presented cases of his patients, G. Favez regularly taught the courses on psychoanalytic technique reserved to those candidates who were already in charge of supervisory controls. However, the pattern was not completely rigid; Lagache sometimes also presented cases of patients, Lacan was in charge one year of the certificate of special studies in neuropsychiatry, and little by little, François Perrier, Serge Leclaire, Jean-Paul Valabrega, Didier Anzieu, Piera Aulagnier, and Wladimir Granoff started to organize groups, to publish, and to give clinical consultations. As for Françoise Dolto, she was responsible for child analysis. She gave a long series of conferences on comparative studies of children's drawings and clinical problems. She was not one of Lacan's students, but a travelling companion. Finally, on the société's executive board, positions and titles were exchanged with a perfect regularity (D. Lagache, J. Lacan, J. Favez-Boutonier, F. Boutonier, F. Dolto, and sometimes Hesnard) until Serge Leclaire became secretary and then president.

The first issue of *La Psychanalyse* (directed by Lacan, Lagache, Perrier, and Valabrega) was devoted entirely to Lacan; not only did it include the Rome report and discourse with the discussions that followed and with Lacan's response, the commentaries from *Séminaire I* on Hyppolite's analysis of denegation, a translation by Lacan of Heidegger's *Logos*, but even the preliminary text was obviously written by him and Benvéniste's article had been planned by him. . . . However, the following issues were more balanced. New names appeared: Pujol, O. Mannoni, Anzieu, Leclaire, Clavreul, Laplanche, Andouard, I. Perrier-Roubleff, Reverend Father Beirnaert, Safouan, and Hesnard who commented on the famous *Wo es war, soll Ich werden* (according to Lacan, "'I' must come to the place where the 'id' was" [*là où était le "ça," "je" dois advenir*], as opposed to the S.P.P.'s translation: "the ego must drive out the id" [*le Moi doit déloger le ça*]). The reports of the scientific sessions showed great activity on everybody's part. The issue devoted to the Colloquium in Royaumont published, among other things, Lagache's report, Lacan's report, and Lacan's commentary on Lagache's report ("Remarque sur le rapport de Lagache"), which was a new article in itself. As for the issue on feminine sexuality, it began with Lacan's intervention whose title is revealing: "Propos directifs pour un Congrès sur la sexualité féminine." In a

subtle way he emerged, if not as the only thinker of the group, at least as the one who had the largest audience and the most audacity, especially since his practice of short sessions secured him the greatest number of analysts-in-training. A Lacan group began to organize itself, identifiable by its language and by its modes of intervention in discussions.

The S.F.P. was trying to come out of its ghetto: in 1954 Ey organized a colloquium on depressive states where Lagache (S.F.P.) chaired a session while Mâle (S.P.P.) chaired another one. Lacan himself participated in the discussion—the fight—between the two groups. In 1960, it was Ey again who organized the famous Sixth Bonneval Colloquium on the unconscious. Philosophers (Hyppolite, Merleau-Ponty, Lefebvre, Ricoeur, and Waelhens), psychiatrists, and the enemy brothers from both psychoanalytic societies attended. On the S.P.P. side, André Green and Conrad Stein whom Lacan was going to try to rally to him; on the other side, Laplanche, Leclaire, and Perrier with whom Lacan was not entirely satisfied. In any case, by his presence and his way of attacking without listening, Lacan transformed this meeting into a “circus,” the very word of H. Ey who nevertheless asked him to write down all his observations for the book to be published. In 1958, the S.F.P. organized in its own name an international colloquium in Royaumont. Foreign participation turned out to be limited and not very representative. The core of the Colloquium was a confrontation between Lagache’s and Lacan’s theses. How uneasy the audience felt is easily perceivable in Pontalis’s account of the Colloquium for *Bulletin de Psychologie*.³² He expressed his regrets for “the absence of tight discussions about Lagache’s rigorous reflections” and for the absence of time to “answer the theses that Mr Lacan defended with the vigor and passion we know he has” but also with “a precision that we do not always know him to have.” He also regretted that “his [Lacan’s] passion for truth always finds a stimulant in polemic.” In 1960, the colloquium in Amsterdam was an initiative of the municipal university, and there again the members of the S.F.P. felt that they were the main contributors. Again, at the congress on anorexia the S.F.P. members were exclusively among themselves.

In many members’ opinions, the threat was that of suffocation. Lacan himself, like the other founders, wanted to be recognized by the I.P.A. Many young analysts refused Nacht’s authoritarianism and the rigidity of the training at the S.P.P., but they did not want to be caught up in the system of Lacanian discourse, a system that would turn them into lifetime followers, a system that did not recognize their own experience or their conception of psychoanalysis. For them, joining the I.P.A. would open up new and extended contacts, in spite of the divergences. Hence, negotiations began between the S.F.P. and the I.P.A., and within the S.F.P. itself: these discussions soon took the form of power relations.

In July 1959, Dr. Hesnard, the president of the S.F.P., asked again for affiliation with the I.P.A. The request was signed by Lagache and included a

detailed report on the société's activities, written by Leclaire. A new inquiry committee was created and chaired by Turquet, an English analyst who had been Lacan's "friend" in 1947 and had then become the "turkey." From then on, things developed with the frequency of the different international congresses. In the imbroglio of congresses, let us mention the Congress in Edinburgh (1961) where nineteen recommendations were sent to the S.F.P., plus a twentieth one that, according to F. Perrier's narrative, was communicated outside of the Congress. They all asked for the banning of Lacan, Dolto, and Berge from the analysts' training. Berge was included in the ban either at the S.F.P.'s request or to cover up the main issue. F. Dolto's case was different; there was no doubt that her practice of child analysis displeased A. Freud as much as M. Klein's practice had displeased her before. This is probably the reason why she was included in the ban because, as far as training analyses were concerned, her practice was truly in accordance with the international norms and with the deontology prevailing among analysts, as she herself wrote in a pathetic letter to S. Leclaire (pathetic because of its good faith).³³ Hence, did Lacan alone deserve to be excluded? Was he a scapegoat? In 1974, at the Congress in Rome, he declared, "I took my stands in psychoanalysis in 1953." What was true on a theoretical level also held on the level of analytic technique. The problem of the short sessions, which was already at stake during the first split, came back for discussion. Indeed, Lacan had continued his practice of short sessions without really explaining himself about it. In *Variantes de la cure type* (1955) he used Ferenczi's "psychoanalytic elasticity" as his authority while claiming to be the only orthodox Freudian, and he ended up stating that his technique was "the only one appropriate to his personality" (what about the personality of his patients and of the future analysts who were undergoing training analyses?), but that others could act differently. We will not comment on his position here, but note that such tolerance allowed him to do whatever he wanted outside of the community to which he belonged. He did not "give in on his desire," in his own famous words, and neither did the I.P.A. make concessions about its principles. He was not banned from psychoanalytic practice or even from teaching, but he was denied the right to train analysts (both training analyses and courses validated in the official curriculum). Was it going to be a choice for the S.F.P. between Lacan and affiliation with the I.P.A.? New negotiations, new inquiries, and new reports took place. In 1962 the S.F.P. chose not to make any decision, an attitude that Leclaire believed to be efficient and that was approved by Lacan and Dolto who, out of solidarity and for symbolic reasons, had been elected president and vice-president.

However, the Congress in Stockholm (July 1963) (where Lacan showed up with a big black hat, and was preceded by Solange Faladé) voted an ultimatum; within three months (October 31 at the latest), Lacan's name had to be crossed off the list of didacticians. Everything was organized to reorient his

students in training analysis towards other didacticians, thanks to a committee supervised by the I.P.A. The ball was in the S.F.P.'s court. It could either comply or remain excluded from the international institutions. Leclaire was the president when things came to a resolution (he had been elected in January 1963). The crisis thus revealed the divisions that existed within the S.F.P. itself.

During that period, which was indeed agitated in psychoanalytic circles, Stalin's death in 1953, followed by Krushchev's report at the XXth Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party, led to a change in the Communists' position towards psychoanalysis. Such a change explains why Lacan was welcomed by Althusser at the rue d'Ulm. Althusser was a member of the Communist party and a theoretician of the "return to Marx." The Lacanian attacks against Hartmann's, Loewenstein's, and Kris's "ego-psychology" were taken globally and politically as attacks against American hegemony, but most of the students generally had not read a single line written by them and did not raise any questions about Soviet psychiatry. The war between Indochina and France had just ended in 1954 but it started again with American help. Meanwhile war began in Algeria, followed by the bid for power of May 13, 1958 in Algiers, and then by the Vth Republic under the leadership of General de Gaulle who signed the end of the war in 1961. Riots started and were severely repressed in the German Democratic Republic, Poland, and Budapest. The council of Vatican II opened Catholicism to a broader understanding of problems, at least of occidental problems; besides worker-priests, psychoanalyst-Jesuits would be accepted. Fidel Castro was triumphing and Che Guevara became a model for young French leftists. Oddly enough, it was also the time when French structuralism, which situated itself on the fringe of history or beyond it, prevailed among many intellectuals. In 1960, Lacan resolutely declared that he was a structuralist.

FALL 1963—JUNE 1964: THE SECOND SPLIT AND THE CREATION OF THE ECOLE FREUDIENNE DE PARIS

At this point, the drama of the S.F.P. was internal. Berge's exclusion was soon overruled. F. Dolto would only need to comply to a period of withdrawal requested by Leclaire and then she could resume her position, because the I.P.A. considered that "everything remained to be done in France" as far as child analysis went and because "she could send didacticians to both societies" (the S.P.P. as well as the S.F.P.). Lacan's situation was more perilous. Two weeks before the expiration of the deadline fixed by the I.P.A., the committee of didacticians of the S.F.P. gave up its generous position of 1962 (the motion called "the motionaries" [*des motionnaires*]), which tried to respect general norms while giving Lacan the freedom to continue his teaching and to go into it in more depth. On November 19, 1963 a general meeting had

to make a final decision concerning the committee's propositions of November 11. Lacan wrote a letter to Leclaire announcing that he would not attend either of these meetings, because he could foresee a disavowal. It was a desperate letter. On November 19, the members' majority took the position in favor of the October 14 motion prescribing the ban. Most of his friends and, more importantly, most of his students abandoned Lacan. The following section of the Turquet report is unforgettable: "Lacan issue: Lacan does not realize that his position jeopardizes the S.F.P. Article 13 is not implemented. The arguments given have no weight. It is impossible to predict the length of the sessions. Lacan tries to avoid negative transference. He sees himself as the source of awards and punishments."³⁴ In July 1963, Serge Leclaire had already foreseen it—"Either a breakup with the I.P.A., or a breakup within our own group." During the November 19 meeting, Laplanche's intervention, supported by Lang, Pontalis, Smirnoff, and Widlöcher (Piera Aulagnier withdrew from this group at the last minute), called into question not only the I.P.A. but also the functioning of the S.F.P. Laplanche clearly and publicly expressed everybody's uneasiness and everybody's private thoughts; the problem posed by Lacan was fundamental, he was "indefensible but we cannot do that to him! What would we look like?" He insisted on two things: "the necessity of a recruitment of quality and the need for a scientific communication outside the group, that is, beyond the initiatory relationship" maintained "between master and disciple." Finally, he stressed "the incompatibility between the functioning of an analysts' society and the decision to maintain Lacan's position in our society," an incompatibility that "unveils what the passionately assumed function of master signifies, in fact, about desire, and how it goes beyond what is possible in a group such as this one."³⁵ For the time being and until any decision was made about Lacan's activities, he suggested a list of didacticians that did not include Lacan's name. On the other hand, Jenny Aubry suggested a solution of compromise. She suggested that members of the S.F.P. be accepted by the I.P.A. on an individual basis, without involving the société as a whole. Such a solution, reasonable in itself, came much too late.

During the night Lacan learned the decision made at the meeting. He was no longer one of the didacticians. The next day, his seminar on the Names-of-the-Father was starting at Sainte-Anne; he announced its end. Was it to be a final or a temporary end? Was it Delay's decision to welcome him no longer at Sainte-Anne, as some say? Or was it Lacan's renouncement, given the state of shock that he was in? However, like the Phoenix, he was to rise from his ashes.

On November 27, Leclaire addressed a letter to Dr. Nacht who was then vice-president of the I.P.A., along with a report on the situation. This was his last action in the S.F.P., because on November 19, he, F. Dolto the vice-president, and F. Perrier, the scientific secretary, had resigned from their po-

sitions. For the next six months, the struggle went on to keep the acronym of the S.F.P. In the end, some tenured members were individually recognized by the I.P.A., with the creation of a French Study Group. In July 1964 that group would become the Association Française de Psychanalyse (A.F.P.). Lacanians formed a Study Group on Psychoanalysis [*Groupe d'étude de la psychanalyse*] organized by Clavreul, until Lacan officially announced on June 21, 1964, the birth of the Ecole Française de Psychanalyse. It rapidly became, with the same acronym (E.F.P.), the Ecole Freudienne de Paris: "I hereby found the Ecole Française de Psychanalyse, by myself, as alone as I have ever been in my relation to the psychoanalytic cause." Such a declaration may cause surprise given the number of participants involved in the split, but it explains why the Ecole is often simply referred to as the Lacanian school, the Ecole lacanienne. Finally the A.F.P. was recognized by the I.P.A., the E.F.P. began its long road, and the S.F.P. was definitively dissolved in January 1964 during an extraordinary meeting that divided property equally between the two new associations.

Meanwhile, with Lévi-Strauss's and Althusser's support, Lacan was appointed lecturer [*chargé de cours*] at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (E.P.H.E.). He began his new seminar on *Les Quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse* in January 1964 in the Dussane room at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (E.N.S.). Lacan, who said that he had finally entered psychoanalysis when he was fifty-two, thus changed location and audience when he was sixty-three, and this lasted until 1969 when he left the rue d'Ulm to go to the University of Paris at the Panthéon, when he was sixty-eight.

1964—SUMMER 1969: THE NEW DIRECTIONS OF LACANIAN THEORY: THE THIRD SPLIT AND THE EVICTION FROM THE RUE D'ULM

Beginning in 1964, Lacan's audience and power increased year after year. He alone held the analytic word, without any confrontation with his peers; and he was established in a very prestigious place—the E.N.S. at the rue d'Ulm. He had founded his own école for those who followed him; finally, they could be just among themselves! Was such homogeneity going to guarantee a good functioning of the group and a serious training for the new generations of analysts? The group's activities were widespread in a number of different institutions. Thanks to Dr Daumezon, Lacan kept presenting cases of patients at Sainte-Anne; members of his école were working and teaching in Paris in hospitals such as Trousseau, Sainte-Anne, Les Enfants-Malades, or in medical-psychological centers; and others joined universities or hospitals in the provinces (Strasbourg, Montpellier, Lille, etc.). Finally, the publication of *Ecrits* in 1966 drew public attention to the école beyond the intelligentsia. Discussions and interviews were published in widespread newspapers or

broadcasted on French and Belgian radio, so that his name was gradually associated with contemporary psychoanalysis. However, two crises combined in 1969. Within the école some of his first followers left and created the Quatrième groupe and within the university institution the director of the E.N.S. took away from Lacan the use of the space of the E.N.S. Let us try to isolate certain elements that shed light on the facts.

On January 15, 1964, after a colloquium in Rome, Lacan began his series of seminars at the rue d'Ulm, as a lecturer at the E.P.H.E. [*chargé de conférences*]. The first session was ceremonial and devoted to thanking Braudel (absent), Lévi-Strauss (present) who had thus officially allowed him to speak again, and Flacelière who was providing him the nicest room of the E.N.S. Lacan also explained his position within the psychoanalytic institution, this actual "Church" that had decreed the "greatest excommunication" against him (he even compared himself to Spinoza, victim of the Synagogue), and he explained his project to teach "the foundations of psychoanalysis." The audience included H. Ey as well as other personalities and a number of analysts who had remained faithful to him, but, and this was something new, it also included young students in philosophy at the E.N.S. They were trained by Althusser who, at the beginning of 1965, published in *La Nouvelle Critique* his article "Freud et Lacan" (the official Communist party, always late, recognized Lacan as the only acceptable analyst in 1970). These young men were fascinated by Lacan, but they did not spare him and they, in turn, fascinated him. For example, on the very first day, Michel Tort asked him if he could not be accused of "psychologism," a true crime for Althusserians but also for Lacan. The following week, Jacques-Alain Miller, to whom Althusser had assigned the reading of "all of Lacan" and who had actually done it, asked the famous question, "Does your notion of the subject imply an ontology?"

In 1966, these young men founded *Cahiers pour l'Analyse*, the journal of the Cercle d'Epistémologie at the E.N.S., which was going to publish texts by Lacan in three of its issues that very year. These young men included Alain Grosrichard, Alain Badiou, J. Claude Milner, François Regnault, and Jacques-Alain Miller who was going to become his favorite disciple, if not his alter ego. The group's slogan was Miller's: "What is at stake for us is only to train ourselves to the rigor of the concept." Such a slogan explains why Miller changed the title of the *Séminaire XI* when he published it, with Lacan's consent, in 1973, to *Les Quatre Concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse*. Catherine Clément describes these first years at the E.N.S. as well as the sessions of cases that Lacan presented.³⁶ Her book gives us the point of view of that generation and of those circles. Besides those young students, there were also a number of analysts who wondered more and more what Lacan's teaching had to do with analytic experience; such was the case for example when Y. Duroux and J. A. Miller, both students at the E.N.S., gave presentations about Frege's arithmetics in the seminar on "Les Problèmes

cruciaux de la psychanalyse.” Out of six years of the seminars, only the first one was published officially. The last seminars sometimes had a pathetic tone, especially the 1967–1968 seminar, *L’Acte psychanalytique*, where Lacan constantly repeated, concerning some analysts of his école, “I see that some are not here. . . .” Indeed, Lacan’s ambiguity was increasing before a double audience of which each half played against the other. At the beginning of *Écrits* he states, “Style is the man, shall we agree with this expression provided we can add to it: the man to whom one is speaking?”³⁷ The change in his audience had to do with the change in the orientation of his research. This was to lead to new splits, this time among Lacanians who had been together from the very beginning. There were indeed attempts at reconciliation. S. Leclaire gave a seminar at the rue d’Ulm; Luce Irigaray and Michèle Montreuil participated in it, but they represented a very small proportion of the analysts involved in the profession.

Everyone knows that—*coup de théâtre*—Lacan created his own école in June 1964. Everybody knows the beginning of the *Acte de Fondation*: “I hereby found the Ecole Française de Psychanalyse, by myself, as alone as I have ever been in my relation to the psychoanalytic cause, and I shall undertake its direction during the next four years, a direction about which nothing at present prevents me from answering.”³⁸ This association was finally registered at the police headquarters in September 1964 under the title of Ecole Freudienne de Paris (according to the 1901 law). In actual fact, Lacan remained its director until the dissolution in 1980. The director was everywhere: not only heading the école, but also doing the recruiting (in order to join the école, one had to apply as an organized work-group, called a cartel, which was approved or rejected by the director), as president of the reception committee [*jury d’accueil*], which authorized an analysand to begin supervisory controls, and as president of the committee for approval, which tenured the applicant as analyst of the école. *He* also appointed the members of the first board: P. Aulagnier, S. Leclaire, F. Perrier, G. Rosolato, J. P. Valabrega, and J. Clavreul who remained secretary. *He* divided the école into three clearly differentiated sections: the section for pure psychoanalysis, that is, the section concerned with the training and the continual elaboration of the theory (where members who had been analyzed but had not become analysts could participate); the section for applied psychoanalysis, that is, therapeutic and clinical (and physicians who had neither completed nor started an analysis were welcome); and the section for taking inventory of the Freudian field, that is, the section concerned with the critique of psychoanalytic literature and the analysis of the theoretical relations with related or affiliated sciences (social sciences, logic, mathematics, etc.). Each of these sections was strictly responsible to the director. It seems appropriate to talk of monocratism. As Irène Roubleff said, “the école is made of those who have chosen Lacan’s teaching—the only teaching that talks about psychoanalysis—elsewhere, all

that one worries about is whether psychoanalysis conforms.”³⁹ Her statement repeats Lacan’s own words, “my teaching has no rival because it alone talks about psychoanalysis.”⁴⁰ Because Lacan said that, given his practice of short sessions, his analysands found in his seminars the answers to what they had said on the couch, and because the seminars made clients rush to Lacan, it is true that Lacan’s école was governing over the psychoanalytic scene. It was indeed an école in the sense that antiquity gave to the term, and it was going to become closer and closer to a church with an initiation, a common doctrine, consensus on the members’ parts or else exclusion, and soon clericalism. Lacan’s presence at every meeting, congress, or workshop, where he gave opening and closing speeches and constantly participated in the discussions, gave the feeling of a universe closed upon a single way of thinking, namely, Lacan’s—a way of thinking that was never really understood and always ahead of his disciples’ work. However, this closure went along with a strange laxness; a doctor, a philosopher, an ethnologist, or a mathematician, who had been analyzed or not, could become a member of the école. In itself this could have been a source of enrichment, but why then was such a member entitled to the title of practitioner analyst [*Analyste praticien*]? He/she would not receive an absolute stamp of approval from the école but would nevertheless be in its directory. In the name of the aphorism “the analyst only authorizes himself by himself,”⁴¹ many people joined the école to take advantage of the possibility of practicing psychoanalysis, which gave them a position of prestige in the eyes of an uninformed audience, but a position that might not have been appropriate for them. It was very tempting to become a practitioner so easily, especially at a time when the demand for analysis was increasing considerably in France. However, this contributed to discredit the école and, within the E.F.P. itself, to create legitimate worries on the part of the most demanding analysts, those most concerned with professional ethics. One can understand why analysts such as André Green or Conrad Stein, while participating in the seminars, did not want to leave the S.P.P. Between January 1967 and October 1968, Piera Aulagnier and Jean Clavreul published the journal *L’Inconscient* with members of the institute, namely Conrad Stein and Covello. They were the first ones to refuse the ghettos.

The year 1967 was essential in many respects. An inside bulletin, *Les Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, was created and edited by Clavreul, Conté, Leclaire, Miller, and Jacques Nassif, i.e., by a mixture of analysts and philosophers who had not been in analysis. News was going around; the reports of the Congresses were available. Nassif even published summaries of the seminar on *La Logique du fantasme*. The most diverse cartels were formed (from the study of psychoses to Biblical studies), and, besides the extremely theoretical speeches (often repetitive of the master’s discourse), besides speeches of pure scholarship, clinical works were produced, raising problems of concrete and daily practice. Such a division between theory

and practice, which seems to have been accepted by everybody at the time, must be linked to the practice of “closed sessions” in the seminars, starting in 1965–1966. In order to participate, one needed to ask for Lacan’s authorization—and he was the only judge—or else one needed to send him questions and he then judged whether they were relevant. In other words, he judged, on the basis of the questions, whether the applicant could belong to the theoretical elite. A special card allowed you to attend the seminars. However, upon skimming through the twenty-seven issues (unless I am mistaken about this number) of the *Lettres de l’Ecole* (between 1967 and 1979), what is striking is the contrast between the modest seriousness of certain essays, which are often fascinating, and the flashiness of certain articles written by big names, not to mention, increasingly throughout the years, the garbage. This contrast became more and more pronounced after 1969–1970.

Most importantly, a serious institutional crisis began. At a general meeting of the école in January 1967, the question of modifying its statutes was raised. On March 31, 1967, F. Perrier, who had resigned from the board in 1966, sent a letter to the analysts of the école. He judged the situation very severely, and suggested the creation of an autonomous college with “its own laws of functioning” that would have “clinical practice for its vocation and purpose,” would leave to the école the responsibility for the analysts’ training, and would have a reduced administrative organization. Commenting on Lacan’s “I hereby found . . .,” he stressed that no one in the école was there “in one’s home,” and that one ought to think about a “founding together.” He suggested having a meeting at his house.⁴² Apparently nothing came of it . . . except that Lacan threw, like a bomb, his *Proposition du 9 octobre 1967 sur le psychanalyste à l’Ecole*.⁴³ The novelty of the proposition lies in the modification of access to the title of Analyst of the Ecole (A.E.), a rank superior to that of Member Analyst of the Ecole (A.M.E.). The analysts who would be appointed as A.E. were those who had volunteered for the *passee* and had come victorious out of the trial (“école” would be synonymous for “trial,” he said). The *passee* would consist of testifying, in front of two *passeurs*, to one’s own experience as an analysand and especially to the crucial moment of passage from the position of analysand to that of analyst. The *passeurs* would be chosen by their analysts (generally analysts of the école) and should be at the same point in their analytic experience as the *passant*: they would listen to him and then, in turn, they would testify to what they had heard in front of a committee for approval composed of the director, Lacan, and of some A.E. This committee’s function would be to select the analysts of the école and to elaborate, after the selecting process, a “work on doctrine” that would be communicated to everybody. . . . We won’t go into a detailed analysis of such a proposition; it entails too many theoretical problems concerning the conceptualization of analysis, of the analyst, and of training, and it, therefore, deserves a systematic study. Reactions were violent. In November 1967

Jean-Paul Valabrega denounced the discontent within the école and examined its multiple causes in a precise and caustic way. He also stressed that Lacan's liking for aphorisms aroused "consternation and seduction." Most importantly, he stressed that the supervisory control of beginner analysts was a true training, as opposed to the *passe*, which was a "fiction" or a trick [*tour de passe-passe*].⁴⁴ Lacan responded in December 1969 with a *Discours à l'E.F.P.*⁴⁵ In February 1968, he sent a letter to the A.E. and A.M.E. telling them the names that had been chosen for the committee for approval: Piera Aulagnier, J. Clavreul, J. Aubry, G. Rosolato, and A. Hesnard. Aulagnier withdrew. Discontent was such that a general meeting [*les Assises de l'Ecole*] was scheduled for January 1969. At the end of the 1968 Colloquium in Strasbourg an "exchange of views" concerning the proposition and the école's structure took place. At that point, Irène Roubleff felt the need to write a statement of clarification and a review of the history of the école's organization from its origins.⁴⁶ At the general meeting, three propositions were put to vote. Lacan's proposition prevailed by far in spite of reservations from, among others, Oury and Maud Mannoni. The latter wrote a letter grounding her opposition in serious objections . . . but nevertheless voted for Lacan. As for P. Aulagnier, F. Perrier, and J. P. Valabrega, they had resigned from the E.F.P. even before the vote.

Through the inside newsletters, *Les Lettres de l'Ecole*, the conflict spread (although always with a certain delay). Lacan created a new journal, *Scilicet* published by Seuil, which was also meant to be distributed outside the école. As if by coincidence, issues 1 and 2/3 of the journal were devoted to the reorganization of the école. The originality of the journal lay in the fact that no one signed the articles; theory was elaborated without personal names—except for Lacan's because his style would supposedly be recognized. It was thus a journal without signatures but it was not anonymous since at the end of the year a list of contributors was published.

In 1969, the editors of *L'Inconscient* (which had stopped at the end of 1968) created *Les Etudes freudiennes*, a very open journal still published today by Evel. The Quatrième Groupe was formed in 1969 around those who had resigned from the E.F.P., with Cornélius Castoriadis, Micheline Enriquez, and Nathalie Zaltzman. They created *Topique* whose first issues published various fascinating articles on the problems of the psychoanalytic establishment.

During the years that followed, the issue of the *passe* kept invading—if not poisoning—the E.F.P.'s life. During that period, except for an article on Marguerite Duras published in *Cahiers Renaud/Barrault* in 1965 and the texts of his conferences given in Italy at the end of 1967 in various cultural places (University of Rome, French Institute in Naples and Milan), Lacan was entirely absorbed in the école and in his seminars.

The events of May 1968 disrupted all academic institutions. For several

years already, some of the seminar's sessions at the rue d'Ulm had been a forum for various incidents and noisy episodes because some of the students were not Lacan's disciples. Caught in the political events, many of Lacan's students or those of Althusser joined different political groups, the Communist party for some of them but Maoist groups for most of them. Lacan started including Marx as a topic of discussion in his seminar and, most importantly, he presented analytic discourse as subversive of all other discourses. The E.N.S.'s director, still Flacelière, found an excuse to politely tell Lacan that he would no longer be welcome at the E.N.S. at the beginning of the 1969 academic year. In June 1969, Lacan read publicly the letter that had been sent to him in March: "Discussions about knowledge are kicked out of the E.N.S.," he said. He told the students to whom three hundred copies of the letter had been distributed, "You are three hundred expelled." He ridiculed Flacelière: "*La Flacelière*, I put that in the feminine [. . .], it sounds rather feminine, like the cord [*la cordelière*] or the flatulence [*la flatulencelière*]," or else, "Do you take me for a *flacelière*?"^h Messages arrived from everywhere, Philippe Sollers and Jean-Jacques Lebel led a group of people who picketed the director's office. All that was in vain. However, do not misunderstand Lacan's position concerning the events of May 1968. He described them as "a rebellion, not a revolution." *Cahiers pour l'analyse* had to stop its publication, but Vincennes already appeared as an alternative. At the end of 1968, Michel Foucault asked Lacan to create and direct at Vincennes the Department of psychoanalysis. Lacan suggested that S. Leclaire, rather than he, should undertake this project. Classes started in January 1969. At that time, the department delivered neither diploma nor credits and, around Leclaire, it included François Baudry, Jean Clavreul, Claude Conté, Claude Dumézil, Luce Irigaray, Jacques-Alain Miller, Michèle Montrelay, Claude Rabant, François Roustang, and René Tostain. Moreover, thanks to Lévi-Strauss's intervention, a room had already been promised to Lacan in the law school at the Panthéon.

FALL 1969–SEPTEMBER 1981

Lacan was sixty-eight when he started his teaching in front of a new audience that kept increasing. His seminar was entitled *L'Envers de la psychanalyse* and he began his study of the four discourses, namely, that of the Master, that of the University, that of the Hysteric, and that of the Analyst. In that context, four conferences were scheduled at Vincennes under the general title of "Analyticon." However, the first one was so violent and disruptive that Lacan

h. By using an article, Lacan turned Flacelière's proper name into a common name. By choosing the feminine article, he could associate it with *cordelière*, the cord, and *flatulencelière*, a noun Lacan made up based on flatulence.

gave up—since then the conference has been published in *Le Magazine littéraire* under the title *Premier impromptu de Vincennes: le discours de l'universitaire*. Fortunately, to comfort Lacan from this failure, *Ecrits* came out at the end of 1969 in a paperback edition, *Points*, published by Seuil, and the first thesis on his work came out in Belgium. He wrote a preface for its author, Anika Rifflet-Lemaire.

During that period Lacan supposedly taught ten seminars but, beginning with *Le Moment de conclure* (1977–1978), his tiredness was manifest. All those who attended say that, during *La Topologie et le Temps* (1978–1979), his absences, his silences, his difficulty to draw a graph or articulate a sentence were striking. As for the seminar called “Dissolution” (1980), it only consisted of a series of messages. Who would call “seminar” the few words read with difficulty in Caracas in front of an audience who only wanted a presence and a name? Had Lacan become the hostage of what he had created?

His activity was intense until about 1976. On top of his seminars, which were crowded, he had the pleasure, in 1971–1972, of going back to Saint-Anne where he talked about the psychoanalyst's knowledge (*Le Savoir du psychanalyste*). He gave several conferences at the university of Louvain and in Italy. Most importantly, in the Fall of 1975, he lectured in major American universities: Yale, Columbia, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His radio program *Radiphonie*, broadcast on Belgian and French radios (1970), was published in *Scilicet* while *Télévision* was published by Seuil in 1973. An article, *Lituraterre*, came out in 1971 in the young journal published at Vincennes, *Littérature*. He wrote several prefaces, he saw his *Ecrits* translated in Japanese, German, and English (between 1972 and 1976). However, a desire haunted him, which would never leave him and which he would never accomplish: to write the seminar on ethics (1959–1960), which was still very important to him. He only saw the reprint of *Ecrits sur la paranoïa* and J. A. Miller's transcriptions of five seminars, published by Les Editions du Seuil.

Two problems were becoming urgent and difficult to solve: the functioning of the école and the Department of Psychoanalysis at Vincennes. The number of students in the école kept increasing very rapidly, while dissensions were becoming more and more important; internal groups actually organized themselves, ignoring each other or competing with each other. Lacan still attended every Congress. The one in Rome in 1974 was both a pinnacle (Lacan gave a press conference, the opening and closing sessions of the Congress, and an address on “La Troisième”) and an embalming (J. A. Miller's praising speech, delivered in his address to the Congress, in Lacan's presence, was close to being indecent). As for the issue of analysts' training (and especially the *passe*), it was at the heart of the most violent conflicts; the Congress in Deauville (1978) was beyond belief. Tensions between analysts and nonanalysts, between upholders of clinical practice and upholders of pure mathemes, among peers and generations were so intense that the relation to Lacan—or

to Lacan's name as a stamp—might have been the only thing that maintained a semblance of unity. In 1977, the école included approximately five hundred analysts (of the three kinds) and about the same number of affiliates and correspondents. Nobody was really surprised by the dissolution announced in 1980, even though some were not convinced that the decision was Lacan's own. In any case, the letter, *La Lettre aux mille*, which followed the dissolution, as well as the announcement of the creation of La Cause Freudienne, and then of L'Ecole de la Cause are rarely attributed to a sick and exhausted Lacan. Claude Dorgeuille's book, *La Seconde Mort de Jacques Lacan, Histoire d'une crise (Octobre 1980–Juin 1981)*, tells the countless episodes of that period and publishes numerous documents.⁴⁷ The école completely splintered. This episode seems to have exemplified the consequences of a certain institutional mode.

Let us turn to Vincennes. As early as 1970, S. Leclaire resigned, tired of the contradictory positions, of students' protests, and of the statement Miller supposedly made during his short period of political involvement, "Psychoanalysis is incompatible with the revolution." Until 1974 a collegial leadership was at the head of the department: Clavreul, Conté, Dumézil, Montrelay, and Tostain. However, if some experiments were successful, ultimately, a feeling of sterile disorder prevailed—a feeling that coincided with the global crisis of the university in France. In October 1974, Lacan intervened. He temporarily suspended his classes, and he required from all teachers-to-be a written project that a scientific committee, presided by Lacan himself, would accept or reject. The statutes were changed. The department did not train analysts but it delivered credits and organized the teaching and curriculum in other fields. At that time Luce Irigaray was excluded for deviance from Lacanian theory. The necessity to reorganize the department explains why Lacan felt he had to take things in hand. At the same time, the Champ freudien started publishing a periodical bulletin, the journal *Ornicar?*, while *Scilicet* disappeared in 1976. From then on, the publication, by Miller, of some of Lacan's seminars, almost as they were produced, was exclusively reserved to *Ornicar?*. Miller was head of the department at Vincennes. In February 1979, Judith Miller founded with Lacan, her father, an association, the Association de la Fondation du Champ Freudien. A section for continuous training [*Formation permanente*], was immediately attached to the association. As for the clinical section [*Section clinique*] created by Lacan in 1977, J. A. Miller took charge of it.

When Lacan died in September 1981, a small family group, surrounded by several faithful followers, inherited the Ecole de la Cause Freudienne, the Department of Psychoanalysis at Vincennes, the Association de la Fondation du Champ Freudien, the Clinical and Continuous Training [*Formation clinique et permanente*], the publications, and the publishing rights. Was this the "misappropriation of an old man," as has been said about Sartre and so

many others? The end of a master is always painful to watch. But don't forget that the special understanding between Lacan and Miller went back to 1964–1965. To attack Miller alone in the name of a real Lacan—and this real Lacan could only be one's own image of Lacan—is this not to refuse to mourn for an image that has been too idealized, to mourn for part of oneself and of one's own history? The question is obviously easy to ask of someone who has not lived intimately this long adventure. It nevertheless remains a real question.

While some associations, even after the split of the C.E.R.F. (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Freudiennes), inscribed themselves in a broader psychoanalytic field, other groups were formed that maintained Lacanian references more strictly. Hence, the Association Freudienne (Claude Dorgeuille, Charles Melman), the Convention Psychanalytique (Jean Clavreul, Juan-David Nasio, Ginette Raimbault, Moustapha Safouan, René Tostain), or the Ecole Freudienne (Solange Faladé) all claim separately all of Lacan's inheritance. Will this situation only last for one generation? This links up with our study, in chapter 1, of the situation of psychoanalysis today.

The Works of Jacques Lacan

How did Lacanian theory develop? In order to answer this question, one must follow as closely as possible the chronological order of his work rather than the incomplete and chaotic course of publications. This is the itinerary we propose. Because of the breadth of Lacan's work, its diversity, and the poorly defined status of certain texts, we had to make certain choices. We have, therefore, excluded some of the communications mentioned elsewhere (interviews, remarks, and statements made in specific circumstances, including those ritually made at congresses of the E.F.P., in published letters, etc.); and, sometimes, we have grouped together similar texts. By the same token, we have devoted a good deal of space to seminars and conferences whose transcriptions often circulate without the official seal. Overall, there still are more than one hundred titles. We have, therefore, felt the need to put these works, which spread over fifty-five years, into perspective by grouping them into five periods introduced by an overall presentation. For each title, the date of production (according to our present knowledge) and the (very variable) number of pages appear first; and the first date of publication appears last. For each original title, we shall give a translation in English, and following the first date of publication of the original we shall give, when applicable, the date of publication of the first translation. Each summary includes descriptive information, necessary to set the works within their context. It highlights as clearly as possible the specifics of each communication, its main themes, and the new concepts that it presents. Moreover, an internal system of cross-references (the numbers referring to other works are always indicated in bold-face) should allow the readers to move freely within this complex group of works. Finally, we believe we have protected the reader's freedom of judgment by keeping a certain freedom of tone better than if we had adopted a mask of neutrality.

Joël Dor's essential bibliography of Lacan's works, *Bibliographie des travaux de Jacques Lacan*, published by Inter-Editions at the end of 1983, offers a precious chronology of the seminars. The only thing missing are Lacan's interventions at the meetings of the Evolution Psychiatrique.

For the abbreviations used, we refer the reader to the list of abbreviations at the beginning of this book.

1926–1939

Between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-eight, Lacan discovers neurology, psychiatry, and then psychoanalysis. Two key works are the result: the thesis on paranoia (1932) and the article on the family (1938). Then World War II and the Occupation took place, and with them a silence of six years.

1**1926–1933—PREMIERES CONTRIBUTIONS SCIENTIFIQUES
(FIRST SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS)**

Reading these twenty or so articles shows what could have been, at the time, the training of an outstanding young neuropsychiatrist (and criminologist) in the famous psychiatric hospitals' services in France. The concreteness of the misery of those who ended up at the *Infirmerie Spéciale du Dépôt* or at the *Asile* is evident through the clinical discourse. These texts help in understanding Lacan's first decisive choices in his thesis on paranoia (2).

As it is customary in medical circles, these papers were written within the framework of a research team, in a hierarchical and institutional setting; they were delivered in scholarly societies, and immediately published in specialized journals. Dor's bibliography provides us with a more complete list than that given by Lacan in 1933. We only mention here the texts to which we will refer later: "Abasie chez une traumatisée de guerre" ("Abasia in a Woman Traumatized by War") (1928); "Folies simultanées" ("Simultaneous Madness") (1931); "Structure des psychoses paranoïaques" ("Structure of Paranoid Psychoses") (1931). Special mention must be made of "Ecrits 'inspirés': Schizographie" ("Inspired Writings: Schizographia") (1931). This first exploration of the psychopathology of language deserves to be read because Marcelle C.'s letters raise the problem of the boundaries existing between pathology and creativity. In this text psychiatry meets surrealism around the ambiguous term of "automatism" in writing.

Finally, for the first time, Lacan signed a piece in the *R.F.P.* (1932): it is a translation of Freud's "On Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia, and Homosexuality." Lacan approached the Freudian discovery through his own psychiatric research and "the doctrine."

2**1932 (383 pp.)—DE LA PSYCHOSE PARANOIAQUE DANS SES RAPPORTS
AVEC LA PERSONNALITE (ON PARANOIAC PSYCHOSIS IN ITS RELATION TO
PERSONALITY)—1932**

A monograph is at the center of this doctoral thesis: *Le cas Aimée* (The Case of Aimée), from the name given by the patient to the heroine of her first novel. The Surrealists were enthusiastic; Pierre Janet praised it in 1935, in the *Annales Medico-Psychologiques*, with regard to "malfunctions of so-

cial personality.” I, in turn, find this case study, unique in Lacan’s works, fascinating.

The beginning of the work provides a mine of information concerning psychiatric and psychological theories in France and Germany. It displays a broad range of knowledge, eclectic curiosity, and mastery of the topic. The end opens vast perspectives on a future of a “science of the personality.” Could it be the first draft of that science of the subject, whose project will increasingly pervade the seminars?

Lacan makes the case of Aimée the first case of a particular form of paranoia, that of self-punishment or psychosis of the superego. He defends his method (a concrete and exhaustive phenomenological study), which is linked to his conception of mental illness as an “illness of the personality” in its “development and structure.” In this text, the notions of “*vital milieu*” and of “*vital conflict*”—which are still present in *Le Mythe du névrosé* (22)—designate in fact the *social* environment, including the family.

“Our research in psychoses takes up the problem at the point where psychoanalysis left off.” Here, narcissism, conceived as *terra incognita*, is already a land to be explored.

3

1933 (6 pp.)—LE PROBLEME DU STYLE ET LA CONCEPTION PSYCHIATRIQUE DES FORMES PARANOIAQUES DE L'EXPERIENCE (THE PROBLEM OF STYLE AND THE PSYCHIATRIC CONCEPTION OF PARANOIAC FORMS OF EXPERIENCE)

This text, published in a Surrealist journal, *Le Minotaure*, proclaims the revolutionary value of “madmen’s writings,” but restricts such value to paranoia—a position shared by Dali. As a matter of fact, the painter’s article on “L’Interprétation paranoïaque-critique de l’image obsédante” (“Paranoiac-critical interpretation of the obsessive image”) is included in the same issue of the journal and it quotes Lacan’s thesis (2). Between the two of them there was a silent fight: who could claim to have made the discovery first? Who would create a paranoiac theory of art? As a psychiatrist, Lacan felt he was in a better position to do so and he mainly tried to prove that his method brought “a theoretical revolution” to “anthropology.” As for style, nothing more was said; indeed, Lacan asserted his authorial rights less over a notion of paranoiac style than over the notion of “paranoiac knowledge.”

4

1933 (10 pp.)—MOTIFS DU CRIME PARANOIAQUE: LE CRIME DES SOEURS PAPIN (MOTIVES OF THE PARANOIAC CRIME: THE CRIME OF THE PAPIN SISTERS)

The murder of Mrs. Ancelin and her daughter, committed by Christine and Léa Papin on February 2, 1933, shocked the public. The daily newspaper *Paris-Soir* entrusted the Tharaud brothers with the account of the trial; it is

on their articles that Lacan's study is based. The horror of the crime and the social condition of the murderesses fascinated intellectuals. Beauvoir mentioned the crime in her autobiography, Genet wrote *Les Bonnes* in 1946, and in 1963 Papatakis filmed *Les Abysses*. However, as early as May 1933, the Surrealists—and this comes as no surprise—devoted an entire issue of *Sur-réalisme au Service de la Révolution* to the affair, the very issue in which Crevel reviewed Lacan's thesis (2). Thus, it seems that Lacan was the perfect one to respond to Crevel's call, "But which young psychoanalyst will speak up?"

Lacan spoke up as a specialist on paranoia. Although doctors were familiar with cases of "simultaneous madnesses" (1), they were disconcerted by this case of a simultaneous acting out [*passage à l'acte*]. Lacan's contribution is a real one, especially on narcissism, which announced the *mirror stage* (8). But another Freudian interpretation emerges at the end of his text, also destined to a great Lacanian future; this interpretation relies on the idea of insanities constructed around "the enigma of the phallus and feminine castration." While Eluard and Péret saw the two sisters as "coming out, fully armed, of a song of Maldoror," Lacan saw them as castrating Bacchantes. Ultimately, it is to this grandiose and terrifying image that he reduces this evisceration of women by women, committed, as Christine said, to discover "the mystery of life."

In agreement with his masters, Lacan rejects the purely social explanation of the crime to raise in more qualified terms the questions of expertise, responsibility, and punishment. (19).

5 1933 (7 pp.)—EXPOSE GENERAL DE NOS TRAVAUX SCIENTIFIQUES (GENERAL PRESENTATION OF OUR SCIENTIFIC WORKS)—1975

This kind of presentation is a traditional genre, like the summaries of the seminars written later for the directory of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. It is a very interesting text, however, especially regarding its praise of paranoia through a remarkable review of the thesis (2). One can thus measure the decisive importance for Lacan of the meeting between his desire for theory and "this reactional mode of personality," a "highly organized" reaction to situations whose "moral and human value" is strongly stressed. Lacan did not share his master Clérambault's theory of "mental automatism" but rather Freud's interest in psychoses, as the seminar on *Les Psychoses* (30) demonstrated.

6 1933—HIATUS IRRATIONALIS

We should mention this sonnet that Lacan wrote because *Le Magazine Littéraire* unearthed it. Published in *Le Phare de Neuilly* (Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes publishers), it shows that the medical world had taste for literary relaxation and that the literary world made room for scientists.

7

1935 (5 pp. and 8 pp.)—COMPTES RENDUS D'OUVRAGES (EY et MINKOWSKI) (BOOK REVIEWS [EY and MINKOWSKI])

In these book reviews Lacan specified his theory: mental disorders amount to a “delirious mentality,” which can only be approached through a “phenomenology” capable of combining clinical practice and doctrinal rigor. The expression “paranoiac knowledge” appears for the first time, along with “the complex that is typical of object conflicts (an object between you and me).” Narcissism and aggressivity presage the *mirror stage* that was soon to come.

Minkowski was one of the founding fathers of the E.P. where Ey and Lacan were tenured members. They all promoted “living psychiatry” as opposed to “the lack of inspiration in others.” With Ey, Lacan’s fellow student, these were fraternal times. Lacan’s praise of Ey’s *Hallucinations et délires* (Hallucinations and Deliriums) was almost total; one more step and his friend would think like him. However, this step was never taken (14). With Minkowski, his elder, relations were more conflicted, all the more so since they were both interested in Freud, philosophy, and especially phenomenology. Lacan criticized Minkowski’s *Le Temps vécu* (Experienced Time) for rejecting psychoanalytic genetics and for ignoring Heidegger, the philosopher whose work was to play an important role in his own theoretical elaboration after the war.

8

1936—LE STADE DU MIRROIR (THE MIRROR STAGE)—Unpublished

As the author stated in 1966, this was “the first pivotal moment of our intervention in psychoanalytic theory.” We know that he gave, or rather, could not give this address at the XIVth International Congress in Marienbad. This fact would explain why he “neglected to submit the text of this address for the Proceedings of the Congress.” In any case, it is indexed, under the title “Looking-Glass Phase”^a in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis (I.J.P.)* of 1937. The best-known text was to be delivered in 1949 (18). For the first version Lacan refers us to his 1938 article on the family, *La Famille* (10), an article that had been requested by Wallon. In order to measure Lacan’s contribution concerning this stage, in which the child forms his unity around the image of his body, one must read at least one of the psychologist’s articles, “Conscience et individualisation du corps propre,” reprinted in 1934 in *Les Origines du caractère chez l’enfant*.

9

1936 (20pp.)—AU-DELA DU “PRINCIPE DE REALITE” (BEYOND THE “REALITY PRINCIPLE”)

The five pages analyzing the “revolution of the Freudian method” and “the phenomenological description of analytic experience” are enlightening

a. In English in the original.

(*Ecrits*, pp. 81–85). Lacan's thinking here is as close as possible to analytic experience. "Language, before signifying something, signifies for someone": this expression as well as others announce the famous 1953 declarations in Rome (24). Finally, Lacan attributes Freud's innovative exploration to "the desire to cure"; he even adopts the expression as his maxim.

What about the rest of the text? It is a series of long didactic and polemical theoretical elaborations, related as always to the ambition to create a "new psychological science" that would integrate "the phenomenological achievements of Freudism." Written at the time of the setback in Marienbad, this composite text promises a second installment that never came to light. In 1966, Lacan made "gestaltism and phenomenology" responsible for the fact that it was never written. In fact, he had not yet found his own way to answer two questions that were already clearly raised here: How is reality constituted for the subject? How is the I, in which the subject recognizes himself, constituted?

10

1938 (112 pp.)—LA FAMILLE: LE COMPLEXE, FACTEUR CONCRET DE LA PSYCHOLOGIE FAMILIALE. LES COMPLEXES FAMILIAUX EN PATHOLOGIE (THE FAMILY: THE COMPLEX, A CONCRETE FACTOR IN FAMILIAL PSYCHOLOGY. FAMILIAL COMPLEXES IN PATHOLOGY)

This article is easy to read. It was commissioned for the *Encyclopédie Française* by Wallon who, at the time, was a professor at the Sorbonne. It posits two essential notions of Lacan's theory: the *mirror stage* (8, 18); and the double *paternal function* of "repression" and "sublimation," which are the single source of cultural values. Shedding light on other more difficult works, it helps measure the subsequent continuities and disruptions. To the same questions were there other solutions? Or were the same fundamental options theorized differently?

The introduction defines "the familial institution." The first part argues for the notion of "complex" instead of "instinct," so as to construct the individual's psychic development around three successive structures: "the complex of weaning," "the complex of intrusion" where the mirror stage appears, and the Oedipus complex. The second part describes psychoses and neuroses by opposing them according to the different functions played by the familial complex. Analytic technique is clearly reserved for neuroses. At the intersection of "experimental psychology" and "psychoanalytic investigations," but also of ethno-sociology and history, Lacan wishes to "revise" the Oedipus complex, but he also modifies the pre-Oedipus stages. The seeds of the future doctrinal conflicts are already present in this text. Nevertheless, his unconditional praise of the "paternalist" family, his vibrant regrets over "the social decline of the paternal image" (indeed its "decadence") and over the increased role of the mother or of woman, could only have pleased many—and in all camps.

11

1938 (5 pp.)—DE L'IMPULSION AU COMPLEXE (FROM IMPULSION TO COMPLEX)—1939

On October 25, 1938, shortly before his election as a tenured member, Lacan gave his first paper at the S.P.P. We only have its summary (written by the author), followed by the transcription of the discussion. Was he really proposing, at this date, a *saturnine stage* (from the name of the god who devoured his children), which would correspond with the “fantasy of the fragmented body” and would precede the *mirror stage*? It thus seems that he was recasting Freudian genetic theory by renaming it—as the article on the family, *La Famille* (10), tends to confirm. Moreover, with respect to a clinical case, he defended the idea of “a primitive drive in a pure state,” functioning almost without any defense symptom on the part of the ego. In 1938, his research stopped on the edge of an unmasterable: states of horror and passive beatitude. However their trace remains and can be followed, after 1953, in the direction of *the Thing* (seminar on ethics, *L'Ethique* 43) or in the direction of the category of the *Real* (23).

Infancy, archaic fantasies, drives—is this not the domain explored by Melanie Klein whose first book dated back to 1932? Lacan's relations to Klein's works were always complex and even ambivalent, especially when he asserted the absolute primacy of the *Symbolic* (language and Name-of-the-Father).

1945–1953

The first theoretical splits appeared in the intense activity of the new generation in power both at the Evolution Psychiatrique and at the Société Psychanalytique de Paris. Between the ages of forty-four and fifty, Lacan deepened his earlier studies (especially on the Imaginary) and diversified his research (from logic to the social role of the psychiatrist-psychoanalyst). The decisive choice made in 1953, to give priority both to the “return to Freud” and to the category of the Symbolic, was already in preparation.

12

1945 (17 pp.)—LE TEMPS LOGIQUE ET L'ASSERTION DE CERTITUDE ANTICIPEE. UN NOUVEAU SOPHISME. (LOGICAL TIME AND THE PREMATURE ASSERTION OF CERTAINTY. A NEW SOPHISM)

A game is the basis of a subjective and intersubjective logic. This game leaves no one indifferent: it involves three prisoners and five disks, three white and two black ones. A director puts a disk on each prisoner's back (in fact, the three disks are white). The first prisoner who goes through the door, gives the correct answer, and justifies his choice (black/white) “based on logical motives and not on probabilities” wins a prize—his freedom.

Game theory, which intends to formalize human action in terms of pure strategy, had made it to Paris. It became part of the Lacanian theoretical

landscape as of this article published in *Cahiers d'Art* and up to the appeal to cybernetics, in 1954, during the first seminar at Sainte-Anne (25). With the model of game theory, the only question that remains is the question of subjective time organized into three stages: “the instant of the gaze,” “the period of understanding,” and “the moment to conclude.” This model runs through all of Lacan’s works, in order to define analytic experience and technique (length of the sessions, moments and modes of interventions, end of the analysis, etc.). It very often recurs among disciples as a reference scheme, although neither the other aspects of a case nor the other motives, real and varied, for the chosen technique are consistently taken into account. Are we dealing with logic or with sophistry? The article ends with an enlightening application of the formula to the assertion, “I am a man,” in order to give rise to the fundamental opposition, man/nonman. Here is matter for reflection on the “sophism” that Lacan himself claims to have invented—and for reading other texts, especially those devoted to castration, in light of this one.

13

**1946 (31 pp.)—LE NOMBRE TREIZE ET LA FORME LOGIQUE DE LA SUSPICION
(THE NUMBER THIRTEEN AND THE LOGICAL FORM OF SUSPICION)**

The starting point of this text is a mathematical problem raised by Queneau: you are given 12 coins and are allowed three weighings, without any weigh standard, to find the “bad” one—no one knows whether the coin has something more or less than the others, it is simply different from the other ones which are all identical. Lacan transformed the problem, because he wanted to give the formula of “collective logic” in which there is “neither a specified norm nor a specifying norm” and in which reference is thus made “not to the species but to the uniform”—“the position by three-and-one” (a formula that was food for thought for those in the école who were familiar with the theory of cartels). The logic of sorting [*logique du tri*] leads inexorably to the “absolute notion of difference, the root and the form of suspicion.” Not devoid of black humor, Lacan says that the final judgment will take place efficiently and quickly in twenty-six tosses, and he invites us to consider the political applications.

In contrast to the previous text, this “apologue” was rarely referred to thereafter. Because it is enigmatic, it causes anxiety. Where is “the inhuman,” on the side of the Other or on the side of the Same? Lacan always struggled with the question of difference: a similar kind of giddiness can affect us when we try to give a univocal meaning to the famous concept of the Other (pure locus of a combinatory, Mother, woman, Father-Death, etc.). Often, to answer this question, he advocated, as he did here, “the return to logic,” which is, at “its basis, solid like a rock and no less implacable”—thereby reusing Freud’s terms concerning castration and penis envy.

14

1946 (43 pp.)—PROPOS SUR LA CAUSALITE PSYCHIQUE (REMARKS ON PSYCHIC CAUSALITY)—1947

This report opened the workshop organized by H. Ey at the Bonneval hospital. Passionate, violent, shrewd, solidly constructed, it is a nice example of Lacan's rhetoric, as he had become a master in the "contest of speech." It is also the most complete presentation of this theses until 1953.

First, he attacked H. Ey's "organo-dynamism." According to him, it was a mere return to the organicist conception of madness, and he opposed to it his "psychogenesis" in a definitively radicalized version: "Madness is entirely experienced in the register of meaning." The debate was thus placed under the sign of a strict alternative. Was it psychoanalysis against psychiatry, then? No, because Lacan violently expressed his contempt for "the psychoanalytical seraglio" that does not dare "to consider as obsolete what indeed is in the works of a master who has no equal."

In fact, a first essential change was taking place here: in order to create a "scientific psychology," questions needed to be raised in terms of truth and not of reality. A plague on pragmatism, and long live philosophy; hence the "return to Descartes" and the appeal to Hegel, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty. The trilogy Knowledge/Science/Truth took on increasing importance. As for psychology, it became "the domain of the insane." Whether in terms of language or of identifications, madness was the royal path leading to the knowledge of "the very being of man." A number of famous concrete analyses fit into this context: the word *rideau* (language/lie/truth); Alceste, as *la belle âme* (the paranoiac ego as the structural model of the human ego). Ultimately, however, the father and his "categorical imperative" emerged as saviors of all categories.

Obviously, H. Ey was shocked. What is embarrassing for readers is reconciling this paper with the one that follows, on English psychiatry, *La Psychiatrie anglaise*: both texts were published in the same issue of the same journal.

15

1946 (26 pp.)—LA PSYCHIATRIE ANGLAISE ET LA GUERRE (ENGLISH PSYCHIATRY AND THE WAR)—1947

In London and, through the English experimentations, in Canada and in the United States, Lacan found the solution to save the future of French psychiatry! He defended, with an incredible passion, theses that will surprise those who see in him the pure supporter of "pure psychoanalysis." He praised the efficiency of psychiatry/psychoanalysis in the war effort; the decisive progress in science and psychological techniques allowed by the war; the extension of those methods to peace times: tests, social and professional selection, child guidance, group psychotherapies; the "eminent function" of the psychiatrist/

psychoanalyst in the new society, on the sides of the “civil servant, the administrator, and the nonphysician psychologist,” etc. “Social prophylaxis,” “psychological rationalization,” and the art of creating united groups: what a lesson for “a demoralized country”!

This text which is not very well known is a paper given at the E.P. in 1946: it is the precise, enthusiastic, and fascinating account of a study-trip to England at the end of 1945, and it introduces into France names, works, and experiences which were unknown at the time. In a word, Lacan finds in England “methodological innovation,” “a new look on the world,” and even much more: “I have found there the miraculous feeling of the first Freudian steps: finding at the very dead end of a situation the vivid force of action.” Better known is his subsequent condemnation, without appeal, of the same names and the same experiences: what was described here as “the truthful relation to the real” was later described by the derisive term *adaptation*. Was it the correction of a mistake, then? The ideas underlying this presentation are too deeply rooted in Lacanian thinking for one to be too careful. Reading this text sheds light on the functioning of the Ecole Freudienne, opened in 1964 (the functioning of the cartels and of the *passe*), and on the presence of Lacanians in the “psychoanalytic” social institutions.

16

1948 (25 pp.)—L'AGRESSIVITE EN PSYCHANALYSE (AGGRESSIVITY IN PSYCHOANALYSIS)

At the XIth Conférence des Psychanalystes de Langue Française, on the theme of aggressivity, Lacan was responsible for the theoretical report and Nacht for the clinical report. History would prove theory to be correct; these two figures of the S.P.P. would be the warring brothers of the 1953 split. In 1966, Lacan took out of *Ecrits* the tribute to his “learned colleague.”

The objectives of this report were to give psychoanalysis the status of a science, by making aggressivity into a concept and by proving that analytic experience could, in its own way, provide results capable of founding “a positive science.” Lacan’s conception of therapy is clear here; analytic technique is useful for setting into play the motivating forces of aggressivity, in particular negative transference, the “inaugural knot of the analytic drama.” In order to fight against the ego of misconception [*méconnaissance*], “maieutics” must operate through a detour, “to induce a guided paranoia,” and from there it is possible to work. These theses and the practice that they subtend would give rise to many discussions and arguments. However, what remains specific about analytic experience is the fact that it takes place entirely in speech, which makes for some nice pages between *Principe de réalité* (9) and *Fonction et Champ* (24).

The concept of aggressivity is constructed in relation to the mirror stage (8, 18) (in spite of the Kleinian contributions on the maternal image) and the

“*paranoiac structure of the Ego.*” Only Oedipal identification with the father is pacifying and allows for social and cultural creativity. A final image mourns the twilight of an idealized “paternalist” society, and, for the first time, the term *dérélection* appears. Would man’s destiny be “the assumption of his original splitting,” or the necessity of “constituting, at every moment, his world by his suicide”? The only soothing balm would be “discrete fraternity,” the psychoanalyst’s vocation.

17

**1948 (7 pp.)—ESSAI SUR LES REACTIONS PSYCHIQUES DE L'HYPERTENDU
(ESSAY ON THE PSYCHICAL REACTIONS OF THE HYPERTENSE PATIENT)**

We group together here the report given by Lacan in 1948 at the Surgery Congress on arterial hypertension and a collective document published in 1953 (13 pp.), an appraisal of several years of work in the hospitals of Beaujon and Villejuif. These texts reveal an aspect of Lacan that is too often ignored, his activity in the psychosomatic field. If, in 1948, he emphasized the links between hypertension and aggressivity (16), here he does not separate psychogenesis and psychological factors. He puts forward “the instinctual metamorphoses of development, that is, for the male, weaning, the Oedipus complex, puberty, virile maturity, premenopause.” The 1953 article shows the deceptiveness of purely somatic treatments, but it also shows the limits of psychogenesis. The degeneration of the other analytic groups is not the only explanation for the existence of psychosomatic research. A serious reading of the *Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne* shows that the problems raised in psychosomatic research are really encountered in clinical practice.

18

**1949 (8 pp.)—LE STADE DU MIRROIR COMME FORMATEUR DE LA FONCTION
DU JE, TELLE QU'ELLE NOUS EST REVELEE DANS L'EXPERIENCE ANALYTIQUE
(THE MIRROR STAGE AS FORMATOR OF THE FUNCTION OF THE I AS
REVEALED IN PSYCHOANALYTIC EXPERIENCE)**

Thirteen years after Marienbad (8), Lacan developed the same theme at the XVIth International Congress held in Zurich. This time, he spoke to the end, but this was his last talk in a congress of the International Association. The entire text was published in the *R.F.P.*, and its summary appeared in the *I.J.P.* in 1949. This difficult text condenses the itinerary begun in 1936 and continuing up to the question asked in 1949: What is “the function of the I” in the psychoanalytic experience, a function that is opposed to “any philosophy born of the Cogito” (Descartes) and also to the primacy of the ego in the official doctrine of psychoanalysis? The child constructs his unity around the image of his body proper in the mirror and, paradoxically, he is also divided between this objectified figure of himself (the origin of the ego) and what he can already perceive of “his own reality” with respect to this I, which would be, from then on, the focus of Lacan’s research.

Between psychoanalysis and philosophy, thinking emerges from dazzling metaphors. The whole human condition, with its moments of “jubilant assumption,” as well as with the unbearable character of its “alienation in a figure of fiction” that “runs the risk of resolving itself in murderous or suicidal aggressivity,” would come into play “even before its social determination.” The metaphysics of *déréliction* or of “the passions of the soul” meet with stories of female pigeons and migratory locusts borrowed from genetic psychology. How can one make sense of all this without reading the previous texts and their examples? In any case, the messianic tone gets stronger at the end: “In the recourse of subject to subject that we preserve, psychoanalysis may accompany the patient to the ecstatic limit of the ‘*Thou art that*’, in which is revealed to him the cipher of his mortal destiny. ‘Begins’ the real journey.” Could this be the text of a visionary? How can the idea of psychoanalysis as a science, instead of initiation be maintained? This was the problem that Lacan had to face over and over again.

19

1950 (30 pp.)—INTRODUCTION THEORIQUE AUX FONCTIONS DE LA PSYCHANALYSE EN CRIMINOLOGIE (M. CÉNAC ET J. LACAN) (THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE FUNCTIONS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS IN CRIMINOLOGY) (M. CÉNAC AND J. LACAN)

The question of the responsibility of the criminal and thus of punishment came up at the Liberation, but the dimensions of the question were given by the Nuremberg trials with the notion of “crime against mankind.” The report established for the XIIIth Conférence des Psychanalystes de Langue Française was deliberately situated in this post-war context.

“If psychoanalysis un-realizes [*irréalise*] the crime, it does not dehumanize the criminal”; this is the central thesis. Recalling some famous cases (Mrs Lefèbre, Aimée (2), the Papin sisters (4), Mr Verdoux), the text denies irresponsibility both in cases of organic madness or “criminal instincts” and in cases where the crime is a mere response to a social context. The significant portion devoted to English experimentations in prisons—one remembers *La Psychiatrie anglaise* (15)—elaborates on the psychoanalyst’s mission: to restore the subject to himself and to his truth by “nonaction” [*le non-agir*]; to restore his links to the community without replacing justice; to stress that the rest belongs to social values, beliefs, and institutions.

The ideal of the ego as opposed to the superego, the mirror stage, the misadventures of Oedipalism, are all inscribed in a broader conception of *manization* [*hominisation*]. The text begins with a quote from Saint Paul, “It is the law that makes sin,” and stresses its absolute truth for the foundations of society. This concept is opposed to Freud’s thesis concerning the primal horde in which it is the horror of crime that creates the law. Socrates is used to recall the obedience to the laws, although unjust, of the city. As for Dostoevsky’s sentence, “God is dead, then everything is allowed,” it is turned

upside down into “God is dead, nothing is allowed any more.” The Lacanian system of values is very much present in this text, including the tone of the response to the participants.

20

1951 (12 pp.)—INTERVENTION SUR LE TRANSFERT (INTERVENTION ON TRANSFERENCE)—1952

At the XIVth Conférence des Psychanalystes de Langue Française Lagache was responsible for the theoretical report and Schlumberger for the clinical report. Lacan turned the comments he made during the discussions into a text written for the journal. In *Ecrits* he took out the name of Bénassy with whom he argued, as well as a passage probably too favorable to Lagache after the 1963 secession.

The text mainly consists of an analysis, remarkable in its rigor, of the case of Dora in which Freud discovered that the analyst plays a part in the transference. Lacan recounts the different steps of the case around a series of dialectic reversals, each of them leading to the discovery of a moment of the subject's truth. Nevertheless, all of a sudden, it failed. When did Freud go wrong and why? He missed feminine homosexuality because he had identified too much with Mr. K. Lacan, on the other hand, conceives feminine homosexuality both as an identification with the father's image as the only valorous image and as the difficulty of assuming the nevertheless desired femininity (through Mrs K.), because it “normally” requires giving up the position of subject. For women there is a specific subjective dead end due to the necessity “of accepting themselves as the object of man's desire.”

What, then, is transference? It is “an entity entirely relative to counter-transference defined as the sum of the analyst's prejudices, passions, confusion, and insufficient information at a given moment of the dialectical process” of therapy. This provides food for thought, and even food to think about Lacan's works. The conception of analysis as the “orthodramatization of subjectivity in the patient” by means of “the projection of his past onto a discourse in becoming” is already sketched in this text, written in the margins of the seminars on the Freudian texts, held at the Institut de Psychanalyse. *Le Mythe du névrosé* will follow (22).

21

1951 (7 pp.)—SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EGO—1953

Lacan delivered this at a conference in London in May 1951. Its transcription has multiple historical interests and reveals the diversity of strategies that he adopted, depending on his audience, to make his theses accepted. N. E. Beau-fils published its translation in 1980 in *Le Coq Héron* because she considered that it offered “a summary and a synthesis of Lacan's thinking” at that time. In that respect, it is a failure.

22

1953 (19 pp.)—LE MYTHE INDIVIDUEL DU NEVROSE OU POESIE ET VERITE DANS LA NEVROSE (THE INDIVIDUAL MYTH OF THE NEUROTIC OR POETRY AND TRUTH IN NEUROSIS)

After *Dora*, Lacan dealt here with *The Ratman*. Invited by J. Wahl, Lacan talked to the students of the Collège de Philosophie. In order to present to them—in the midst of the crisis of the S.P.P.—his “attempt to renew and analyze more in depth the fundamental reality of analysis,” he chose this difficult text of Freud and linked it with Goethe’s *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Indeed, the juxtaposition of these two life stories raises the question of fiction and truth. But, beyond this, by emphasizing the most particular aspects of the two stories and because of their similarities, the study ends up “formalizing, that is, universalizing ‘the individual myth of the neurotic.’” Curiously, this fascinating talk, which sheds light on *Fonction et Champ* (24), has remained unknown to many Lacanians until J.-A. Miller finally produced a readable transcription of it in 1979.

The extremely subtle analysis plays between Freud, Heidegger (on Speech), and Lévi-Strauss. Although the structural analysis of myth is essential in this text, Lévi-Strauss is not mentioned here. Lacan, however, acknowledged his debt to him in 1956. For the obsessional patient, “the original constellation” is not the Oedipal triangle but a quartet formed by the splitting in two of the father or of the mother, a splitting that Lacan analyzes as narcissistic. Either the male subject manages to be recognized in the social world, and the sexual object is then split in two (this is deadly love-passion) or his “sensitivity” is unified around a single object, and then a man appears in social life with whom he has a deadly relation. In spite of the ideal picture of the normal man, who would peacefully enjoy the fruits of his social activity and of his only wife, this structure seems to portray the masculine condition as opposed to the feminine condition illustrated by *Dora*. Through it, it depicts the tragedy of human condition since the fourth element in the quartet is finally death. What is the way out? It is the reunion, in the person of the father, of the “function of speech” and the “function of love.” Such a message is what Goethe would have aspired to and what Freud would have managed to indicate.

1953–1963

Lacan was right when he stated, “I took my stands in psychoanalysis in 1953.” What was in question was not only the split within the Société Française de Psychanalyse but a crucial moment in the construction of the Symbolic/Imaginary/Real trilogy. Between the ages of fifty-two and sixty-two, Lacan worked intensively: ten seminars, close to twenty publications, among which are the best-known ones. The range of references was broad: phi-

osophy (Plato, Descartes, Hegel, and Heidegger), linguistics (Saussure and Jakobson), ethnology (Lévi-Strauss), logico-mathematical formalization (algebraic notations, “graphs,” and even the first elaboration of the “topology”). Finally, it was in 1960 that Lacan declared that he was resolutely “a structuralist.”

23

1953 (10 pp.)—LE SYMBOLIQUE, L'IMAGINAIRE ET LE REEL (THE SYMBOLIC, THE IMAGINARY, AND THE REAL)—1982

Under this title Lacan gave the first address of the brand new S.F.P. He presented in a very clear way the concepts he had been elaborating for the previous two years through his “return to the Freudian texts” (this was the first time the famous expression appeared), and especially through his reading of *Cinq psychanalyses*.^b This text is an excellent introduction to the more difficult publications that would follow, while it is an interesting photograph of a thought in the midst of research. At this point it was a matter of distinguishing three “registers of human reality,” registers that the theoretician would later try to tie together (for example in 1974–1975 in the seminar *R.S.I.*) (90). The *Imaginary* was a reformulation of twenty years of work. The *Symbolic* began to be defined around speech, the interhuman pact, and the relations of kinship. For a long time it would be the privileged object of Lacan’s thinking. On the other hand, the *Real* emerged as the unknown of the problem, even if, in the suggested formalization of the unfolding of any analysis, its place was already constantly marked.

24

1953 (86 pp. and 24 pp.)—FONCTION ET CHAMP DE LA PAROLE ET DU LANGAGE EN PSYCHANALYSE. DISCOURS DU CONGRES DE ROME ET REPOSE AUX INTERVENTIONS (FUNCTION AND FIELD OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE IN PSYCHOANALYSIS. DISCOURSE AT THE CONGRESS IN ROME AND ANSWER TO THE INTERVENTIONS)—1956

After the 1953 split, Lacan was no longer responsible for the theoretical report at the Rome Congress. However, the Italian organizers offered him a place to speak. He presented himself as an *enseigneur*, a master-teacher whose return to Freud renewed psychoanalysis, and as the theoretical leader of the new group. Although they shed light on each other, one must distinguish between the two texts. The report, *Fonction et champ*, was distributed to those attending the Congress; it was more developed than the *Discours* and Lacan would revise it between the two publications (1956–1966). Greeted as “the S.F.P. manifesto,” it remains a major text in psychoanalytic thinking in France. The *Discours de Rome*, on the other hand, delivered on September 26, 1953 to general enthusiasm, was addressed to “my friends,” above all to the young,

b. Title of the French volume that includes the translation of five of Freud’s case histories (Dora, Little Hans, the Rat Man, Dr Schreber, and the Wolf Man).

as a passionate call for the rescue of psychoanalysis, which gave the participants an exhilarating image of themselves and of their tasks.

“Speech, subject, language,” this “A.B.C.” defined an entire program. This time, the concrete descriptions (9, 16) of analytic experience (empty speech/full speech, silence and interpretation, reconstruction by the subject of his history, etc.) were grounded in the assertion of the “absolute power of language” in all human activities. “In the beginning was the Word [*le Verbe*]” and, with it, the symbolic order where the name-of-the-father shines (still without capital letters). Lévi-Strauss was a model, for he managed to base “the autonomy of a signifying system” on “a generalized theory of exchange where women, goods, and words appear as homogeneous”—the very principle of *culture* that becomes a major term between *nature* and *society*. Another crucial novelty, the concept of the unconscious made its triumphant entrance here, with a load of definitions. Because they have been quoted over and over again, those definitions have changed the psychoanalytic landscape. This was not a coincidence; the unconscious could now be restored to the field of language and of the symbol, the “foundations of mankind.” The passage is not from unconscious to conscious but from language to speech, through the assumption of the subject. The notion of “unconscious subject” even appeared for the first time. Finally, the burning question of technique was settled in favor of the handling of logical time (*Le Temps logique* 12), in the name of a true mission: to lead the patient (and *a fortiori* the analyst-to-be) to “the act of speech” as “foundation of the subjects in an essential annunciation.” It is difficult not to establish a link between the numerous expressions celebrating the analyst here and the sentence that has been repeated so often since 1967: “The psychoanalyst only authorizes himself by himself [*ne s'autorise que de lui-même*].”

25

**1953–1954 (319 pp.)—SEMINAIRE I: LES ECRITS TECHNIQUES DE FREUD.
THE SEMINAR OF JACQUES LACAN (SEMINAR I: FREUD'S PAPERS ON
TECHNIQUE)—1975, 1988**

This was the first seminar at Sainte-Anne after the creation of the S.F.P. and the first seminar open to the public. It is characterized by Lacan's pedagogical concern, his witty eloquence, his art of suspense and of formulation, his dialogue with the participants who gave presentations, who made comments and objections. This teaching is in direct line with Rome (24), but focuses more on the problems of resistance, transference, and therapeutic efficiency. Besides Freud's cases, other cases were examined, Kris's “Fresh Brain Man,” M. Klein's Little Dick, and examples from Balint. There was even a live observation by Rosine Lefort. All this was framed in a broad meditation where psychoanalysis verged on philosophy, theology, linguistics, mysticism, and game theory. The seminar opened with a (fragmentary) portrait of the

Master and ended with the following question: What allows one to say “I am an analyst” without being either the fool who likes to think he is the king or the king who likes to think he is the king? Was this a critical return to the *Discours de Rome* (24)?

Thanks to the so-called schemas of the inverted bouquet [*Bouquet renversé*] (better known through the *Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache*, in 1958 (44)), the mirror stage became part of the topography of the Imaginary. A close link was established between theory and method. As Lacan subordinated the Imaginary to the Symbolic, he appealed to optics to systematize his previous analyses of the specular relation. As for the “misconstruction” [*mé-connaissance*] that characterized the ego, it was associated with negation [*dénégation*]. Since, as early as 1956, *La Psychanalyse* published both Hyppolite’s and Lacan’s comments, we refer our readers to these texts (26).

26

1954–1955 (31 pp.)—INTRODUCTION ET REPONSE AU COMMENTAIRE DE JEAN HYPOLITE SUR LA “VERNEINUNG” DE FREUD (INTRODUCTION AND RESPONSE TO JEAN HYPOLITE’S COMMENTARY ON FREUD’S “VERNEINUNG”)—1956

In February 1954, in the seminars, the philosopher Hyppolite, a specialist on Hegel, commented on Freud’s article on “Verneinung” (1925), which he suggested be translated as *Dénégation* instead of *Négation* (*R.F.P.* 1934). The real question is to analyze how the return of the repressed operates. Freud analyzed a complex mode in which the repressed is intellectually accepted by the subject, since it is named, and at the same time negated because the subject refuses to recognize it as his, refuses to recognize himself in it. Denegation [*dénégation*] thus includes an assertion on which the psychoanalyst can rely but whose status is difficult to define. The stakes are very high because the frontier between neurosis and psychosis is drawn here, between repression [*Verdrängung*] and repudiation [*Verwerfung*] (a term that Lacan replaced here by “withdrawal” [*retranchement*] before definitively calling it “foreclosure” [*forclusion*] in 1956 (30)). The version published in *La Psychanalyse* is an important rewriting of the session of the *Séminaire I* (25). The *Introduction* condenses the entire beginning of the teaching and the *Réponse* promotes two of Hyppolite’s ideas: the creation of the symbol refers back to mythic rather than genetic time; the symbolic creation of “negation” [*la négation*] is situated at another level of the subject than “assertion.”

Against the “doctrinarians” of the analysis of resistances, Lacan establishes two poles of analytic experience: the (imaginary) ego and the (symbolic) speech. For him, “the true subject,” the one who must “come to be” [*advenir*], is “the subject of the unconscious” and “the unconscious is the discourse of the Other.” He then gives the following condensed description of therapy: “First, the subject talks about himself without talking to you, then

he talks to you without talking about himself. When he is able to talk to you about himself, the analysis will be over." To this possible reshaping of the Imaginary by the Symbolic, he opposes the intersection of the Symbolic and the Real without Imaginary mediation, which would be the characteristic of psychosis.

27
 1954–1955 (374 pp.)—SEMINAIRE II: LE MOI DANS LA THEORIE DE FREUD ET DANS LA TECHNIQUE DE LA PSYCHANALYSE (SEMINAR II: THE EGO IN FREUD'S THEORY AND IN THE TECHNIQUE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS)—1978, 1988

I always come back to this seminar. It is said to be dense, disparate, even crazy. This is precisely why I like it better than the more systematic writings produced at the same time, for example, *La Cure type* (28) or *La Lettre volée* (31). Three of Freud's works were on the agenda: *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, on the death instinct; *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*; and *The Ego and the Id*. In fact, however, Lacan's *What I think* referred to a rather heterogeneous assortment of references (Plato, Lévi-Strauss, cybernetics, Poe, Molière, Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Proudhon, Biblical exegesis, etc.). Then, the audience discovered a passionate *What I believe*, where Lacan revealed himself more than ever. It sheds light on many of his later choices. The audience was invited to follow "the midwife [*l'accoucheur*] of modern thought." However, the audience often grumbled. Hyppolite, O. Mannoni, Pontalis, Leclaire, a certain X, well versed in rabbinic tradition . . . even Father Beirnaert and the mathematician Riguet, overwhelmed, admitted that they were embarrassed. This made for intense discussions that the Master sometimes brought to a firm and definite conclusion, for example when he said, "In this teaching, as in analysis, we deal with resistances." The following year, he calmed things down by offering the study of paranoia, his field *par excellence*.

The *Schéma L*, better known for its systematization in *La Lettre volée* (31), was elaborated during this seminar. This four-term structure, which maps the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic, replaced the second Freudian topography (ego/id/superego). Two diagonals intersect: while the imaginary relationship links *a* (the ego) to *a'* (the other), the line going from *S* (the initial of subject as well as *Es*, the Freudian id) to *A* (the Other) is interrupted by the first one. The Other is present in the schema but it is difficult to define. Is it the locus of language where subjectivity is constituted? Is it the locus of the founding speech linked to the Father? Is it the locus of the absolute Other, the mother in the demand? In any case, this Other "makes" [*machine*] the subject without his knowing it.

The dream of Irma's injection (Freud) allowed Lacan to draw a heroic fresco of human destiny through the figure of the psychoanalyst who functions as the founding myth of psychoanalysis. The most tragic moment is the con-

frontation with the *Real*, a theme that, in years, would become increasingly important. Here, in its “horror,” the “ultimate Real,” “impossible to mediate,” not even an object but this “something in front of which words stop,” is both the feminine mouth and sexual organs combined. Fortunately, the study of the *Sosie*, in Plautus and Molière, gives a less frightening version of this destiny between ego and subject because woman is inserted into an “androcentric” system. As for the unconscious, how was it articulated at this point? It was defined through ontology (Heidegger), through structuralism (Lévi-Strauss), through an intersubjective combinatory (Poe), and through cybernetics (“The primordial and primitive language is the language of the machine: 0 and 1”). Cybernetics indeed provides the opportunity for a remarkable conference on June 22, 1955. Hyppolite asks: —“What use does the Symbolic have?” —“The Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real are useful in giving its meaning to a particularly *pure* symbolic experience, that of analysis.”

28

1955 (40 pp.)—VARIANTES DE LA CURE TYPE (VARIATIONS OF THE TYPICAL THERAPY)

Lacan wrote this article for the *Encyclopédie Médico-Chirurgicale*, at H. Ey’s request. He denounced the notion of typical therapy defended by the S.P.P. In 1960 the article was removed from the encyclopedia, under the pressure of “a certain majority defined by our critique,” he said in *Ecrits*. Indeed, using an investigation conducted by Glover in England (1934), he violently denounced those who were “screens of nullity,” incapable of spreading the truth of psychoanalysis outside the official circles because it was misunderstood inside the official societies. Against “their practical formalism,” he claimed Ferenczi and his “psychoanalytic elasticity” as his authority, and he ultimately argued for “a theoretical formalization” that alone could be the guarantor of the “ethical rigor” that separates psychoanalysis from psychotherapy. For the first time, he expressed a certain distrust before any innovation “motivated by recovery.”

Séminaire II (27), with the *Schema L.*, required that, for the psychoanalyst, “the ego be absent.” Here, it is enough that “the mirages of his narcissism have become transparent to him,” so as to make him “permeable to the speech of the other.” Everything takes place in language, including “the drives discovered in analysis according to the vicissitudes of logical substitutions, in their source, their direction, their object.” But what is speech? Since *Le Mythe du névrosé (22)* reference to Heidegger was constant. Lacan kept referring to him, in spite of Hyppolite who did not recognize in the philosopher “the symbolic abolition” and the “inaugural assertion” that Lacan saw in him linking the symbolic order and the death instinct (27). There is already an indication of the famous expression, “there is no metalanguage,” in the

following Heideggerian tones: "No concept gives us the meaning of speech, not even the concept of the concept, for speech is not the meaning of meaning, but it gives its support to meaning in the symbol which it embodies through its act." Then, at the origin, is there language as system or is there speech? Besides, the end of the analysis, defined as the subjectivation of one own's death, refers back to the philosopher's "being-for-death." What is the psychoanalyst's knowledge? . . . A learned ignorance. What about his technique? . . . It is "the only one that is appropriate to my personality"—others may prefer to make other arrangements concerning their patients . . .

29

1955 (36 pp.)—LA CHOSE FREUDIENNE OU SENS DU RETOUR A FREUD EN PSYCHANALYSE (THE FREUDIAN THING, OR THE MEANING OF THE RETURN TO FREUD IN PSYCHOANALYSIS)—1956

On November 7, 1955, Lacan gave a paper at the neuropsychiatric clinic of Prof. Hoff in Vienna, followed by a discussion session among analysts. He gave an account of the paper in *Séminaire III* (30). Then, after the fact, he wrote it for the E.P. and later, in 1966, he revised the text again. This shows how attached he was to this digest of "four years of teaching." After the outdated rhetoric of the preamble, the presentation is organized around forceful subtitles and contains inspired accents: the unforgettable prosopopeia of truth ("I, Truth, will speak"), like Diana speaking to men, her lovers, through Actaeon-Freud (Lacan?), and telling them to hear "literally" what "the professor-Freud" (Lacan?) said about her. Also unforgettable are the parodic prosopopeia of the "desk" where the object speaks, "the unripe grape of speech" (on the Father's side) and "the bunch of wrath" (on the Mother's side) that inhabit the child, or the avenging expressions against his opponents, these "managers of the soul."

What remains of all this? It may be surprising that Lacan rediscovered Freud through a line of moralists (Gracián, La Rochefoucauld, Nietzsche): "The latest to join them, and, like them, stimulated no doubt by a properly Christian concern for the authenticity of the movement of the soul, Freud was able to precipitate a whole casuistics into a map of *Tendre*,^c which has only to be set in accordance with the offices for which it was intended." Against the Anglo-Saxon "success" or "happiness," the reign of the Other in the *Schéma L* (27, 31) "extends as far into the subject as the laws of speech reign," the laws that are the binary laws of cybernetics (presence-absence) as well as the laws of kinship and alliance (Oedipus) where the commerce in women is held to be prior to all others. Finally, the *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden* (There where it was [*Là où c' (s') était*], must I come to be [*dois-Je*

c. The *Pays du Tendre* was an allegorical country in which love was the sole preoccupation. It was the creation of Mlle. de Scudéry and other novelists of the seventeenth century.

advenir)), more amply commented on than in the *Séminaire II*, takes on the weight of a sacred word.

Here, it is a question of a “murder party.”^d Everywhere, indeed, metaphors of death blossom. Logically, then, the function of the analyst is to “cadaverize his position” by his silence. Whether he embodies the Other or the other, “he makes death present.” Is this the vision of an analysand or of an analyst? Is it the emblem of the founding *dead Father*? Jung is supposed to have passed on to Lacan Freud’s words as he was sailing towards the United States: “They do not realize we’re bringing them the plague.”

30

1955–1956 (362 pp.)—SEMINAIRE III: LES PSYCHOSES (SEMINAR III: PSYCHOSES)—1981

How is it possible to understand psychosis and distinguish it from neurosis? By means of the *foreclosure* of a fundamental signifier, the Name-of-the-Father. This term, which Lacan had been looking for since 1954 (27) in order to translate Freud’s *Verwerfung* (repudiation) and which will be used beyond the Lacanian circles, appeared for the first time at the very end of this seminar that reexamines the questions raised in 1932 (2). By psychosis Lacan means paranoia. So, what about paranoia? By paranoia Lacan means the case of Schreber, a case that is exemplary enough to offer the key to human becoming. Paradoxically, it is on texts that the theory is constructed here—Schreber’s *Mémoires*, Freud’s interpretation, Ida Macalpine’s—even if examples borrowed from the cases that Lacan presented at Sainte-Anne recall clinical reality. The foreclosed signifier reappears in the Real under the form of hallucinated voices. The link with the case of the *Wolfman* (Freud), where hallucination is visual—the hallucination of the cut finger referring to the penis—is not established, except through the idea that the father is the ring holding together the mother, the child, and the phallus.

To return to the “pure Freudian position” is “to investigate more in depth the metaphysics of such a discovery” that is “entirely inscribed in man’s relation to the symbolic.” In psychosis, it is not a matter of the projection outside of a bodily “primitive inside,” but of “a body of foreclosed signifiers.” Thus, linguistics is very present here: from this point of view, many sessions in this seminar shed light on difficult writings such as *La Lettre volée* (31) or *L’Instance de la lettre* (35). The Saussurian opposition between signifier and signified leads to the radical separation of the two chains, until they are tied through anchoring points [*points de capiton*, a term borrowed from upholstery]. Only one of these points is explained, the Father. With Jakobson and his article on aphasia, *Les Aphasies*, metaphor and metonymy reorganize mental pathology; the famous analysis of *Booz endormi* (Hugo) allows Lacan to create the notion of *paternal metaphor* whose absence would

d. In English in the original.

mean psychosis. Finally, Benveniste's classification of pronouns (I/You/He) provides the opportunity for brilliant elaborations on the sentence, "You are the one who will follow me" [*Tu es celui qui me suivra(s)*], a sentence that defines the founding word: that of sworn Faith situated in the Other. The Other, clearly opposed to the imaginary other, seems to be "discourse itself." It is a beneficial place "where the I who speaks is constituted in relation with the one who hears" and, at the same time, an evil place since "the neurotic inhabits language; the psychotic is inhabited, possessed by the language" that persecutes him. The whole destiny of man is decided during the Oedipus complex whose laws are the laws of language—however, everything is already decided in archaic times ("the fundamental signifier is a myth"). To explain psychosis by the absence of a primordial symbolization does not answer two questions, even with the help of the *Schéma L.* called the *magical square*. Why this absence and how to remedy to it? Many of the disciples' clinical discourses concerning the psychotic's mother (and more rarely the father) focus on this absence, a flaw in Lacan's elaboration. "It is not enough to want to be mad to become mad," indeed, but how does one become mad without maybe "wanting" to?

The analysis of Schreber reveals something else: the question of procreation, "in its essential root," escapes the symbolic web that includes neither creation ("being is born of another being") nor death. The absence of symbolization of the woman's sex organ as such (for "lack of material") and the absolute primacy of the phallus introduce a quasi-irreparable dissymmetry. This seminar, which goes back to the *cas Dora* (20) and presages the intervention on *La Sexualité féminine* (45), states that the feminine position is "problematic and, up to a certain point, cannot be assimilated." However, women are actually not the only ones concerned since the *Real*, which is so often said to be *impossible* in Lacan's works, is also in question here.

This volume also includes the lecture given by Lacan, in Professor Delay's presence, for the centenary of Freud's birth: *Freud dans le siècle* (Freud in the century), where he explains what he meant by the *return to Freud*.

31

1956 (53 pp.)—LE SEMINAIRE SUR LA LETTRE VOLEE (THE SEMINAR ON THE PURLOINED LETTER)—1957, 1973

Poe's story is read in an entirely original way: by translating the title by "the diverted letter" or "the letter in sufferance,"^e Lacan gives as the moral of the fable "that a letter always arrives at its destination," in spite of its adventures. "The invention of the poet and the rigor of the mathematician," such is his judgment about this story whose "plausibility [is] so perfect that one can say

e. The French is *lettre en souffrance*, which means a letter held up in the course of delivery; *en souffrance* also means in a state of suffering.

that truth reveals there its fictional organization.” The narration repeats a drama organized around three types of gaze in two scenes (the king/the queen/the minister and the police/the minister/Dupin), in which the second scene repeats the first one, with a mere change in the characters’ positions. However, it is a very revealing change. In this detective story, Lacan, repeating Dupin, the narrator, and Poe, reinterprets the clues for our pleasure. But this story interested him because it fit his own research.

He discovered in it “the master words of our drama,” the drama of intersubjectivity where subjects are entirely determined by the displacement of the signifier (here figured by the letter), independently of “innate gifts, social experience, character, and gender.” He asserted both the radical autonomy of the signifying system and the complete subjection of the subject to the trajectory of the signifier. On the basis of the sessions of *Séminaire II* (27), he wrote a first version of this text, published in 1956 in *La Psychanalyse*. Then, revising its organization and its mathematical part, he wrote a second version in 1966, which he put at the beginning of *Ecrits* (63). In this text, he was looking for a logic of intersubjectivity. For that purpose, he clarified the *Schéma L*. (27), and, most importantly, he elaborated, on the basis of the game of odds and evens present in Poe’s story, a pure combinatory based on cybernetics. Cybernetics fascinated him more and more. Ultimately, the subject is only the abstract subject of this combinatory, indeed its product. In 1964 (58) Lacan said that he “had substituted the simplest succession to the randomness of a binary alternation.” Depending on the perspective, the letter is the message, the simplest element of writing (the alphabet), the symbol of a pact, an “immense female body,” the phallus in its function of desire and power, or litter. This leads us to *L’Instance de la lettre* (35) or to *La Subversion du sujet* (46), and also to the future *objet a*, the cause of desire (52).

32

1956 (33 pp.)—SITUATION DE LA PSYCHANALYSE ET FORMATION DU PSYCHANALYSTE EN 1956 (THE SITUATION OF PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE PSYCHOANALYST’S TRAINING IN 1956)

Lacan gave a talk at Sainte-Anne (30) for the centenary of Freud’s birth, and he wrote this article for the special issue of *Etudes Philosophiques*. From the start, his position is clear: “To use the terms by which Freud defined [analytic experience] not as precepts, but as concepts that are appropriate for these terms.” In a rather Manichaean way, this polemical text assails the unfaithful and their nullity (they are accused of not having elaborated “a single new notion”), while seriousness and lyricism are on Lacan’s side. He is the only faithful one in his audacity: “The operation that consists in waking up, an operation based on the words of the Master in a return to the life of his word, can be equated with the care for a decent sepulchre.”

Lacan was never done attacking “the others.” Hence, when he rewrote his

text in 1966, he added a satirical allegory of official analytic communities. The *Sufficiencies* [*Suffisances*], the *Small Shoes* [*Petits Souliers*], the *Necessary Goods* [*Biens Nécessaires*], and the *Beatitudes* [*Béatitudes*] share the different roles, when the *Un en Plus*, which “must also be *Un Sans Plus*,” emerges because “*Un-Encore* would be *Un de Trop*.”^f “The O of the word oracle” is joined with “the One of a Verdict” in an “organization which forces speech to make its way between these two walls of silence, in order to conclude the wedding of confusion and arbitrariness.” How should we read such a flight of oratory in 1984, after the 1963 split and the misadventures of the Ecole Freudienne founded by Lacan? As for the rest of the text, it is a brilliant digest of the theses of the time (31, 35), compiled by a Lacan who assumed ironically his title of “Gongora of psychoanalysis.”

33

1956–1957—SEMINAIRE IV: LA RELATION D’OBJET ET LES STRUCTURES FREUDIENNES (SEMINAR IV: OBJECT RELATIONS AND FREUDIAN STRUCTURES)—Summaries: 1956–1958—Anonymous version: 1981

From the start, Lacan attacked at its very basis the theory of object relations defended by the S.P.P. in its collective work *La Psychanalyse aujourd’hui* (edited by Nacht, 1956). In fact, Freud did not care about the object but about the “lack of the object.” This lack has nothing to do with the *frustration* invented by unfaithful successors. It is a matter of a *renunciation* that involves, from the start, the law of the Father because, “between the mother and the child, Freud introduced a third and imaginary term whose signifying role is a major one, the *phallus*.” The study is based on the function of the object in phobia and in fetishism (Freud’s *Little Hans*, *A Child is being Beaten*, his study of *da Vinci*, and the observation of a little girl by one of Anna Freud’s students). This seminar offers imaginary solutions to the “gap” [*béance*] produced by the appearance of the phallus “as that which is lacking in the mother, in the mother and the child, and between the mother and the child,” because the father, alone, is the “bearer” or the “possessor” of the phallus. Hence, Lacan establishes three modes of relation to this object that is paradoxical because it has a “symbolic vocation”: frustration, the “imaginary damage [*dam*] done to a real object, the penis as organ”; deprivation, the “real lack [hole] created by the loss of a symbolic object, the phallus as signifier”; and castration, the “symbolic debt in the register of the law and the loss of the phallus as imaginary object.”

The mother thus falls “from the Symbolic to the Real” while the objects, through the mediation of the phallus, “from Real become Symbolic.” Such a fall of the mother leads to the structuring preference for the father. Lacan

f. Lacan played here with *Un en Plus* (one more) and *Un Sans Plus* (just one, one without any more) on the one hand, and with *Un-Encore* (one-still, one-again) and *Un De Trop* (one too many) on the other.

wondered about the way in which “the feminine object conceives the object-relation.” He talks of motherhood, of love, and of a case of homosexuality (Freud 1920) in which he sees a type of relation to lack and to the father. Thus, this seminar tackles the major theses of Lacan’s works concerning sexual difference—and it does so in terms that are sometimes so firm and cutting that one wonders what was really at stake for the author. The doctrine would become more systematized starting with *Les Formations de l’inconscient* (36). In his intransigence he ignored some contributions of M. Klein, Bouvet, and Winnicott (on “transitional objects”), and he left the question of the part-object open. Hence, in the 1960s, the notion of *objet a*, the cause of desire, would be added to that of the phallus.

34

1957 (22 pp.)—LA PSYCHANALYSE ET SON ENSEIGNEMENT
(PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ITS TEACHING)

After the war, on Jean Wahl’s initiative, all the celebrities of the avant-garde were invited to talk at the Société Française de Philosophie. In February 1957, it was Lacan’s turn and he summarized his positions. The argument, distributed before the session, provided the main points. The first part, “La psychanalyse, ce qu’elle nous enseigne” (What psychoanalysis teaches us), combines three assertions: “In the unconscious, it speaks”; the symptom is “symbolic”; and psychoanalysts today betray Freud, whether they focus on social environment or on the ego. Then: “However, . . . how can we teach him?” Against analytic literature, too confined in the imaginary of the dual relation, Lacan looks for a formalization that would finally establish psychoanalysis as a science. Such is the role of the return to Freud. The symbolic chain must be located in its three dimensions: a life story lived as history; the subjection to the laws of language, alone capable of producing the overdetermination and the “intersubjective game where truth enters the real”; finally, the locus of the *big Other* [*grand Autre*], the locus of truth and of the pact. It is precisely in the locus of the Other that the analyst is situated in therapy. The end of the argument, more cautious, takes some distance from the scientific project: “The big Other is only half-way in a quest of which we know nothing, the quest for something beyond analysis.” The only training the analyst can transmit is a *style*.

Something is new in this lecture: Lacan denied making a “reactionary discovery.” Nothing, he says, contradicts “the vast dialectic that makes us the slaves of history.” “The second birth in the order of language and universal discourse . . . repeats men’s alienation in the adventures of production.” Did he really believe this? (24)

What about puns? M. Klein was a “woman of genius” and “a tripe butcher” [*tripièrre*]. Or else: down with the analysts who prefer “imaginary *fellatio*” [*fellatio imaginaire*] over “symbolic *filiatio*” [*filiatio symbolique*]! . . .

35

1957 (36 pp.)—L'INSTANCE DE LA LETTRE DANS L'INCONSCIENT OU LA RAISON DEPUIS FREUD (THE AGENCY OF THE LETTER IN THE UNCONSCIOUS OR REASON SINCE FREUD)

This difficult text, written after a talk given at the Sorbonne for students in philosophy, systematizes everything that had been explored in the seminars II (27), III (30), and IV (33). The term *letter* comes from *The Purloined Letter* (31). It tries to localise the signifier and to turn it into a sort of inscription in the unconscious. Here, such an inscription belongs to the order of a "seal," and it will later become "the unbroken line" ["*le trait unaire*"] in *L'Identification* (50). As for the *agency* [*l'instance*], it refers to the law (that of sexual difference), but it plays with the term "insistence" in order to recall "repetition," the characteristic of the signifying chain in the unconscious. The earlier theoretical elaborations shed light on this text because they proceeded more by trial and error, but it is this text that really shows how much Lacan has transformed linguistic, ethnological, or philosophical notions by transporting them into his own field of experience. Three parts clearly indicate the way Lacan was following: "The meaning of the letter," "The letter in the unconscious," and "The letter, being, and the other." Moreover, concrete analyses support the theorization: examples borrowed from Saussure, Jakobson, or Hugo—and the story of the children at the train station, in front of the bathrooms with the letters L/G (Ladies/Gentlemen).

A definitive assertion is made: "The unconscious is neither primordial nor instinctual; what it knows about the elementary is no more than the elements of the signifier." What was Lacan's aim? Beyond speech (in the Freudian and Heideggerian sense), it was "the entire structure of language that psychoanalytic experience discovers in the unconscious." In a kind of infinite race, he wanted to grasp the mechanism of "the machine" that "directs the director himself" (the *Deus ex machina* often invoked). He ran the risk, as he knew, of meeting only "the obscene, ferocious figure of the primordial father, not to be exhausted in the expiation of Oedipus' blindness." For him, the resistance to analysis is less situated on the side of sexuality than on the side of "this abyss opened up to the thought that a thought might be heard in the abyss." The breathtaking series of transformations of Descartes's *Cogito ergo sum* is precisely meant to explore such an abyss. What intimate drama does this text cover, to the point that the author chooses over everything (over what exactly?) to give the following definition of the unconscious: a memory that can be compared to that of "modern thinking-machines" where can be "found the chain that *insists* on reproducing itself in the transference, and which is the chain of *dead desire*"?

Against "the embroidery of pseudo-Freudianism [*fofreudisme*]" (Lacan's first play on writing), this discourse goes down to the hell of the signifier in order to come back to Heidegger's sovereign speech. Lacan concludes with

“T,t,y,m,p,t,” which, according to J.-A. Miller, stands for *Tu t’y es mis un peu tard* (You started a little late).

36

1957–1958—SEMINAIRE V: LES FORMATIONS DE L’INCONSCIENT (SEMINAR V: THE FORMATIONS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS)—SUMMARIES: 1957–1959

Research continued with the analyses of *jokes* as verbal productions (Freud’s *famillionär* [famillionairely] or Gide’s *miglionnaire* and of *the forgetting of words* (Freud’s “Signorelli”). In the first case, with metaphor, the play of signifiers creates sense in nonsense in relation to truth. The second case reveals the lack of a word, “an item of waste sent like a ball between code and message.” In this lack substitute words appear and function like “the metonymic ruins of the object.” At the junction between psychoanalysis and linguistics, Lacan wanted to formalize the primordial laws of the unconscious that Freud uncovered in his early works. His project was to define a *topology* of the levels of functioning of the signifier in the subject, by elaborating the graphs that, under the name of *graphs of desire*, would be at the core of *Subversion du sujet* (46).

The subject is dependent on the recognition of the Other who embodies “the legitimacy of the code,” for he alone can ratify a word as a joke, as stupidity, or as madness. By means of the Other, Lacan moves on to the analysis of the Oedipus complex. Three stages structure the constitution of the subject. First, the *paternal metaphor* acts intrinsically because of the primacy given to the phallus by culture. Then, the father intervenes as the one who deprives the mother: it is to her that he addresses the message “You will not reintegrate your product” (the child as phallic object), while the child subject receives “a message on the message,” in the form of “You will not sleep with your mother,” which liberates him while depriving him of the object of his desire. From the alternative “To be or not to be the phallus,” he can move to the alternative “To have or not to have it.” The third moment—the exit out of the Oedipus complex—requires the intervention of the “permissive and generous” father who, preferred over the mother, gives birth to the ideal of the ego. It is in this context that the problems of the becoming boy or girl and of the inverted Oedipus complex are raised. Most of the doctrine developed by Lacanian literature (especially in child analysis), by intellectual circles, and by the media, can be found here. The “return to Freud” is a return to a strict definition of parental roles in an “androcentric society.”

37

1957–1958 (53 pp.)—D’UNE QUESTION PRELIMINAIRE A TOUT TRAITEMENT POSSIBLE DE LA PSYCHOSE (ON A QUESTION PRELIMINARY TO ANY POSSIBLE TREATMENT OF PSYCHOSIS)—1958

Contrary to the author’s claim, this is not a mere digest of the first two semesters of his seminar on *Les Psychoses* (30). Rather, it is a synthesis focused on

the term *foreclosure* that concluded the seminar. However, this is an even broader synthesis because one finds here traces of *Les Formations de l'inconscient* (36), not to mention the *Schema L.* of intersubjective dialectic (27, 31), which is simplified here. A new *Schema R* tries to articulate the imaginary triad with the symbolic triad, both of which cut the "quadrangle of reality." Reality? The term is still ambiguous, for it could designate what makes our relation to the world (from daily life to science) as well as the Real as inaccessible. This scheme R is elaborated here in terms of its particular form in psychosis (Schreber); later, *Kant avec Sade* (51) would elaborate its perverse version. Thus, Lacan was clearly more and more concerned with creating the formal bases of his theory before addressing the problems of the treatment of psychosis, which were indeed deferred to a future beyond this text. One has to change the way one "understands," hence the demonstrative character of the composition in five points: *Towards Freud* (a historical assessment), *After Freud* (the catastrophic assessment of the succession), *With Freud* and *Schreber's Way* (the main part of his teaching), and *Post-Scriptum*.

But what is the "preliminary question"? It seems to be the question of the Other, whose presence commands everything else. He is the locus from which the subject is confronted with the question of his existence (sexuation and death). When the *paternal metaphor* does not allow the subject to evoke the signification of the phallus (39), when the response to the call of the *Name-of-the-Father* is a lack of the signifier itself, then it is a case of psychosis. What is the Other? Is it the unconscious where "it speaks"? Is it the locus of memory that conditions the indestructibility of certain desires? Is it the locus where the signifier of signifiers is the phallus? Is it the locus symbolized by the Name-of-the-Father, since "the Oedipus complex is consubstantial with the unconscious"? In any case, the ignorance and the denial of the opponents "does not prevent [the Other] from existing" in its place of Other, Lacan said, thereby repeating, after Freud, Charcot's joke. Finally, he summarized his theory of man in an elliptical form that would generate countless commentaries:

$$\frac{\text{Name-of-the-Father}}{\text{Desire of the Mother}} \cdot \frac{\text{Desire of the Mother}}{\text{Signified to the subject}} \rightarrow \text{Name-of-the-Father} \frac{(O)}{\text{Phallus}}$$

However, one may wonder about the value of a model that claims to define psychosis in general, based on Schreber and only a few cases of paranoia. This might be a repetition of the misunderstanding between Freud (paranoia) and the Zurich School (schizophrenia).

38

1958 (26 pp.)—JEUNESSE DE GIDE OU LA LETTRE DU DESIR
(GIDE'S YOUTH OR THE LETTER OF DESIRE)

In *Critique*, Georges Bataille's journal, Lacan praised the two volumes devoted by J. Delay to Gide's youth, *La Jeunesse d'André Gide* (1956–1957),

while J. Schlumberger acted as a foil with his *Madeleine et André Gide* (1956). This subtle analysis deserves its place in Gidian studies and in literary psychoanalytic criticism, but it can also familiarize readers with the Lacanian doctrine. Why is this text whose style is very effective so neglected by Lacanians? It may be because Lacan shamelessly compromised himself with *psychobiography*: "With Delay, psychology finds a unique confrontation with literary discipline. The lesson is striking because we can see the gradual organization, in its very rigor, of the constitution of the subject." The psychiatrist, who would be a truer psychoanalyst than actual psychoanalysts, would not be doing applied psychoanalysis but would be looking for "a psychoanalytic method of reading." This text brings to mind the study of Goethe in *Le Mythe du névrosé* (22), another neglected text. Whether in his fictional works or in his miscellaneous papers (letters, notes, journal, etc.), Gide raised "a problem that is so personal that it is the very problem of the notion of the person," the problem of being [*l'être*] and seeming [*le paraître*]. Delay read by Lacan would reveal "the mirage of psychology and of the letter" where the writer knows more about the disease from which he suffers than the specialist (at least when his name is Janet).

Little by little, another history of the subject, Gide, is reconstructed, a history that stresses the labyrinth of identifications, "the components of the mother's discourse," the disappearance in death of the father's "word" that "humanizes desire," the child Gide between "masturbatory eroticism" and "the pure voice of death," the unconsummated marriage with the cousin-wife, and the drama of the letters she burnt. Everything leads to the following statement: "Desire is lack and cannot in any way be weighed or placed in the balance, except on the scales of logic." Of course, it is the logic of the unconscious and the signifier. Gide's family romance fit perfectly with Lacan's theory of the family.

39

1958 (11 pp.)—LA SIGNIFICATION DU PHALLUS (THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE PHALLUS)—1966

Originally, this text was a lecture given at the Max Planck Institute in Munich, where Lacan had been invited by Professor Matussek who himself had come to Paris to talk about "the psychotherapy of schizophrenics." The lecture had, as Lacan said, "incredible effects" because of "certain terms" that "we were the first to extract from Freud." All the research accomplished during the seminars on *La Relation d'objet* (33) and *Les Formations de l'inconscient* (36) culminated here. This is why, in order to know everything about the (Lacanian) phallus, it is necessary to read this text, a real war machine against the other analytic theories of the time. The alternative seems ineluctable: *either* the Mother *or* the Father. To choose the Mother means to be condemned to the dependency of the *demand*, while the Father constitutes the

access to *desire*, hence to salvation. If the Father *must* be preferred to the Mother, if the Father is the origin and the representative of culture (and of the Law), it is because he possesses the phallus that he can give or refuse. This absolute primacy of the phallus—the single emblem of Man—has been the real doctrinal basis of Lacanians, who have often turned it into a dogma. Some of the expressions are famous: “The phallus is the signifier of signifiers,” “the privileged signifier of that mark in which the role of the logos is joined with the advent of desire,” its function “touches on its most profound relation: that in which the Ancients embodied the Nous (the Mind) and the Logos (speech, discourse, reason),” etc. Why such a privilege? The answer is given as follows: “this signifier is chosen as the most tangible element in the real of sexual copulation”; “it is the most symbolic in the literal sense,” since it “is equivalent to the logical copula”; “it is, by virtue of its turgidity, the image of the vital flow as it is transmitted in generation.” As Freud said, there is only one libido—and it is masculine in nature. One understands how Lacan could later assert that “there is no sexual relation” (*il n’y a pas de rapport sexuel*, in the sense of proportion or relation): one sex counts for both sexes. But the phallus can only appear as “veiled,” as in the painting of the Villa of Mysteries in Pompei . . .

40

1958 (51 pp.)—LA DIRECTION DE LA CURE ET LES PRINCIPES DE SON POUVOIR (THE DIRECTION OF THE TREATMENT AND THE PRINCIPLES OF ITS POWER) 1961

Nowhere else did Lacan try as hard to communicate to analysts coming from different perspectives what constitutes the ethics, the concepts, and the interrogations of his practice. He made an effort to situate himself in the global field of psychoanalytic thinking (there was even a bibliography), he revealed his desire for pedagogical clarity, mentioning concrete problems and numerous examples. Paradoxically, this address, which was meant for a limited public (the audience of the International Colloquium in Royaumont, organized by the S.F.P.) seems to me to be a good introduction (for the general public) to his thinking of the time. The dream of the Beautiful Butcher’s Wife (Freud) allows him to define hysterical desire as the model of human desire (the subject’s desire is the desire of the Other), and desire as “metonymy of the lack-to-be” whose dream would be metaphor. Elsewhere, relatively simple formulations discuss the unconscious as a structure of signifiers and analyze fantasy or primary identification, here based on the mother’s Demand.

The text is violently polemical: analytic literature is assimilated to “the pile of dung from the Augean stables” in front of which Leonardo’s St John stands with his finger raised. Mistakes are always attributed to others while the author claims “to hear and understand” and not “to auscultate”: “My listening is one of understanding [*entendement*].” The suggested solutions

are then discussed, whether it is a matter of transference, or interpretation, or of the ultimate rule: “*One must take desire literally.*” However, many of the problems that are raised are important ones: the fact that Freud did not necessarily “cure” his patients while making “the discoveries on which we live”; the patient’s acting-out, linked to the analyst’s *passage à l’acte*; the analyst’s desire producing in the subject an effect in which “that which is not forbidden can become mandatory”; the money given in exchange for a “nothing” that the analyst does not even give. Ultimately, *who is the analyst?* He is the one who must “pay with words,” “pay with his person” and “with that which is essential in his most intimate judgment, in order to intervene in an action that goes to the heart of being.”

41

1958–1959—SEMINAIRE VI: LE DESIR ET SON INTERPRETATION (SEMINAR VI: DESIRE AND ITS INTERPRETATION)—Summaries 1959–1960—On *Hamlet* 1981–1983—ANONYMOUS VERSION 1981

Desire has to be placed at the heart of analytic theory and practice: the title does not indicate a mere juxtaposition of the two terms, but also ties them around the essential function of language. Desire, if the libido is its psychic energy, indicates man’s dependency on the signifiers that constitute him. This is what the treatment, based on speech, must make clear beyond the patient’s *demand*. Lacan even says that “desire is its own interpretation.”

The best way to approach this seminar may be to read the seven lessons on *Hamlet* published by J.-A. Miller in *Ornicar?*: after Freud, Jones, and Ella Sharpe, Lacan offered a new interpretation. *Hamlet* is the “tragedy of desire”: this is why, Lacan says, “we are in the midst of clinical experience.” What is this “bird-catcher’s net in which man’s desire is articulated according to the coordinates of Freud, Oedipus, and castration”? The structural analysis of the play, which orders not only the characters’ positions but also the succession of events, should lead us to “situate the meaning and direction [*le sens*] of desire.” The enigma is that of Hamlet’s inability to act: he cannot kill Claudius (his father’s killer, his mother’s lover, and the usurper), he cannot love Ophelia, “he cannot want.” When, at the end, he discovers his desire—by fighting with Laertes in the hole that has been dug out to bury Ophelia—this revelation is ineluctably linked to the death in which they all disappear. Fascinated by this tragedy, Lacan devoted to it his best pages. They shed light on what is, for him, the masculine drama of desire and, more deeply, the anxiety of the “To be or not to be.” What is, then, this “hopeless truth of modern man”?

On the Father’s side, the disappointment is beyond remedy: “*There is no Other of the Other.*” The dead King wanders in quest of an impossible redemption. The Other, locus of truth, does not contain the signifier that could be the guarantor of such Truth. The phallus is unavailable in the Other (which

is translated by the sign: $-\Phi$). This was an important turn in Lacanian thinking, which explains the desperate tone of the next seminar on ethics, *L'Éthique* (43). What if the masculine subject turns toward his mother to love her woman's "dignity"? Then he comes up against what she manifests of her desire: "not desire, but a gluttony that is an engulfing." "*The horror of femininity*" rules over the play and hits Ophelia, the virgin fiancée, in the face. For Lacan, this character is a "fascinating" figure because, he says, she embodies "the drama of the feminine object caught in the snare of masculine desire," but above all because she is at the same time the object and the touchstone of desire: *objet a* (part object) of desire and phallus (present in Ophelia). The two terms are not clearly distinguished and, if Ophelia can only be discovered in mourning—"I loved Ophelia"—such mourning is both that of the object and of the phallus. Besides, against *aphanisis* as defined by Jones who tried to find in the fear of being deprived of one's desire a factor common to both sexes, Lacan maintains a radical asymmetry in the relation to the phallic signifier alone. Man "is not without having it" and woman "is without having it." The only object of desire—and at the same time its only signifier—seems indeed to be the phallus, which, alas, only appears "in flashes," during decisive "phallophanias" where death is at the rendez-vous.

42

1959 (21 pp.)—A LA MEMOIRE D'ERNEST JONES: SUR LA THEORIE DU SYMBOLISME (IN MEMORY OF ERNEST JONES: ON THE THEORY OF SYMBOLISM)—1960

The decorum of this memorial tones down the attacks against Jones who had been called the "little child of psychoanalysis." After a few personal and historical reminders, Lacan tackles the theoretical divergences. If he pays homage to Jones for choosing Freud against Jung, he also stresses his numerous mistakes, especially concerning the function of language. For *symbolism* one must substitute *Symbolic*: "As the *need* is submitted to the *demand*, it is the concrete incidence of the signifier that, by repressing *desire* into the position of being misknown [*méconnu*], gives its order to the unconscious." Many pages address the question of the phallus. The author attacks Jones's articles on sexual difference (1927 and 1932) and his address to the Society of Vienna (1935), in which, joining "Melanie Klein's genetism of fantasies," he would have largely contributed to misleading all psychoanalytic thought in the direction of symbolism. Only Lacan's 1953 Discourse in Rome would have finally broken the malevolent spell. The seminars often present Jones as "the champion of English feminists": he is accused of practicing "figure skating" in order to take the opposite view of Freud's positions on the phallic phase, while claiming to be in perfect agreement. Elsewhere, his Protestantism seems to be responsible for his "misconstructions" [*méconnaissances*]. In any case, he did not see that "the only notion that allows understanding of

the symbolism of the phallus is the specificity of its function as signifier” and “as signifier of lack” (39, 41). However, in the end he is saved in spite of himself. His study on Punchinello truly reveals the winged phallus, the “unconscious fantasy of male desire’s impossibilities, the treasure in which woman’s infinite impotence [*impuissance*] is exhausted.”

43

1959–1960 (491 pp.)—SEMINAIRE VII: L’ETHIQUE DE LA PSYCHANALYSE (SEMINAR VII: THE ETHICS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS)—Anonymous version: 1981; Official version: 1986

Lacan’s certainty that a mission needed to be accomplished sustains this seminar and gives it an overall unity. He was responding to two pressures: to define in all their rigor the true *ethical foundations of psychoanalysis*; but, even more, to construct, thanks to the discoveries of psychoanalysis, an “*ethics for our time*,” an ethics that would finally prove to be equal to the tragedy of modern man and to the “discontent in civilization” (Freud). The two addresses on the same themes given in March 1960 at the Catholic University of Brussels confirm the messianic tone of his teaching. The truth of the human condition is an unbearable horror: the irreparable calamity of being born, the indelible sin, the *déréliction*, the nightmare of the incomprehensible desire of the Father, the nightmare of *the Thing* of which one is the prey and that is the mortal “gap” [*béance*] of our being, etc. Such are the most basic and obvious facts. However, how many people refuse to see them! An uncompromising duty is therefore Lacan’s: to confront such a truth and to announce it to everybody, no matter what the cost might be, without flagging and without expecting any other reward than that of not having failed in his most personal conviction. Until his death, he always wanted to write the message of this seminar himself; however, the quasi-legacy remained unfinished. Even if the transcription is controversial, its reading remains necessary for anyone who wants to grasp the doctrinal principles of Lacanian theory and practice.^g

At the root of the ethics, one must locate *desire*, but desire marked by the indelible stamp of the *fault* (in the two senses of crime and lack).^h Lacan rejects Hesnard’s expression, “the morbid universe of sin” [*l’univers morbide de la faute*], which is the title of one of his books. If analytic experience can reduce morbidity, there is no way it could obliterate [*volatiliser*] sin. Those confessors who are too quick to send their penitents to the doctor should remember this. Analysis’s only promise is austere: it is “the entrance-into-

g. The official version of this seminar appeared in 1986, published by Seuil.

h. To render the French *faute*, by fault, is only an approximate translation because, although both the original and the translation convey the idea of lack, the English *fault* also conveys the idea of a “failing,” whereas in French *faute* is used in the sense of a misdeed, an offense, a sin.

the-I" [*l'entrée-en-Je*]. "I must come to the place where the id was," where the patient discovers, in its absolute nakedness, the truth of his desire. One still has to know that this entrance is always missed. What, then, can the end of psychoanalysis be? It is "the purification of desire" that can be achieved "*beyond fear and pity*." Lacan makes three statements, often used by his disciples: one is only guilty of "*having given in on one's desire*"; "the hero is he who can be betrayed with impunity"; goods indeed exist, but "there is no other good than the one that can pay the price of the access to desire," a desire that is only valid insofar as it is the desire to know. Are the exemplary figures he chose enlightening? Freud remains, of course, the Master: he leads us toward Greek tradition. However, if Lacan lauded Oedipus, it is the Oedipus at Colonus who calls down curses before dying—and he associated him with Antigone, walled up alive, who has not given in at all. Both have rejected the *primum vivere* (first, to live) in order to enter the "in-between-two-deaths" [*entre-deux-morts*] where they have gained their immortal greatness. However, Freud was situated here more in "the Judeo-Christian tradition," insofar as, with the primacy of the Name-of-the-Father, he would have picked up the torch of Moses's monotheism. Lacan even appealed to Jones (42) for having placed "Freud's notion of man's destiny under the patronage of the fathers of the Church." On the other hand, Lacan referred to Saint Paul, to Luther, and to the Cathars. These are the precursors he acknowledged for himself. Can we go further in this genealogy? Can we read in this discourse the more secret figure of Christ as the chosen figure, the figure of the perfect son and the most afflicted son? We have discussed this issue in our general presentation.

In any case, since *Hamlet* (41), the analysis of the son's passion (subject) had become more radical. Who is the Father? Here he is the terrible Father; the monstrous Father of the primal horde (Freud's *Totem and Taboo*); Luther's God with "his eternal hatred against men, a hatred that existed even before the world was born"; worse, the Father of the law who, according to Saint Paul, leads to temptation: "For me, the very commandment [You shall not covet] which should lead to life has proved to be death to me. For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, seduced me and by it killed me." Lacan specifies, "I have put the *Thing* in the place of *sin*," denouncing the complicity between the Law and the Thing, "which is properly called *Evil*." But what is the Thing against which the Father cannot or does not know how to defend himself? It has nothing to do with the "object," which is created by words. It is the "outside signifier" and also the foreign and hostile "outside signified," a "mute reality" prior to primal repression itself that already puts in its place "the pure signifying web" without being able to hide it. It is the center of the unconscious but it is excluded; it the Real but always represented by an emptiness, the nonthing, the a-thing [*l'a-chose*], the nothing, a hole in the Real from which the Word—the Signifier—creates the world. It is the

locus of deadly *jouissance* sanctioned by the prohibition of incest. Of course, it is associated with the mother who represents it by her “manifest carnality,” and with the woman who, idealized in courtly love, speaks the truth: “I am nothing but the emptiness which is in my cloaca.” Thus, the idea that human sexuality is irremediably distorted already emerges here, foreshadowing the multiple developments of the '70s around the quasi-ritual expression, “There is no sexual relation.” Of course, the woman, who is the Other, has to bear the burden of the curse—although the Thing is settled at the heart of all subjects who have to recognize it. Who am I? “You are the waste that falls in the world through the devil’s anus,” Luther roared. Lacan’s thesis could be summarized with the cliché *le ver est dans le fruit* (literally, the worm is in the fruit, that is, the rot has already set in), but this formulation is obviously not as sparkling. Rather, let us say that salvation only holds on by a thread; the theme of “the exquisiteness [the exquisite character] of the son’s love for the father” would be amplified in 1969 with the reading of Pascal’s *Pari* (71). This father is ultimately a symbolic Father, that is, he is all the more present for being absent, a Father without a body or the glorious body of signifiers, a Father who can only be the object of an act of faith, for “there is no Other of the Other” to guarantee him. In this perspective, sublimation, especially artistic sublimation, is the quest for the encounter with the Thing; the true love for one’s neighbor consists in recognizing in him, as in oneself, the place (and the wound of the Thing. As for disbelief, by rejecting the Thing it makes it reappear in the Real, which is exactly the Lacanian definition of psychosis.

Therefore, Lacan expressed only sarcasm toward “doctor-love” that offers the patient “the ideal of human love,” “authenticity” (the end of lies), and “the ideal of nondependency.” What *he* says is instructional for all: “*the philosopher* might find reasons there to modify the traditional position of hedonism” (whether it is a matter of the search for the sovereign good, for pleasure provided in its temperance, or for the utilitarian conception of goods); “*the man capable of emotion*” will learn there how “to restrain his demand for happiness”; “*the man of duty*” will learn how to reconsider “the illusions of altruism” (including the Christians for whom the precept “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” is the locus of their narcissistic loss); “*the libertine*” will be able to “recognize the Father’s voice in the commandments left intact by His death” (here is where the analyses of Sade, which we will discuss in *Kant avec Sade* (51), are situated); finally, “*the spiritual*” will be able to resituate the Thing around which the nostalgia of desire revolves. However, there is a problem; how are the *objet a*, the Thing, and later the *agalma* in the seminar on transference (47) articulated, not to mention the fact that the phallus is not always clearly distinguished from them?

We have spent some time on this seminar because it seems to enlighten in depth the Lacanian process of thinking: this text functions like a bass accompanying the melodic variations throughout the years. If one pays attention to

it, one can hear it even in the most abstract commentaries on mathemes or in the statutory texts that structure the Ecole Freudienne.

44
1958–1960 (38 pp.)—REMARQUE SUR LE RAPPORT DE DANIEL LAGACHE:
“PSYCHANALYSE ET STRUCTURE DE LA PERSONNALITE” (A COMMENT ON
DANIEL LAGACHE’S REPORT: “PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE STRUCTURE OF
PERSONALITY”)—1961

In 1958, at the Colloquium in Royaumont where Lacan presented *La Direction de la cure* (40), Lagache gave an important theoretical presentation on *Psychanalyse et structure de la personnalité* (Psychoanalysis and the Structure of Personality), and Lacan took part in the discussion that followed. That was the starting point of this text, carefully written two years later for a special issue of *La Psychanalyse*. Besides the author’s foreword (“a piece of writing can only be attested to at the moment of its definitive writing”), the article integrates elements that had been elaborated between 1958 and 1960 in *Le Désir et son interprétation* (41) and *L’Ethique* (43). At this point in time, the two leaders of the S.F.P. still belonged to the same camp, against the opponents of the S.P.P. and the I.P.A. Lacan needed to broaden the audience of his seminars. His tone, therefore, remained polite, in spite of several biting comments. The points of agreement were always stressed before the development of divergences. However, everything tended to show the incompatibility of the two teachings and the superiority of Lacan’s conceptions. The one talked of the “structure of *personality*” and the other, who had abandoned his project of a “science of personality” (2) long ago, responded with the “structure of the *subject*.” The two texts should be read together because a truly essential discussion that goes beyond the psychoanalytic field takes place here. Against what he called “personalist ideology,” Lacan declared that he was resolutely “structuralist” and explained why.

Four subtitles organize the development of the article: “Structure and the subject,” “Where?,” “On the individual’s ideals,” and “For an ethics.” The reader will base his own judgment on the text itself, a detailed controversy and a presentation argued with propositions that claim to be scientific. The *graph of desire*, created in 1957–1958 (36), was about to become the true graph of the (Lacanian) subject, which it would be in the article written at the end of 1960, *Subversion du sujet et dialectique du désir* (46). In the present text, this graph, organizing three types of functioning of the subject, attempts to replace the traditional economic and dynamic points of view in psychoanalysis, ultimately grounded in biology. The optical schema of the *inverted bouquet*, which dated back to 1953–1954 (25), is finally published. Lacan carries on his systematization of the mirror stage, adding new commentaries on the ideal ego, the ideal of the ego, and the relations between the imaginary other and the *objet a*. Finally, the following statement closely follows *L’Ethique* (43) and is in the same vein: “The true subject, the subject of

desire, is nothing other than the Thing that is the closest to him but that, at the same time, eludes him the most.”

In fact, two major concepts are involved in the conflict, structure and intersubjectivity. For Lagache, structure is “a theoretical model” constructed from experience and allowing for a return to experience in a sort of testing process. In this way, it differs from the structure produced by a description conceived as the reproduction of the natural structure of things. Lacan rejects this opposition. For him, if the psychoanalytic field is “the field where it speaks,” “the distance of structure from experience fades,” since structure operates “not as a theoretical model but as the original machine that places the subject in it.” The Real and structure coincide, but in an essential reversal because what prevails are “the effects that the pure and simple combinatory of the signifier determines in the reality where it happens.” To convince us, Lacan gives us his famous model-example, that of the turbine (a pure chain of equations) and of the waterfall in the production of energy. For him, anteriority and supremacy are undoubtedly on the side of signifying organizations and symbolic laws, not on the side of the body and of lived or empirical experiences. Here he was in total agreement with Lévi-Strauss’s principles in ethnology. Far from the relativism accepted by Lagache, which Lacan considered to be timid thinking, Lacan shared with Lévi-Strauss the following ambition: to reach the point where theory *is* the reality it analyzes, not only because it constructs it, but because it produces it, and even more so because it is one and the same with the universal laws of the human mind that are its origin.

All this is not without consequences for the analytic field. Hence, the id [*le ça*], if it is indeed impersonal as Lagache says, is not an aggregate of object relations in which the subject is dispersed; rather, it is an aggregate of signifiers. It exists because “discourse was there, from the beginning, if only in its impersonal presence.” Intersubjectivity defined by Lagache can, therefore, only belong to the order of the Imaginary. It is only defined as exchanges with the surrounding human world, a play of interactions, a mere “For-the-Other” [*Pour-Autru*]. One must restore to it its symbolic dimension by inscribing the locus of the Other as the “transcendental locus” that governs the subject and his relations with others. This brilliant sentence was meant to settle things: On “the Tablets of the Law,” “nothing is written for whomever can read, except the laws of Speech itself.”

Is the Thing not a metamorphosis—a new name—of the id? What exactly is the signifier for Lacan? According to him, the *fading*ⁱ of the subject is not linked, as Lagache believed, to the emergence of thought. It is originally linked to “the suspension of desire,” to the “eclipse” of the subject in the signifier of demand, and to the fascination of the fantasy in which “the subject himself becomes the cut that makes the part object shine in its inexpressible

i. In English in the original.

oscillation." One loses track. So did Lacan. In the seminar on identification, *L'Identification* (50), he tried to define this signifier or this primary signifying operation. The definition remains enigmatic, but for the first time he appealed to mathematical theories of topology. The sentence we just quoted contains in embryo all the developments of the previous twenty years: would those consist of a more in-depth development of the theory or of a desperate movement of escape forward?

45

1960 (15 pp.)—PROPOS DIRECTIFS POUR UN CONGRES SUR LA SEXUALITE FEMININE (GUIDING REMARKS FOR A CONGRESS ON FEMININE SEXUALITY)—1964

In 1959–1960, the S.F.P. devoted part of its work to the investigation of psychoanalytic theories of feminine sexuality, before participating, in September 1960, in the International Colloquium in Amsterdam. Issue 7 of *La Psychanalyse* (1964) included translations of Deutsch, Jones, and Rivière as well as articles by Laurin, Dolto, Granoff, and Perrier. Lacan's text, whose title is significant, opened the volume and summed up the historical and theoretical situation. He said that he wrote it in 1958; indeed this text includes, summarized in a didactic way, theses that had been argued in *La Relation d'objet* (33), *Les Formations de l'inconscient* (36), *La Signification du phallus* (39), *Le Désir et son interprétation* (41), and the article on Jones (42). If he felt the need to revise it, it was indeed because his mind was set about the main points. Contrary to Melanie Klein, Ernest Jones, Karen Horney, and others, he advocates the strictest return to the Freudian doctrine, that is, the primacy of the father, the absolute privilege of the phallus for both sexes, and the existence of one single and male libido. Otherwise, one could not claim to be a Freudian, because one would let one's prejudices speak and would forget what listening to the unconscious teaches.

All the classical themes of feminine sexuality (frigidity, maternity, masochism, and homosexuality) are thus situated in an imperative framework. "We start with the man so as to measure the reciprocal position of the sexes," "and, afterwards, this opens up" a certain problem concerning women, for it is doubtful that one would learn anything by taking woman as a starting point; that is, "the feminine part, if the term has any meaning, of what is played out in the genital relation, in which the act of coitus occupies, to put it no higher, a limited and local place." Woman must assume the position of "the absolute Other" who she is in "the phallogocentric dialectic": "Man acts as the relay whereby woman becomes this Other for herself as she is this Other for him." Remember the "subjective dead end" specific to women (concerning Dora (20)), and the feminine position that is "problematic and, up to a certain point, cannot be assimilated" (30). Here again Lacan refers to homosexuality in order to try to dissociate femininity and passivity: it is analyzed as "the effort

of a *jouissance* wrapped in its own contiguity (and all circumcision might represent its symbolic rupture) in order to be *realized in the envy* [*se réaliser à l'envi*] of the desire that castration releases in the male by giving him its signifier in the phallus." Such is the modernist version of penis envy.

Once these broad lines are sketched, the appraisal of the contribution of psychoanalysis to the knowledge of feminine sexuality is negative; it is an appraisal of ignorance. "The vaginal orgasm has kept the darkness of its nature inviolate," one even wonders whether "the phallic mediation drains off the whole force of the drives in the woman, and notably the whole current of the *maternal instinct*." Lacan adds, "Perhaps we should also state here the fact that everything that can be analyzed is sexual does not entail that everything sexual is accessible to analysis?" Would the feminine be the unanalyzable part of sexuality? Besides, did the author really want ignorance to disappear? A joke leads us to doubt it: "A congress on feminine sexuality is not going to hold over us the threat of Tiresias's fate" (the seer who was changed into a woman for a while). It is, therefore, better to go on asserting that the only possibility offered to psychoanalysts is to study "the incidences of the phallus in the subjective structure" of women, according to the three categories of the Imaginary, the Real, and the Symbolic.

Lacan concludes with very broad questions concerning feminine sexuality and society (or culture), but these questions would never really be followed up. On the other hand, feminine sexuality would haunt the seminars, in relation with the famous expression: "There is no sexual relation." The most well-known text is undoubtedly the 1972–1973 seminar, *Encore* (84). At least in part, it picks up "Freud's often repeated warning not to reduce the supplement of feminine over masculine to the complement of passive to active." It is around this term *supplement* that Lacan would try to find *his* solution to a problem whose givens he tried, above all, to master.

46

1960 (35 pp.)—SUBVERSION DU SUJET ET DIALECTIQUE DU DESIR DANS L'INCONSCIENT FREUDIEN (SUBVERSION OF THE SUBJECT AND DIALECTIC OF DESIRE IN THE FREUDIAN UNCONSCIOUS)—1966

At the colloquium on dialectic organized by Jean Wahl at Royaumont, Lacan defended, in front of an audience of distinguished philosophers, three assertions: psychoanalysis, insofar as it elaborates its theory from its praxis, must have a scientific status; the Freudian discovery has definitively and radically changed the concepts of the subject, of knowledge, and of desire; the analytic field is the only one from where it is possible to efficiently interrogate the insufficiencies or the blind spots of science and philosophy. He adopted a double position on these assertions. In front of nonanalysts he spoke in the name of his analytic experience; among analysts, he was the only one who was truly determined to make up for a certain "theoretical nullity coupled

with abuses in the way in which theory [was] passed on.” Then he made the wager that it would not take him very long to present what indeed had to be called his system.

This text is difficult to grasp both in its formulations and in its articulations, and it functions on several levels: the philosophical level, provided a radical criticism of the philosophical position is made; the mathematical level, provided there is a “distortion of the mathematical algorithm for our use”; the linguistic level, which led Lacan to assert that “language is the condition of the unconscious” (75), with the reservation that “the unconscious is the condition of linguistics” (77); the metaphysical level if one accepts that the analyst “does not have to answer for any ultimate truth” since there is no Other of the Other to guarantee him (41); and finally, the analytical level if one preserves the ambiguity between the discourse in analysis and the discourse about analysis, in which the high level of abstraction requires recourse to concepts of other disciplines. Is this text, then, “half-scientific, half-metaphorical,” as he himself said? This does not mean that the two halves could be juxtaposed to complement each other. It is at once both yet neither quite one nor the other. From this point of view, this article is exemplary of Lacanian writing.

The subject of psychoanalysis is neither Hegel’s absolute subject, nor the abolished subject of science. It is a subject irremediably divided by the emergence of the signifier. Regarding the subject of the unconscious, it is impossible to know who speaks. This subject is merely “the place of the ‘inter-said’ [*inter-dit*],^j which is the ‘intra-said’ [*intra-dit*] of a between-two-subjects,” it is constantly subjected to the effects of fading provoked by “its occultation by an ever purer signifier.” It is “the pure subject of the enunciation,” which the pronoun *I* in a statement indicates but does not signify. The argument produces some nice flights of rhetoric: “An enunciation that denounces itself, a statement that renounces itself, ignorance that dissipates itself, an opportunity that loses itself, what remains here if not the trace of what *must* be in order to fall from being?”

The key concept here is that of *desire*. However, Lacan’s dialectic of desire is very different from Hegel’s. The heart of this text lies in the *graph of desire*, elaborated during the seminar on *Les Formations de l’inconscient* (36) and revised here, improved, and commented upon differently. Lacan wanted to transform this graph into a real *topology* of the different steps constitutive of the subject. In its complete version it is supposed to be the synthesis and the ordering of all previous theorizations since the mirror stage. Ultimately, it is supposed to answer all the questions raised in psychoanalysis. Thus, one can understand why this text is at the center of Lacan’s teaching—with a bonus of

j. *Inter-dit* suggests both “inter-said,” what is said between two subjects, and prohibition, *interdit*.

pleasure (or of consolation): “it is precisely because desire is articulated that it is not articulable.”

One can try to follow this zigzag trajectory of the subject, this poor combatant. One can try to orient oneself in the multiple definitions of the Other, to get interested in the new adventures of the phallus, and to meditate on the answer to the question “Who am I?": “I am in the place from which a voice is heard clamouring ‘the universe is a defect in the purity of Non-Being’.” One may, or may not, be happy that a human being is condemned to talk instead of make love, and one may prefer the statement according to which it is “not the law that bars the subject’s access to *jouissance* but pleasure,” that is, life. Don’t forget the final sentence, added in 1966: “Castration means that *jouissance* must be refused, so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder [*échelle renversée*] of the Law of desire.”

47

1960–1961 (148 pp.)—SEMINAIRE VIII: LE TRANSFERT DANS SA DISPARITE SUBJECTIVE (SEMINAR VIII: TRANSFERENCE IN ITS SUBJECTIVE DISPARITY)—ANONYMOUS VERSION 1981; OFFICIAL VERSION 1991

What is most often quoted from this seminar is the analysis of Plato’s *Symposium* (with Socrates, Alcibiades, Diotima, and Agathon). However, the analysis of Claudel’s trilogy—*L’Otage*, *Le Pain dur* and *Le Père humilié*—is often forgotten, because the link between these two analyses is enigmatic, as they are caught in a flow of allusive, contradictory, or apparently disparate formulations. The question of transference is crucial throughout the present study. Here the title of the seminar can be used as a guiding thread.

This text testifies to a turning point in Lacan’s thinking on transference: before, the emphasis was placed on *repetition*; now, it is placed on *transference love* [*amour de transfert*]. Indeed, both are inseparable, but the perspective changes. For Lacan, to insist on repetition means to refuse to see in the analytic situation an intersubjective relation among others, to be dealt with directly—here and now. Treatment is offered in order to reproduce in it, through and in speech, relationships organized since childhood. In short, what speech constructed in the past can only be deconstructed now by speech. As such, the analytic experience is “a particularly pure symbolic experience” (27). On the individual level, it allows for “the reshaping of the imaginary,” and on the theoretical level, an intersubjective logic can be constructed, a simple schema of the subject with its variations (hysteria, obsession, phobia, perversion, psychosis), which are tools useful for practice. These elements, indeed present in this seminar, are often only implicit. *L’Intervention sur le transfert* (20), *Le Mythe individuel* (22), *Fonction et Champ* (24), and *Les Ecrits techniques* (25) may enlighten many obscure passages.

What does this second perspective reveal? Analysis is described as a “particularly pure” *experience of desire*, hence on the side of sexuality. Speech

has an effect only because there is transference, and to deal with transference is the fundamental function of analysis. Two sentences really show the paradoxical nature of the treatment: "It is in the position that transference gives him that the psychoanalyst intervenes in transference itself" and "Transference is interpreted on the basis of and with the tool of transference itself." This is a classical conception that again grants some importance to the analysis, here and now, of the relationship between the two partners. In *La Direction de la cure* (40) Lacan already considered that counter-transference was the analyst's unavoidable and necessary involvement in the experience in process, and he thus raised the problem of the psychoanalyst's desire. Here, "subjective disparity" becomes a rigorous rule establishing the radical dissymmetry of the two protagonists before desire; this dissymmetry is precisely what the analyzed patient will discover through the disappointment of transference love [*amour de transfert*]. Because in the course of analysis one learns to talk instead of make love, in the end, desire, which has been purified, is no more than the empty place where the (barred) subject has access to the desire for the "forever revealed-revealing discourse." These themes of repetition and transference reappear in *Les Quatre Concepts fondamentaux* (55).

It is indeed surprising that a key issue of psychoanalytic technique is approached only through a reading of a philosophical text, as opposed to *Ecrits techniques* (25) where a lot of space was devoted to case histories. *The Symposium* seems to be the privileged place of an encounter between practice and theory. As early as 1955 (27), O. Mannoni had opposed the assimilation of the analytic dialogue to the Socratic dialogue. Here Lacan comes back to this assimilation and insists on it because it is indeed a matter of a model and not just of a mere illustration. Throughout the text, the analyst's position is identified with Socrates's, which further reinforces the assertion that Freud, like Socrates, chose to serve [*servir*] Eros in order to use it [*s'en servir*], inventing a method that turned him into the Master of Eros. As for Alcibiades, he occupies the position of the analyzed patient who, thanks to Socrates, will discover himself desiring. Even the tactic is similar: "To isolate oneself with an other in order to teach him what he is lacking and, by the nature of transference, he will learn what he is lacking insofar as he loves: I am not here for his Good, but for him to love me," and for me to disappoint him. The adventure begins. . . .

Lacan chooses a homosexual model, in order, he says, to avoid "that which is too complicated in love with women." Sexual difference thus is erased from the start. The two masculine partners are "two partners in the neutral" thanks to "the something through which the male gender is naturally expressed at the level of the couple formed by the lover and the loved one." Alcibiades desires because he thinks that Socrates possesses the *agalma* (the brilliant object, the fetish, the part object of desire, the phallus as desirable). But

Socrates refuses the position of loved object in order to assert himself as lacking, that is, desiring, a subject of desire. As a matter of fact, for Lacan, desire never takes place between two subjects but between a subject and an overvalorized being who, in fact, has fallen to the state of an object. The only possible way to discover the other as subject is “to recognize that the other speaks an articulated language, a combinatory, and responds to ours with his own combinations; thus, the other cannot fit into our calculations as someone who combines like us.” Socrates, by shying away from Alcibiades’ declaration, by refusing to mask his lack with a fetish, and by showing him Agathon as the true object of his love, shows the psychoanalyst how to behave; such is the other aspect of “the subjective disparity” that must take place in the ideal analysis (between two males?). Although sexual difference is erased here, “to give what one does not have” is however not reserved to women, and sexual difference is in play between men. The discrepancy comes from the fact that there is no relationship between what the one possesses and what the other lacks. Then, the phallus, from being the part object [*objet a*], the imaginary object, finally emerges as the signifier of signifiers, and then as “the only signifier that deserves, in our register and in the form of the absolute signifier, the role of *symbol*.” “It designates, beyond all possible signification, this real presence that permits identification, the origin of the Ideal-of-the-Ego on the side of the Other, a flat mirror that no longer has anything to do with the mirror stage. It thus operates between counterparts.

However, there is a woman who speaks in *The Symposium*—Diotima, who expresses herself in the form of myth. For Lacan she is Socrates’s feminine voice. It is, he says, “as if I let Françoise Dolto speak to describe to us psychoanalytic theory.” In the fable where female lack is confronted with male resources, the feminine first has an active role before the eminently desirable masculine. The reversal takes place because in love one only gives what one does not have: the masculine, by shying away from the demand, reveals himself as a subject of desire. Later, Lacan would make Socrates the true model of hysterical discourse, but also of analytic discourse, because he reaches the knowledge (the episteme) of love.

The analyst is the one who has managed to provoke “a mutation in the economy of his desire.” He has access both to the unconscious and to the experience of the unconscious because, like Socrates, he has confronted the desire for death in order to gain access to that in which he becomes eternal, the “between-two-deaths” [*entre-deux-morts*]. If he has placed the signifier in the position of the absolute, then he has abolished “fear and trembling” in himself. His motto is not “You shall love your neighbor like yourself” but “You shall love above all in your soul what is most essential to you,” or else “One puts one’s desire aside in order to preserve what is the most precious, the phallus, the symbol of desire.” Desire is only its empty place. It is in this

way, taking up some issues of *L'Éthique* (43) again, that Lacan approaches Claudel's trilogy. He opens a kind of passage from Plato to Claudel, which would assimilate Socrates and Alcibiades with the Father and the Son in the Christian trinity whose third term is the symbolic mystery of love. However, the Father figure is cruel. The character Sygne de Coûfontaine in Claudel's trilogy is put in the place of the sacrificed Christ. According to Lacan, what created a scandal is the fact that she crossed the very limits of the second death. Most of the analysis is devoted to the father-son (sometimes daughter) relationship over three generations. Anxiety originates from the Father's enigmatic cruelty and from his degradation already noted in *Hamlet* (41), which Lacan still seems to attribute to the separation of the function of speech and of the function of love for the Father (22). We will limit ourselves here to these few landmarks.

48

1961 (4 pp.)—LA METAPHORE DU SUJET (THE METAPHOR OF THE SUBJECT)—1961

In 1960, Pérelman gave a presentation at the Société Française de Philosophie on "The Idea of Rationality and the Rule of Justice." Lacan asked him a question on metaphor, thereby showing that he knew Pérelman's *Traité sur l'argumentation* and its attempt to formalize rhetoric. He acknowledged his debt at the very moment when he radically modified Pérelman's equation. Lacan's question was basically, Do you agree with my own theory and my new algebraic formulas? This short text is the only one in the second edition of *Écrits* in which a student is mentioned. It sheds light on other texts and is enlightened by them. It is an important part of the Lacanian jigsaw of metaphor.

Lacan saves the four-term functioning from Pérelman and the distinction between metaphor and image, but he refuses, he says, to reduce metaphor to the function of analogy. For that purpose, instead of opposing terms two by two, between *theme* and *phor* (the upholding signifying element), he opposes three signifiers to a single signified. Lacan powerfully states that metaphor is the substitution of a signifier for another signifier "without any natural predestination" and without the intervention of any signified. Thus Pérelman's example "Un océan de fausse science" ("An ocean of false learning") becomes:

$$\frac{\text{an ocean}}{\text{learning}} \text{ of } \frac{\text{false}}{X} \rightarrow \text{an ocean } \left(\frac{1}{?} \right)^k$$

The question mark is supposed to figure "a new kind of signification," "the irremediable and unimaginable falsity of any signified put in that place," a sort of "abyss of the imaginary." This is rather confusing. It may be useful to link this formula with the one that already defined the constitution of the

k. In English in the original.

subject in the text on psychosis in 1958 (37), a text in which Lacan did not mention P erelman and a text that he does not mention here:

$$\frac{\text{Name-of-the-Father}}{\text{Desire of the Mother}} \cdot \frac{\text{Desire-of-the-Mother}}{\text{Signified to the subject}} \rightarrow \text{Name-of-the-Father} \frac{\text{O}}{\text{PHALLUS}}$$

This formula explains the title *M taphore du sujet* and stresses the substitution of the question mark for the phallus in the position of single signified of the equation.

The heterogeneous character of the arguments suggests that Lacan may not have been all that sure of his theory of metaphor. He refers us to *L'Instance de la lettre* (35), but remember that, between the 1960 talk and the 1961 text, there was *Subversion du sujet* (46) and most importantly the Colloquium at Bonneval on *L'Inconscient* where metaphor had already been the starting point of a conflict with his student Laplanche concerning the relationship between language and the unconscious; which one is the condition of the other? In 1964 (hence after the second split), Lacan reaffirmed his doctrine in *Position de l'inconscient* (56), and again in 1969 (74): "It is language that is the condition of the unconscious." Thus, it is interesting to read these different texts together.

49

1961 (10 pp.)—MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY—1961

Younger than Lacan and a professor at the Coll ge de France since 1953, the philosopher died suddenly in May 1961. *Les Temps modernes*, where he published from the beginning, devoted a special issue to him. Lacan's tribute is ambiguous, to say the least. The grandiloquence of the funeral oration at the beginning and at the end contrasts with a presentation numbered in twelve points, which is, for the main part, a critique of *La Ph nom nologie de la perception* (1945). Although he had praised him in 1953–1954 (26), as early as the following year (27), he had denounced Merleau-Ponty's humanist position—"one can see where it leads him." Here, "his intention [is] covered and restrained by the properly academic link, even if impatiently put to the test, even if broadened in public debate." One year after this text (50) and then again in 1964, at the rue d'Ulm (55), Lacan started attacking again, to the great pleasure of the novice philosophers of the time. In any case, the present text—especially regarding the "body as sexed being" and "the body as expression of speech"—placed Merleau-Ponty among the backward thinkers of the metaphysics of the subject and of the body, as opposed to the innovators of the primacy of the signifier and of structure. Is this text a critical reading of Merleau-Ponty? Is its violence poorly veiled by the mask of argumentation? Or is it an irreparable misunderstanding?

Rather, it offers a presentation of Lacan's doctrine. Contrary to the philosopher's concept of the "sensible," improperly reduced to the traditional

perceptum, Lacan asserts that the body has no place in psychoanalysis. Contrary to the philosopher's reading of Sade, Lacan gives his own, already sketched in *L'Éthique* (43) and later to be developed in *Kant avec Sade* (51). There is even disagreement concerning the relationship between art and desire (in painting): "The eye is meant not to see"; the artist "gives us access to the place of that which cannot be seen: it would still remain to be named"—and this foreshadows *Les Quatre Concepts* (55).

To assert an opposition between psychoanalysis and philosophy would be simplistic. To assert an opposition between a quest for the "purity" of the signifier on the one hand, and a research grounded in the body and in a concrete relation to the world on the other hand would be even more so. Furthermore, Lacan refuses to bet on life against death; rather, he bets on the greatness of "between-two-deaths" against a radically devaluated life (43, 47). The fundamental positions of the two thinkers are irreconcilable.

50

1960–1961 (550 pp.)—SEMINAIRE IX: L'IDENTIFICATION (SEMINAR IX: IDENTIFICATION)—ANONYMOUS VERSION 1981

Lacan declared that, after having alternated the themes of the subject and that of the signifier in his teaching up to this point, he finally studied the very relation of the subject to the signifier in *L'Identification*. He also acknowledged the "dryness" of this seminar, which he nevertheless considered to be necessary.

At the end of the seminar on *Le Transfert* he had defined the three types of identification isolated by Freud. The first one is a primitive identification with the father as such, a "virile exquisiteness" even before the rivalry in the desire for the mother, an identification based on a single characteristic feature, the matrix of the ideal-of-the-ego, the symbolic introjection of the father's mark. Ultimately, it is an incorporation that comes close to the semitic religious theme according to which "an identity of body links the Father of all times to all those who descend from Him," a theme that becomes that of the mystical body in Christianity. The second identification is the regressive identification in love relations; the object refuses itself, therefore one identifies with the object itself. One could think here of the mother, but the seminar on *Le Transfert* (47) reminds us that it is still a man's business (Master/student; Father/son) centered around the *objet a* and the phallus, which are still often confused. Here again one identifies with a single characteristic feature of the loved object. The third identification is the hysterical identification in which the subject recognizes in the other the global situation in which he lives. Lacan says that he focuses on the second identification but, by establishing the identification of the signifier and the identification with the signifier, his analyses create a new category that encompasses the first two and that centers on the relation to the Father and to the phallus.

The most important thing is to institute the subject in his relation to the signifier—and the signifier alone. Everything begins with a story whose function is to mark the difference between the preverbal and the verbal. Lacan talked about his dog, Justine (in honour of Sade), who has speech but not language: insofar as she speaks, he says, she never takes him for an other, she is not capable of transference, and she lives in the demand. The same holds for the woman who takes care of his building [*gardienne d'immeuble*] and for society women in bed or in conversation; they embody the glory to be there and the fear of the gesture that chases away or of the word that turns down [*parole de non-recevoir*]. Lacan's horror of "baby talk" (*parler babysh*, Ferenczi's confusion of languages) goes very far; recall the epigraph of *L'Instance de la lettre* (35) where the language of the affect and of the body is referred to as the "nonhuman" aspect of those who "do not have language"! These people live in the sign that represents them for somebody and not in the signifier. The only salvation is "the signifying identification" where the preverbal is articulated within the subject's relation to the word.

Identification raises the question of the identical. Can it be said that $A = A$? No, for there already is a difference due to the very fact of repetition: hence, $A \neq A$. Against the One of totality, Lacan institutes the 1 as the single mark that he calls *the unbroken line* [*trait unaire*], constituted by mere repetition: the line of sticks in elementary school (in which not one is similar to the other), the marks of our remote ancestors (at the museum of Saint-Germain), or the marks of violence inscribed by Sade on the bedstead. The difference is not only a qualitative one, but in fact the signifier has a unity only insofar as it is that which all the other ones are not, insofar as it is pure difference: the One as such is the Other. There is, therefore, no tautology in expressions such as "war is war" or "Laplanche is Laplanche and Lacan is Lacan." The real has nothing to do with this, it is the same signifier that functions to connote pure difference, for, in repetition, the signifier represents the subject for another signifier and not for someone. The identification of the signifier and the identification with the signifier closely mingle: "the elastic logic" that Lacan wanted to practice led him to use the symbol V-1, which upholds the subject. Formal logic, the study of the proper name, the complex grammar of negation—everything works toward defining the *unbroken line* as "a return, the seizing of the origin of a counting before the number." The phallus as the symbolic mark is at the origin since "narcissism and incorporation should be located in the direction of the Father and not in the direction of the parasited mother's body." In short, Lacan's response to the problem of the origin (the chicken or the egg?) is the rooster, or better, the signifier that makes the rooster, that is, the letter or the unbroken line.

There was something new in this seminar: the project to create "*a topological structure of the subject*," with the help of a discipline that, in mathematics, studies the different types of surfaces constituted by the movement of

different geometrical figures. Lacan's disciples would have to acquaint themselves (even if, like myself, they did not have any serious knowledge of this field) with the spheric surface, the surface delineated by a ring (the torus or the cross-cap), the Moebius strip, etc. Lacan was confident that, from the theories of Gauss, Riemann, and Moebius, he could construct a *science of the subject*. From then on, this dream would tirelessly haunt him until the last seminars. At this early stage several questions were raised: could this research further analytic theory and practice, and, if so, how? Was the use of topology real or metaphorical? Was it a way of illustrating notions elaborated through other means or was it a sort of metadiscourse of analytic discourse? Finally, how was this theorization articulated with linguistic notions, with Russell's and Frege's logic, or else with the theory of grace, which, in Saint-Paul, comes after that of law?

To whomever might ask, "What is the truth of your discourse?", Lacan had already responded: I am a psychoanalyst, and, as such, I have to disappoint you, "I don't tell the truth about truth." "I can take you very far on the path of the 'who am I' without the truth of what I am telling you being guaranteed for a single moment, but nevertheless, in what I am telling you, it is still only a matter of truth." In this seminar, however, the subject was defined as a "structure full of holes," made of empty circles in which the "lacuna" would consist in the snare of the web [*les lacs (lacs)*] of circles described by the torus turning around its axis.

51

1962 (26 pp.)—KANT AVEC SADE (KANT WITH SADE)—1963

Right after the war, many intellectuals seemed to find the accursed Sade necessary reading: Bataille, Klossowski, Paulhan, Blanchot, Merleau-Ponty, and even S. de Beauvoir—before Barthes. Would Sade guarantee a certain claim to "modernity," indeed to revolutionary audacity, in front of the right-thinking bourgeois? Lacan's text was supposed to be a preface to *La Philosophie dans le boudoir*, in the complete works published by the Cercle du Livre Précieux. According to Lacan, Paulhan rejected it. Ironically, it appeared in *Critique* (Bataille's journal) as a review of the edition from which it had been excluded.

Lacan clearly positioned himself in the camp of those who were *pro*. He made the Sadian boudoir the equivalent of the ancient schools of philosophy (the Académie, the Lycée, or the Stoa); he interpellated the judge but also the academician—namely, Jean Cocteau—who dared to say, during the proceedings instituted against the publisher Pauvert, that Sade was "boring," "a philosopher and a moralist." He was ironic about Merleau-Ponty who accused the sadist of "negating the existence of the other"; for Lacan the sadist rejects the pain of living in the other.

What original thesis could Lacan argue? He argues that there is a striking analogy between Sade's requirement of the freedom of *jouissance* and the universal rule of Kantian conduct. Sade, especially in the pamphlet *Français, encore un effort si vous voulez être républicains*, reveals the truth about the *Critique of Practical Reason* published eight years earlier. Sade made "the inaugural step of a subversion . . . of which Kant is the turning point although, as far as we know, never recognized as such." Freud was going to complete this subversion in which it is not a matter of elaborating a "catalogue of perversions," but of exactly situating the relations of law and *jouissance*, of life and death, or else of the divided subject with the *object a* of his desire and the Other, the transcendent locus of the "commandments whose imperative is represented as categorical, in other words an unconditional imperative." Thus, it would be wrong to judge the content of the commandment that is given. Whether vile or noble, what is most important is that the commandment be logically receivable as universal, that it hold for all cases, even if not everyone obeys it, and that it indicate what is possible and not what is actualized; "it is a matter of taking things as they are set up at their basis, not as they are ordered" in practice. Sade's honesty was to reveal that "the imperative is imposed upon us as to the Other not as to ourselves," that is, pronounced by the mouth of the Other and not as a voice from inside. Sade, therefore, unmasked the splitting [*refente*] of the subject that others usually bypassed. It is thus through the ethical reference that Lacan elaborates the "savage reference" of a Sade who would have pushed to its extreme the first Declaration of Man's Rights.

Sade's text allows Lacan to construct the perverse's structure and fantasy, just as the case of Schreber had allowed him to do so with psychosis. It is possible to follow Lacan's analyses of Kant and Sade from *L'Éthique* (43), the text on Merleau-Ponty (49), *Le Transfert* (47), and *L'Identification* (50), until *L'Angoisse* (52), not to mention many later references. He appeals to these analyses to raise the question of the difference between the pleasure principle and the death instinct, and to further his reflection on "between-two-deaths" (in this case, it became the quest for unaltered beauty and immortality beyond the other's real death and beyond the pain, inseparable from his degradation or from his ignominy). "It is as an object that the Sadian subject is obliterated" (50), whereas, in Masoch's works, the subject is obliterated to become an object. There is no complementarity between Sade and Masoch. After all, Lacan says, Sade was masochistic in life and sadistic (Sadian) in his works. Really? For Piera Aulagnier (50), the perverse becomes an object for the *jouissance* of a phallus whose bearer he does not suspect, he becomes the instrument of the *jouissance* of a God. Lacan responds to Aulagnier's argument that it is necessary to define the phallus. It is around the *jouissance* of the Other—*jouissance* of a God, a "supreme Being in mali-

sciousness,” the locus where “the Law and *jouissance* as forbidden are one and the same”—that Lacan tries to decipher “this monumental challenge” that the Sadian works represent for him. Perverse fantasy would be located entirely on the side of the Other. Indeed, psychoanalysis has undoubtedly more to learn from Sade than from Kant. Recall Claudel’s trilogy (43). Remember also the context of the time: a culture that had not fully recovered from what Hannah Arendt calls “totalitarianism,” whether it is Nazism or Stalinism, whose fascination upon the intellectuals of the 60s has not been analyzed yet.

52

1962–1963 (400 pp.)—SEMINAIRE X: L’ANGOISSE
(SEMINAR X: ANXIETY)—ANONYMOUS VERSION 1982

According to Lacan, in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926), Freud spoke of everything but anxiety in order to better “leave the emptiness in which there is anxiety.” This affect, related to the structure of the subject, is not repressed but adrift; only the signifiers that anchor it are repressed. For Lacan, *anxiety is not without an object*, but this object is simply unknown. Because anxiety is linked to desire and because fantasy is the support of desire, the starting point is the algebraic formula of fantasy, which was already elaborated in the graph of desire (36) and which would be at the center of *La Logique du fantasme* (65): $\$ \diamond a$ (Subject barred by the signifier/relation to/objet *a*). The problem here was to define this *objet a* which relates anxiety with desire: “Anxiety is the signal of its appearance.” This concept was elaborated here for the first time, starting from the part object (33) or from the agalma with its brilliance as part object or fetish (43). It would become more precise throughout the seminars.

The *objet a* is the *cause* of desire and not its aim; such is its function, and it did not change throughout the years. However, its definitions were more complex and sometimes aleatory. Here, it is approached from two different points of view. On the one hand, it is “the residue of division when the subject is marked by the unbroken line of the signifier in the field of the Other”; it is that which falls from its position, the remainder of the operation described in *L’Identification* (50). The *objet a* has nothing to do with the *a* of the mirror stage, it is not specular; neither is it “visible in what constitutes for man the image of his desire.” It is what is lost during the original constitution of the subject in which the Father is primary. Is it situated on the side of the Real? If one considers the body, the *objet a* is not created by the separation from the mother (a mere parasited body), but by the separation from the body proper. The *objet a* is the embryo’s envelope, the placenta (what Lacan later called *l’hommelette*), and even the breast tied to the subject and detached from the mother, as the figure of Saint Agatha in Zurbaran’s painting shows, carrying her breasts on a tray. They are all objects of desire for us, and there is

no anxiety for the woman. For Lacan, there is an obvious analogy with the figure of the “cross-cap”¹ in which the separation from an enigmatic *a* takes place. At the heart of a system centered on the signifier, the *objet a* seems to be the irreducible Real, “a lack which the symbol does not fill in,” a “real deprivation,” and “an insect on the Moebius strip.”

Another claim is that *anxiety arises when lack comes to be lacking*. For example, anxiety is not a nostalgia of the maternal breast, but the threat of its imminence. Lacan uses Jones’s analysis of nightmare, this incubus [*incube*] or succubus [*succube*], “this being who weighs on our chest with his opaque weight of foreign *jouissance*,” “who crushes you under his *jouissance*” and who is “a questioner” (the Sphinx). Anxiety, like desire, is thus linked to the Other, but to the *jouissance* and to the demand of the Other. Lacan links it to the praying mantis and to the terrible commandment of the Father-God: “*Jouis!*” What or whose apparition do the sudden gap [*béance*] of an opening window (*Wolf Man*) and the three knocks before the curtain rises at the theater announce? An uncanny strangeness or familiarity, it is the horror of the *Thing* (43) against which only desire and law combined are said to be able to protect us. This takes place when the subject loses the support of the *lack* that allows him to constitute himself: $-\Phi$ (the phallus as symbol of lack). Lacan admits that it is difficult to situate $-\Phi$ and the *objet a* in relation to each other. The phallus is sometimes the *agalma*, a highly desirable part object (43), and sometimes an “operating” libidinal reserve that saves the subject from the fascination of the part object. Hence, the importance he granted to what he calls symbolic castration in front of the “father’s opaque and ungraspable desire,” a castration at the origin of the law.

What happens in analysis? How can one measure how much anxiety a patient can bear? How can one deal with one’s own anxiety as a psychoanalyst? Once again, the *desire of the analyst* is involved and the analyst’s function is to help to institute, along with anxiety, the $-\Phi$, an emptiness whose function is nonetheless structural. His function is also to know when he is placed in the position of O, the big Other, or of *a*, the *objet a*. Otherwise, the risk is an *acting out* in which the subject identifies with the *objet a* as waste or trash. The *acting out* belongs to the order of anxiety whereas the *passage à l’acte* belongs to that of emotion. It is a call to the other and it must be interpreted. However, the examples given (Dora, the young woman in Freud’s *Case of Homosexuality in a Woman*, Balint’s “terminal crisis”) and the critique of Little’s, Low’s, and Szasz’ articles were not yet successful in establishing this distinction.

Reading the obscure passages patiently, one may learn what discourse to speak in order to seduce irresistibly, thanks to the small *a*. One can also find out that the Freudian discovery stems from the fact that, in front of Anna O.,

1. In English in the original.

Freud had to use his own anxiety before desire—an “anxiety rooted in the principle of his ridiculous attachment to this impossible woman who incidentally buried him, Mrs Freud.”

53

**1963 (1 p.)—LE SEMINAIRE DES NOMS-DU-PERE
(THE SEMINAR OF THE NAMES-OF-THE-FATHER)—1977**

In the Fall of 1963 the crisis within the S.F.P. was intense. On the night of November 19, Lacan was definitively crossed off the list of didacticians (Training Analysts). The next day, at the first session of his seminar at Sainte-Anne, he announced its end. On January 15, 1964, he settled at the E.N.S., rue d’Ulm, talked about his excommunication, and announced the theme of his new seminar, *Les Quatre Concepts* (55). The title of this 1963 seminar only reappeared in 1973 and in a form that may be surprising: *Les Non-dupes errent* (85).^m

Lacan’s distress was profound, as if the father was suddenly no longer his father, Freud, or the Father, but himself discovering himself in that position, and in that position as betrayed. We are tempted to reread his analysis of Claudel’s trilogy, especially of *Le Père humilié* (47). He had to defend himself against the judgment of one of his students according to whom “the meaning of my teaching would be that truth, its real grip, is never grasped.” The Master’s answers sketch the theory of truth that he would keep elaborating in more depth, for example in the seminar *L’Objet de la psychanalyse* (59), whose first session appears in *Ecrits* under the title *La Science et la vérité* (60).

1964–1969

This was the period of success. After the second split, Lacan, who had become a lecturer at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, held six seminars at the E.N.S., rue d’Ulm, while still presenting cases of patients at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne. His audience increased; it became more varied and included students in philosophy at the E.N.S. and a number of intellectuals, especially a new generation who often did not know his earlier works. The diversification of his audience led him to reorient his teaching. He himself often described it as the resumption of his previous seminars, but with more rigorous requirements of conceptualization.

In June 1964, he created his own group, the Ecole Freudienne de Paris, which expanded rapidly, in spite of the 1967 crisis about the question of the *passé*. The only director until the end, he promulgated, he opened and

m. *Les Non-dupes errent* sounds like *Les Noms-du-Père* and means “the nonfools wander.”

closed the meetings and congresses of his école, and he participated in all the discussion so as to insure the cohesion of practice and theory, based on his message.

Finally, the publication of *Ecrits* in 1966—a collection of articles written since 1936—had an (unexpected) success in a fairly broad audience and attracted newcomers to the seminars.

When, in 1969, as a repercussion of the events of May 1968, Lacan was asked to leave the rue d'Ulm before being welcomed at the University of Paris at the Panthéon, he was one of the most famous figures of Parisian intelligentsia, and the opening of a Department of Psychoanalysis at the University of Paris at Vincennes established his influence in the official institutions.

54

1964 (4 pp.)—DU “TRIEB” DE FREUD ET DU DESIR DU PSYCHANALYSTE (ON FREUD’S “TRIEB” AND ON THE DESIRE OF THE PSYCHOANALYST)—ITALY 1964—FRANCE 1966

How should *Trieb* be translated? One knows the controversy: “instinct” or “drive”? In 1938, Lacan had already rejected the term “instinct” in favor of “complex” (10), and he also thought at the time that he could isolate “a pure primitive drive” (11). Later, in his graphs of desire (36) he linked the drive to the formula: a \diamond D (the drive is related to the demand and not to the need). However, it was not until the seminar on *L’Angoisse* (52) that he began to address this concept more closely.

The problem of translation is above all a problem of definition. This summary of his talk and of his comments in Rome at the Colloquium organized by Professor Castelli on “Technique and Casuistry” foreshadows the seminar to come on *Les Quatre Concepts fondamentaux* (55), one of these four concepts being the drive. Lacan even says in a note in *Ecrits* that he “avoided giving too quickly [his own theorizations] to a wide and uncontrollable audience.”

He reaffirms the difference between libido and sexual instinct: “its reduction, up to a point, to male desire warns us of the difference,” he says. Except for this statement, the text is a confirmation of his convictions (some would say of his ideology): the Name-of-the-Father allows man to escape the sexual service of the mother; Venus is proscribed from our world; theology has decayed before a prevailing monotheism; castration protects one from incest with the mother as well as from homosexuality, as the law protects one from *jouissance*, which is on the side of the Thing; desire institutes itself in the assumption of castration and lack; as for the woman, “she must lose what she does not have,” etc. Such themes are familiar. What about the analyst’s desire? This desire is the one that ultimately, for good or for bad, operates in psychoanalysis.

Let us conclude with an indiscreet question: why did Lacan talk about a

“maternal instinct” in *Les Propos directifs* (45) and, in an obsessive way, about a “death instinct” above all?

55

1964 (256 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XI: LES QUATRE CONCEPTS FONDAMENTAUX DE LA PSYCHANALYSE (SEMINAR XI: THE FOUR FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS)—1973, 1978

January 15, 1964 marked the opening session of the seminars at the E.N.S. where, in the presence of a number of celebrities (Lévi-Strauss, H. Ey, Althusser . . .) and of a new and young audience, Lacan reminded people of the “censorship” of his teaching and of his excommunication by the official psychoanalytic circles. Why, he asked, was this refugee involved in the university, a place generally held in contempt by psychoanalysts? Well, he wanted to continue to train analysts, which was his first priority. At the same time, his teaching was also addressed to the non analysts and he wanted to raise the following questions: Is psychoanalysis a science? Under what conditions is it a science? If it is—the “science of the unconscious” or a “conjectural science of the subject”—what can it, in turn, teach us about science? This double aim of Lacan’s discourse created interferences that are not always easy to follow, and also led him to evade some of the participants’ questions. For example, could one do without the “stages” of earliest childhood? (Françoise Dolto’s question); how would others reappear in his discourse? and “is topology for you a method of discovery or of exposition?” (Wahl’s questions); “What difference do you make between the object of desire and the object of the drive?” (Safouan’s question). Once, Lacan even answered, “Look, the main thing is that I don’t fail and get hurt!”

Praxis, which “places man in a position of dealing with the real through the symbolic,” produces concepts; four concepts are offered here, the unconscious, repetition, transference, and the drive. The 1973 title has often been contested in favor of the 1964 title, “*Les Fondements de la psychanalyse*” (The Foundations of Psychoanalysis), which implies neither that it is a matter of concepts, nor that there are only four of them. Sometimes Lacan talked of concepts, and sometimes he wondered whether psychoanalysts lived in deception, and he was suspicious of the relationships among psychoanalysis, religion, and science. Did they not have, like religious groups, a founding father and quasi-sacred texts? Freud was “legitimately the subject that one could presume to know,” at least regarding the unconscious; “he was not only the subject who was supposed to know. He did know.” “He gave us this knowledge in terms that may be said to be indestructible,” terms that support an inexhaustible interrogation. “No progress has been made, however small, that has not deviated whenever one of the terms has been neglected around which Freud ordered the ways that he traced and the paths of the unconscious.” This declaration of total allegiance contrasts with the study of

Freud's dream about the dead son screaming "Father, can't you see I'm burning?" Was Lacan both an inventor and the only faithful disciple? The more he protected himself with Freud's name, the more he exposed himself. Indeed, the central problem remained that of the transference to the founding father: the Name-of-the-Father is a foundation, he tells us, but the legacy of the Father is sin, and the original sin of psychoanalysis is Freud's desire that was not analyzed. This repeats the theme of *L'Éthique* (43). Lacan presented himself as the son of the plowman in La Fontaine's fable; the Name-of-the-Father is a treasure that remains to be found, provided, like Actaeon, one offers oneself as a sacrificial victim to truth (29).

Of the four concepts mentioned, three were already amply developed between 1953 and 1963. Concerning the unconscious, transference, and repetition, this seminar provided an opportunity for spreading the major principles of Lacanian teaching, although this sometimes meant rectifying them. There remained the *drive* whose importance had kept increasing since the study of the *objet a* in *L'Angoisse* (52). If one does not take sexuality into account, which is always linked to the part objects, then "psychoanalysis is nothing but a mantic." Moreover, "the reality of the unconscious is sexual reality—an untenable truth," and sexual reality cannot be separated from death. Under the form of the *objet petit a* whose "only reality is topological," Lacan grouped all the partial drives linked to part objects: the breast, feces, the penis, and he added the gaze and the voice. Here, he was mobilized by the gaze; he confronted Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, and Caillois so as to assert the radical split between the eye and the gaze. He analyzed Holbein's *Ambassadors* as a "trap for the gaze" [*piège à regards*], but also as a *dompte-regard* and a *trompe-l'oeil*.ⁿ In the foreground, a floating object, a phallic ghost object gives presence to the $-\Phi$ of castration. This object is the heart of the whole organization of desire through the framework of the fundamental drives. For the Cartesian *Cogito* (I think), Freud substituted the *Desidero* (I desire).

How is it possible to reconcile the desire linked to the signifier and to the Other with the libido that has become an organ under the form of the "lamella" or the *hommelette*, the placenta, the part of his own body from which the subject must separate in order to exist? Here is where a new conception of *repetition* comes into play, whose functioning stems from two forces: the automatism (*automaton*) on the side of the signifier, and the always missed but desired encounter (the *tuchê*) on the side of the drive, where the *objet a* refers to the "impossible" Real that, "as such, cannot be assimilated." If

n. The meaning of the verb *dompter* is "to tame." The reference is to a situation in which the gaze is tamed by an object, such as a painting. Lacan invented the expression *dompte-regard* as a counterpart to the notion of *trompe-l'oeil*, which has passed into the English language.

transference is “the enactment [*la mise en acte*] of the reality of the unconscious” (which is what Lacan’s deconstruction of the drive wants to bring to light), if desire is the nodal point where the pulsation of the unconscious—an untenable sexual reality—is also at work, then what a Gordian knot! Is it to be untied or cut? For the first time, the psychoanalyst’s role is clearly to allow the drive “to be made present in the reality of the unconscious”: for that purpose, he must fall from his idealized position so as to become the upholder of the *objet a*, the separating object. The analysand will thus discover “to what signifier—a traumatic, irreducible nonsense—he, as subject, is subjected.” Was this a first step toward the *désêtre* that would be the focus of Lacan’s texts in 1967 (66)?

The fourth page of the 1973 edition edited by J.-A. Miller reprints the summary written by Lacan for the directory of the E.P.H.E. In a note (p. 249) Miller explains his task of transcription, while a postscript by the Master rereads this text in relation to his new research (especially concerning the *plus-de-jour* [71]), and most importantly and ironically in relation to his exclusion from the E.N.S., which had taken place in the meantime. Note that he uses the terms *poubelliciation*^o and *stécriture* (this writing) (terms meant to have a popular success), and also that he insists on the Real as impossible.

56

1960–1964 (21 pp.)—POSITION DE L’INCONSCIENT
(THE POSITION OF THE UNCONSCIOUS) 1966

In 1960, H. Ey gathered psychiatrists, philosophers, and psychoanalysts from the two groups for the Colloquium on the unconscious at Bonneval. This was an explosive situation. Two students of Lacan gave a widely noticed talk on “L’Inconscient: une étude psychanalytique” (The Unconscious: A Psychoanalytic Study). They delivered it in the context of the workshop on “Langage et inconscient” (Language and the Unconscious) and it was going to be published in *Les Temps modernes*. Lacan at first praised it in his seminar, but not without some uneasiness because he had recognized the theoretical divergence that was widening between Laplanche and himself. In 1964 H. Ey requested a text from each of them, giving them the freedom to revise their old talk, and he asked Lacan to write a digest of his numerous comments during the Colloquium; this was *Position de l’inconscient* published in 1966 both in *Ecrits* and in *L’Inconscient* (Desclée de Brouwer publisher). Keeping the 1963 split in mind, this volume sheds light on the divergence, and especially enlightening is the postscript in which Laplanche specifies and defends his sacrilegious statement: “The unconscious, more than a language, is the condition of language” (p. 96).

o. *Poubelliciation* is a condensation of *poubelle*, trash, and publication.

Lacan reasserted his basic thesis: “The unconscious is a concept forged on the trace of that which works to constitute the subject.” Moreover, “the subject is not the cause of himself, he carries in him the worm of the cause which splits [*refend*] him,” and this cause is language, or rather the primordial signifier that divides him and “represents him for another signifier.” “Without this signifier there would be no subject in the real.” Such are the *effects of language* that give birth to the subject in an originary alienation. Presented here in a denser and more pedagogical way, these were already the themes of *L’Instance de la lettre* (35), *L’Identification* (50), and *La Métaphore du sujet* (48), all texts that should be read together. In 1969, questioned by Anika Rifflet-Lemaire, he responded clearly to Laplanche, “It is language that is the condition of the unconscious” (74).

If there are *effects of language*, there are also *effect of speech*, in which the subject alienates himself in his demand made to the Other and in his demand of the Other. Lacan resumed all the themes on the Other that he had developed since *Fonction et Champ* (24): the terms of the pact; the exchange of signifiers; the metaphors of the Father; the ideals that govern what one must do as a man or as a woman; the subject to be located at the level of the enunciation of all discourse, etc.

However, as was the case in *Séminaire XI* (55), contemporaneous with this writing, the difficulty was linking the theory of the signifier with the current research on sexuality, oriented towards the drive and the *objet a*. Lacan repeated that the libido as “lamella” is an “organ”—“the organ of the incorporeal in the sexed being,” because “the speaking subject has the privilege of revealing the deadly meaning of this organ and, thereby, its relation to sexuality.” Man is born from a division from “the membranes, the daughters of the egg”: “Breaking the egg, you make man, but also the *hommelette*,” which man must lose. This place is then occupied by the various *objets a*, the upholders of the Desire of/to the Other. It is difficult to say, then, if there is a passage from the drive to desire by means of the fantasy. In any case, only the object — Φ , the “cause” of the castration complex and thus of the assumption of the subject, allows the subject to construct himself as living beyond the “impossible Real” that threatens him.

“Psychoanalysis is responsible for the presence of the unconscious in the field of science”: the Master’s teaching has been anathematized because he stressed this requirement. He cheerfully returned the anathema: instead of “psychological ideals,” indeed ideologies, psychoanalysis “should have furthered its ethics and learned about theology, according to a path that Freud showed us to be unavoidable.” Even Betty Friedan’s book on the vogue of a “feminine mystic” in the United States, or the distrust of Eastern countries for psychoanalysis were used to attack the role of the “other” psychoanalysts in society.

57

**1964 (4 pp.)—ACTE DE FONDATION DE L'E.F.P.
(THE FOUNDING ACT OF THE E.F.P.)—1977**

The solemn tone of the opening is well known: "I hereby found the Ecole Française de Psychanalyse, by myself, as alone as I have ever been in my relation to the psychoanalytic cause." The Ecole Française de Psychanalyse was soon to become, under the same initials, the Ecole Freudienne de Paris. Very rapidly, people started talking of the Lacanian School, which defined itself by the haughty admission of its isolation, its conception of psychoanalysis as a cause to be defended, its faithfulness to a name—Freud—and to a body of texts, its appeal to disciples gathered in a School where they could militate in favor of the truth of a doctrine taught in seminars, its crusade against the unfaithful, and its "movement of reconquest" for which Lacan needed "determined workers."

The organization of the école in three sections revealed the theoretical choices. The first section, the most prestigious, was called "the section for *pure psychoanalysis*, or praxis and doctrine of psychoanalysis properly speaking, which is nothing but *didactic* psychoanalysis." It was the lively place of theoretical elaboration, which was not reserved for physicians alone. Therapeutics and clinical practice were separated from it; they formed the section for *applied psychoanalysis* that was open to physicians even if they had not been psychoanalyzed. As for the third section, it was linked to the seminars and to the research of the E.P.H.E. and the E.N.S.; it was the section for *taking inventory of the Freudian field* that studied the analytic movement and its publications, its articulation with related sciences, and, curiously, the ethics of psychoanalysis. It seemed to be open to whomever supported the Lacanian principles. The novelty and the open-mindedness of the enterprise are clear but the notion of a "pure psychoanalysis," so institutionalized and isolated, was soon going to create a problem.

58

**1964–1965 (237 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XII: PROBLEMES CRUCIAUX POUR
LA PSYCHANALYSE (SEMINAR XII: CRUCIAL PROBLEMS FOR
PSYCHOANALYSIS)—ANONYMOUS VERSION, NO DATE**

Explaining themselves and their work at the beginning, the transcribers of this seminar headed it with a bold epigraph: "In all my opening addresses to what I have to call my audience I have warned that psychoanalysis is a remedy against ignorance; it has no effect on fucking imbecility." A word to the wise is sufficient. We want to ask, What about its effects on those who are suffering?

This seminar, coming after the foundations of psychoanalysis (55), would have originally been announced under a more philosophical title, "Les Positions subjectives de l'existence et de l'être" (The Subjective Positions of

Existence and of Being). Indeed, the theoretician psychoanalyst would be confronted with an alternative that he cannot admit: in his experience, the subject is the pivot of praxis (practice linked to theory) but, in all formalizations, one usually tries to exclude the subject.

For Lacan, the fundamental problem was that of the subject's relation to language. However, taking into account the Real in the trilogy of Symbolic/Imaginary/Real had transformed the problem. Thus, the crucial issues were the relations among identification, transference, and demand; we are already familiar with them from the previous seminars.

The problem of problems then became "offering a form, an essential topology for analytic praxis." The signifier returned, structured on the Moebius strip with the three fundamental forms of the hole, the torus or ring, and the "cross-cap." Euler's circles also returned, as the maze of the torus or of the spirals of the demand on the surface of the *Klein bottle*, which was a new star in this seminar. These figures were said to be constructed in a simple and combinatory way, but the commentary, on the other hand, was complicated. Apparently, no doubt, this bottle contains the secret of desire "as the split whereby a surface is revealed as a-cosmic," which would explain the "turning away in horror" from Merleau-Ponty's glove turned inside-out and from the nylon stocking turned inside-out in which sexual difference would be read. Still, some assertions are puzzling; there would be a relation only of analogy between the existence of that surface (a projection in a three dimensional space) and the immersion in a space, the space of the Other as the locus of speech. The torsion of the famous bottle would stem from the intervention of the Name-of-the-Father, of the desire of this Other desired as desiring (47). This desire of the Other would be hidden at the heart of the *objet a*, which has to be opened with a pair of scissors, and in the proper way, so as to allow one to be the master of desires. The *interior 8* would be the relation of the *objet a* to O, the big Other. When I read that the subject's certainty "is located in the pure lack of the sex," in "the impossible relation between sex and knowledge," that "all knowledge is instituted in an impassable horror as regards the place where the secret of sex is located," that "the impossible real is on the side of sex," I begin to feel concerned and want to ask for some explanations about such aphorisms made under the cover of topological science.

The seminar also included hundreds of comments on Pascal's *Pari*, "a desperate attempt to solve the question we are trying to raise here, that of desire as the desire of the big Other [*Grand Autre*]" ; on syllogism: "all men are mortal, Socrates is a man, hence Socrates is mortal" ; and on the different relation to knowledge in psychosis (anxiety of the Other), in neurosis (demand to the Other), and in perversion (*jouissance* of the Other). I leave it up to the reader to fit these heterogeneous comments wherever he wants or can.

Note that, for the first time, Lacan organized “closed seminars” where one was accepted at one’s own request, thanks to a card certifying the Master’s acceptance. “Critical” students such as Duroux and Miller gave talks there, later published in *Cahiers pour l’Analyse*. In short, this seminar had two gears and two speeds, which corresponded fairly well to the principles of the organization of the E.F.P. (57). The école was said to be “something where a life style must be formed.” And between the Name-of-the-Father and the impossible Real, do we find the “throbbing gap of the unconscious” [*béance palpitante de l’inconscient*]? Doesn’t all this lack modesty and humor?

59

1965–1966 (APPROX. 160 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XIII:

L’OBJET DE LA PSYCHANALYSE (SEMINAR XIII: THE OBJECT OF

PSYCHOANALYSIS)—VERSION TAKEN DOWN IN SHORTHAND, NO DATE

The first meeting was a written lesson published in 1966 by *Cahiers pour l’Analyse* under the title “La science et la vérité” (60), but the theme of the subject divided between knowledge and truth was raised throughout the seminar, and it included Lacan’s own position.

For the first time he claimed to be the discoverer of psychoanalysis as a new science whose object would be the *objet a*, as lack or hole, the object in its original reality, the object whose role would be to enlighten the other sciences—science itself—about their own objects. Since *Les Quatre Concepts* (55), his position had changed radically. Indeed, he still spoke “in Freud’s name,” but “as others have to speak in the name of he who bears my name”; “the birth of science does not remain linked for ever to the name of he who institutes it. Not only does science not present itself as belonging to the structure of myth, but moreover it proves not to belong to it, and it proves it by showing that it belongs to another structure: such is the meaning of *the topological investigation* that I am carrying out here.” “The theory that I construct here is not to be placed on the level of myth.” We are thus far from 1964 when drives were mythical beings (55), and we are even far from the previous seminar (58) where it was still a matter of analogy. Here Lacan responds to the alternative between the mathematical model and metaphor by stating, “Topology is not a metaphor, but a rigorous *montage* with the *objet a*, the specific object of analytic science.” The predominant use in the last years of the term *mathemes* thus makes sense. Lacan used four forms, which we have already seen and which would become more and more important in his reflections: the cylinder or disk with a hole, the torus, the Moebius strip, and the Klein bottle, all of which are accompanied by algebraic formulas “formed of small letters.” Did he want to go beyond the graph of the fantasy, which would be like a “moveable theatrical set” [*un praticable*], the *trompe-l’oeil* of a game, while the *objet a* would be the “frame”? The following seminar was devoted precisely to *La Logique du fantasme* (65).

“The hole of the lack of the *objet a* would be located at the intersection of the fields of truth and knowledge”: such is the contribution of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysts can, therefore, question science—Russell’s or Frege’s logic—concerning the truth whose encounter they do not know or they forget; they can also demystify religion. Thus, psychoanalysis would be the foundation and the guide for all other human sciences, which Lacan called conjectural sciences. Banking on structuralism, which prevailed at the time, Lacan both split and united his audience in two categories: “those who need to use my word for analytic purposes,” and “those who prove that it can be followed in all its coherence and rigor, that it fits in a structure that is valid even outside its present practice.” At the same time, he distinguished between the psychoanalyst who, at the moment of knowledge, is—and knows he is—divided, and the status of the “subject-supposed-to-know” (the subject of science) who restores the prestige of misknowledge [*méconnaissance*] by thinking that he unites knowledge and subject. Praise be to the true (Lacanian) exercise of “this unique experience,” that is, analysis, which has the “effect of separating us from the herd.”

Lacan went back to his graphs of desire (36 and 46), and he tried to relate them to his topology. The *objet a* is situated on four sides: the demand of the Other (the *objet a* is feces); the demand on the part of the Other (the *objet a* is the breast); the desire on the part of the Other (the *objet a* is the gaze); and the desire of the Other (the *objet a* is the voice).

It was with this perspective that the Master began to analyze Pascal’s *Pari*, that he invited A. Green and C. Stein to speak (they both belonged to the S.P.P. and he met them at the Colloquium in Bonneval 56), that he gave an account of his lectures in the United States (lectures organized by Jakobson who might be called a structuralist), and most importantly that he invited Michel Foucault to talk about Vélasquez’s *Las Meninas*. Foucault’s address allowed Lacan to come back to his theory of the painting as a “trap for the gaze” (55), a gaze in which what falls is the *objet a*. The little girl’s slit is the perspective and the vanishing point, the hidden center of the painting, and “in this gap [*béance*] where there is nothing to see, it is impossible to recognize the structure of the *objets a*: underneath the infant’s dresses, ‘it looks at me,’ while the eye, on the other hand, is made not to see. . . .” Even Bataille, for once, was quoted from *Histoire de l’oeil*, a text that would establish a connection among all the *objet a* in their relationship to the (feminine?) sexual organ. What sign ultimately occupies the place of this gap, the impossible or untenable real? Of course, it is the phallus, as in the case of Little Hans mentioned at the beginning of the seminar. What was needed was to reshape the unconscious around language and the gaze (excluded by Freud). The voice was ultimately forgotten here. Lacan went back to the Freudian dimension of desire and of the subject whose foundation is castration; the feminine sexual organ (and woman as Adam’s rib) became the *objet a*, which fascinates

and leads to ruin unless there is the screen of the phallus, even under the form of $-\Phi$. There are links between this study and that of Holbein's *Ambassadors* (55). However, in the end, the penis—as a manifestation that is seen, “Phanè”—hardly hides the presence of an *objet a* that would be an enigmatic $-a$.

60

1965 (23 pp.)—LA SCIENCE ET LA VERITE (SCIENCE AND TRUTH)—1966

This text was the opening lesson of the seminar on *L'Objet de la psychanalyse* (59), and it was published in 1966, both in *Cahiers pour l'Analyse* (n.1) and as the conclusion of *Ecrits*. I feel rather uncomfortable talking about it because it irresistibly reminds me of the philosophical exercises practiced at the E.N.S. and at the Sorbonne: one is given a highly abstract subject that is, in its very principle, impossible to solve, but it allows one to shine and exhibit an eclectic, broad, and modern “culture.” The best thing for the reader is to go to the text and see for himself. However I want to note that Lacan claimed to draw from a number of figures while he dissociated himself from them: Freud, as well as linguists such as Jakobson, Hjelmslev, and Chomsky, formal logic, Lévi-Strauss, not to mention several philosophers such as Descartes, Spinoza, Heidegger, and Angelus Silesius (the last straw). His enemies were still the same, “phony intimacy” [*le personnalisme à la manque*] and the “liberal heart-to-heart” [*l'âme-à-âme libéral*] (44, 49). All this should satisfy his audience.

I also want to note a few aphorisms: in psychoanalysis, there is no way out, “a mistake in good faith is, among all mistakes, the most unforgivable”; “There is no science of man because the man of science does not exist, only its subject does” (a topological subject, of course); “Logic is the subject's navel”; “The truth of neurotic suffering is that its cause is truth”; “A successful paranoia is the closure of science”. . . . Lacan also gives us a (provocative?) self-presentation: “I say the truth about Freud who, under the name of the unconscious, allowed the truth to speak” (see *La Chose freudienne* 29). Finally he reveals a confidence to us: “I cannot console myself for having had to give up linking the study of the Bible with the function of the Name-of-the-Father” . . .

Besides this opening lesson, “the answers to students in philosophy concerning the object of psychoanalysis,” given in February 1966, were also published in issue 3 of *Cahiers pour l'Analyse*. The four topics of these answers are quite original!: “Consciousness and the subject,” “Psychoanalysis and society,” “Psychoanalysis and anthropology,” and “Psychoanalysis and philosophy.” It would be more interesting to read A. Green's analysis of “L'objet a dans l'oeuvre de Lacan” (“The *objet a* in the works of Lacan”), which is in the same issue.

61

1965 (9 pp.)—HOMMAGE FAIT A MARGUERITE DURAS DU RAVISSEMENT DE LOL V. STEIN (AN HOMAGE PAID TO MARGUERITE DURAS FOR THE RAVISHING OF LOL V. STEIN)—1965

This subtle reading of M. Duras's novel reveals the gravity of the concerns in Duras's works: desire, suffering, "the taciturn wedding of the empty life and the indescribable object," the quest for a new (impossible?) ethics of love. The style itself often shows how implicated Lacan was in his reading, which led him to establish a connection that he found fascinating, between this modern Marguerite and the Marguerite of the *Heptameron*: both are examples of an "active and severe charity."

In his reading of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (22), in the *Séminaire sur la Lettre volée* (31), in *Jeunesse de Gide ou la lettre et le désir* (38), not to mention the pages on *Hamlet* (41) or Claudel (47), Lacan always managed to combine the care for the literary text with his interest in theorizing. Each of these readings seems to have given him the opportunity of an encounter. Here we find "being-three" [*l'être-à-trois*], the gaze, the dissymmetry between the masculine and the feminine, Lol's "emptiness" and the division of the subject in J. Hold (the "narrative voice"), the sublimation in which "the practice of the letter converges with the use of the unconscious." Duras's text can indeed be read differently, but, as it is, Lacan's reading, caught between the ravishing and the desire to ravish in turn, allows us to see this text with an other's eyes.

What relations exist between a writer and an analyst? Lacan says of M. Duras, "she proves that she knows what I teach without me." This statement might be more naive than obnoxious, and it might fit between Freud's two positions: geniuses are everybody's masters on the one hand, and the writer has at his disposal an unknown knowledge on the other. We discussed this issue in our general presentation. However, this novel is not foreign to what Lacan will say about "nonknowledge" and feminine *jouissance* in the seminar *Encore* (84), the *jouissance* of the very nonfulfillment of desire (Duras) or of something beyond what is called desire.

62

1966 (19 pp.)—LA PLACE DE LA PSYCHANALYSE DANS LA MEDECINE ou PSYCHANALYSE ET MEDECINE (THE PLACE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS IN MEDICINE or PSYCHOANALYSIS AND MEDICINE) 1966 AND 1967

Some Lacanian psychoanalysts began experimentations in hospitals, notably Ginette Raimbault in Dr Royer's practice of infantile medicine. Their role was to listen to those in charge of the treatment, to the parents, and to the patients, while taking into account how they all experienced the disease. In February 1966 Lacan participated in a panel organized under Jenny Aubry's presidency at the Collège de Médecine at the Salpêtrière with doctors and psychoanalysts.

Dr G. Raimbault said that the doctor is neither a diagnosing machine nor a therapeutic robot, but a subject caught, like all other subjects, in a discourse of the unconscious, which governs both his response to the patient and his behavior or his therapeutics. Her comments came at the appropriate moment because, after Lacan's address, which was tactless to say the least, not to say condescending and provocative, the audience angrily muttered against his cursory judgments. "It would have been honest on your part," a member of the audience told him, "to say that you [were] familiar neither with the physicians nor with medicine." Was this a misunderstanding or was it too good an understanding of Lacan's true message?

What he said of the transformation of the function and image of the physician in an industrialized society is not wrong, but how banal! He rightfully reminded his audience that the patient does not always want to escape his condition of patient and that one should not forget the *jouissance* of the body. But is this *jouissance* reserved to the illness? Is it possible to generalize? And does the psychoanalyst himself avoid the problems attributed to physicians? If it is true that psychoanalysis is not a mere branch of medicine, can it conversely claim to be the ultimate knowledge of all medical fields?

Do these discussions of the unconscious, sexual desire, the topology of the subject, and attendance at Lacan's seminar provide answers for everything? They seem to deny the fact that illness, suffering, and death concretely affect bodies even though these processes elude us. They also seem to deny that medical research and practices can bring some answers. The journal *Les Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne* published this talk and the discussions that followed in its first issue. It is interesting to read the more nuanced text that follows Lacan's: Emile Raimbault's *Psychanalyse et Médecine. Notes pour une discussion* (Psychoanalysis and Medicine. Notes for a discussion).

63

1966 (925 pp.)—**ECRITS (ECRITS, A SELECTION)—1966, 1977**

This volume includes twenty-eight articles written and published by Lacan between 1936 and 1966. Many of them had become inaccessible, except in certain libraries, and unknown even to those who attended his seminars. The success was incredible and went far beyond both the specialists and his audience to reach what is called the educated public. The second edition was expanded with an appendix that includes J. Hyppolite's commentary on Freud's *Verneinung*, *Métaphore du sujet*, a classified index of the major concepts, and a commentary on the graphs by J.-A. Miller. In 1969 a selection from these articles came out in a more popular edition (74). In 1973, in his postscript to the *Séminaire XI* (55), Lacan wrote, "I bet that this book will be read. It won't be like my *Ecrits*, a book that is said to sell, but not to be read," accusing both those who do not open the volume and those who only remember a few sentences constantly quoted outside their context. The paradox is

that many people do not read the more accessible texts—probably judging them to be insignificant or untrue to the “real” Lacan.

This volume encompasses thirty years of work—a complete itinerary that Lacan invited us to follow in an order that is not chronological. For example, he put *Le Séminaire sur La Lettre volée* (31) at the beginning of the book, and grouped together the text on Gide and the one on *Kant avec Sade*. It is, therefore, not a mere collection but a book that has been reconstructed in seven parts, often punctuated with recently written pieces: *Ouverture*, *De nos antécédents*, *Du sujet enfin en question*, *D'un dessein*, *D'un syllabaire après coup*. Moreover, some articles (including the first one) were profoundly revised.

The book is characterized by the variety of its themes, of its tones, and also of its addresses; from the beginning, in *Ouverture*, the author tells us that “Style is the man, shall we agree with this expression, provided we can add to it: the man to whom one is speaking?” The style of the talks—meant directly for the audience and addressed to it—is different from that of the articles where, although the different addresses are actually absent, it is possible to detect their trace or their aims. This major book, which has become the Bible of nonpsychoanalyst academics, should not make us forget the importance, in the movement of psychoanalytic thinking in France, of the thesis on paranoia (2) and of the numerous texts that have not been included—above all the seminars.

64

1966 (4 pp.)—PRESENTATION DE LA TRADUCTION DE P. DUQUENNE DES MEMOIRES D'UN NEVROPATHE (SCHREBER) (PRESENTATION OF P. DUQUENNE'S TRANSLATION OF THE MEMOIRS OF A NEUROPATH [SCHREBER])—1966

Lacan used this opportunity to mention the seminar he conducted on psychosis ten years earlier, *Les Psychoses* (30) and his article on the same topic (37). He criticized Ida Macalpine's translation as he had, at the time, criticized her interpretation. Hence he stated, “This translation was long awaited.”

He argued for the possibility of analyzing a text as a word [*une parole*] and of theorizing with the text as with the word: “Constructing the subject as is appropriate from the unconscious is a matter for logic.” Such is his main argument. He retraced his trajectory since the case study of Aimée (2), made a cutting remark about S. Dali, and gave his new conception of “paranoia as identifying *jouissance* in the locus of the Other as such.” Finally, he situated his objectives of the moment; the true structure of the subject is divided “with an irreducible residue (the *objet a*) whose logical analysis is in progress.” “Mathematics is in progress,” he said; concerning this point, he stressed that the conception of psychiatric disturbance is the clinician's business, reaffirming “the implication in the symptom of the subject-supposed-to-know.” Thus, he denounced the psychoanalysts' torments and resistances in reaction to his

new orientations, but without calling into question the motives of his own choice.

65

1966–1967 (324 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XIV: LA LOGIQUE DU FANTASME
(SEMINAR XIV: THE LOGIC OF FANTASY)—Reports 1967–1968—
ANONYMOUS EDITION 1981

What a nice fantasy to finally have a logical formula of fantasy, this imaginary scenario that governs us, as it is linked to our desires, drives, history—this “mixed blood,” as Freud said, between unconscious and conscious! Logic must go beyond “the fundamental fantasy,” which is already a theoretical construct as opposed to the multiplicity of any individual’s fantasies. It must go beyond the “originary fantasies” that are structures shared by all; and it must go beyond the grammatical transformations structured around a simplified sentence (subject/verb/object) and the substitutions *ad infinitum* of its elements where pleasure and anxiety are at play. Lacan took as his starting point the “algorithm” $\$ \diamond a$, which is the logical articulation of fantasy. This algorithm had already been introduced, in 1956–1957, in the *graphs of desire* (36), which then articulated in 1960 a first *topology of the subject* (46).

Here, Lacan recalled the signification of the algorithm: $\$$ represents the division of the subject barred by the signifier that constitutes him. “The punch,” \diamond , is the sign of a relation either of inclusion/implication (and they are reversible), or of exclusion between the two terms. It is thus a binary system where the verb as such has disappeared (along with its semantic and dynamic values) to leave room for the algebraic sign of a pure relation. There remains the *objet a* whose definitions changed with the years, for it was indeed the object of Lacan’s quest. To understand its definition here, we must start with the part object of the *Séminaire IV* (33) and follow its analyses in *Séminaires X* (52) and *XIII* (59). However, a statement made in 1960 seems crucial to me: Lacan mentioned “the fascination” of the fantasy in which “the subject himself becomes the cut that makes the object shine in its inexpressible oscillation” (44).

The *objet a* would be the primal object, forever lost, the fall, the remainder, or the product (that “cannot be assimilated” because it is Real) of the cut operated by the primal signifier that engenders the “subject” by the very fact of repeating itself in absolute difference (see *L’Identification* 50). These assertions are repeated here in a systematic way: “If *a* is the frame of the subject (“jewel”), this frame falls at the level of the most fundamental act of life, the act in which the subject as such is engendered, i.e., the repetition of the signifier.” This is the symbolic paternal mark or the phallic mark since there is no signifier of sexual difference: “The phallus alone is the sex-unity.” The *objet a* creates a “hole” constantly filled, in the partial drives, by the different objects *a*, the breast, feces, the penis, the gaze, or the voice, objects that are

themselves caught in imaginary substitutions. To understand the fantasy, it is thus necessary to try to determine the logical status of the *objet a*, which can only be accomplished by a theory in keeping with the geometrical figures of topology. For example, is the *objet a* situated on the side of the drive or of the desire of which it is the cause? Is it born from the separation from the placenta as a part of the body proper or from the division/separation from oneself by the signifier, the cost that the speaking being has to pay to become a subject? But is there really an alternative? Indeed, Lacan talked of a surface where “desire and reality” are “the right and the wrong sides”; however, the passage from one side to the other is unnoticeable, as if there were only one side, because “the relation of texture does not entail any break.” The *objet a* seems to be a “bubble,” just as, on a projective plane, the Klein bottle is. Incidentally, the Master often marveled that his topological figures resembled those of embryology. Might the fantasy allow us to go from the drive to desire and from desire to the drive, to link them or to disjoint them? Will we learn more about the logic of fantasy?

In fact, Lacan seemed to oscillate between exaltation for having discovered a new logic, indeed the foundation of all logic on the one hand, and a profound anxiety about the excessiveness of such an enterprise on the other hand. Hence, he said, “The logic of fantasy is the most fundamental principle of any logic that deals with formalizing defiles” (this is an allusion to Wittgenstein, Russell, and even Boole and Morgan); “I am going to formulate decisive formulas about the unconscious, i.e., logical formulas.” But, at the same time, he deferred until January his “presentation of alienation in terms of logical calculation” because “its formulation [was] not ready.” The reason for this delay might have been that “truth is related to desire,” which “creates difficulties for handling it like the logicians do.” He even wondered whether he would continue his seminar (the number of participants encouraged him to continue while the troublemakers discouraged him). What was his aim? It was to define “a logic that is not a logic, an entirely new logic that I have not named yet, for it needs to be instituted first.” Is his appeal to an “elastic logic” not a way of saving, until his death, a dream that was also his tragedy? Using once again (in a parody?) the figure of Diotima in *The Symposium*, he talked about academic Penia (female lack) before psychoanalytic Poros (male resource) and wondered “up to what point, between the two, [he could] let the obscurity go.”

We will not mention the constant digressions (which were deleted in Nassif’s reports) and the perpetual repetitions of aphorisms or of previously used examples; the seminar drifted toward the search for a logic of the subject around the eternal Cartesian cogito, then toward the questions of “the sexual act,” of “the impossible subjectivization of sex,” and of “*jouissance*,” all questions that would prevail in the following seminars.

The multiple transformations of Descartes’ *Cogito ergo sum* (“either I

think or I am”; “either I don’t think or I am not”; “I am where I don’t think,” “I think where I am not,” etc.) ended with a formula that is a play on words: *Cogito ergo es*. The Latin “es” (you are) marks the always fundamental dependency on the Other and raises the problem of the passage from the *objet a* to the Other or from the Other to the *objet a* (71). Applied to desire, the formula becomes, “I desire you” means “I implicate you in my fundamental fantasy” as the *objet a*. Applied to love, it becomes, “You are not, therefore I am not”; “You are nothing but what I am”; “You are the nothing that I am,” etc. However, *Es* in German is the *id*, defined as the “non-I,” the impersonal *id* (neither first, nor second or third person): is it the reservoir of drives? Is it the cauldron (with a hole in it) of Freud’s witches? Or is it an “aggregate of signifiers” as Lagache was told (44)? A. Green’s comments during the seminar were helpful because he tried to mark the differences between the Freudian teaching and the Lacanian teaching, especially concerning the questions of the representations and of the affects that constitute the unconscious in Freud. For Lacan, the affects are signifiers whose chain excludes the subject: but did anybody doubt that the subject as such was absent from the fantasy, and that he was only present as scattered in all its elements, to be reconstructed as the subject of the enunciation? Green’s commentaries on Lacan’s translations of *Wo Es War, soll Ich Werden* are enlightening.

Lacan’s new interpretations led him to the first elaboration of “unbeing” [*désêtre*], which would soon become the mark of the end of the analysis (66). This first elaboration is based on puns: the unconscious desire is “pure desire,” *dés-être* like *dés-espoir* (despair, nonhope) is an *irpas* (from the Latin *ire*, to go, and the negation *pas*, not), which is an *inpassé* (something that has not gone through) linked to the desire of the Other, but also an *inpassé* (a dead end) due to repetition. The interpretation does not give any solution [*issue*] to the interpreted desire because there is no solution [*issue*] to the unconscious desire that “will always remain, and all the better so, a *désirpas* (desirenot).” For Lacan, is this knowledge of the truth of the unconscious desire really the solution [*issue*] to be offered in analysis, the solution to the “unfulfilled desire” of hysteria, to the “prevented desire” of phobia, or to the “impossible desire” of obsession? In his schema, the *objet a* upholds “the truth of the alienation”; to discover this truth is to discover that “there is no universe of discourse” because something real (something impossible because not symbolizable) eludes it, makes a “hole” or an opening in it. Then comes the terrible experience of the “subjective destitution” which, according to him, is necessary for any analyst-to-be (66). But what about the ordinary analysands and even the analysts-to-be as individuals?

“The big secret of psychoanalysis is that there is no sexual act,” all there is sexuality, which is a very different thing. For Lacan indeed, the act has a specific definition: it entails a signifying doubling that allows for an insertion of the subject in a chain where he inscribes himself—or else it entails the

institution of a signifier. But there is no signifier of sexual difference and none of the feminine sex either. On the other hand, *between* the man and the woman, “there is this third object (*objet a*) whose always sliding function of substitution makes it impossible to keep them opposed in whatever eternal essence. Therefore, it is impossible to posit a subject inscribing himself as sexed in the act of conjunction to the subject of what is called the opposite sex.” At the symbolic level, there is no “sexual relation”: there is merely $(a + 1)$ and $(a - 1)$, where a term marks the difference as a plus or as a minus. Remember that the phallus is “the sex-unity”: the 1 symbolizes the incommensurable.

For the first time Lacan used Marx’s analyses of use value and exchange value, and he began a long journey to back up his theory of “man-he” [*l’homme-il*]. The “man-he” is also the man-standard and the man-stallion [*l’homme-étalon* in the two senses of the term in French], as well as the bull and the poor bearer of the symbol of sex, thereby doomed to (symbolic) castration. He does not know how to live since there is no Other to guarantee him, not even if he were God, marked as he himself is by castration. The only protection is the construction of a protective society based on masculine homosexuality. The Father of Freud’s primal horde, because he supposedly enjoys [*jouir*] all women, sees “his *jouissance* killed.” Then, if the almighty phallus circulates, it is due to women: “Woman represents it [the phallus] as an exchange value among men; and, if the power of the penis bears the mark of castration, it seems that it is because, in a fictitious way, the woman becomes what is enjoyed [*ce dont on jouit*] and circulates as an object of *jouissance*.” “She is the locus of transference of this *jouissance* value” represented by the phallus. Through her identification to the use value embodied in the phallus, the woman transforms herself into an “object-good.” But it seems that she does not lack resources (such as masquerade) to act as “man-she” [*l’homme-elle*]. However, “she is unexpugnable as a woman precisely outside the system of the sexual act”: “she has a different use of her own *jouissance*, outside this ideology.” Thus, Lacan established the “radical heterogeneity” of the *jouissance* of the two sexes whose relationship could only be problematic. He began here a reflection that would lead him to the seminar *Encore* (84). If there is an enigma for the analysts (of both sexes?), he told us, it is indeed that of feminine *jouissance*.

I have devoted substantial space to this seminar because it seems to me to be an important crossroads in Lacanian thinking. I have omitted many aspects that emerged in the course of his oral comments, but I would suggest reading carefully the session where Jakobson responded, without equivocation, to the relevant questions asked by Dr. Jenny Aubry, Luce Irigaray, and Dr. Oury, and evaded Lacan’s tricky questions. What he said about the possible links between psychoanalysis and linguistics as regards the development of language in the child and the problem of verbalization is fascinating, all the more

so since he admitted his divergence from Lacan. For him, as a linguist, there is no element cut off from signification, not even at the most minimal level, and semantics is not to be separated from syntax in too rigid a manner.

66
 1967 (17 pp.)—PROPOSITION DU 9 OCTOBRE 1967 SUR LE PSYCHANALYSTE
 A L'ÉCOLE (PROPOSITION OF OCTOBER 9, 1967 CONCERNING
 THE PSYCHOANALYST IN THE ÉCOLE)—1968 AND 1978

Lacan suggested changing the organization of his école by creating a new “gradus” that would sanction the recognition of the analyst’s training. In the first part of our dossier (Chronology) we analyzed the discussions, dissensions, and agreements concerning this proposition and its implementation. Let us recall here that “the psychoanalyst only authorizes himself by himself [*ne s’autorise que de lui-même*]” in deciding to conduct therapy: such was the case for the A. P. (Practitioner Analyst). However, “this [did] not preclude the école from guaranteeing that an analyst [had] undergone its curriculum”: such was always the case for the A. M. E. (Member Analyst of the école) for whom a jury decided whether he had “proved himself.” Now Lacan added a third—and superior—category, the A. E. (Analysts of the école) who could “testify to all crucial and sharp problems as they appear in analysis, especially inasmuch as they have set for themselves the task of solving these problems and are hard at it.” We were thus “at this delicate limit-point where theory [was] linked to the establishment of the école by means of the training of the analyst.”

What did Lacan want? He said that he wanted to “disperse this thick obscurity,” this “darkness,” that covers the *passage* from the position of *psychoanalysand* (and this is the first time the term appeared) to that of *psychoanalyst*. Every psychoanalyst has lived through those ungraspable moments and experiences that Lacan called the *passe*. Lacan, on the other hand, wanted to grasp them and theorize them. For that purpose, he needed those who were experiencing them to testify. Who better than he who was going through it to talk about the *passe*? Who better than another analysand about to become an analyst to understand what he said about his analysis? Two *passeurs*, witnesses and not judges, would testify in front of a jury (formed of Lacan and several A. E.s) to what they would hear. This jury would both act as “selector” and produce “a doctrinal work” for everybody’s best benefit. So, was this a procedure meant to collectively improve the theory?

What interested Lacan was the aim of the analysis, in its relationship to the desire to become an analyst. As we know, for him, “pure psychoanalysis” is “didactic” (57). However, he wanted to go further; he wanted to articulate what remained “unarticulated after half a century of constant experience.” Beyond the desire to become an analyst, he wanted to articulate “the ending, the goal, and the object of psychoanalysis.” In his *Discours du 6 décembre*

1967 à l'E.F.P., he maintained the possibility that analyzeds who were not analysts by profession may have access to the *passé*, hence to the title of A. E.

However, wasn't the theory already given by Lacan, even before the results of the proposed experience? Would it be a kind of verification *in vitro* of what he was teaching in his seminar, with the hope of a gain-in-knowledge [*plus-de-savoir*]? Do not forget that *La Logique du fantasme* (65) ended with an analysis of *désêtre* (a crucial term here) and that the year 1967–1968 was devoted to the psychoanalytic act (*L'Acte psychanalytique* 69).

"In the beginning of psychoanalysis is transference," without any intersubjectivity, because *between* the two partners the *subject supposed to know* acts as a third, as the "pivot from where everything that goes on in transference is articulated." Lacan specified what he meant by this pivot: it is the signifier introduced in the discourse instituted by it, a formation as though detached from the psychoanalysand, which has nothing to do with the analyst's person. It is "a chain of letters that leads the not-known to frame knowledge," which concerns desire. The graph of desire still guided the analysis (36, 46) but an identity was asserted here between the algorithm (whose formula is

_____ supposed
subject . . . to know) and the *agalma* of Plato's *Symposium* (47),

which presents the "pure angle of the subject as the free relation to the signifier, a signifier from which both the desire of knowledge and the desire of the Other are isolated."

Let us move to the "endgame": our purpose, Lacan said, is to establish, regarding the passage from the psychoanalysand to the psychoanalyst, an "equation whose constant is the *agalma*" (and we have seen the difficulty of locating this term, a kind of compromise between the *objet a* and the phallus). Once "the desire that, in its functioning, upheld the psychoanalysand has been resolved, the analysand no longer wants to remove the possibility of such desire, that is, the remainder which, insofar as it determines his division, makes him fall from his fantasy and destitutes him as subject." Lacan interpreted the "depressive" position often noticed as the end of the analysis in terms of *désêtre* and "subjective destitution." "The subject sees his self-assurance sink, a self-assurance that came from the fantasy in which everybody's opening onto the real is constituted." He realizes that the grasp of desire is nothing other than that of a *désêtre*. "In this *désêtre* what is unveiled is the nonessential nature of the subject supposed to know; hence, the psychoanalyst-to-be dedicates himself to the *agalma* of the essence of desire, even if it means that he has to be reduced, himself and his name, to an ordinary signifier" since "the subject is the signifier of the pure signifying relation." Lacan stated, "May he [the analyst-to-be] know, as regards that which I did not know about the being of desire, how he is concerned, he who has come to the being of knowledge, and may he withdraw: *sicut palea*, as [Saint]

Thomas said of his work at the end of his life, like muck.” Does going through the fantasy, then, mean going toward the drive or toward a breathtaking confrontation with the signifier? Is the answer given by the following statement: “The being of desire thus meets the being of knowledge to be reborn from their knot in a strip formed by the only side on which only one lack is inscribed, that which upholds the *agalma*”? Topology returned: the *agalma* became the signifier of the bar that is put on the Other (A); the gap of $(-\Phi)$ opens in the Other; and the (*a*) falls from the Other. Those who could articulate this S (A) did not need any training course: they were worthy of being analysts of the Ecole Freudienne.

“Our poor Ecole can be the starting place of a renovation of the analytic experience”: this renovation could be achieved by uniting around Lacan’s teaching—an “unrivaled teaching” since he was the only one to talk about psychoanalysis (or the only one to talk about it this way, the forked tongues said). The école would be synonymous with “trial”: this would be the final word.

It is interesting to read the two versions of this text which, once again, claimed to be a founding text: the first one was actually delivered on October 9 and made public only in 1978 in *Analytica* (supplement to the journal *Ornicar?*); the second one, more condensed and more cautious, was published in the first issue of *Scilicet*, a journal founded in 1968 by Lacan who wrote the introductory text.

67

1967 (14 pp.)—DISCOURS DE CLOTURE DES JOURNEES SUR LES PSYCHOSES CHEZ L'ENFANT (CLOSING SPEECH OF THE WORKSHOP ON CHILD PSYCHOSES)—1967–1968 AND 1972

Maud Mannoni organized the workshop of October 1967 where the structural conceptions of the French group (the E.F.P.) and the existential conceptions of the English group led by R. Laing and D. Cooper (their interest in Sartrean theories is well known) and of the Philadelphia Association confronted each other. They shared two things: the attention given to the patient as a subject rather than to the study of the disease; and the question of freedom raised concerning the child, psychosis, and the establishment. It is unfortunate that the publication as a book (*Enfance aliénée*, collection 10/18) only kept the French talks, except for a translation by O. Mannoni of a text by Winnicott (absent from the meeting) who spoke so well of “the unthinkable anxiety [or distress].” However, even though the French positions all belonged to the same école, were they all that homogeneous? Take for example M. Mannoni’s statement: “Through Freud we know that the only valid training for a psychoanalyst rests on his own ability to identify with the patient.” Is this statement orthodox according to Lacanian standards?

Lacan gave the closing speech, taking the position of a theoretician in front

of field analysts: it is “an inspired address,” rather an informal talk in which he recalled his position about psychosis since *La Causalité psychique* (14). “Far from being an insult to freedom, it is its most faithful companion.” He also recalled his ethical strictures on “segregation” and his misadventures with the establishment. He politely showed his mistrust toward what he saw as too humanistic, utopian, or pragmatic in the English position: he reminded the audience that “any human formation requires curbing *jouissance*.” If he took off his hat to Winnicott for his discovery of “the transitional object,” he stressed the distance between this clinical observation and his own theoretical work: psychoanalysis has to “operate on the fantasy” that frames reality, and the *objet a* has to be viewed as “the cause as regards to desire, a desire of which the fantasy is the *montage*.”

In the note written in 1968, Lacan returned to two questions that were crucial to him. The first one is that of “*being-for-sex*”: “What woman wants, which is to still be at the blind center of analytic discourse, carries as its consequence that woman is a born-psychoanalyst (as one realizes by the fact that those women who have been least analyzed rule over analysis).” Such an homage is in fact a counter-homage. The second one is that of the *relations between language and speech*: he went back to his theses on the preverbal (the dog Justine and women in *L’Identification* 50) and language. “Once again, I have taken the upper hand due to the fact that language is obviously present precisely where one obstinately insists on figuring the preverbal.” Thus, does incompleteness [*l’incomplétude*] belong to the order of logic rather than to the order of feelings? “When will you understand that what I prefer is a discourse without words [*discours sans paroles*]?”

68

1967 (32 pp.)—PETIT DISCOURS AUX PSYCHIATRES (LITTLE SPEECH TO PSYCHIATRISTS)—ANONYMOUS EDITION, 1982

A circle for psychiatric studies, the Cercle d’Etudes Psychiatriques, was created in 1966 under Dr. H. Ey’s authority, and it included a teaching curriculum and a psychoanalysis section. On November 10, 1967 Lacan gave a talk there on *La Psychanalyse et la formation du psychiatre* (Psychoanalysis and the psychiatrist’s training), which he then changed to *Formation du psychanalyste et psychanalyse* (The psychoanalyst’s training and psychoanalysis). In order to understand what he said it is necessary to take into account the increasing number of psychiatrists who requested a training analysis (which was what Lacan called “the mass effect” of psychoanalysis—and not only in the E.F.P.), the dissensions within the E.F.P. concerning the 1967 Proposition (66), and finally the title of his seminar for the year: *L’Acte psychanalytique* (69). This address helps to grasp the climate of the time and Lacan’s reactions. In short, “I persist” [*je persevere*] and I talk as a “severe father” [*père sévère*]—a play on words that Lacan was particularly fond of.

Between “jumble and synthesis,” how are you going to use your training? he asked the psychiatrists. He reproached them for neglecting their patients, for putting off the search for therapeutic results for the “brighter future” of their own analytic training from which they expect the key to madness. Their misunderstanding was radical: psychoanalysis does not function in the register of understanding, it dispels false understanding in order to locate nonunderstanding. This is why it does not lessen the anxiety of the encounter with the madman. On the contrary, this anxiety must be maintained because the madman is the truly free man: he does not hold on to the locus of the Other through the *objet a* (65) because he has this *objet a* at his disposal, “he has its cause in his pocket.” The psychiatrist, by his very function, responds to the madman’s existence with something other than anxiety. After a training analysis he would thus become again the psychiatrist subjugating “the free man.” This was a stone thrown into the yard of the psychiatrists/psychoanalysts (which the E.F.P. was full of). But then, we wonder, is there a therapeutic position taken by analysis in this domain, except for a laissez-faire attitude? To respond to the madman by “putting into practice” the Lacanian formulas, is that not derisive? Or is it a more subtle way of bringing him back to a “normed” condition, this time defined by the subject divided by the signifier, alienated by the Big Other, and dependent on the *objet a*, the cause of his desire? Isn’t that also to respond to him with something other than anxiety? Lacan did not respond to that question, because he did not even consider it.

In actual fact, he mainly used this opportunity to present a digest of his theory to a new audience, a digest of what he “keeps coming back to [*ressasse*]” as he said, throughout the seminars, for it was certain that “nothing of what I say is understood.” Besides, “it does not matter, because it is not meant to be understood”: “it is meant to be used,” and his formulas do work! In any case, one thing was sure: “Without formalization, there is no psychoanalysis!”

“I have other little tricks up my sleeve; it would make me happy if some guy discovered something up my sleeve before I did . . .”

69

1967–1968 (267 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XV: L’ACTE PSYCHANALYTIQUE
(SEMINAR XV: THE PSYCHOANALYTIC ACT)—ANONYMOUS VERSION, 1981

Since *La Logique du fantasme* (65), where he stated that there is no “sexual act,” Lacan questioned the difference between the act [*l’acte*] and a mere action [*l’agir*]. One of his students summarized this opposition in an enlightening, if not satisfactory, way: “to fuck” is an action [*un agir*], “to get married” is an act [*un acte*], because there is “a commitment and a recognition, which entail repetition” and “the inscription in the Big Other.” Certainly, the signifier would appear soon, which the Master had already announced the

previous year. This was confirmed by the absence of contradiction between Saint John's sentence, "In the beginning was the Word [*le Verbe*]," and Goethe's, "In the beginning was the action" (as noted by Lacan, based on A. Koyré). However these statements were mild compared to the Lacanian assertion of the "irreducibility of the sexual act to any truthful relation." Since love is itself purely narcissistic, what remained of a possible relation between the sexes, other than a social pact?

To talk about the psychoanalytic act meant a lot, and a lot was expected from this seminar. It is disappointing. It is a chaotic set of previously stated things, and the transcription is not alone to blame for it. Lacan seemed to be uncomfortable, and, as often in such cases, he embarked on polemics, complained about the absence of so many analysts of his *école*, fulminated, threw incisive formulas, repeated over and over again formulas that had already been fully tested, spread banalities, got irritated whenever someone raised the slightest doubts. . . . The *Proposition sur l'analyste à l'école* (66) and the *Conférences* written for the trip to Italy (70) are more enlightening than this text concerning his elaborations about the *subject-supposed-to-know* and the end of the analysis.

What can be redeemed from this seminar? An overview of the different types of acts in psychoanalysis might be. There is the founding act of psychoanalysis: before, the effects of the unconscious existed, but nobody knew that they existed. There is the entrance into analysis and the fact of becoming an established psychoanalyst, which are decisions and commitments. On the side of the analysand, there are the slips and the failures, which led Lacan to give an *Eloge de la connerie* (Praise of Folly). In analysis one learns that it is impossible to respond simply to the injunction "render unto truth the things that are truth's and unto folly the things that are folly's," because the two overlap and one encounters "the folly of truth even more often than the truth of folly." Other acts are the *passage à l'acte* and the "acting out," activities that, although they fill a distressing hole, reproduce the past instead of remembering it in words. On the side of the psychoanalyst, Lacan reminded the audience that "outside the manipulation of transference, there is no psychoanalytic act." He had been repeating it since 1948, but the perspective is very different here: in order for the analysand to move to the function of analyst, his analyst must accept—while pretending to be the upholder of the subject supposed to know—being "reduced to his function of cause of a process in which the subject supposed to know is undone" and he must accept in the end being "nothing more than the waste of the operation represented by the *objet a*," which will produce an effect of truth. The analyst's position is thus untenable, as Freud said, and this is why he opposes "the most violent misconception [*méconnaissance*] as regards the psychoanalytic act itself." Besides, the analysand who has experienced *désêtre* discovers, when he "takes up the analyst's torch," that he is forced to restore for another the

subject supposed to know. The transmission would thus be completed, very different from the *passé* itself. The psychoanalytic act, a “setting into act of the subject” and a “setting into act of the unconscious,” is like a tragedy where the hero falls in the end as a piece of trash.

One of the sessions of the seminar—which ended with the events of May 1968—is fascinating: in Lacan’s absence, some analysts discussed among themselves what they had, or had not, understood in his teaching and some expressed their fears concerning the effects of these new developments about the *objet a* and the *désêtre* in therapies.

70
 1967 (11 pp.)—LA MEPRISE DU SUJET SUPPOSE SAVOIR (THE MISTAKE OF THE SUBJECT SUPPOSED TO KNOW)—(9 pp.)—DE ROME 53 A ROME 67: LA PSYCHANALYSE. RAISON D’UN ECHEC (FROM ROME 53 TO ROME 67: PSYCHOANALYSIS. THE REASON FOR A FAILURE)—?(9 pp.)—DE LA PSYCHANALYSE DANS SES RAPPORTS AVEC LA REALITE (ON PSYCHOANALYSIS IN ITS RELATIONS WITH REALITY)—1968

These texts, written for conferences at the French Institute in Naples, at the University of Rome, and at the French Institute in Milan, in December 1967, were never read “because of the number and diversity of the audience.” However, they were published in the first issue of *Scilicet*, at the same time as Lacan’s *Presentation* of the journal and his *Proposition du 9 octobre* (68): *Scilicet* was where Lacanian teaching was written down, and it was more accessible to outsiders.

These three addresses form a whole. Mixing polemic and pedagogy to convince the audience of the value of the theory, they are organized around the essential notions elaborated in the previous fourteen years. The first one again asks the question, “What is the unconscious?” in order to explain “the mistake [*méprise*] of the subject-supposed-to-know.” The unconscious belongs to the order of the *unheimlich* (the uncanny), because “its function is to erase the subject.” “Everything that belongs to the unconscious only plays on effects of language. It is something that is said, without the subject representing himself in it, or without him saying himself—and without him knowing what he says.” The second address recalls *Fonction et champ* (24) where Lacan wanted, in 1953, to question analytic practice and to renew the status of the unconscious: it was misunderstood and reduced to a psychologizing intersubjectivity. Going back to a number of his texts in *Ecrits* (63), he talks about the misappropriation of his concepts and about the *poubelliciation* of his works: his failure is also the failure of psychoanalysis. The third address asserts that “psychoanalysis *is reality*” and claims to be resolutely “realistic.” An analysis is a “Freudian” analysis when it “excludes the worlds that open onto a mutation of consciousness, an ascetism of knowledge, and a communicative effusion.” As for the analyst, he “must know that, far from being the measure of reality, he only clears for the subject the way towards his truth, by

offering himself as the medium through which this *désêtre* is experienced; and, as a consequence, the subject lives on in an alienated reality, but without being unable to think of himself as divided, and the analyst is properly the cause of that." Such would be the *psychoanalytic act*.

The subject-supposed-to-know would be the God of philosophers, and theory would be "the place of *The-ology* in the world." On the other hand, Freud would rather mark the place of God-the-Father, the place of a *Dio-logy* (with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Fathers of the Church, Professor Eckhart, and . . . Joyce), a place that Lacan called *Nom-du-Père*; if this place were not marked, psychoanalysis would only be a Schreberlike delirium. What was needed, therefore, was to "construct the theory of the mistake [*méprise*] of the subject-supposed-to-know," a theory that would include lack on all levels. In the psychoanalytic act, the analyst's intervention has "no grasp": Freud stressed that "it is from that place [the unconscious], which differs from any grasp by the subject, that a knowledge is passed on to us since it is only given through the mistake [*méprise*] of the subject." One must be open to *surprise*. According to Reik, "what is expected from the session is precisely what one refuses to expect, by fear of getting caught up, i.e., surprise." Thus, psychoanalysis would be "the assertion of the incapacity of knowledge to meet anything but an opacity without remedy." For Lacan, its field is that of the relations among knowledge, *jouissance*, and truth around a fundamental lack. He, therefore, recalled the "irreducibility" of castration and of penis-envy in Freud. It is in "the indetermination of his sex" that the analyst has to "find the certainty of his act and the gap [*béance*] that makes its law."

71

1968–1969 (699 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XVI: D'UN AUTRE A L'AUTRE
(SEMINAR XVI: FROM ONE OTHER TO THE OTHER)—ANONYMOUS VERSION,
1981

Lacan took a stand in the crisis of the university that followed May 1968: "If psychoanalysis cannot be articulated as a knowledge and taught as such, it has no place in the university, where it is only a matter of knowledge" and he rejected nonconceptualization. For him, structure is the real and can be taught thanks to the mathematical logic that analysts should learn, for it took the place of the question of the existence of God. Focusing on the Other and the *objet a*, Lacan analyzed and combined Pascal, Marx, and the logic of the link between 1 (the unbroken line [*trait unaire*] of *L'Identification 50*) and *a* under the form

$$\frac{1}{a} = 1 + a$$

with a series of transformations. To that, add questions on feminine *jouissance* (is its locus the Other or the Thing? 43), on the *nullibiquité* of the phallus that testifies to the fact that *jouissance* is real but cannot be symbol-

ized, on the Phallus as a symbol that is lacking or outside system, and the repetition of the graphs of desire (36 and 46). Remember that this seminar is seven hundred typed pages long!

Lacan chose the right moment to declare that he read Marx when he was twenty, on his way to the hospital. How could he prove it? "His own volume [was] falling to pieces." *He* had not waited for the recent research on "Marx's structuralism" (an allusion to Althusser and his students at the E.N.S.) in order to discover in the third part, the fifth chapter of *Capital!* Marx, he said, had invented "surplus-value" [*plus-value*] and *he* had invented the *objet a*. He stated that he was going to construct the *plus-de-jouir* so as to isolate the *objet a*, and he was going to do so by homology (and not analogy, what a nightmare!) with "surplus-value" [*plus-value*]. In the algorithm of fantasy, $S \diamond a$ (65), "the being of *a* is the *plus-de-jouir*." Moreover, "at the level of the enunciation," perversion reveals "the *plus-de-jouir* in its bare form." The relation between the *plus-de-jouir* and surplus value [*plus-value*] is the function of the *objet a*. Everybody, no doubt, agrees. As for the perverse, like "the man of faith or the crusader," he has given to God his true plenitude by giving *a* back to the Other. Hence, *a* is in *A* (the small other is in the big Other); However, *a* makes a hole in *A*, as shown by the figure of the cross-cap *Aa*. *Jouissance* is excluded, the Other is the locus where it is known, *a* is the effect of fall that results from it. After going from *a* to *A*, one must go from *A* to *a*. One can understand why the disciples fought to figure out whether the title should be spelled *de l'autre à l'Autre* or *de L'Autre à l'autre*. In this very debate over the title, what was at stake for everyone was his *plus-de-jouir*.

Pascal's *Pari* appeared in the seminar so as to complicate everything. On the one hand, Lacan said, "I mainly talk about a dead God, maybe in order to better free myself from my relation to a dead Freud." On the other hand, however, Pascal in *Le Pari* raises the question of the existence of God. In fact, the only true question is that of the subject: Does *I* exist? Do I exist? "The nothing that life is," which is at stake for Pascal, is the *plus-de-jouir*. The assumption of the loss creates the gap [*béance*] between the body and its *jouissance*: such is indeed the well-known effect of the *objet a* (the lost object) in the field of the Other. For Pascal, the central point is "the infinite nothing"; the only salvation is grace, for God's mercy is bigger than His justice. Grace allows proximity to the desire of the Other in its various forms: "I ask myself what you want," "I ask you what you want," which leads to "Thy Will be Done!" However, this sentence is said to a faceless Other. God's will, for not being our will, comes to lack; then, for lack of God, we are left with the Father as dead, the Father as a name (the pivot of discourse) and as the relation of *jouissance* to castration. "The Name-of-the-Father is a rift that remains wide open in my discourse, it is only known through an act of faith: there is no Incarnation in the locus of the Other." Such is the

Lacanian pathos. "After seventy years of analysis, still nothing has been formulated about male man," he admitted. This may explain the effect upon him of Michel Foucault's talk on "the name of the author."

In June Lacan read the letter that Flacelière, the director of the E.N.S., sent him in March to tell him that his teaching privileges on the premises of the E.N.S. were suspended. Lacan left the rue d'Ulm with the stirrings of protest.

72

1969 (4 pp.)—LA PSYCHANALYSE EN CE TEMPS
(PSYCHOANALYSIS AT THAT TIME)—1983

In 1983, the *Bulletin de l'Association Freudienne* published a transcription of this talk given at the Grand Lodge of France. It is a pleasant example of several informal talks, in semifashionable circles, which the Master easily agreed to give. The example is pleasant because the (shared?) pleasure is that of a paradox: Lacan kept the audience off balance but he did not neglect the art of seducing it.

The subject that was called into question was a principle which, for centuries, had been guiding the doctor's action, namely, the principle of the *Primum non nocere* (first, not to harm). This was a generally accepted idea, but the analyst had to ask himself, "not to harm what?" What does the analyst offer the "psychoanalysand" (this new term proved "that the agent is restored in the patient")? He offers "an operation in which the subject is stabilized as the established quotient of the desire that engendered him in the ego he thought he was" with "a remainder in which the subject actualizes himself for what he is in his structure: a loss." "The subject comes out of analysis having done nothing but alienate this remainder, that is, give it back to the Other where it comes from. Then, clear of his debt, he can cancel the creditor himself. He no longer needs the demand of this Other to uphold his own desire. He is satisfied with this emptiness in which he can love his neighbor, because it is in this emptiness that he finds his neighbor as-if in himself and he cannot love him in any other way." It is clear that, in spite of the theoretical changes, Lacan remained faithful to the concerns of his seminar on *L'Éthique* in 1959–1960 (43). The *cure* [guérison] is not a Lacanian term; if the psychoanalytic act is "the purest of essential acts," it is because it opens up a possible access to truth and to ethics.

Nevertheless, the reactions of this audience, not very familiar with Lacanian discourse, are easy to imagine. Lacan eased the atmosphere with a little criticism of Freud "who gave to the heirs of his thought the status of a Church" and of the Church dedicated to a regime of "double truth." He proceeded with a quote from Kierkegaard for whom, "in the real, the priest is nothing but an imbecile and the Christian is absent," and with a few allusions to the *belle âme* of "Left-wing intellectuals." He added a play on

words: “we are today between *censée* and *pensure*.”^p And he ended with a final punch line: “Truth on this side of thinking, knowledge on that.”^q What *savoir-faire*!

1969–1981

Lacan was sixty-eight when he moved his seminars to the University of Paris at the Pantheon, and it was crowded. A specifically Lacanian teaching started at Vincennes with the creation of the department of psychoanalysis and then the opening of the clinical section. At the same time, Lacan made his debut in the media with *Radiophonie* and *Télévision*.

Between 1969 and 1981 he gave eleven seminars, some of which were immediately transcribed in the journal *Ornicar?*, created in 1975. “I have other tricks up my sleeve,” he said in 1967. Here are a few: “the Four Discourses” which appeared in *L’Envers de la psychanalyse*, the Borromean knots, and the seminar *Encore* where he posed both questions and answers concerning woman and the “sexual relation.” All this was involved with the grandiose project of creating a *matheme* of psychoanalysis, which alone would be capable of reinterpreting formal logic and of showing the very limits of science. But wasn’t he resorting to the last trick up his sleeve when, at seventy-nine, he decided to dissolve his école, the E.F.P., and to invite its former members to a new commitment in psychoanalysis around his own person?

73

1969–1970 (94 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XVII: L’ENVERS DE LA PSYCHANALYSE (SEMINAR XVII: THE NETHERSIDE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS)—ANONYMOUS VERSION, 1981

This seminar, whose title is enigmatic, is well known because it establishes the fundamental *Four Discourses* (the discourse of the Master, the discourse of the Hysteric, the discourse of the University, and the discourse of the Analyst). Their study went on and was elaborated for at least two years, until *Savoir du psychanalyste* (81). In this context, four seminar sessions (addresses) were planned at the new department of psychoanalysis in Vincennes. In December 1969, the first session, *Impromptu de Vincennes* (“Impromptu at Vincennes”), was stormy, “memorable, and unique since Lacan did not come back,” according to *Le Magazine Littéraire*, which published the text in 1977. However, in June 1970, Lacan came back to talk—with the title

p. The pun plays on the split of *censure* (censorship) into *censée* (to be supposed to, which also sounds like *sensée*, which makes sense) and *pensure* (from *pensée*, thinking).

q. A transformation of Pascal’s thought: “Truth on this side of the Pyrénées, error on that.”

“Psychanalyticon”—about the discourse of the University, the place that students have in it, and his own position as an analyst.

The formulations of the four discourses were elaborated little by little, as he developed a speech in which the often very digressive commentary extended far beyond the four algebraic schemas he wanted to promote. These digressions might be the most interesting part of this seminar, and there is enough variety to satisfy all tastes: the *plus-de-jouir* and *jouissance*; the master and the slave; Marx and the proletariat; knowledge, truth, and *jouissance*; the Father of *Totem and Taboo* who is all love (or all *jouissance*) and whose murder generates the love of the Dead Father, a Father to whom Lacan opposed both the Father presiding over the first idealization, the one who deserves love (50), and the Father who enters the discourse of the Master and who is thereby castrated from the origin. For Lacan, indeed, “the death of the father is the key to supreme *jouissance*, later identified with the mother as the aim of incest.” According to him, psychoanalysis “is not constructed on the proposition ‘to sleep with the mother’ but on the death of the father as primal *jouissance*.” The real father is thus not the father of biological (or daily) reality, but he who upholds “the Real as impossible.” From the Oedipus complex, the theoretician only saved “the paternal metaphor” and “the Name-of-the-Father,” which “is positioned where knowledge acts as truth.” Hence, he asserted—against M. C. Boons according to whom analysis frees us from the law (in *L’Inconscient*, 5)—that, on the contrary, “psychoanalysis consolidates the law.” Lacan stated that he was neither a libertarian, nor an anarchist, nor a protester, nor a “progressist.”

However, the novelty here was the forceful (and glorious?) return of the hysteric, with Dora (20) and *la Belle Bouche erre* (the Beautiful Mouth wanders, an allusion to the dream of the beautiful butcher’s wife analyzed by Freud and carried on in *La Direction de la cure* 40). Three questions arose: the question of the relation between *jouissance* and the desire for unfulfilled desire; the question of the hysteric who “makes the man” [*fait l’homme*] (or the Master) in the sense that she “constructs” him as “a man prompted by the desire to know”; and a new conception of the analytic treatment as a “hystericization of discourse,” which the analyst must introduce through “ingenious devices” at the structural level. Lacan was now far from the “directed paranoia” of 1948 (16). However, this left untouched the problem of hysteria as attributed to woman (the only discourse where sexual difference openly comes into play) and as valorized in Socrates and here in Hegel. Don’t forget that castration is the “deprivation of the woman” (with the ambiguity of the *of*), insofar as “she would fulfill herself in the smallest signifier.” In short, woman is absent from the field of the signifier, nobody can do anything about it, and furthermore everybody is unhappy!

Let us come back to the algebraic schemas. Their elaboration can be followed step by step. It is helpful, in order to follow the evolution, to read

Radiophonie (77) at the same time, which was recorded at the time that this seminar was taking place. The end of the text published in *Scilicet* (2/3) and the note (p. 99) summarizing the definitive schemas are enlightening. It is also relevant to read this seminar in conjunction with the *Séminaire XVIII, D'un Discours qui ne serait pas du semblant* (78). We shall come back to it later; at this point, let us sketch the steps. First, “a fundamental starting relation” functions as a postulate:

$$\frac{S1}{\S} \rightarrow S2.$$

S1 refers to “the marked circle of the field of the big Other,” it is the Master-Signifier. S2 is the “battery of signifiers,” which “is already there” at the place where “one wants to determine the status of a discourse as status of the statement”—that is, knowledge. S1 thus comes into play in a signifying battery that already forms the “network of knowledge.” § is the subject, marked from the origin by the “unbroken line” [*trait unaire*], which represents him and is, therefore, very different from the living individual who is not the locus of this subject (for the “unbroken line,” see *L'Identification* 50). Add to this the *objet a*, the object-waste or the loss of the object that occurred when the ordinary division of the subject took place, the object that is the cause of his desire, but that is, since seminar XVI (71), his *plus-de-jour*. These four terms are “fixed elements.”

How is it possible to turn “a quarter way around” the “succession of letters of this algebra,” and so, while avoiding the (horrible) “imaginary incidence,” to arrive at the famous four structures of discourse (which are, of course, in a position to govern, without our knowing it, all our words)? The response: it is possible through algebra, and here are the results:

Discourse of the Master:

$$\frac{S1}{\S} \rightarrow \frac{S2}{a}$$

Discourse of the University:

$$\frac{S2}{S1} \rightarrow \frac{a}{\S}$$

Discourse of the Hysteric:

$$\frac{\S}{a} \rightarrow \frac{S1}{S2}$$

Discourse of the Analyst:

$$\frac{a}{S2} \rightarrow \frac{\S}{S1}$$

This algebra is also concerned with the positions which, like the four terms, are also fixed:

The agent
truth

the other
production

It is now up to you to play with this and to interpret! But, in order to do so, the elements need to move; so, the arrows allow for the circular permutation of the four elements. How can one go from one discourse to the other? “The

discourse of the analyst loops the dizzying loop of the three other discourses but does not resolve it." Furthermore, at the end Lacan added the opposition between "impossibility" and "impotence" [*impuissance*]: "the impossible is the real where speech, as the *objet a*, functions like a carrion" and "impotence, on the other hand, protects truth." Let us stop here; maybe the *Séminaire XVIII* (78) will enlighten us.

Let us end with a paradox. As he stated in his new translation of *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*, work is for the analyst and "the *plus-de-jouir* is for you": "Where it was the *plus-de-jouir* of the other, it is there, where it was, that I, insofar as I utter the psychoanalytic act, must come."

But why not rather end on this story of the three Congolese, psychoanalyzed after World War II: "Their unconscious functioned according to the rules of the Oedipus complex, it was the unconscious that had been sold to them at the same time as the laws of colonization, an exotic form of the discourse of the Master, a regression before imperialist capitalism." Then, why are there only four discourses, which moreover can turn a quarter way around very quickly? Are the "capitalistic" or "imperialistic discourses" mentioned here only metamorphoses of the discourse of the Master, a term whose ambiguity (or whose plurality of meaning) always remained? Aren't we too a little bit Congolese?

What is "the netherside of psychoanalysis"? Sometimes, it is the discourse of the Master, insofar as it functions as a foil. Sometimes, it is unconscious discourse as the knowledge located where wrong and right sides (analytic discourse) cannot be separated, according to the figure of the Moebius strip. "The netherside is assonant with truth," "one moves to the netherside," indeed, "but the netherside does not explain any right side." The end of the text belongs to Lacan's pessimistic inspiration: "To die of shame is not easy" because "death needs to be deserved, at least in order to die of shame," otherwise all that remains is "life as shame-to-drink" because "it does not die and one does not die from it." "This shame is justified by not dying of shame, that is, by maintaining the discourse of a perverted world": "The more ignoble you will be, the better things will go."

74

1969 (6 pp.)—PRESENTATION DE LA PUBLICATION DES ECRITS I
(PRESENTATION OF THE PUBLICATION OF ECRITS I)—1969

The collection *Points* (Seuil) published five texts from *Ecrits* (63). For that occasion, Lacan wrote a preface whose style is an affected elegance, with the touch of polemic and of ultimate casualness towards the reader that can make Lacan delightful; he slips away at the very moment when he exposes himself to the spirit of seriousness that drives him as a theoretician.

The main part of this preface is a rereading of Poe's *Purloined Letter* (31): "There is no other master than the signifier." Thus, to seize "a signifier that

allows one to have a hold on the Queen," isn't this "to curb Femininity inasmuch as it is almighty, but only in order to be at the mercy of what is called here, and for good reasons, the King"? The King's "power is that of Death," as in bridge ("the dummy") or in the symbolic game of the dead father. For having stolen the letter, the minister will be feminized—and "castrated precisely for thinking that he still has it." Dupin, on the other hand, is the model of the psychoanalyst whose act is only successful because of "the blunder of the other." "The Master trump" is the phallus, insofar as nobody owns it. As for the woman, we must quote the famous passage: "Would it be the letter that makes the Woman this subject both almighty and in serfdom, so that any hand to whom the woman leaves the letter also takes with it that which, for having received it, she herself leaves as a legacy? Legacy [*lais*] means that which the woman bequeaths for never having had it: hence, truth comes out of the well, but always only half-way [*à mi-corps*]." Lacan uses "signifier" here, "letter" there; it is only in *Séminaire XVIII* (78) that he tried to distinguish them by renewing his theory, using this same short story for that purpose. Moreover, he repeats here two old statements: "The signifier is that which represents a subject for another signifier" and "The unconscious is a discourse."

75

1969 (12 pp.)—PREFACE AU LIVRE D'A. RIFFLET-LEMAIRE: JACQUES LACAN
(PREFACE TO A. RIFFLET-LEMAIRE'S BOOK: JACQUES LACAN)—1970

"Thanks to my *Ecrits*, I am now the subject of a thesis": what a revenge on the opponents of the old days! However, "My *Ecrits* are unsuitable for a thesis, particularly an academic thesis: they are antithetical by nature, since one either takes what they formulate or one leaves them. . . ."

This preface is full of allusions to the analytic conflicts since 1963, to his "teaching that has been marginalized by psychiatrists and psychoanalysts," who were nevertheless his true addressees, to the academic structure, to the psychoanalytic establishment, etc. Underneath this settling of scores one can perceive the wound against which the plays on words protect him. He goes back to his graph of desire (36 and 46), so neglected by the "L"s of the time (Laplanche and Leclaire) that they did not understand the formula of metaphor. Since the Colloquium at Bonneval, the discussion with Laplanche had never come to a conclusion (48 and 56), and this is a plea in retrospect; here, he argues that, by inscribing the variable x , he has allowed the function of the signifier phallus to emerge, as the sign of the "passion of the signifier." Against Laplanche's "the unconscious is the condition of language," Lacan reaffirms that "language is the condition of the unconscious." The entire discussion (7 pp.) summarized by A. Rifflet-Lemaire deals with this theoretical antagonism that hides another one: "Aile" [Laplanche] would have been fluster. *Aile*, wing, sounds like *L*, Laplanche's initial.

tered if he had said that the unconscious was the logical implication of language: in effect, there is no unconscious without language. This could have been a step toward the root of the implication and of the logic itself. *Aile* would have got back to the subject presupposed by my knowledge. Perhaps—who knows—*Aile* might have outstripped me in that which I am reaching.” In brief, “*Aile*” would have been Lacan or the son so much desired but so much hated for arriving ahead. . . . Nobody has understood that the graph of desire is in fact “a rigorous apparatus,” the apparatus “in which *l'apparole* figures, made out of this spendthrift [*panier percé*], the Other (known as the Big Other), so that the basket of desire can be hung up by its four corners and stiffened into a fantasy by *the a*, the ball-object.”⁵

Lacan presented the principles of his analytic practice and of his teaching: “There is no knowledge without discourse,” but “the unconscious one imagines is refuted by the unconscious as it is, *a knowledge put in the place of truth*; this can be conceived only within a structure of discourse.” This is an “unthinkable” discourse since it is only held for the subject to be “ejected” from it; it is a “teachable” discourse but from the “middle ground of speech” [*mi-dire*]. Against “the inanity of the discourse of knowledge” which, asserting itself with its closure, makes the others lie, Lacan opposed an “asymptomatic discourse” in which “the impossible (to say the truth) is the basis of his [the psychoanalyst’s] real, a real from where the consistency of the discourses in which truth limps can be judged, precisely because it limps openly.” Thus, he firmly contested academic discourse.

76

1970 (9 pp.)—ALLOCUTION PRONONCEE POUR LA CLOTURE DU CONGRES DE L'E.F.P., LE 19 AVRIL 1970, PAR SON DIRECTEUR (ADDRESS GIVEN, ON APRIL 19, 1970, FOR THE CLOSURE OF THE CONGRESS OF THE E.F.P., BY ITS DIRECTOR)—1970

Like Don Juan, Lacan gave *mille e tre* closing speeches. This one has the privilege of being written and immediately published in *Scilicet* under this solemn title that sounds like a call to order. (The transcription of the oral speech, which is much funnier, appeared in *Les Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne*, 8). The stakes are high: the congress dealt with the teaching of psychoanalysis, at a time when the Lacanians were settled at the University of Paris at Vincennes and when it was impossible to avoid the problem of the *passé* (66)—two fire-brands in the Ecole.

Lacan went back to his schemas of the four discourses (73, 77) and commented on them because, he said, nobody had taken them into account. Against his disciples' trend, he did not hesitate to state that he gave “a course in psychoanalysis”; for him, \$ (the subject divided by the signifier) is the

s. *Panier percé* means both a spendthrift (metaphorically) and a basket with a hole in the bottom (literally).

only locus where there can be a teacher, “which does not mean that everywhere the \$ is there is a teacher.” One simply must ask oneself how one behaves toward knowledge when one has put oneself in the position of a teacher. Indeed, “teaching could be meant to be a barrier to knowledge” but “I have established a sliding of knowledge by making it homologous to *jouissance*” and raised the problem of the relation between knowledge and truth: truth is formalized in science, with formal logic that is “for us the target, since we have to extend it to the structure of language.” However, if “the truth may not convince, knowledge, on the other hand, passes into act.” Thus, he stated, “What saves me from teaching is the act and that which testifies to the act.” The psychoanalytic act can “be celebrated by the university as the conjecture of its lack”: “for actualizing this conjecture, the university must tolerate me.”

It is therefore out of the question to see “psychoanalysis [as] a subversion of knowledge”: “On the contrary, knowledge makes the truth of our discourse.” Indeed, knowledge is on the side of the unconscious. Then, it is “from the relation of knowledge to truth” (and truth is formalized in logical terms) that “the masters-signifiers produced in analytic discourse take on some truth.” Why hide “the confusion that my teaching creates within the école”? he said. For the first time, he clearly asserted that “by offering itself to teaching, analytic discourse leads the analyst to the position of *analysand*, that is, leads him to produce nothing master-able,” except “as a symptom.” At the opposite end from the *discourse of the Master*, the *discourse of the Analyst* allows knowledge to come in the place that we designate as truth.

As for the *passé*, the director tried to dedramatize the conflict around *désêtre*: “the availability” that the *passé* creates is “a necessary danger in order that there be a true *passant*” but *désêtre* is not “a state in which anybody could settle in any activity.” Joking in *Les Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne*, he expanded at length on the fact that “[he did] not spend [his] time in *désêtre*, that [he worked] a lot,” etc. He even backed away from this term “that had actually come to him just like that” after the term “subjective destitution,” which, on the other hand, is used “most appropriately concerning what takes place in analysis” because “the psychoanalysand is the support of the text.”

“Teachers, therefore, you were to me [*Enseignants donc vous me fûtes*]. Not without some *désêtre* taking hold of me: it must have been showing for a while. Am I thereby taught something more by you?”

77

1970 (45 pp.)—RADIOPHONIE—1970

This is an interview with Lacan conducted by GeorGIN, with seven questions and answers. The first four were broadcast in Belgium, and then in France. *Scilicet* (2/3) published the entire interview, including the passages that shed light on the four discourses (73, 76) and, most importantly, the note that gives

the complete algebraic schemas (p. 99). However, the aim of the interview was wider: it was to assess the Freudian and Lacanian contributions, the notion of structure, the place of psychoanalysis in the humanities, its consequences “on the level of science, philosophy and more particularly Marxism, indeed communism,” in order to conclude finally with the question, “To what extent are knowledge and truth incompatible?” If “to govern, to educate, and to psychoanalyse are three wagers impossible to take up,” how “do you resolve the contradiction” between “the perpetual contesting of all discourse,” even of “analytic knowledge,” and the necessity to “hang on to it”? Is it through the “status of the impossible,” because “the impossible is the real”? This was a standard interview in the media—with a lot of general and abstract problems—and it was characteristic of the 60s and 70s.

The point was to allow a broader audience to know what Lacan’s theses had been since 1953. Let us merely point out what was new.

First, there is the following statement: if “language is the condition of the unconscious” (a thesis that had been reaffirmed, 75), “*the unconscious is the condition of linguistics.*” Freud anticipated the researches of Saussure and the Prague circle by sticking to the letter of the patient’s word, to jokes, to “slips” of the tongue, and by bringing to light the fundamental importance of condensation and displacement in the production of dreams. The unconscious is simply the fact “that the subject is not the one who knows what he says.” “Whoever articulates it [the unconscious], in Lacan’s name, must say that it is either that or nothing.” “And why would Saussure have realized [. . .] better than Freud himself, what he anticipated, notably the Lacanian metaphor and metonymy, the very places where Saussure engendered Jakobson?” Besides, metaphor and metonymy do not have the same functions in the two disciplines.

No, the notion of “structure” does not allow us to create a “common field” uniting linguistics, ethnology, and psychoanalysis. Linguistics has “no hold over the unconscious,” because “it leaves as a blank that which produces effects in the unconscious, the *objet a*,” the very focus of the psychoanalytic act—and of any act. Such is the “linguist’s shortcoming” (an allusion to Benvéniste). The two discourses also differ in the position of the subject: “Only the discourse that defines itself in the terms given by psychoanalysis manifests the subject as other, that is, gives him the key to his division—whereas science, by making the subject a master, conceals him, to the extent that the desire that gives way to him bars him for me, as for Socrates, without remedy.” As opposed to ethnology, psychoanalysis “does not have to make an inventory of the myths that have conditioned a subject.” There is only one myth in Lacan’s discourse, the Freudian Oedipus complex. Moreover, for Lévi-Strauss, “myth denies everything I promoted in *L’Instance de la lettre dans l’inconscient* (35). It performs neither metaphor nor metonymy. It does not condense, it explains. It does not displace, it accommodates, even if it

has to change the order of the tents.” “It only functions by combining its heavy units, and it is the complement alone that, because it insures the presence of the couple, allows a background to emerge, which is precisely what its structure rejects.” On the other hand, “in psychoanalysis (as well as in the unconscious), man knows nothing of woman, and woman nothing of man. The phallus epitomizes the point in myth where the sexual becomes the passion of the signifier.”

For Lacan, the structure is the body of the symbolic. The Stoics “were abled, with the term ‘*incorporeal*,’ to mark how the symbolic relates to the body.” “The function that at once makes the reality of mathematics, the use of topology whose effect is similar, and analysis in a broader sense for logics, is incorporeal.” Lacan added, “It is as incorporeal that structure creates the affect [. . .], thereby revealing that it [the affect] is second to the body, be it dead or alive.” Moreover, the structure in analysis entails “*a rift—and a structural one*”! “*There is no sexual relation—implying no sexual relation that can be formulated in the structure,*” a statement that *La Logique du fantasme* (65) had already presaged and that would be further developed in the seminars to follow. There is no “appropriate signifier to give substance to a formula of sexual relation.” Thus, Lacan brought into play the “undecidable,” which belongs to the order of a real that makes a hole in the structure. Ultimately, Marx, with the “surplus-value,” made a discovery that Lacan’s *plus-de-jouir* surpasses because it exposes the operative mechanism of the surplus-value: “When one acknowledges the kind of *plus-de-jouir* that leads one to say ‘this is truly somebody,’ one will be on the right track towards a dialectical material that may be more active than the party meat [*la chair à Parti*], used as the babysitter of history. Psychoanalysis can shed light on this track with its *passe*” (66, 76). In the end, it can be said without any hesitation that this carefully thought text establishes psychoanalysis both as fundamental and hegemonic.

This is indeed what the four discourses (Master, Hysteric, University, Analyst) attempt to establish in the relations that tie them together and in the passages from one to the other. There is, however, no algebraic formula for the unconscious discourse: “The unconscious [. . .] is only the metaphorical term designating the knowledge that only sustains itself by presenting itself as impossible, so that it can conform by being real (that is, real discourse).” Lacan was thus not calling knowledge [*la connaissance*] into question, he had nothing to do with it. “My ordeal [*épreuve*] only concerns being [*l’être*] insofar as it gives birth to being from the rift produced by the existent [*l’étant*] by telling itself,” he said.⁴

t. In French, the sentence reads: “Mon épreuve ne touche à l’être qu’à le faire naître de la faille que produit l’étant de se dire.” In *naître*, one also hears the negation of *être*, i.e., *n’être*, so that the emergence of being is already a disappearance.

78

1970–1971 (165 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XVIII: D'UN DISCOURS QUI NE SERAIT PAS DU SEMBLANT (SEMINAR XVIII: OF A DISCOURSE THAT WOULD NOT BE ON SEMBLANCE)—ANONYMOUS VERSION, 1981

This seminar took for granted the four discourses of *L'Envers de la psychanalyse* (73) and *Radiophonie* (77), in order to define—insisting on the conditional of the expression—a discourse that would not be on semblance, a discourse that would not have semblance as its object or that would not rely on it. *Semblance* is not opposed to truth, but is correlative to it and upholds it because it belongs to the order of the signifier. It is “the point of organization” [*point d'ordonnance*] of the four discourses. Where, then, does the privilege of the analytic discourse come from, a discourse that is able to distribute the other discourses according to the “four fundamental arrangements” of the same four letters? Where does this privilege come from, if not from having one's ears opened to “this last discourse,” “that would not be on semblance.” Is it the discourse of the unconscious? In any case, if it is, it is not in terms of the sayable or the nonsayable, but in terms of the said or the unsaid. Or is it the discourse that, by extending the analyst's position, would put the *plus-de-jouir* in “a certain place” (a certain place that would be a different place?). This discourse would be on the side of repetition and *jouissance*: it is the discourse of a “does not talk,” except maybe in the “middle ground of speech” [*mi-dire*] of the analytic experience. Is it a discourse that “is centered by its effect as impossible” and that is kept on the edge by the pleasure principle? No doubt about it, this discourse deals with the Real!

If it cannot be said, can it however be written? This is one of the interesting questions raised here. What is the “written” (or “writing” since they are given to be the same) for Lacan, as opposed to speech? He moved back and forth, over and over again, in a breathtaking way, from the transcription of words to Chinese ideograms, to the Lacanian “letter” (31, 35), to *Ecrits*, which led to the *graphs* (themselves incomprehensible without the text that comments on them), to mathematical writing and logical topology. . . . It “makes its way from speech” [*ça se fraye de la parole*] but it functions differently: it belongs to the order of an inscription which, on the one hand, demands interpretation, and, on the other hand, demonstrates [*démontre*] rather than shows [*montre*]. Algebraic formulas are thus the best way to talk about *l'achose*, which is absent where it has its place and which only leaves the sexual act, “that is, castration,” once the *objet a*, which masks it, is removed. However, concerning the analytic experience, Lacan said that “writing is *jouissance*,” a *jouissance* that is doubly inscribed, on the right and the wrong side, without any border cut, according to the Moebius strip. But can we decipher it and separate ourselves from it if, as he said, it is the deadly *jouissance* of one's body proper, thus forbidden in the name of the pleasure principle (on the side of life), before being forbidden secondarily as the *jouis-*

sance of the mother's body? Is it on this account that "writing is the bone of which language would be the flesh"? Or is it on the account of the Name-of-the-Father, equivalent to the phallus (which has nothing to do with the penis, which, as he noted complacently, lacks bones)? What about the Law? One really gets lost, because logical writing too would be the right and the wrong sides of this "primary" discourse: is it for this reason that Lacan talked more and more about the logico-mathematical discourse as the order of the Real?

If the audience pushed to get in, if the reader, upon a first reading, is under the spell, isn't it because Lacan mainly talked here about *jouissance* and the sexual relation? Where does the unavowed pleasure come from? Is it that the seriousness of the discourse allows him both to approach and to elude the issues between men and women? Or is it that these issues, so ordinary and so painful (unavowable?), suddenly find a noble facade? Or else is it that it is reassuring to realize that *there is no sexual relation* that can be written or said, hence lived? Is this what Lacan was about to say (and to write algebraically) when he claimed the nonexistence of a signifier of sexual difference and asserted the place of the phallus as a third party, but not a "middle term," between men and women: "if one links it to one of the terms" (man or woman), "it won't communicate with the other." This tragedy is fascinating and disarming, because it relies on so many texts, cultures, different disciplines, not to mention the weight of the analytic position: Lacan positioned himself as an "analysand" in front of his audience, indeed, but it was because he told them that he could not occupy the position of the analyst "for lack of knowing."

Still, rereading *La Lettre volée* (31) is worth the détour. The analysis, in Freud, of *Totem and Taboo* compared to the Oedipus myth, gives a new image to the figure of the original father and of the superego, a new image that sheds a disturbing shadow on the Name-of-the-Father, this master-signifier of psychoanalysis, which is one and the same as the phallus (except that "if one calls it, somebody gets up to answer"). Numerous possibilities of reflection are opened up by what is said of the conjunction of *jouissance* and semblance in man (hence man's fear of confronting woman in the ordeal) and of their disjunction in woman, and by the comments on the hysteric's desire for the "at least one" man [*l' "au-moins-un" homme*, which provides the pun *L'hommo-inzun*]^u in a patriarchal system grounded in the *Pas-plus-d'un* (no-more-than-one). We will encounter these issues again in the seminar *Encore* (84).

79

1971 (8 pp.)—LITURATERRE—1971

This was the opening text of the third issue of the new journal of Vincennes, *Littérature*, devoted to "Littérature et psychanalyse" (Literature and psycho-
u. *L'hommo-inzun* sounds like *au-moins-un*, at least one, and like *l'homme moins un*, man minus one.

analysis). Enigmatic because it is so elliptical, it consists of a succession of short paragraphs without any apparent link, aphorisms, plays on words, tortuous syntax. As in 1956, Lacan still enjoyed being “the Gongora of psychoanalysis” (32), even if, in 1970, he had a lot of competition. Indeed that is the effect of this text if it is read separately. However, the themes of *Séminaire XVIII* (78) shed some light on it, notably the session of May 12, 1971, also entitled “Lituraterre”; it shows how, to Lacan, “speech” [*la parole*] becomes “writing” [*écrit*]. . . .

The title, which plays on “*litura*” and “*littera*,” is justified by Joyce who slides from “a letter” to “a litter.”^v This sliding was already present in the 1956 analysis of *The Purloined Letter* (31). Poe’s short story was studied again during the 1970–1971 seminar; here, we only find bits and pieces of it. However, let us acknowledge the elegance of Lacan’s gesture of deleting the following attack against Marie Bonaparte: “A psychoanalyst who has scoured Poe’s other texts withdraws here with her mop.” As for the pun on “literal” and “littoral” (hence *litura-terre*, *laturaterrir*“), the seminar explains it: “Isn’t the letter the literal, which grounds itself in the littoral [. . .]. The littoral is what establishes an entire domain as bordering another, but precisely from the fact that they have absolutely nothing in common, not even a reciprocal relation. [. . .] Between *jouissance* and knowledge, the letter would make the littoral.”

80

1971–1972 (149 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XIX . . . OU PIRE (SEMINAR XIX: . . . OR WORSE)—PUBLISHED SUMMARY. ANONYMOUS VERSION, 1981

In 1971–1972, Lacan taught in two places; he continued his regular seminar (. . . *Ou pire*) and, at the same time, he went back to the Hôpital Sainte-Anne for a series of discussions (*Le Savoir du psychanalyste* 81), which was somewhat of a victory after his 1963 departure (53). The meetings alternated in an irregular way. So much of the audience in the two places was the same that, in June, the two audiences were united. It was obvious that the themes also overlapped. However, we separate the two series of addresses because their publications were separate. More importantly, the addressee, the intention, and the tone remained different. The summary of the seminar . . . *Ou pire*, written by Lacan for the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, was published in *Scilicet*, 5 (6 pp.); once again, this is a short written text, as opposed to a redundant and tortuous speech. In the written text one has to pick up elliptical formulations; in the oral speech, on the contrary, one’s interest was often aroused by the détour of a digression or of a commentary made as if in passing.

v. In English in the original.

w. *Litura-terre* plays on “*litura*” and *terre*, the noun “land.” *Laturaterrir* plays on “*litura*” and the verb “to land.”

How to understand the title? The three ellipses would mark an empty place—"the only way to say something with the help of language"—here the empty place "of a verb: to say [*dire*] or, better, *to say something about* [*en dire*]." Therefore, should we have read the title of the previous seminar as "A discourse that would not be on semblance . . . (to say something about it) or worse"? What is said could be summarized in a single proposition: "*There is no sexual relation.*" Lacan reminded his audience: "When I say that there is no sexual relation, I put forward very precisely a truth concerning speaking beings: sex does not define any relation." This is the truth and, since it can only be said in "half-speech" [*à mi-dire*], it is then ultimately a matter for "the other half to say worse." It was again the same old story and it ended with a final *pirouette*.

What was new here was the desire to ground this proposition *in logic*. For that purpose, Lacan contested and revised Aristotle's categories, *the possible*, *the impossible*, *the contingent*, *the necessary*, and he added *the impotence* [*l'impuissance*] to write sexual relation, which made all discourse a "broken discourse." For the same purpose, Lacan appealed to modern logic: Frege and Cantor, among others, were called upon. This seminar is, therefore, meant for those who are crazy about mathematics and logic. The others can find in *Encore* (84), put in good order by J. A. Miller, the equations defining the sexes, equations that are the necessary stock of knowledge for the new analyst (analysand): it is indeed a matter, and no less than that, of "finding in logic the means to articulate what the unconscious demonstrates about sexual values (that is, values received from language, such as man, woman" . . . and other trifles).

This seminar was a way for Lacan to provoke the analysts who refused to follow him on these paths (or who were incapable of judging them, for lack of training), but it was also a way to provoke the logicians. While he wanted to create a "logical articulation of castration" and "a logical exploration of the Real," he also stated that his "writing [*imitated*] the mathematical function," that the analytic discourse "is not a scientific discourse but a discourse for which science provides the material." So, if "the use of logic is not without relation with the content of the unconscious" (mainly concerning woman, of course), then Lacan was the only one who could establish this content. Was this pride or cautiousness? It was indeed seduction. He embarked on this enterprise for the psychoanalyst's salvation; thanks to logic, he could make this position of *objet a* bearable for the psychoanalyst who "cannot bear to represent it to himself." "To elevate this function to the position of semblance that is the key position to all discourse," could console one for the fact that "the analysand analyzes himself with this turd that the *objet a* offers him in the figure of his analyst."

I will let you discover by yourself the "*Tout*" (All); the "*Nul*" (Nul); the "*Pas-Tout*" (Not-All in the masculine); the "*Pas-Toute*" (Not-All in the

feminine); the “*Aumoinzun*” (*au-moins-un*, at-least-one); the “*Ya D’L’UN*” (There’s something of One); “*L’UNIEN*” (an anagram of *ennui*, annoyance, which could roughly be translated as “oneyance”); *L’UN* (The One), which fortunately is two-fold and is one and the same as Being; “*lalangue*,” which is a way to dissociate oneself haughtily from Jakobson’s concern for language (*la langue*), etc. Why not wander about in this seminar, why not have some fun, a way of thinking that is just as good as any other?

In our wanderings through this seminar, we find “the hypothetical,” which would be “the tail of thoughts”; the “train of the comet,” which may well be the phallus. We find woman’s “*jouis-presence*” on the phallic side and her “*jouis-absence*” as woman; the homosexual woman would be an exception because “she is not at all absent from what she has left of *jouissance*,” which makes the discourse of love easy for her, but which “excludes her from the psychoanalytic discourse that she can only mumble.” We also find a diatribe against Marx who “induces woman to claim herself as equal” (but woman would be equal to what if man himself equals zero?). We read about these poor workers who prefer capitalist exploitation to the sexual exploitation of their wife whom, incidentally, they call “the bourgeoisie.” We find out that men, because of their unsolved problems with the Father, have not understood yet that, “from the Real,” women, “except for a little insignificant nothingness—I do not say that at random—are not castratable,” etc.

Two sentences seem to have some potential, but unfortunately they are not elaborated: “The mistake would be not to see that the signifier is *jouissance* and that the phallus is only its signified”; and, as for woman, “she is the one who is not contained in the phallic function without nevertheless being its negation.”

81

1971–1972 (126 pp.)—LE SAVOIR DU PSYCHANALYSTE (THE PSYCHOANALYST’S KNOWLEDGE)—ANONYMOUS VERSION, 1981

This was Lacan’s first invitation to talk at Sainte-Anne since the 1963 breakup. The seven discussions that he led there reminded him first of all of his own beginnings as an intern at the Asiles, of his friends of the time, such as Henri Ey, and of the state of psychiatry in the 30s. It was, therefore, to the interns in psychiatry that he wished to address his talks, even if they were only “an overwhelming minority” in the room, compared to the audience coming from the seminar held at the same time at the University of Paris at the Pantheon (80). The nature of his address gave a more direct style to the talks; he recalled with emotion or humor “these fifty-five years spent within these walls,” and especially the cases of patients that he presented there; he enjoyed talking as if in the staff waiting room, or comparing “the incomprehension of Lacan” to “the incomprehension of mathematics” (would both be “a symptom”?). In any case, his concern for simple formulations and a pedagogical progres-

sion was obvious, without the nuances and the difficulties of the reflection being sacrificed.

Everything began with a clarification concerning “the ignorance linked to knowledge”; ignorance is a “true passion” that is made an “established knowledge” or it is a “learned ignorance” that is the highest knowledge. Then, sarcasm attacked antipsychiatry (67) (which would be “psychiatry” [*psychiatrie*]) in which one is more attentive “to the liberation of the psychiatrist” than concerned with “solving the problem of psychoses.” Sarcasm attacked the trend of “nonknowledge” borrowed from a misunderstood G. Bataille. And what about psychoanalysis? It stood “on the perceptible boundary between truth and knowledge,” at least for him and for those who followed him. . . . Lacan then embarked on a recapitulation of the problems raised by Freud’s texts and by his own texts since the thesis on paranoia (2). He went over them as he went over his main concepts, in an order that was not chronological but that was the order of his present questioning, with re-definitions, responses to the critiques or misunderstandings, and rectifications. Little by little, he led his discourse toward the importance of logic for the construction of the true analytic theory and particularly the absence of sexual relation, concerning which he explained himself in a more precise and sometimes different way than in the previous texts. This is why these discussions should be read carefully. He called these talks a “teaching speech,” “at the most elementary level.” Are such terms degrading? As far as I am concerned, I have found a number of analyses there that shed light on more “logical” seminars and also on the seminar *Encore* (84).

Here is an example: “I am not saying that speech exists because there is no sexual relation. This would be absurd. I am not saying either that there is no sexual relation because speech is there. But there is no sexual relation because speech functions on that level that analytic discourse reveals to be specific to speaking human beings, that is, the importance, the preeminence of what makes sex a semblance, the semblance of men and women.” Lacan thought that, with the *objet a*, he had created the matheme of psychoanalysis; he then wanted to create that of sexual *jouissance* and of its articulation with castration. He started with a ritornello, “Between man and love, there is woman; between man and woman, there is a world; between man and the world, there is a wall,” in order to conclude that “what is at stake in a serious love relationship between a man and a woman is castration” and that “castration is the means of adaptation to survival” (but whose?). The love letter is a “*lettre d’a-mur*”;^x is this why he said that he was addressing himself to the walls of the chapel (in the two senses of the word *chapelle* in French: chapel and clique) where he was holding these discussions? What are the four walls that

x. The *lettre d’amour*, love letter, becomes the *lettre d’a-mur*, where *mur* means wall in French.

lock us up? They are the four fundamental terms that formed the four discourses since *L'Envers de la psychanalyse* (73). Here, he named them differently: *semblance*, *jouissance*, *truth*, *plus-de-jouir*, and the rectangle was not closed. He almost managed to convince us that “only the matheme approaches the knowledge of truth,” by showing how, concerning sexual relations, his logico-mathematical formulas were untranslatable into the logic of propositions; he subtly analyzed the impossibility of defining the relation between the two sexes in terms of negation, conjunction, disjunction, and implication.

In psychoanalysis, the phallic function dominates both partners equally, but it does not make them different: the difference has to be looked for somewhere else. On one side, there is *the One* [*l'Un*], on the other there is *nonexistence*. What relation can be established between one and zero (cf. Pierce for whom it makes two)? However, the One in which the organ only acts as “a tool” around which “analytic experience induces us to consider that everything that is uttered about sexual relation revolves,” is rather “the at-least-One” [*l'au-moins-Un*], “the exception that confirms the rule” of everybody’s castration. The figure of the ancestral Father emerges here, as the noncastrated One, who is also *l'epater*, the *pater familias* who amazes and impresses the others, his slaves.⁹ As for woman, if “she is not-all” and is nonuniversal, she “conceals a *jouissance* that does not depend on the One, a properly feminine *jouissance*.” The fact that her *jouissance* is dual is a “landmark in the whole.” Lacan said that when one talks about sex or love, one always talks about the other sex. Is that not what he was doing here, by wondering at such length about Woman? Behind all this, is there not another question: what is *a man* [*un homme*] who is not the One of the Father or the Zero of woman? That is to say, what about “castration”? There was no answer. Is *Y a d'l'Un* (there’s something of One) a Master-signifier? “This year, I have reached the point where I only have the choice between that . . . or worse.” He was caught in undecidability between the “not-all” [*pas-tout*] and the “not-one” [*pas-une*]! He admitted that he could not link the two “horizons of signifier” that he bracketed together: the maternal (material) and the mathematical (the Real written?). Let us stop here: “If there is no relation between the two, even in the sexual act, each partner remains one.” The embarrassment and the obsessive fear before femininity, Woman, a woman, or women are characteristic of this period of Lacanian thinking.

82

1972 (48 pp.)—L'ETOURDIT—1973

No, there is no spelling mistake! It is a play on words, meant to condense what Lacan had been arguing for a long time, in a difficult and tortuous way,

y. *L'epater* puns on *le pater*, the father in Latin, and *épater*, to amaze and to impress in French.

about the said [*le dit*], the nonsaid [*le non-dit*], and the act of saying [*le dire*]. He thus hoped that his entire teaching would be imprinted on others' memories. This text is the first in which *plays on writing* started to proliferate in all directions. In the seminars and the lectures given the same year (80, 81), Lacan constantly needed to spell out. The brilliant display began with *l'hommodit*, *l'après-midit*, and the *dit-mension* that would be so successful in Lacanian circles. It went on with the *passifou*, the *asphère* and the *n'espace*, and *le Père-Otang du pérorant Outang*,² not to mention *lalangue* which, from then on, would designate the natural language, in the linguistic sense, in the école freudienne. Is *lalangue* a concept? Probably, but it is also a password among initiates. Were someone to protest against the confusion between the elaboration of a concept and the construction of a play on words (that did not emerge spontaneously but was part of the strategy), Lacan could respond that he talked *like* the unconscious. Or else, he could refer to the *de facto* reality: thanks to his use of *portemanteau* words, "one uses *portemanteau* words interminably" in some French intellectual circles.

This text was originally a lecture given for the fiftieth anniversary of the Hôpital Henri-Rousselle where Lacan used to present the cases of his patients (in Professor Daumézon's practice). In July 1972, he wrote the lecture for *Scilicet*: he thus revived the tradition of the days when his articles presented, in a new form, the main aspects of his teaching to a broader audience.

As a matter of fact, the themes he develops here had been part of the seminars since 1969 at least, with *L'Envers de la psychanalyse* (73). Moreover, he repeats a number of previous statements about language, the phallus, and the unconscious. A huge effort toward synthesis seems to try to recenter everything around a single proposition thanks to *logic* and *topology*: "there is no sexual relation." This proposition constantly eluded a decisive definition, which explains the complication of the style.

The formulations are more striking here than in the seminars held at the same time, and they shed light on these seminars that make tiresome reading. On the other hand, the more laborious movement of the seminars sheds light on this text, which is very obscure because of the ellipses in the development of the thinking. We refer you to them, for we would only be repeating our previous summaries.

z. These puns are untranslatable: *l'hommodit* condenses *homme* (or *homo*), man, and *dit*, he says and that which is said; *l'après-midit* condenses *après-midi*, afternoon, and *dit*; *dit-mension* introduces *dit* in the word *dimension*. *Passifou* condenses in one word the three words *pas* (not), *si* (all that), *fou* (mad). *L'asphère*, which sounds like *la sphère*, is a neologism created by Lacan to play on "the sphere" and the "a-sphere," with the privative prefix "a." *N'espace* plays on *n'est ce pas*, isn't it, and *espace*, space, which is at the same time no-space due to the prefix of negation "n." *Le Père-Otang du pérorant Outang* plays on the father (*le père*), the ourang-outang, and the verb *pérorer*, to declaim.

Several elements presage the seminar *Encore* (84). Against Melanie Klein and Jones, against Karen Horney and even Hélène Deutsch who all “appealed to the voice of the body from the unconscious, as if it were not precisely from the unconscious that the body became voice,” Lacan summarized his own theory of femininity based on his “quantic formulas” of the two sexes. He specified: “To say that a woman is not all is what the myth tells us, because she is the only one whose *jouissance* exceeds that of coitus.” The thesis of the feminine as “supplement” to the masculine rather than as its “complement” emerges here. However, a woman has to go through man who, at the same time, is at her service: “To what extent could a man admit being most useful to the woman from whom he wants to get pleasure [*la femme dont il veut jouir*], if not by making hers this *jouissance* which prevents her from being all his: *from her to re-suscitate it.*”

Finally, Lacan described his own place in analytic discourse: “for ten years [he had] taken care to turn into a formal garden the paths that Freud had first drawn and followed.” As for the Oedipus complex, it “is what I say, not what one thinks.”

83

1972 (19 pp.)—CONFERENCE A L'UNIVERSITE DE LOUVAIN (LECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN)—1981

Invited by J. Schotte and A. Vergote at the University of Louvain, Lacan gave a presentation, on October 13, 1972, in front of three hundred people, on the basis of questions raised during a preliminary discussion with a limited group. He felt comfortable, and even conversed in a rather funny way with someone who raised objections.

This informal discussion has sometimes been entitled: “Death belongs to the domain of faith.” The development is based on a paradox: “You are certainly right to think that you will die; of course, it holds you up. If you did not think so, could you bear the life you have?” The problem is mainly to define life: in biology, it is “what reproduces itself”; for Lacan, “it means that it has pleasure [*ça jouit*] or it suffers, that’s on the same order: it has a body.” However, in order to give life a meaning, one must first “not believe that it is itself the meaning. It happens that it may be the outcome of a meaning.” For speaking beings, *the act* comes first, and the act consists of “putting one’s life on the line, in betting on it, as Pascal saw clearly.” “Outside the risk of life, there is nothing that gives a meaning to the aforesaid life.”

Analytic discourse—the guiding thread of this improvisation—does not lead one to give meaning to life or the meaning of life. It concerns desire and *jouissance* (*joui-sens, joui-sense*). Many Lacanian notions were repeated in different forms: the unconscious; the discourses of the Hysteric, the Master, and the Analyst; neurosis and perversion. As for the phallus, it becomes an “ideal point,” and “unlocatable point,” a “point outside the map,” and a

“point of gap” [*point de béance*]. This is what the teaching of psychoanalysis is, a “new discourse,” a “new mode of social linking,” which may be capable of “compensating” and “stemming” the *discontent in civilization*.

84
1972–1973 (137 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XX: ENCORE (SEMINAR XX: ENCORE)—1975,
PARTIAL TRANSLATION, 1982

There are several reasons why this seminar is one of the best-known: of all the seminars held since 1964–1965, it is the only one that has been published; it has been shortened and reorganized by J.-A. Miller, and it makes the latest developments of Lacanian thinking relatively accessible; finally, it concerns a sensitive area, that of femininity, at a time when the Mouvement de Libération des Femmes contested psychoanalytic theory. Lacan presented the doctrine of femininity here, and he defied women to say—to articulate—anything about their sexuality, about their *jouissance*, and about themselves. All this did not go without violence (pp. 69–70).

Most of the notions had already been elaborated during the previous years and had been published in *Radiophonie* (77): the four discourses, the broad logical categories, the distance put between linguistics and Lacanian “linguistry,” the aphorism, “there is no sexual relation”—they all appeared as early as *L’Envers de la psychanalyse* (73). The “quantic formulas” used to write the absence of relation between the sexes—which does not mean the absence of a relation to the sex symbolized by the phallus—went back to Seminar XIX . . . *Ou pire* (80). Several sessions at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne the previous year (82) were devoted to *l’amur* and the love letter. Besides, Lacan quoted himself more and more often: here, he comments on *L’Etourdit* (82), but the text is full of explicit or implicit self-references. This phenomenon was unavoidable: to be at the same time a theoretician and a teacher whose audience changed led to these repetitions. However, more and more, what varied was the form more than the content. Since *L’Etourdit*, the plays on writing or the puns served this purpose. Here, the latest “trick” was to write *The woman* in order to indicate that she is not inscribed in the universal.

However, the strict doctrine is fairly simple: woman would only enter in the sexual relation “*quoad matrem*” (as a mother) and man “*quoad castrationem*” (depending on castration?). Hence there is no real “sexual relation,” and love as well as speech make up for this absence. “There is woman only as excluded by the nature of words.” Why should she complain since she reaches a *supplementary jouissance*? This infinitude places her in a particular relation with “the god” [*le dieu*], *le dieur*,^{aa} “the act of saying” [*le dire*], . . . and with God who is on the side of the Name-of-the-Father. In any case, for man she is on the side of “the truth” and man does

aa. *Dieur* is a neologism created by Lacan combining *dieu*, god, and *dire*, to say.

not know what to do with it. . . . Lacan said that he was the first one to feel that way.

Topology (for the first time they played with pieces of string at the end of this seminar), Saint Paul, Freud, logic, and plays on words—everything was able to prove the validity of the Lacanian theory. If, by erasing the uncertainties, the text published by J.-A. Miller makes it more dogmatic and more pedagogical, it reveals clearly its main founding certainties.

85

1973–1974 (203 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XXI: LES NON-DUPES ERRENT (THE NON-FOOLS WANDER)—ANONYMOUS VERSION 1981

Non-dupes-errent (Nonfools wander) / *Noms-du-père* (Names-of-the-Father)—this seminar was an echo of the 1963 seminar that was interrupted during the second split (53). “It does not mean that the fools don’t wander.” It is in a parodic or very abstract form (topology) that Lacan resumed the theme of the Names-of-the-Father. One can interpret this interruption either by considering that Lacan had jealously kept for himself a theme that had been interrupted by the others, or by considering that it might be a theme that is impossible to approach. The reading of *L’Eveil du printemps* (88) is illuminating for the question of the Names-of-the-Father.

There is nothing really new here, except the importance given from now on to the Borromean knots that allow Lacan to link the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real with a fourth circle (the one that creates the knot), precisely the Name-of-the-Father. They can also be approached through the figure of the braid. They belong to the order of the structure in the following schema:

birth s t r u c t u r e death

Lacan threw string rings in the seminar room. As for the rest of the seminar, I can only refer the reader to my previous summaries. However, this anonymous transcription is very useful: for the first time, bibliographic notes assist reading. They testify to the amount, the multiplicity, and the diversity of the Lacanian references. The writing, more finely wrought, makes this text a point of access, for example, to *Discours qui ne serait pas du semblant* (78).

86

1973 (75 pp.)—TELEVISION—1973, 1987

Lacan made his debut on television on two shows produced by Benoît Jacquot, under the title *Psychoanalysis*. He was questioned by J.-A. Miller who, afterwards, wrote the transcription of the discussions to be published by the Editions du Seuil. As a foreword, Miller stated: “I asked the person who replied to you to sift what I heard of what he had said to me.” Lacan answered, “He who interrogates me also knows how to read me.” But there

was a misunderstanding; Lacan did not respond *to us*. We had not asked *our* questions. He only addressed himself to us *or* he answered J.-A. Miller's questions. Such a complicity "between two" persons is characteristic of debates on television in France, where the interviewer's role is to highlight the interviewee while enhancing his own prestige via the interview. The false casualness of the questions hardly hid this relationship, particularly since they were asked in already coded terms. For example, in the question "*Quid of psychic energy?*" it is easy to perceive the jargon. In fact, the organization of the interview showed it: the jokes were meant for those who did not belong to the clan—the audience and the non- or anti-Lacanian psychoanalysts. It was a matter of responding to a variety of questions that had already been disqualified by the tone, the form, or the caricatured simplification of their content.

Lacan began with a statement that has become famous: "I always speak the truth. Not the whole truth, because there's no way, to say it all. Saying it all is materially impossible: words fail. Yet it is through this very impossibility that the truth holds onto the real." One either agreed, captivated by the power of the word, or one already knew most of the theory as a result of having attended the seminars. Then, almost all the problems were tackled: the doctrine, the psychoanalytic institution, the mental-health workers who "[were] taking all the burdens of the world's misery onto their shoulders" and who held it against the analyst, the family and society, style, etc.

Some of his inventions were funny: the SAMCDA, *société d'assistance mutuelle contre le discours analytique* (Society of mutual assistance against analytic discourse), was the nickname given to the International Association of Psychoanalysis. This conception of sainthood implied in the notion of "mutual assistance" has nothing to do with charity. The themes of *L'Éthique de la psychanalyse* (43), already reelaborated in *La Logique du fantasme* (65) and the *Proposition de 1967 sur la passe* (66), under the form of *désêtre*, reappeared forcefully; was it under the form of the saint? "His business is not *caritas*. He acts as trash; his business being *trashitas [il décharite]*."^{bb} Finally, we quote the conclusion: "*De ce qui perdure de perte pure à ce qui ne parie que du père au pire*," which corresponds to the equation written in the

margin $\frac{a}{-\Phi}$.^{cc} This is a real condensation of the Lacanian discourse.

bb. The word, a neologism created by Lacan, combines *déchet*, trash, and *charité*, charity. As a verb it associates trash and the act of doing charity, or rather of not doing charity since the prefix *de* connotes negation or removal.

cc. This sentence defies translation: it plays on *perdre*, loss, *perdre pure*, pure loss and also pure dross, the neologism *perdure*, from *perdu*, lost, and from *durer*, to last, *parier*, to bet, *le père*, the father, and *le pire*, the worst. The meaning would be that the equation would correspond to the movement between that which is lost but lasts through pure dross, and the hand that draws only from Father to worse.

87

1973 (4 pp.)—NOTE ITALIENNE (ITALIAN NOTE)—1981 AND 1982

This letter was addressed by Lacan to three Italian psychoanalysts who wanted to create a group linked to the E.F.P. In its brevity, it defined clearly the Master's new conceptions about analysis, about the analyst, and about the analytic institution; they were even more rigorous than in 1967, for the proposition on the *passe* (66).

What charter did he propose? He suggested that all analyst's accreditation [*habilitation*] should, from now on, be subjected to the *passe*. There would only be analysts of the école (A.E.), and they alone would be recognized, as opposed to the practitioner analysts (A.P.) who would not have the stamp of approval: the category of the member analysts of the école (A.M.E.) would thus disappear (they were appointed by a jury, in the name of their practice, of their supervisory analyses, and of their work in a cartel). Only "those who apply so as to be accepted on the principle of the *passe*, thereby taking the risk not to be accepted," would be able to become members. Between the lines of this text, one can read what Lacan thought of his école, when he wished that, in the new group, "only analysts would have a role." He sent a warning: "the analyst only authorizes himself by himself" [*ne s'autorise que de lui-même*], indeed, but "to authorize himself [*s'autoriser*] is not to ritualize himself [*s'auto-ri (tuali) ser*]." He added, "What is important is that by authorizing himself by himself, there would not be an analyst"; "Not-all being who speaks can authorize himself to make an analyst."

What were the criteria, then? The analyst must "have defined the cause of his horror, his own horror of knowing, which is his and is detached from everybody else's." "From then on, he knows he is trash. This is what the analysis must at least have allowed him to perceive. If he is not prone to enthusiasm, there may have been an analysis but there is no chance that there will be an analyst." Besides, "everything must revolve around the writings to be published": the true analyst must publish, in order to say "that there is no sexual relation that can be put into writing" (78), instead of decorating with "a few added oriental vases" a "patrimony that is supposed to lift God's good spirits." In short, the analyst has to write in the right direction, that of the Master.

Apparently "the persons concerned did not follow up the suggestions expressed here." May we say that we understand them?

88

1974 (4 pp.)—L'EVEIL DU PRINTEMPS (THE AWAKENING OF SPRING)—1974

Gallimard published, in a translation by François Regnault, *L'Eveil du printemps* (*The Awakening of Spring, Frühling erwachen*), a play about the tragedy of childhood by Frank Wedekind (1890). Lacan wrote the preface and, at the end of the book, J.-A. Miller translated Freud's analysis of the

play, written in 1907. The rivalry between Lacan and Freud is striking; according to Lacan, this Freud, by far outstripped by the playwright, “had not, even at his death, set in motion the experience that the regime [of the unconscious] institutes.” Fortunately, Lacan had finally arrived!

What is in question here? The text focuses on what boys dream, to the point that they get the idea of making love with girls. A whole comparative study of boys and girls follows, in accordance with the precept, “there is no sexual relation,” a precept argued in all the seminars since *Radiophonie* (77). He elaborates: the “girl” (a function embodied here by a boy) “is only one and wants to remain one”; conversely, the “boy becomes a man by positioning himself as something of one-among-others [*de l'un-entre-autres*], and by entering himself [*s'entrer*] among his counterparts.” The boy-girl, by excluding him(her)self, is one among the dead (this is a wink at *Non-dupes-errent* (85)).

Indeed, the Father appears; among his different names there might have been that of the “masked Man” in the play. “But the Father has so many [names] that there is not one name that is appropriate for him, except the Name of Name of Name.” He could just as well be the “Name among others of the white Goddess,” the symbol of “the Different, the forever Other in her power,” a form of the infinite. Moreover, “woman as the version of the Father [*version du Père*] can only be figured as father-version/perversion [*père-version*].” In just a few pages, this short text reveals, after *Encore* (84), Lacan’s waverings in front of the existence—real, mythic, or symbolic?—of the other sex. Like all his other literary analyses, this one provides an enlightening summary of his latest theories.

89

1974 (26 pp.)—LA TROISIEME (THE THIRD)—1975

This was a pinnacle in Lacan’s career, at the VIIIth Congress of the E.F.P., in Rome, twenty years after the *Discours de Rome* (24). Lacan was everywhere: he was at the press conference, at the opening and closing speeches of the Congress (a closing speech that was the highlight of the show) and even at all the talks that elaborated on one of his famous expressions. There was no moderation in the way in which the école received communion in the triumph of the Master and of his doctrine; the culminating moment was J.-A. Miller’s “Address to the Congress of the Ecole.” Posing himself as an intercessor, Miller started singing Lacan’s praises, which managed to provoke some violent protestations. Lacan was there to convert: “I hope that, in the future, something is formed, which could explain to the Italians the way in which we conceive analysis, that is, I think, the right way,” he concluded.

The conference borrows its title from Nerval: “the third comes back, it is always the first.” The third is also the Real. The first, which comes back and never stops writing itself, is the letter (35), the third is the Real, “that which

always comes back to the same place,” thereby revealing “the place of semblance” (78). What did this address communicate that was new?

For the first time the symptom was clearly defined as “that which comes from the Real”; the unconscious is a knowledge that is articulated in *la-langue*,^{dd} but “the body that talks in the unconscious is only tied there by the Real from which it takes its own pleasure [*le réel dont il se jouit*].” The subject can, therefore, never meet the unconscious knowledge, except as an “I think, therefore, it *jouit*,” that is, as an “I *souis*.”^{ee} The subject would thus be a symptom. By laying the Borromean knots flat, the knots that had concerned him since *Encore* (84), Lacan places the *objet a* at the junction of the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real, or, better yet, he placed there the *Plus de jouir* (71), which creates a knot between the circles and the braids. In that point the unconscious cannot be interpreted. Anxiety arises from the fear of being reduced to one’s body and “the Real stretches at the sides to prevent things from working.” As for the human being, he is “parasexed” [*para-sexué*]; “between the outside-body [*hors-corps*] of phallic *jouissance*” and “the *jouissance* of the Other that is outside language, outside-symbolic,” nothing can happen. Hence, “each remains on his side, remains beside the other.” Psychoanalysis, in turn, is a “symptom” of the Real (the source of the discontent in civilization); if it manages to subdue the symptom and the Real, it will die; if the Real resists, it will go on. In fact, religion alone, “the true,” “the Roman,” “the Christian” religion subdues the symptom. The three theological virtues (and it is not a coincidence that they are women), Faith, Hope, and Charity, are the opiates of the people that true psychoanalysis must denounce. Ultimately, all that is left is suicide, the only act, properly speaking, which the Stoics knew.

This is a brilliant improvisation (from sixty-six written pages, Lacan said). Plays on words, trivialities, and attacks abound. For example, “Nothing looks more like a fly speck than Anna Freud! It must be useful to her.”

90

1974–1975 (ABOUT 112 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XXII: R.S.I. (SEMINAR XXII: REAL, SYMBOLIC, IMAGINARY)—1975

By the very title of the seminar (Real, Symbolic, Imaginary), priority was given to the Real. The seminar, entirely constructed on the study, the application, and the interpretation of the Borromean knots, developed the theses of *Non-dupes errent* (85), *L’Eveil du printemps* (88), and the Conference in Rome (89).

The most important thing was to justify the appeal to topology: the consis-
dd. *Lalangue* is the combination of *La* (the feminine definite article) and *langue* (lan-
gauge as a system and as opposed to the Saussurian *parole*).
ee. *Je souris* is the combination between *Je suis*, I am, and *Jouis*, from *jouir*.

tency of the Real creates the consistency of the Symbolic and the Imaginary, provided one acknowledges first that “any approach of the real is woven for us by the number.” Such an imbroglio creates a vortex in which algebra and geometry are each caught in turn. At the same time, Lacan referred to Michel Thomé and Pierre Soury, two mathematicians who rectified the propositions of *Encore* (84) and defined new properties of the Borromean knot, and he subjected their reasonings to his own thinking. This time, the *Names-of-the-Father*, under three forms, names the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real, “because it is in these names that the knot fits.” How is it possible to reconcile this with the function of the *objet a*, the point of intersection of the three circles (89)? In actual fact, the Names-of-the-Father are posited at the very origin of the figures; “they are the primary names insofar as they name.” The phallus soon appeared, enabling Lacan to create a definable set, even if it is only a symptom, whereas the woman is an empty set. “The *jouissance* of the phallus is linked to *ex-sistence* [*ex-sistence*], which is what the Borromean knots should prove.” Amidst the crowd of signifiers “copulating among each other” (which is what creates the consistency of the unconscious) there is a “*patheme of the phallus*” whose signifier would be *the One* that divides the subject to the point of creating “*pathematical subjects*.”

Sometimes Lacan regained his clear-headedness: “I’ll leave it up to you to decide if all this sheds light on the practice of analytic discourse!” Caught between a scientific requirement (“there are no moods [*états d’âme*], there is speech [*il y a dire*] that has to be demonstrated”) and the pleasure to free associate on words and on philosophical, religious, literary, and Lacanian reminiscences, he suddenly wondered: this “freezing of desire,” it is paranoia, or isn’t it? But he immediately resumed. The theory of the knots, “still in its infancy” (how fortunate for us!), allowed him to assert that speaking beings are mis-situated between two and three dimensions, which would explain the equivocation between “dimension” and “*dit-mension, mension du dit*” (mention of the said) (82). In this seminar, there are endless plays on words. An example: “Aristotle who argues about the idea of *âne* [donkey], who argues that the *âne* is an *âne* and that there is no capital *Ane*, he himself *anistote*.” From there it follows that “the Names-of-the-Father” have become the “*ânon*s-of-the-Father.” Or else: “*Père-version* [Father-version/perversion], an *a-péritive* version of the *jouir*.”

When he lectured in the United States (93), Lacan stated, “I have tried to condense, to formulate as regards our practice something that would be coherent. It has led me to wild imaginings that worry me a lot.”

In order to put an end to the crisis of the Department of Psychoanalysis at the University of Paris at Vincennes, Lacan presented the conditions required for

a true teaching of psychoanalysis. The analyst must discover in such teaching what his own analysis has made use of. He will be helped in that task by teachers belonging to other disciplines. But it is not enough that “sciences taught in the academic mode” bring their assistance; “these sciences must also find in the experience [of psychoanalysis] the opportunity of renewing themselves.” It is thus a question of intervening in the whole field of knowledge and of its transmission. The model was Lacan’s seminar.

On the syllabus, Lacan put *linguistics* (with the reservations he had had about it for several years), *logic*, “the science of the real because it places access to the Real in the mode of the impossible,” and *topology*. This latter science cannot be reoriented by psychoanalysis yet: “The knot, the torus, the fibre, connections, compactness, all the forms through which space is a rift or an accumulation, are meant here to provide the analyst with what he lacks, that is, a support other than metaphorical, in order to sustain metonymy with it.” *Antiphilosophy* was finally on its way.

92

1975 (5 pp.)—REPOSE DE LACAN A UNE QUESTION POSEE PAR MARCEL RITTER (LACAN’S RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ASKED BY MARCEL RITTER)—1976

In January 1975, during the Strasbourg workshop, Lacan gave an impromptu response to a question asked by Ritter on the “nonrecognized” as the “uncanny” situated on the side of the Real. Is it the instinctual Real in which the network of signifiers falters? What are the relations of this Real with desire?

For Lacan, there is no instinctual Real because, in the drive, the Real only has the function of the hole. The unconscious, on the other hand, belongs to the order of the primal repressed, that is, of that which is doomed to be nonsaid, and, thereby, at the root of language itself. “The navel of the dream” is the limit of the analyzable. It is a point from which the thread emerges, which links not so much to the mother’s womb but to one’s own placenta. This mark remains the scar of being born from a being who desired you or who did not. Only speech can heal this “place of the body that makes a knot.” The impossible-to-recognize is on the side of the Real (what can neither be said nor written) *and* on the side of the Symbolic where “it [*ça*, also the id] never stops being written.” Some of the previous analyses (89) are repeated here. Most importantly, this response presages *L’Insu* in 1976 (95). Note that “the desire of man is hell” and that “not to desire hell” is the resistance.

93

1975 (58 pp.)—CONFERENCES AUX ETATS-UNIS (LECTURES IN THE UNITED STATES)—1975

Lacan’s lectures, as much as the comments of sharp audiences, amount to a general survey of Lacanian thinking in its different aspects. Lacan went to Yale University, Columbia University, and Massachusetts Institute of Tech-

nology. This tour of the big universities of the American Northeast revealed a Lacan convinced of his truth, but more subtle, more cautious in his assertions—an excellent strategist. It is a pity that there is no transcription of his confrontation with Chomsky, especially since Chomsky attacked Lacan violently during the seminar on *Le Sinthome* (94). However, the version published in *Scilicet* provides a general survey of all his theory.

Several expressions deserve to be noted because they will come back in the later works: “A woman is a symptom for the man.” “Psychosis is an attempt towards rigor. In that sense, I would say that I am a psychotic.” “The *acte manqué par excellence* is precisely the sexual act. One of the two is always unsatisfied.” “The terrible thing is that psychoanalysis in itself is presently a wound: I mean that it is itself a *social symptom*, the latest form of social madness that has been conceived.” “The first one who had the idea of the symptom is Marx.” “I have not said that I mathematize everything, but that I have begun to isolate [from psychoanalysis] a mathematizable minimum.”

Finally, “to explain art by the unconscious seems very suspicious to me [. . .] To explain art by the symptom seems more serious to me”. The study of Joyce was forthcoming (94).

94

1975–1976 (70 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XXIII: LE SINTHOME
(SEMINAR XXIII: THE SINTHOME)—1976–1977

Sinthome is an archaic writing of symptom: this is perfect for a seminar interweaving a reading of Joyce with a revision of the Borromean knot, now grounded on four and no longer on three. The Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real form a four-term knot with *the symptom*, which becomes the heart of the system. But then, the Borromean knot as such disappears, which creates a distressing problem: “It is not even a knot any more since the three are only held by the symptom,” Lacan said. Fortunately, Soury and Thomé came to his rescue: they showed that the Borromean knot with four knots indeed exists. What a relief!

This mode of writing mainly allowed Lacan to follow Joyce in his paths, a Joyce with whom he felt a strange fraternity, although he dissociated himself from him at the last minute. Joyce was a good heretic who had identified the nature of the *sinthome* and had not held back in using it logically, “to the point of reaching his real.” He was a “poor *hère-étique*” who knew that his only weapon against the symptom was *equivocation*.^{ff} Art is an “artifice” that can expressly aim at what first presents itself as a “symptom.” However, it thwarts “what compels recognition through the symptom, that is, truth”; here is where a distance would appear between Joyce, *the Symptom* (title of the lecture published in *L’Ane*, 6) and Lacan the psychoanalyst. However, the

ff. *Pauvre hère-étique*: to split the word *hérétique*, heretic, allows Lacan to play with *un pauvre hère*, poor wretch, and *étique*, skinny.

embarrassment is obvious: was Joyce crazy? Did he think he was the Redeemer? Lacan wondered about himself too.

Joyce's "obsession" with injecting other languages into his own to the point of arriving at the distended *l'élanguages*,⁸⁸ with making jokes concerning everything by mixing languages, put Lacan in brilliant form. The *sinthome* became the *Saint Homme* (the Saint Man), but without losing the sense of "sin." Lacan talked about "*sinthomadaquin*" (Saint Thomas Aquinas) whom Joyce would have made fall from "his madaquinism" to turn him into a "sint'home rule," "the sinthome on castors," etc. *Equivocation* triumphs; language, the instrument of speech, is also taste buds, which explains "*ce qu'on dit ment*" ("what one says lies," which sounds like *this condiment*).

However, the links between Joyce and Lacan are more profound: both were raised by the Jesuits ("Is a Catholic analyzable?"). Whether Lacan discussed the relation to the Father, the wife, or the daughter, one sometimes wonders whether he or Joyce was speaking. Such is the case in the discussion of the clitoris as the "black button" of the "glove turned inside out"; in the discussion of sado-masochism between father and son; in the desire to make a name for oneself in order to compensate the paternal deficiency and in the necessity to "take care of the father" to make him ex-sist [*ex-sister*]; and in the discussions of perversion as "version toward the Father": "*Ulysses* is the testimony to that by which Joyce remains rooted to his father, while repudiating him, and this is precisely what his symptom is." What should we make of Joyce's remark, "I want the professors to deal with me for three hundred years"? In the end, Lacan himself reduced his own name to a common noun: "Jaclaquehan!" Lacan is very close to the *Ecrits inspirés* (1) studied in his youth, which he found again in Joyce's art. A kind of chilling despair haunts this seminar: everything is a symptom: woman, the father, psychoanalysis, although he denies it (93). What remains when "the Real forecloses meaning"?

95

1976–1977 (about 50 pp.)—SEMINAIRE XXIV: L'INSU QUE SAIT DE L'UNE BEVUE S'AILE A MOURRE (SEMINAR XXIV)—1977–1979

We really are into equivocation here, although it is a well-coded equivocation. *L'insu* (the non-known) is the inaccessible to knowledge (92). *L'insu que sait* (the non-known that knows) plays on *L'insu que c'est* (the non-known that is it). *L'insu qu'on sait (à partir) de l'une-bévue*, the non-known that one knows from a blunder, constitutes the new formula for the unconscious. *S'aile à mourre*^{hh} sounds like *c'est l'amour* (it is love). And *aile* (wing, also sounds like *elle*, she) flies in the *jeu de mourre*, a game of guessing played by two players with their fingers. The equivocation on *l'amour/la mourre*, borrowed

gg. *L'élanguages* is a "distention" of *les langues*, languages.

hh. *Aile* means wing, and *la mourre* is a game of chance and guessing. *S'aile à mourre* thus means that which flies in the game of guessing.

from Apollinaire, was already present in *Fonction et Champ* (24). Your turn to play!

Although, during this seminar, Lacan wanted to go “further than the unconscious,” what took place was mainly the repetition of the by now hackneyed themes, on man and woman, the parasited mother, the proper name, the ego, identifications, etc. To transform the hystéric into *hystoric* (on the topological figure of the torus), the toric into a cudgel [*trique*] in front of a hole, and matter [*matière*] into *âme-à-tiers* (soul with a third party) did not much change this situation. A short excursion in the direction of mystic possession during the events at Saint-Médard (1727) illustrated the fact that the hysteric is both a threat against a certain knowledge and an “agent of its production *via* the master-signifier,” a thesis that had already been argued in 1969 (73). Anecdotes followed one another, as did self-references.

The desire remained to discover a *new signifier* on the basis of the researches on the *symptom* (94): “A signifier that, like the Real, would not have any kind of meaning.” The seminar ends with that.

96

**1977—OUVERTURE DE LA SECTION CLINIQUE A VINCENNES
(OPENING OF THE CLINICAL SECTION AT VINCENNES)—1977**

Lacan went back to his familiar themes. Of note what he said of Freud: “Well, I shall say that, up to a certain point, I have set back on its feet what Freud said. If I talked of a ‘return to Freud,’ it is to convince you how much it limps [*c’est boiteux*]. And it seems to me that the idea of the signifier nevertheless expresses how it works [*ça marche*].” “The unconscious thus is not Freud’s, I have to say it, it is Lacan’s. Still, the field is Freudian.”

In addition, he wrote that clinical practice is “the Real insofar as it is impossible to bear” but eludes all explanation. Under what auspices did this teaching at Vincennes begin? Many psychoanalysts, especially members of the Quatrième Groupe, denounced the type of training—a psychiatric training, not a psychoanalytic training—and even the distortion of psychoanalysis that was practiced at Vincennes.

97

1977 (6 pp.)—PROPOS SUR L’HYSTERIE (REMARKS ON HYSTERIA)—1981

The lecture began with a lyrical flight of oratory in honor of the great hysterics, on the model of Villon’s ballad for the ladies of yesteryear. Hasn’t “psychoanalytic craziness” replaced hysteria? Is this the reason why Lacan stated: “our practice is a fraud”? On January 26, 1977, in Brussels, he talked informally on his favorite topics. Freud understood nothing about the unconscious; “I have dropped a bombshell in the field of Freud, I am not particularly proud of it [. . .] I am not proud of having been caught in this practice which I have continued, which I have pursued like that, as I could, and after all it is not sure that I will uphold it until I drop.”

In the midst of often bitter confidences, Lacan asserted that his geometry could articulate what women have not been able to articulate—because “they are not-all”—about their practice of weaving. In a similar way, the psychoanalyst theorizes that which the hysteric knows without knowing it.

98

(17 pp.)—**C’EST A LA LECTURE DE FREUD . . .**
(UPON READING FREUD . . .)—1977

This previously unpublished text, of which date of writing is uncertain, constitutes the introduction to the third issue of *Cahiers Cistre*, an issue that Robert Georjin devoted to Jacques Lacan.

Lacan focused his exposition on the unconscious: he went over the broad lines of his teaching against “the big theoretical deprivation that characterizes the whole psychoanalytic movement.” Language structures the unconscious but the unconscious is the Real “insofar as it is impossible to say” [*en tant qu’impossible à dire*]. The end of the text, devoted to literature, refuses to see art as imitating the unconscious (which would make it an art of forgers) in order to see in literature the symptom “as a palimpsest.”

99

1977–1978—**SEMINAIRE XXV: LE MOMENT DE CONCLURE**
(SEMINAR XXV: TIME TO CONCLUDE)—1979

Only a version of the first meeting has been published, in *Ornicar?* under the title “Une pratique de bavardage” (A babbling practice).

Lacan was exhausted and he attempted to take stock of his activities: “I do not have the slightest desire to do my seminar. This year, I have entitled it *Time to conclude*.” Psychoanalysis is not a science, “because it is irrefutable,” as Karl Popper said. But it must be taken seriously: babbling does entail risks. The psychoanalyst is a rhetorician who “rhetoricizes” and “recifies.” “Words make things,” but psychoanalysis precisely “deals with the inadequacy of words to things.” Nothing is really new in all this. Let us end with the statement that “life is not *tragic*.” It is “*comic*.” Freud was wrong to choose the Oedipus complex, a tragedy, in order to give a name to “what he was dealing with in the relationship that links the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real.”

100

1978–1979—**SEMINAIRE XXVI: LA TOPOLOGIE ET LE TEMPS**
(SEMINAR XXVI: TOPOLOGY AND TIME)

This seminar has not been published, but could it be? Many who attended it remember Lacan’s immense weariness, his absences, his silences, sometimes interrupted by a formula written on the board or by some enigmatic statements, silences that could last for almost entire meetings. As for the title, it shows clearly—in a philosophical form—the stumbling block (or the end

point) of his passionate theorizing. The lecture given in November 1978 at Sainte-Anne (101) helps us sense, beyond Lacan's illness,ⁱⁱ a more profound tragedy.

101

1978 (2 pp.)—CONFERENCE CHEZ LE DOCTEUR DENIKER A L'HOPITAL SAINTE-ANNE (LECTURE AT DOCTOR DENIKER'S AT THE HOSPITAL SAINTE-ANNE)—1984

The *Association Freudienne* published a transcription of this lecture, given in November 1978; it presents itself as a succession of lapidary sentences.

Lacan denies that he wanted to define the unconscious; he only wanted "to present it." However, once again, decisive expressions accumulate: "the unconscious is . . . ," like in the good old days of 1953 (54). Now what prevailed was the tragic despair of a thinking that came up against itself, enclosed in this "impossible" that it kept wanting "to understand," that is, to capture with an aphorism (even if it was "the unconscious is the impossible"), with an equation, or with a topological figure. Mathematical reasoning is "primary," hence it is a founder, but "its consistency is properly speaking imaginary." In brief, it is the acknowledgment of "In the unconscious, one is *disoriented*."

If the unconscious is "what one constructs with language, it is a *fraud*: the free association of ideas relies on the haphazard; it is haphazardly that we proceed in order to free someone from what is called the symptom." So, is this an appraisal of failure when it is already too late? "I sometimes wonder if I should not rather have played on what is called *the psychological*. The thing that exempted me from doing it is *the structure*." Had he simply taken a wrong course?

102

1980—SEMINAIRE DISSOLUTION (DISSOLUTION SEMINAR)—1980

On January 5, 1980, Lacan wrote a letter in which he proclaimed the *dissolution of the E.F.P.* He sent it to the members of his école and also to the daily newspaper *Le Monde*, so that it could be made public. At the same time, he invited those who wanted to "go on with Lacan" to "join together once again." Lacan would sort out the requests for the new école to come. Ambiguously, he seemed to want to leave ("in order to be Other at last" and so that "the Other is missing") and he was already planning a new organization. The criteria was clear: "I don't need many. And there are many whom I don't need." It was in fact to a single person, "the only one who knows how to read me," that Lacan wanted to bequeath the institution as a property that he owned. However, the small group rapidly became "the one thousand of

ii. Since the early Fall 1978 Lacan's health had been deteriorating. More and more frequently he experienced failures of memory and spoke less and less in public.

the Cause Freudienne” [*les mille de la Cause Freudienne*]—“my Freudian cause,” as the Master said. In 1980–1981, the atmosphere was, therefore, tense and the situation was explosive in Lacanian circles, doomed to demand, hatred, and rivalry.

At the same time, in his seminar, Lacan commented on his own positions: *Delenda est* [Carthago] (Carthage, which threatened Rome, had to be destroyed, and an entire program was sketched here). He dictated his orders, he reminded the audience of the *mourning* to be done, he presented himself as “*Monsieur Aa antiphilosophie*” (in a free association of ideas with a title by Tzara, at the time of Dada), he prophesied: “*Let there be light!*”, he attacked, and he ended with “*Le Malentendu*” (The *Misunderstanding/Mis-heard*)—“*L’homme nait malentendu*” (“Man is born misunderstood/mis-heard”). Meanwhile, conflicts burst out.

103

1980—LE SEMINAIRE DE CARACAS (THE SEMINAR IN CARACAS)—1981

In July 1980, in Caracas, a meeting on Jacques Lacan’s teaching and on psychoanalysis in Latin America took place. Lacan said a few words, in which he alluded to the dissolution, talked about “my family” [*les miens*] and announced the creation of “my Freudian cause.” The importance of the meeting lay in his presence, which guaranteed its legitimacy, at a time of dissensions. *L’Ane*, the journal of the E.C.P., devoted its first issue to Lacan, to his écoles, and to the events of 1980. It even included a summary of a discussion with Catherine Millot about death.

“It is up to you to be Lacanians. As far as I am concerned, I am a Freudian.” Still, Lacan clearly marked the difference between the two theories.

104

1980–1981—DERNIERES LETTRES PUBLIQUES (LAST PUBLIC LETTERS)—1980–1981

These letters were published in *Le Courrier de la Cause Freudienne*, and then in *Les Actes du Forum de l’Ecole de la Cause Freudienne* or in *Le Courrier de l’Ecole de la Cause Freudienne*. Each time they greeted—and legitimized—the new school created in his name. Let us leave aside the dissensions that we discussed elsewhere. Let us rather listen to the immense despondency: “For a month now I have cut myself off from everything, except my practice . . . ,” and to the indifference toward the agitation that surrounded him: “My forte is to know what it means to wait.” Lacan died on September 9, 1981.

Cases, Dreams, and Symptoms Analyzed by Lacan

Only the main references are mentioned here: for the others, the indexes of *Ecrits* can be consulted. We give here only short titles; for the complete titles, see the bibliography.

I. CASES PRESENTED BY LACAN

The case of Marcelle C:

“Ecrits inspirés.”

The case of Aimée:

De la psychose paranoïaque . . .

“Présentation de la traduction des *Mémoires d'un névropathe*”

Le Savoir du psychanalyste

Two female cases:

“De l'impulsion au complexe”

Cases presented at Sainte-Anne:

Sem. III, *Les Psychoses*

II. CASES REREAD BY LACAN

The Papin sisters' crime:

“Motifs du crime paranoïaque”

“Introduction théorique aux fonctions de la psychanalyse en criminologie”

Freud

The case of Dora:

“Intervention sur le transfert”

“Fonction et Champ . . .”

Sem. XVII, *L'Envers de la psychanalyse*

The case of the Wolfman:

“Fonction et Champ . . .”

Sem. I, *Les Ecrits techniques . . .*

“Réponse au commentaire de J. Hyppolite”

“Remarque sur le rapport de D. Lagache”

Sem. X, *L'Angoisse*

The case of the Ratman:

“Le mythe individuel du névrosé”

“Fonction et Champ . . .”

“La direction de la cure”

The case of Little Hans:

“Fonction et Champ”

“L’Instance de la lettre . . .”

Sem. IV, *La Relation d’objet*

Sem. XIII, *L’Objet de la psychanalyse*

The case of Schreber:

Sem. III, *Les Psychoses*

“D’une question préliminaire . . .”

“Présentation de la traduction des *Mémoires d’un névropathe*”

A case of feminine homosexuality:

Sem. IV, *La Relation d’objet*

Sem. X, *L’Angoisse*

M. Balint

Sem. I, *Les Ecrits techniques*

Sem. X, *L’Angoisse*

A. Freud (a student of)

Observation of a little girl:

Sem. IV, *La Relation d’objet*

M. Klein

Little Dick:

Sem. I, *Les Ecrits techniques*

R. Lefort

A case reported in the seminar:

Sem. I, *Les Ecrits techniques*

E. Kris

Fresh Brain Man:

Sem. I, *Les Ecrits techniques*

Sem. X, *L’Angoisse*

III. ANALYSES OF DREAMS OR SYMPTOMS

Freud

The dream of Irma’s injection:

Sem. II, *Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud*

The dream of the Beautiful Butcher’s wife:

“La direction de la cure”

Sem. XVII, *L’Envers de la psychanalyse*

The dream: Father, can’t you see I’m burning?

Sem. XI, *Les Quatre Concepts fondamentaux*

Sem. XVIII, *D’un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant*

The forgetting of the word “Signorelli”:

“Introduction au commentaire de J. Hyppolite”

The word “famiglionnaire” :

Sem. V, *Les Formations de l'inconscient*

“*Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*” :

“La chose freudienne”

“Subversion du sujet”

Sem. XVI, *D'un autre à l'autre*

Famous literary, philosophical, and psychoanalytical texts reread by Lacan

Here again, we only mention, on the one hand, the important texts that do not appear in the titles, and on the other hand, the Lacanian works that are discussed at length. The indexes of *Ecrits* or the bibliography of *Non-dupes errent* will give an idea of the amount of references.

I. LITERARY TEXTS

G. Bataille, *Histoire de l'oeil*

Sem. XIII, *L'Objet de la psychanalyse* (a single reference)

P. Claudel, *L'Otage*, *Le Pain dur*, and *Le Père humilié*

Sem. VIII, *Le Transfert*

Goethe, *Poésie et vérité* [*Dichtung und Wahrheit*]

"Le mythe individuel du névrosé"

V. Hugo, "Booz endormi"

Sem. III, *Les Psychoses*

"L'Instance de la lettre"

J. Joyce

Sem. XXIII, *Le Sinthome*

Molière, *Le Misanthrope*

"Propos sur la causalité psychique"

Pascal, "Le Pari"

Sem. XII, *Problèmes cruciaux*

Sem. XIII, *L'Objet de la psychanalyse*

Sem. XVI, *D'Un Autre à l'autre*

Plautus (and Molière), *The Sosie*

Sem. II, *Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud*

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Sem. VI, *Le Désir et son interprétation*

II. PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS

For Hegel and Heidegger, see the indexes of *Ecrits*.

Aristotle

"La Science et la Vérité"

Sem. XIV, *La Logique du fantasme*

Sem. XVII, *L'Envers de la psychanalyse*

Sem. XIX, . . . *Ou pire*

Sem. XXI, *Les Non-dupes errent*

Descartes: “*Cogito ergo sum*”

“L’Instance de la lettre”

Sem. XIV, *La Logique du fantasme*

Sem. XVII, *L’Envers de la psychanalyse*

Sem. XIX, . . . *Ou pire*

“La Troisième”

Marx

Sem. XIV, *La Logique du fantasme*

Sem. XVI, *D’un Autre à l’autre* (on “surplus value”)

Plato: *The Symposium*

Sem. VIII, *Le Transfert*

Meno

Sem. II, *Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud*

Parmenides

Sem. XIX, . . . *Ou pire*

III. PSYCHOANALYTICAL TEXTS: A FEW LANDMARKS

Freud

Papers on technique

Sem. I, *Les Ecrits techniques de Freud*

Beyond the Pleasure Principle

Sem. II, *Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud*

Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego

Sem. II, *Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud*

Jokes

Sem. V, *Les Formations de l’inconscient*

Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety

Sem. X, *L’Angoisse*

Totem and Taboo (on the father of the primal horde)

Sem. VII, *L’Ethique de la psychanalyse*

Sem. XVII, *L’Envers de la psychanalyse*

Sem. XVIII, *D’un Discours qui ne serait pas du semblant*

Sem. XXI, *Les Non-dupes errent*

L’Eveil du Printemps

On the sentence “*Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*”

“La chose freudienne” (see the index of *Ecrits*)

Sem. XVI, *D’un Autre à l’autre*

On Texts by Other Psychoanalysts

Against “ego-psychology”:

As early as *Fonction et Champ* . . .

Situation de la psychanalyse

Variantes de la cure type

. . . until his death

On Jones’s “aphanisis”:

Sem. III, *Les Psychoses*

Sem. VI, *Le Désir et son interprétation*

La Psychanalyse aujourd'hui, *a collective book edited by Nacht:*

Sem. IV, *La Relation d'objet*

On M. Klein and Winnicott:

Lacan's comments are dispersed, Some English articles are commented in Sem. IV,

La Relation d'objet

Against Karen Horney, Jones, H. Deutsch:

L'Etourdit

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

Linguistics

Saussure and Jakobson

Sem. III, *Les Psychoses*

"L'Instance de la lettre"

Jakobson: "Radiophonie"

Sem. XIV, *La Logique de fantasme*

Conférences aux Etats-Unis

Chomsky

Sem. XXIII, *Le Sinthome*

Painting

Holbein: *The Ambassadors*

Sem. XI, *Les Quatre Concepts*

Velasquez: *Las Meninas*

Sem. XIII, *L'Objet de la psychanalyse*

List of the major psychoanalytical journals today

Place of publication is Paris unless otherwise noted.

L'Ane, the journal of the E.C.F., can be purchased at newspaper stands.

Le Bloc-notes de la psychanalyse, published in Geneva.

Cahiers confrontation, published by Aubier, Ed: R. Major

Le Coq-Héron, a publication of the Centre Etienne Marcel in Paris.

Dires, the journal of the Freudian center in Montpellier

Le Discours psychanalytique, affiliated to the Association Freudienne

L'Ecrit du temps, published by Minuit, Eds.: M. Moscovici and J. M. Rey.

Etudes Freudiennes, Evel, Eds.: C. Stein and L. Covello.

Littoral, Erès (Toulouse), Ed.: J. Allouch.

Mi-dit, a creative writing journal (Montpellier)

Nodal, affiliated with the Association Freudienne, published by J. Clins.

Nouvelle Revue de psychanalyse, Gallimard, Ed.: J. B. Pontalis

Ornicar?, former journal of the E.F.P., taken up by the E.C.F., Navarin, Ed.: J. A. Miller

Patio, journal of the Cercle Freudien, Evel.

Psychanalyse à l'Université, journal of the psychoanalysis and psychopathology laboratory in the department of "Sciences Humaines Cliniques" at the University of Paris VII, Erès (Toulouse), Ed.: J. Laplanche.

Psychanalystes, journal of the Collège de Psychanalystes but without being obedient.

Revue française de psychanalyse, P.U.F., journal of the S.P.P.

Spirales, magazine edited by A. Verdiglione, at newspapers stands.

Topique, journal of the Quatrième Groupe, P.U.F.

Tribune, publication that the Cartels Constituants de l'Analyse Freudienne puts out irregularly.

There are many bulletins, including the bulletin of the Association Freudienne (in France and in Belgium); the *Lettre mensuelle de l'E.C.F.* and *Quarto*, its supplement published in Bruxelles; *Poinçon*, a bulletin to enhance contacts outside of groups, published in Strasbourg, etc. There are also a whole range of bulletins and journals published in a much less sophisticated way in Paris and the provinces. One is most likely to discover them in specialized bookstores.

As far as publications in book format, besides the old and well-known series published by Gallimard, Payot, Aubier, Denoël, P.U.F., Seuil, Union Générale d'Éditions (10/18), Privat in Limoges, etc., and the books published by the Editions de Minuit,

we must mention the following: some new publishing houses—the Editions Erès in Toulouse, the Editions Navarin in Paris (E.C.F.); some new series such as “L’Analyse au singulier,” edited by J. Sédat at Inter-Editions, “L’Espace analytique,” edited by Prof. Guyomard and M. Mannoni at Denoël, “Jeux de l’Inconscient,” edited by C. Baladier and M. David-Ménard at Editions Universitaires. . . . Psychoanalysis’s expansion in the number of its publications is in keeping with the multiplicity of groups.

Notes

In the following bibliographical notes, the place of publication of books is Paris unless otherwise noted.

INTRODUCTION

1. J.-A. Miller, "Adresse au Congrès de l'Ecole Freudienne," Rome, November 2, 1974, in *Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne* 16 (November 1975).

2. G. Haddad, "Une pratique" ("A Practice"), *L'Ane* 3 (September 20, 1981).

3. Lacan, "Situation de la psychanalyse et formation du psychanalyste," in *Ecrits*, p. 467. Gongora was a Spanish poet at the beginning of the seventeenth century, well known for his affectation and the difficulty of his texts. He gave birth to Gongorism.

4. Article in *Le Monde* (September 20, 1981), quoted by G. Haddad, n. 2 above. Eric Laurent also wrote "J'accuse!" ("I accuse," and his accusation is directed toward "Dr Anatole Red," that is, A. Green?) in *La Lettre mensuelle*, the monthly letter of the E.C.F. 3 (October 1981). Besides, the contradictory dossier published after the publication of *Ecrits* by *La Quinzaine Littéraire* (January 20, 1967) can be read. Charles Melman wrote in favor of Lacan; Didier Anzieu wrote against him. Thus, it is apparent that the attacks did not start with Lacan's illness and death.

5. The expression "gossip from Orléans" ["*rumeur d'Orléans*"] comes from Haddad's article, n. 2 above.

6. W. Granoff, *Filiations* (Edition de Minuit, 1975), pp. 73–74.

7. Catherine Clément, *Vies et légendes de Jacques Lacan* (Grasset, 1981), pp. 33 and 240. Translated by Arthur Goldhammer as *The Lives and Legends of Jacques Lacan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 21 and 207. Catherine Clément said that she received Althusser's written message and published some excerpts in the newspaper *Le Matin*.

8. Preface to Anika Rifflet-Lemaire's book, *Jacques Lacan* (Brussels: Edition Desart 1970) (reprinted 1977). Translated by David Macey as *Jacques Lacan* (London, Rostan and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977).

LACAN CAME AND WENT

1. Le Groupe d'Etudes C. G. Jung belongs to the Société Française de Psychologie Analytique and is located at Place de l'Ecole Militaire, 75007 Paris.

2. Pamela Tytell, *La Plume sur le divan* (Aubier-Montaigne, 1982), pp. 223–266 (a first, more sketchy version first appeared in *Le Magazine Littéraire* in April 1980). Also, *Psychanalystes* (12 rue de Chantilly, 75009 Paris). Many issues of this journal give presentations of the new groups as they form themselves. Also, "L'Institution en question" ("The Institution in Question") in *Tribune I* (Cartels Constituants de l'Ana-

lyse freudienne, 36 rue Vaneau, 75007 Paris, 1985). Two other issues are scheduled for publication.

3. “La Psychanalyse à sa place” (“Psychoanalysis in its place”), in *Psychanalystes* (January 1984).

4. Is that even quite sure? See “Proposition du 9 octobre 1967 sur le Psychanalyste à l’Ecole,” *Scilicet* (1968); “L’Acte de fondation de l’E.F.P.,” in *L’Excommunication*, supplement to *Ornicar?* (1977); and the texts of the different directories of the école.

5. *Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, inside bulletin of the E.F.P., 1967–1979. Especially issue 19 (Congress in Strasbourg, 1976).

6. *L’Ordinaire du psychanalyste*, edited under the collective pseudonym of Sigismond, published 12 issues from May 1973 until May 1978.

7. S.P.P., 187 rue Saint-Jacques, 75005 Paris.

8. A.P.F., 24 rue Dauphine, 75001 Paris.

9. *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, published since 1970 (Gallimard). *Psychanalyse à l’Université*, journal of the Psychoanalysis and Psychopathology Laboratory at the University of Paris VII, founded in 1975.

10. Quatrième Groupe, 10 rue Croulebarbe, 75013 Paris.

11. *Etudes Freudiennes* (Edition Evel) published since 1969.

12. *Topique* (Editions l’Epi) published since 1969.

13. Ecole de la Cause Freudienne, 1 rue Huysmans, 75006 Paris (with a library open to the general public).

14. *Ornicar?*, (Champ freudien) journal published since 1975.

15. *L’Ane*, (E.C.F.) magazine created in 1981.

16. Edition Navarin (Seuil), in connection with the Champ freudien (E.C.F.: 25 rue de Navarin, 75009 Paris).

17. J.-A. Miller, F. Ansermet, “Entretien à propos de l’établissement du Séminaire de Lacan” (“Interview Concerning the Establishment of Lacan’s Seminar”), *Le Bloc-Notes de la psychanalyse*, 4, Geneva, 1984. In the Fall 1985, J.-A. Miller published *L’Entretien sur le séminaire* at Edition Navarin.

18. Collège de Psychanalystes, 12 rue de Chantilly, 75009 Paris.

19. *Psychanalystes*, (November 1981).

20. “Le mythe de l’Un dans le fantasme et dans la réalité politique,” *Ibid.*, 9 (October 1983).

21. “La psychanalyse et l’évolution du social,” *Ibid.*, 17 (October 1985).

22. The Association Freudienne, 5 rue de la Clef, 75005 Paris. Les Cartels Constituants, 36 rue Vaneau, 75007 Paris. C.R.F.P., 35 av. Ferdinand-Buisson, 75016 Paris. Le Cercle Freudien, 9 passage d’Enfer, 75014 Paris. La Convention psychanalytique, 14 bis rue des Minimes, 75003 Paris. Le Coût Freudien, 18 rue de Varenne, 75007 Paris. The Ecole Freudienne, 1 rue Las-Cases, 75007 Paris. Errata, 48-50 rue de l’Université, 75007 Paris. *Revue Littoral*, 1 rue des Feuillantines, 75005 Paris. For the Fédération d’Espaces Psychanalytiques, inquire at the C.E.P., 1 passage d’Enfer, 75014 Paris.

23. Lacan noted the failure of the *passé* at the Congress in Deauville in April 1978. See *Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, 23 (1978).

24. *Tribune I*, pp. 90–91.

25. See Maud Mannoni, *Education impossible*, (Seuil, 1973).

26. Lacan, especially in “Ouverture de la Section clinique à Vincennes,” *Ornicar?*, 9 (1977).
27. *Le Bulletin du livre*, 338 (February 15, 1978), devoted to psychoanalysis and psychiatry, lists twenty-two psychoanalytic collections. Others, such as “L’Espace analytique” published by Denoël, have been created since then. Some publish a large number of foreign texts. This provides an opportunity to put Lacanian psychoanalysis in the perspective of its inscription, even in France, in a much broader field. However, in this study, journals are not included. As of today, there are more than fifteen of them.
28. See “La propriété des oeuvres de Lacan” (“The property of Lacan’s works”), *Le Monde* (July 7–8, 1985) and J.-A. Miller’s answer (July 12, 1985). Also “Entre deux mots de Lacan, comment choisir le pire?” (“Between Two Words of Lacan, How to Choose the Worst?”) *Libération* (July 16, 1985).
29. Subscriptions are taken by the association APRES (Danielle Hébrard, 3 rue Mary-Davy, 75014 Paris). The rhythm of publication was to be three issues per year, under the title *Stécriture*. The title is the pun Lacan made in his postscript to Seminar XI (Seuil, 1973) “*cette écriture*” (this writing), perhaps with a touch of derision.
30. In *D’un Autre à l’autre* (1968–1969). However, thinking of those who plagiarize his unpublished works without quoting him, he added: “This does not mean that there is no theft.” At that time, the publishing house Grandes-Têtes-Molles de Notre Époque inaugurated pirate publications (with no dates and no registration of copyright), but they only reprinted old texts that had become difficult to get. However, a number of conferences and radio programs remain unpublished. One day, by chance, I found a transcription, without any reference, of the *Petit Discours aux psychiatres* (a speech given in 1967). Today, the *Bulletin de l’Association Freudienne* and *Quarto* (supplement to the monthly letter of the E.C.F. in Bruxelles) publish previously unpublished transcriptions.
31. J.-A. Miller, F. Ansemet, “Entretien à propos de l’établissement du Séminaire.”
32. *Libération* (July 16, 1985), see n. 28.
33. Article quoted above (see n. 17 and 31).
34. *Littoral*, 13 (June 1984), “Traduction de Freud. Transcription de Lacan” (“Translation of Freud. Transcription of Lacan”), (Toulouse, Editions Erès) pp. 77–126.
35. J.-A. Miller, “Notice,” in Jacques Lacan, *Les Quatre Concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse (Séminaire XI)*, p. 249. Translated by Alan Sheridan as *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, (New York and London: Norton & Company, 1981), p. xi.
36. Lacan, *Séminaire XI*, pp. 251–254.
37. J.-A. Miller, F. Ansemet, “Entretien à propos de l’établissement du séminaire.”
38. *Littoral*, 13, p. 77.
39. *La Psychanalyse*, 1 (1956).
40. A. de Mijolla, “L’Histoire de la psychanalyse en France,” in *Histoire de la psychanalyse*, edited by Roland Jaccard, tome II (Hachette, 1982).
41. The quote is from his last real seminar *L’Insu que sait . . . 1976–1977*, *Ornicar?*, 19, (1977).
42. “Où les chemins divergent” (“Where paths diverge”), *Ornicar?*, 9 (1977), pp. 41–73.

43. A. Clancier, who was already tired of talking to someone who was drinking tea and reading, made her decision when Lacan led her out of his office with the following soothing words: “What a good little analyst you are!” Her attitude was fair play until the end. . . .

44. In *L'Excommunication*, supplement to *Ornicar?*, 8 (1977).

45. Freud, “On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement,” quoted by Lacan in “Fonction et Champ” notably.

46. In *Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne*, report on the 1970 Congress, 7 (March 1970).

47. See *Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne*, 23 (April 1978).

48. See the above quoted interview between Miller and Anselmet.

49. *Un destin si funeste* (Editions de Minuit, 1976).

50. “La direction de la cure,” *Ecrits*, p. 586.

51. In *Topique*, 6 (2nd semester 1971), P.U.F., pp. 29–64.

52. Lacan analyzes Freud’s dream of Irma’s injection in *Séminaire II: Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse (1954–1955)*, (Seuil, 1978). Translated by Sylvana Tomaselli with notes by John Forrester: *Seminar II: The Ego in Freud’s Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis (1954–1955)* (New York and London: Norton & Company, 1988).

53. In “La chose freudienne ou Sens du retour à Freud,” *Ecrits*, pp. 401–436. The sentence is on p. 403, and in Alan Sheridan’s translation of a selection of essays from *Ecrits (Ecrits: A Selection)* (New York: Norton, 1977) it is on p. 116.

54. In “Au-delà du Principe de réalité,” *Ecrits*, pp. 73–92.

55. “L’agressivité en psychanalyse,” *Ecrits*, pp. 101–114. Sheridan’s translation, pp. 8–29.

56. *Séminaire VIII. Le Transfert dans sa disparité subjective*, 1960–1961.

LACAN’S THEORETICAL ITINERARY

1. J. Dor, *Introduction à la lecture de Lacan. 1. L’inconscient structuré comme un langage* (“L’espace analytique,” Denoël, 1985). Other volumes are expected. Dor’s project is explicitly pedagogical.

2. A. Juranville, *Lacan et la philosophie*, (Paris: “Philosophie d’aujourd’hui,” 1984) P.U.F.

3. “Entretien avec F. Dolto” (“Interview with F. Dolto”), C. David, *Le Nouvel Observateur* (September 19, 1981).

4. S. Freud, “Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides) in *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Translated by James Strachey, vol. 12 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953).

5. *Les Motifs du crime paranoïaque, Le Minotaure*, 3/4 (1933).

6. “Introduction théorique aux fonctions de la psychanalyse en criminologie,” written with M. Cénac, 1950, *Ecrits*, pp. 125–149.

7. *La Psychiatrie anglaise et la guerre, Evolution psychiatrique*, 1 (1947).

8. M. Mannoni, *La Théorie comme fiction* (Seuil, 1979).

9. J.-A. Miller, “L’enseignement de la Présentation des Malades” (“The Teaching of the Cases that Lacan Presented”), *Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne*, 21 (“les Journées

sur les Mathèmes,” “Study days on the Mathemes” (August 1977). See also *Ornicar?*, 10, (July 1977).

See also “Notes prises aux présentations du Dr Lacan à l’hôpital Sainte-Anne” (“Notes taken while Dr Lacan presented cases of patients at the Sainte-Anne Hospital”), *Scilicet*, 1 (1968).

10. In *Ecrits*, (Seuil), pp. 93–100. The quotes without references refer to this text.

11. “Some Reflections on the Ego,” *I.J.P.*, 34 (1953). French translation in *Le Coq Héron*, 78 (1968).

12. H. Wallon, “Conscience et individualisation du corps propre” (“Consciousness and individualization of the body-proper”), reprinted in *Les Origines du caractère chez l’enfant. Les préludes du sentiment de personnalité* (Boivin, 1934). Numerous other editions at P.U.F.

13. In *Encyclopédie Française*, 1938. Reprinted as *Les Complexes familiaux dans la formation de l’individu*, (Editions Navarin, 1984).

14. “De l’impulsion au complexe” (“From impulsion to complex”), *R.F.P.*, (1939).

15. M. Klein, *La Psychanalyse des enfants* (1932), P.U.F.

16. “De nos antécédents,” *Ecrits*, p. 70.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

18. In *R.F.P.*, 4 (1949).

19. D. W. Winnicott, “Mirror-role of Mother and Family in Child Development,” *Playing and Reality* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1971).

20. See, in *La Psychanalyse*, 1 (1956), the discussions that follow Lacan’s intervention in Rome in 1953.

21. Maud Mannoni, *La Théorie comme fiction*.

22. Among others in the *Séminaire XIV, La Logique du fantasme* (1966–1967). What is at stake is one of the many interpretations of the Schema L. of intersubjective dialectic (see *Ecrits*, p. 53 and 548; in the English translation, p. 193).

23. Conference given on July 8, 1953, published in *Bulletin de l’Association Freudienne*, 1 (1982).

24. “Situation de la psychanalyse et formation des analystes en 1956,” in *Ecrits*, pp. 459–491.

25. “Propos sur la causalité psychique,” 1946, in *Ecrits*, pp. 151–194.

26. “La Psychanalyse et son enseignement,” 1957, in *Ecrits*, pp. 437–458.

27. “Au-delà du Principe de réalité,” 1936, in *Ecrits*, pp. 73–92.

28. *Les Ecrits techniques de Freud* (1953–1954) (Seuil, 1975), p. 10. Translated by John Forrester as *Seminar I: Freud’s Papers on Technique* (1953–1954) (New York, London: Norton, 1988), p. 3. This is also the argument of the conference entitled “Freud dans le siècle,” delivered on May 16, 1956, where Lacan explained himself again about the “return to Freud,” see *Séminaire III, Les Psychoses* (Seuil, 1981), pp. 263–277.

29. “La Psychanalyse et son enseignement.”

30. *Les Ecrits techniques*, p. 7.

31. *Séminaire XI: Les Quatre Concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse*, 1964 (Seuil, 1973), p. 211. Translated by Alan Sheridan as *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (New York and London: Norton & Company, 1978), p. 232.

32. *Séminaire XIII: L'Objet de la psychanalyse* (1965–1966).
33. In July 1980 in Caracas. *L'Ane*, 1 (1981).
34. "Intervention sur le transfert," 1951, in *Ecrits*, pp. 215–226.
35. "Le Mythe individuel du névrosé," 1953. See *Ornicar?*, 17/18, (1978).
36. *Séminaire III, Les Psychoses* (1955–1956) (Seuil, 1981). See also "D'une question préliminaire à tout traitement possible de la psychose," 1956, *Ecrits*, pp. 531–583.
37. "Situation de la psychanalyse," *Ecrits*, p. 486.
38. *Séminaire III, Les Psychoses*.
39. *Séminaire II, Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud*. Translated as *The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis*.
40. 1955. See *Ecrits*, pp. 406–436.
41. Among others, *Les Quatre Concepts*.
42. *Séminaire X, L'Angoisse*, 1962–1963.
43. *Séminaire XVI, D'un Autre à l'autre*, 1968–1969.
44. *Séminaire I, Les Ecrits techniques de Freud* (1953–1954), (Seuil, 1975) p. 7. translation, p. 1.
45. Conference "Le Symbolique, l'Imaginaire et le réel," 1953.
46. Lacan's intervention concerning M. Foucault's conference at the Société Française de Philosophie, on February 22, 1969. *Littoral*, 9 (June 1983).
47. See especially "Réponse au commentaire de Jean Hyppolite sur la *Verneinung* de Freud" ("Response to Jean Hyppolite's commentary on Freud's *Verneinung*"), *Ecrits* (1956), p. 383.
48. We have mentioned this schema in the section on the mirror stage, see n. 22. From the "Séminaire sur *La Lettre volée*," in *Ecrits*, p. 53, until "D'une question préliminaire à tout traitement possible de la psychose," in *Ecrits*, p. 548, Lacan simplified the schema in order to mark the fragility of the subject's relation to the Other, locus of the symbolic.
49. *Séminaire V, Les Formations de l'Inconscient*, 1957–1958.
50. *Séminaire IV, La Relation d'objet*, 1956–1957. According to Lacan, the mother "from symbolic becomes real," while the objects, thanks to the phallus, "from real become symbolic". . . .
51. "Fonction et Champ de la parole et du langage en psychanalyse," 1953, *Ecrits*, p. 271. Translated as "Fonction and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis," *Ecrits, A Selection*, p. 61. Lacan reverses Goethe's reversal—"In the beginning was the Act"—in order to reaffirm the Christian formula, "In the beginning was the Word [*Verbe*]," a formula that he quoted, in those very terms, in his credo in *Le Discours de Rome* (at the same 1953 Congress).
52. "Situation de la psychanalyse," *Ecrits*, p. 468.
53. "Fonction et Champ," *Ecrits*, p. 276. Translation p. 65.
54. See our bibliography. We shall come back to this point.
55. "Fonction et Champ," *Ecrits*, p. 277. Translation p. 66.
56. "Du sujet enfin en question," *Ecrits*, p. 235.
57. "Fonction et Champ," *Ecrits*, p. 285. Translation p. 73.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 243. Translation p. 35.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 247. Translation p. 40.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 248. Translation p. 41.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 255–256. Translation p. 47.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 261–262. Translation p. 52.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 259. Translation p. 51.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 258. Translation p. 49.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 265. Translation p. 55.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 301. Translation p. 87.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 278. Translation p. 67.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 277. Translation p. 66.

69. It is the Other [*l'Autre*] represented by the letter O [A] in the Schema L in the “Séminaire sur *La Lettre volée*,” *Ecrits*, p. 53 and p. 548 (see n. 48). We have reproduced this schema above, in the section “The Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real.”

70. *Séminaire III, Les Psychoses* (1955–1956) (Seuil, 1981) and “D’une question préliminaire,” *Ecrits*, pp. 531–583.

71. “Fonction et Champ,” *Ecrits*, p. 313. Translation p. 98.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 322. Translation p. 106.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 269 and p. 279. Translation p. 59 and p. 68.

74. Especially a rereading of *Cinq Psychanalyses* (P.U.F., 1954) (the case histories of Dora, Little Hans, the Rat Man, the Wolf Man, and President Schreber), of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, and of many of Freud’s texts on psychoanalytic technique.

75. “Fonction et Champ,” *Ecrits*, p. 298. Translation p. 85.

76. A. Rifflet-Lamaire, *Jacques Lacan*, (Bruxelles: Dessart, 1970); A. Kremer-Marietti, *Lacan ou la rhétorique de l’inconscient*, Aubier-Montaigne, 1978; Ph. Lacoue-Labarthe and J.-L. Nancy, *Le Titre de la lettre* (Galilée, 1973); A. Juranville, *Lacan et la philosophie* (P.U.F., 1984); J. Dor, *Introduction à la lecture de J. Lacan. I—L’inconscient structuré comme un langage* (Denoël, 1985).

77. Preface to A. Rifflet-Lamaire’s book, *Jacques Lacan*.

78. “Radiophonie,” *Scilicet*, 2/3 (1970), p. 58.

79. *Séminaire III, Les Psychoses* (1955–1956) (Seuil, 1981).

80. “Position de l’inconscient,” 1960–1964, *Ecrits*, especially p. 840.

81. “L’Instance de la lettre dans l’inconscient,” 1957, *Ecrits*, pp. 493–528. The quote is on p. 522. Translated as “The Agency of the letter in the unconscious,” *Ecrits. A Selection*, pp. 146–178. The quote is on p. 170.

82. “Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache,” 1958–1960, *Ecrits*, pp. 647–684.

83. This was Lacan’s response to Hyppolite in the *Séminaire II, Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse*, 1954–1955 (Seuil, 1978). Translated by Sylvana Tomaselli as *The Ego in Freud’s Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis* (New York and London: Norton & Company, 1988). See also *Séminaire VIII, Le Transfert dans sa disparité subjective*, 1960–1961.

84. “Fonction et Champ,” *Ecrits*, p. 319. Translation p. 104.

85. “Au-delà du Principe de réalité,” *Ecrits*, especially pp. 81–85.

86. *Séminaire IX, L’Identification*, 1961–1962. For the “children in swaddling clothes,” see the epigraph of “L’Instance de la lettre dans l’inconscient,” p. 493. “The Agency of the letter in the unconscious,” p. 146.

87. “L’Instance de la lettre,” *Ecrits*, p. 518. Translation p. 167.

88. Presentation of *Ecrits I*, (Points-Seuil, 1970).

89. "L'Instance de la lettre dans l'inconscient."
90. "Propos sur l'hystérie," 1977, *Quarto*, 2 (September 1981).
91. *Séminaire XI, Les Quatre Concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse*, 1964, (Seuil, 1973), p. 138. Translation p. 150.
92. "La Chose freudienne ou sens de retour à Freud en psychanalyse," 1955, *Ecrits*, pp. 401–436. Translated as "The Freudian thing, or the meaning of the return to Freud in psychoanalysis," *Ecrits. A Selection*, pp. 114–145.
93. "Jeunesse de Gide ou la lettre et le désir," *Ecrits* (1968), pp. 739–764, especially p. 753.
94. Freud uses the term *penis*—or the adjective *phallic* concerning child development and infantile theories. See Laplanche and Pontalis, *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*: pp. 311 and 312 are an excellent clarification (with references) of the evolution of the use of the term *phallus* in psychoanalysis.
95. "D'une question préliminaire à tout traitement possible de la psychose," *Ecrits*, pp. 531–583. Translated as "On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis," *Ecrits. A Selection*, pp. 179–226.
96. *Séminaire IV, La Relation d'objet*, 1956–1957.
97. "La signification du phallus," *Ecrits*, pp. 690, 692, 693, 695.
98. *Séminaire XIV, La Logique du fantasme*, 1966–1967.
99. *Séminaire VI, Le Désir et son interprétation*, 1958–1959.
100. Especially in the *Séminaire XX, Encore*, 1972–1973 (Seuil, 1975), but also in the previous seminars.
101. "La Signification du phallus," *Ecrits*, p. 692. My emphasis.
102. In *Séminaire XII, Le Transfert*, 1960–1961. However, already in "A la mémoire d'Ernest Jones: sur sa théorie du symbolisme," *Ecrits*, p. 697–717.
103. J.-J. Goux, *Freud. Marx. Economie et Symbolique* (Seuil, 1973).
104. L. Irigaray, *Speculum, de l'autre femme*, (Editions de Minuit, 1974); *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*, (Editions de Minuit, 1977) (includes a rereading of one of Marx's chapter).
105. *Séminaire VII, Le Désir et son interprétation*.
106. *Séminaire XIII, Le Transfert*.
107. "A la mémoire d'Ernest Jones: sur sa théorie du symbolisme," *Ecrits*, p. 715.
108. *Séminaire XVI, D'un Autre à l'autre*, 1968–1969.
109. *Séminaire XIX, . . . Ou pire*, 1971–1972.
110. Laplanche et Pontalis, *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, (P.U.F., 1967), pp. 120–122. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith as *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (New York, London: Norton, 1973), p. 483.
111. "La Direction de la cure et les principes de son pouvoir," *Ecrits* (1958), p. 620.
112. "Jeunesse de Gide," p. 759.
113. Such a thesis is notably argued in *Séminaire VIII, Le Transfert dans sa disparité subjective*, 1960–1961.
114. *Ibid.*
115. "La Direction de la cure."
116. *Séminaire XII, Problèmes cruciaux pour la psychanalyse*, 1964–1965, and *Séminaire XIII, L'Objet de la psychanalyse*, 1965–1966.
117. *Séminaire XX, Encore*, 1972–1973, p. 73 and following pages.

118. “Conférences et entretiens dans les universités nord-américaines,” *Scilicet*, 6/7 (1975).
119. *Séminaire XX, Encore*, p. 33.
120. “Radiophonie,” *Scilicet*, 2/3 (1970).
121. *Séminaire XVII, L’Envers de la psychanalyse*, 1969–1970.
122. Among others, *Séminaire XVIII, D’un Discours qui ne serait pas du semblant*, 1970–1971, *Le Savoir du psychanalyste*, 1971–1972.
123. A. Juranville, *Lacan et la philosophie*, see chap. VI, p. 341 *sq.*
124. “Discours de clôture aux Journées sur les psychoses de l’enfant,” 1968, *Enfance aliénée*, 10/18 (1972).
125. G. Guillerault, “Présentation du ‘Il n’y a pas de rapport sexuel’” (“Presentation of ‘There is no sexual relation’”), *Les Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, 20 (March 1977).
126. *Séminaire XVI, D’un Autre à l’autre*, 1968–1969.
127. Juranville, *Lacan et la philosophie*. This is the very object of the overall argument. On *Les Quatre Discours*, see chap. VI, p. 341 *sq.*
128. One of the earliest texts is Elisabeth Roudinesco’s *Pour une politique de la psychanalyse*, Maspero, 1977; but numerous articles allude to this point in Lacanian journals. See our appendix.
129. There are two versions of this speech: one in *Scilicet*, 2/3 (1970), and the other one in *Les Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, 8 (1971).
130. “L’Impromptu de Vincennes” [the title is an echo of Molière’s play “L’Impromptu de Versailles”], 1969, *Le Magazine Littéraire*, 121 (1977).
131. *Allocution*, see n. 129. See also *Séminaire XV, L’Acte psychanalytique*, 1967–1968.
132. *Séminaire XVII, L’Envers de la psychanalyse* (and the following seminars). The French reads: *le discours de l’analyste boucle le tournis des trois autres mais ne le résout pas*.
133. Preface to A. Rifflet-Lemaire’s book.
134. “La Science et la vérité,” 1965, *Ecrits*, pp. 855–877.
135. *Séminaire XVI, D’un Autre à l’autre*, 1968–1969. “Radiophonie,” p. 97.
136. *Séminaire XVII, L’Envers de la psychanalyse*, 1969–1970.
137. *Ibid.*, and also *Séminaire XVIII, D’un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant*, 1970–1971.
138. *Séminaire XVIII, D’un discours qui ne serait pas du semblant*, 1970–1971.
139. *Ibid.*
140. See the interview “Radiophonie.”
141. *Séminaire XX, Encore*, p. 108; however, this proposition runs through the seminars and the texts since 1969.
142. Nathalie Charraud, “La Psychanalyse et la théorie des jeux” (“Psychoanalysis and game theory”), *Ornicar?*, 24 (Fall 1981), and 26–27 (1983).
143. Juranville, *Lacan et la philosophie*, chap. VI, p. 310.
144. *Séminaire XIV, La Logique du fantasme*, 1966–1967.
145. Ph. Lacoue-Labarthe and J.-L. Nancy, *Le Titre de la lettre*.
146. *Séminaire XIX, . . . Ou pire*, 1971–1972. In 1976 Lacan began to search for a “new signifier” that would precisely not have any meaning but, all in all, would be the absolute truth.

147. "Radiophonie."
148. "Discours de clôture des Journées sur les psychoses de l'enfant," *Enfance aliénée*, 10/18 (1972).
149. Such is the thesis of the "Remarque sur le rapport de Daniel Lagache," 1958–1960. The expression is in *Séminaire XVI, D'un Autre à l'autre*, 1968–1969.
150. "Ouverture de la section clinique à Vincennes," speech given in 1977 and published in *Ornicar?*, 9 (1977). Lacan added: "The unconscious is thus not Freud's, I must say it, it is Lacan's. It nevertheless remains that the field, on the other hand, is Freudian."
151. "Position de l'inconscient" ("Position of the unconscious"), 1960–1964, *Ecrits*, pp. 825–850. See especially p. 835: "The effect of language is the cause introduced in the subject."
152. Among others, *Ornicar?*, *Littoral*, and *Nodal*.
153. *Séminaire XI, Les Quatre Concepts*.
154. "De nos antécédents," *Ecrits*, p. 68. I have underlined.
155. Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, 1955, U.G.E., p. 94.
156. "D'un sujet enfin en question," *Ecrits* (1966), p. 235.
157. "Peut-être à Vincennes," *Ornicar?*, 1 (1975).
158. "De l'impulsion au complexe," 1938, *R.F.P.*, (1939).
159. *Séminaire II, Le Moi dans la théorie de Freud*, 1954–1955.
160. *Séminaire III, L'Objet de la psychanalyse*, 1965–1966. [In French, *ça vous regarde* means at the same time "it looks at you" and "it concerns you"—transl.]
161. *Séminaire X, L'Angoisse*, 1962–1963.
162. *Séminaire XXV, Le Moment de conclure*, 1977–1978.
163. "La Psychanalyse et son enseignement," 1957, *Ecrits*, pp. 437–458.
164. "De la psychanalyse dans ses rapports avec la réalité," 1967, *Scilicet*, 1 (1968).
165. *Séminaire XII, Problèmes cruciaux*, 1964–1965.
166. *Séminaire XI, Les Quatre Concepts*.
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170. "La Chose freudienne."

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1. François Perrier, *Voyages extraordinaires en Translacanie*, (Lieu commun, 1985).
2. *Séminaire I, Les Ecrits techniques de Freud* (1953–1954) (Seuil, 1975), p. 8. Translated by John Forrester as *Freud's Papers on Technique* (New York and London: Norton, 1988), p. 2.
3. Catherine Baliteau, "La fin d'une parade misogyne: la psychanalyse lacanienne" ("The End of a Misogynous Parade: Lacanian Psychoanalysis"), *Les Temps Modernes* (July 1975).
4. L. Irigaray, *Spéculum de l'autre femme* (Editions de Minuit, 1974), and *Ce Sexe qui n'en est pas un*, (Editions de Minuit, 1977).

5. Besides “Le Stade du miroir,” read “L’Agressivité en psychanalyse,” in *Ecrits* (1948), pp. 101–124.

6. Among others, *Séminaire IX, L’Identification*, and *Séminaire XVIII, . . . Ou pire*.

7. Lacan used the expression “maternal instinct” in 1960 in “Propos directifs pour un Congrès sur la sexualité féminine,” *Ecrits* (1966), p. 730.

8. The expression “I do know but still” [*je sais bien mais quand même*] is borrowed from Octave Mannoni who, with his usual subtlety, analyzes denegation and denial in *Clefs pour l’imaginaire* (Seuil, 1969). His reflections on the more general phenomenon of belief are food for thought.

9. I will be dealing with this question in a forthcoming article. Let me just recall here the reality of some actual facts that justify such an uncertainty and maintain the “family romance” on the mother’s side: the fact of placing a child in a nurse’s care, a common practice at certain times and in certain social classes; the fact of abandoning or adopting a child; the exchanges of children; infanticide; not to mention the fact that technology today is in the process of drastically changing the idea, the Imaginary, and the experience of maternity. Why is there so much anxiety if not because the mother appears to be the only possible link to nature? I would go even further: she opens up the possibility of hoping for a mode of symbolization other than the radical split between nature and culture. The maternal mediation would allow the newborn’s “socialization” according to a continuous integration of physical and psychical maturation: for the child as well as for the mother, maternal love (care, gestures, words) represents the possibility of sublimating the body in a different way. That such love might not exist shows that it is not a question of a “maternal instinct.”

10. “Propos directifs pour un Congrès sur la sexualité féminine,” *Ecrits*, p. 732.

11. The hysteric, the mother who passes on the Father’s word, and above all woman as an object of exchange among men and representing for them the phallic symbol: woman “is” the phallus while men are not “without having it.”

12. *Séminaire XIX, . . . Ou pire*, 1971–1972.

13. *Séminaire XII, Problèmes cruciaux pour la psychanalyse*, 1964–1965.

14. “La direction de la cure et les principes de son pouvoir” 1958, in *Ecrits*, p. 587. Translation pp. 227–228.

15. “L’Agressivité en psychanalyse,” 1948, in *Ecrits*, p. 124.

16. J. Favret-Saada, “Excusez-moi, je ne faisais que passer” (“Excuse me, I was only stopping by”), *Les Temps Modernes* (June 1977). Numerous issues of *Lettres Modernes* and of *Ornicar?* devoted to the *pas* show that many members of the école suffered and were isolated, and that hatred exploded against anyone who dared talk about the facts. As for the jury, its refusals without any explanation, its failures to respond, the poor level of its debates, its incapacity to show any true reflection at the Congresses, all these reasons were enough to condemn this experience, which bordered on manipulation. O. Mannoni has always linked treatment with life. M. Mannoni’s and F. Dolto’s books on children are well known. Let me mention here a less well-known interview between F. Dolto and J. B. Pontalis, “Miracle en Alabama,” an interview about Gibson’s play that stages the story of Helen Keller, who was deaf, mute, and blind, but who was saved by a woman’s love. In this interview (*Temps Modernes*, December 1961), F. Dolto said, “Words only have meaning if they are spoken out of a love that has given them meaning.” In front of the destitute child, she

opposed the attitude of women to that of men who usually only see such a child as a reject.

17. *Petit discours aux psychiatres*, 1967, anonymous version 1982. This text also contains the famous development on the “bag full of tricks” [*sac à malices*].

18. P. Tytell, *La Plume sur le divan. Psychanalyse et littérature en France* (Aubier, 1982). Her position is paradoxical: the true Lacan reader would be the reader of Aimée’s works in Lacan’s thesis *De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité*, in 1932. However, in his thesis, Lacan adopted a very classical position about literature, which was also the position of a number of psychiatrists and psychoanalysts of the time. If he talked of “the vivacity of [Aimée’s] style,” of her “freshness,” and if he noted the country vocabulary, it was to show his patient’s relation to reality and the richness of her personality. All his judgments were very banal.

19. Charles Mauron created his method of psychocriticism just after the war. I send the reader to the section of our bibliography entitled On Psychoanalysis and Literature. All the books quoted mention Charles Mauron’s method, and a large section of A. Clancier’s book is devoted to it. P. Tytell fails to see how close this method, both structural and historical, is to Lacan’s: Mauron’s “personal myth” is to be linked to Lacan’s “neurotic’s individual myth.” However, the one did not influence the other.

20. J. B. Fagès, *Comprendre Jacques Lacan* (Privat, 1971).

21. F. Georges, *L’Effet ‘Yau de Poële de Lacan et des lacaniens* (Hachette, 1979).

CHRONOLOGY

1. E. Roudinesco, *La Bataille de Cent Ans, Histoire de la psychanalyse en France, 1885–1939*, 1 (Ramsay, 1982). (The second volume was published by Seuil and came out in October 1986—transl.)

2. Dom Marc-François Lacan, Benedictine Order: *Petite Encyclopédie religieuse: à l’écoute des mots, vocabulaire et index de la collection: “Je sais, Je crois”* (Fayard, 1973). *Homélies pour l’année B*. (Mulhouse: Salvador, 1975).

3. “La psychiatrie anglaise et la guerre,” *E.P.*, 1947–1 (Editions AREP, 1977), p. 41.

4. *De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité* (Editions Le François, 1932).

5. Lacan stated that the “problems of pathological psychology” were at the core of his thesis in “Exposé général de nos travaux scientifiques,” 1933, published in the reprint of his thesis *De la psychose paranoïaque . . .* (Seuil, 1975).

6. *De la psychose paranoïaque . . .*

7. “Propos sur la causalité psychique,” *Ecrits*, p. 152.

8. *Ornicar?*, 29 (Summer 1984).

9. *E.P.*, first issue after the war, 1947–1.

10. E. Roudinesco, *La Bataille de Cent Ans*, and “R. Loewenstein” in *Ornicar?*, 31 (Winter 1984).

11. E. Pichon, “La Famille devant M. Lacan,” (“The Family in front of Mr. Lacan”) *R.F.P.*, 1939–1/2. It is in the same issue that Lacan’s first communication at the S.P.P. appeared: “De l’impulsion au complexe.”

12. *La Bataille de Cent Ans*, p. 300.

13. In “La Psychiatrie anglaise.”

14. Although for other reasons than hers, the expression is appropriate here. See pp. 297–320 in *La Bataille de Cent Ans*.
15. *La Bataille de Cent Ans*.
16. “La Psychiatrie anglaise.”
17. “Propos sur la causalité psychique,” *Ecrits*, p. 151.
18. A. de Mijolla, “La Psychanalyse en France,” in *Histoire de la psychanalyse*, directed by R. Jaccard, t.II, (Hachette, 1982).
19. See the final chapters in *La Bataille de Cent Ans*.
20. Maud Mannoni, especially in *Le Symptôme et le Savoir* (Seuil, 1983).
21. “Propos sur la causalité psychique,” Lacan’s paper and the following discussions appeared in *E.P.*, 1947-1, and in *Le Problème de la psychogénèse des névroses et des psychoses*, Desclée de Brouwer, 1950 (reprinted in 1977).
22. See A. de Mijolla’s article, p. 53.
23. *La Scission de 1953*, supplement to the issue 7 of *Ornicar?*, 1976 (with a preliminary text by Lacan, a chronology by J.-A. Miller, and the publication of documents, especially pp. 52–63). Also see A. de Mijolla’s article.
24. *Ibid.*
25. A. de Mijolla, “La psychanalyse en France.”
26. *La Scission de 1953* and A. de Mijolla’s article.
27. *La Scission de 1953*, pp. 102–116.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 120–135.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 98 and 101.
30. Conference published by the *Bulletin de l’Association Freudienne*, 1982-1.
31. A. de Mijolla, “La psychanalyse en France,” pp. 41–44.
32. J. B. Pontalis, account of the Royaumont International Colloquium, in *Bulletin de Psychologie*, V. XII, 2/3 (1958–1959).
33. Letter from F. Dolto to S. Leclair, March 27, 1962, *Analytica*, 7, supplement to *Ornicar?*, 12 (January 1978).
34. *L’Excommunication*, supplement to *Ornicar?*, 8 (1977), p. 43.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 93–99.
36. Catherine Clément, *Vie et Légendes de Jacques Lacan* (Grasset, 1981). Translated by Arthur Goldhammer as *The Lives and Legends of Jacques Lacan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).
37. *Ecrits*, “Ouverture de ce recueil” (Seuil, 1966), p. 9.
38. *Acte de Fondation*, founding act of the Ecole Freudienne de Paris, 1964. See also the “Principes concernant l’accession au titre de psychanalyste dans l’Ecole Freudienne de Paris” (“Principles concerning the access to the title of psychoanalyst in the Ecole Freudienne de Paris”) as well as other texts published in the *Annuaire*s (see the 1975 directory).
39. Irène Roubleff, “Une mise au point,” in *Lettres de l’Ecole Freudienne*, 7 (March 1970). This text is in fact the report written by a study group at the Strasbourg Congress in January 1969. At that time, Pierre Benoît had the audacity to ask Lacan “to resign from his position of director” so that another director be appointed.
40. Lacan, “Proposition du 9 octobre 1967 sur le psychanalyste à l’école,” *Scilicet*, (1968).
41. See, among others, “Principes concernant l’accession au titre de psychanalyste à l’E.F.P.” in the different directories.

42. In *Analytica*, 7, issue on the *passe*, supplement to *Ornicar?*, (1978).

43. There were two, almost concomitant, *Propositions*. The second one was published, immediately after having been delivered, in *Scilicet* (1968); the first version was published in *Analytica*, supplement to *Ornicar?*, 8 (1978).

44. In *Analytica*, 7, issue on the *passe*, pp. 41–51. Ultimately, the expression *tour de passe-passe* comes from J. Oury. M. Mannoni's response, saying that "theory must be at the heart of practice, and practice at the heart of theory," is on pp. 62–64.

45. *Scilicet*, 2/3, the issue includes J. Oury's and J. Aubry's interventions, pp. 3–52.

46. I. Roubleff, "Une mise au point."

47. Cl. Dorgeuille, *La Seconde Mort de Jacques Lacan, Histoire d'une crise (Octobre 1980–Juin 1981)*, in *Actualité freudienne* (the author is also the publisher).

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We give in parenthesis the date when the text was spoken or written for the first time, then the references of the first publication and (when applicable) of the reprint available today; finally, the boldfaced numbers refer to the specific study in our dossier. For the sake of clarity, the chronological list of the seminars follows the present bibliography.

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L'Excommunication, supplement to *Ornicar?*, n. 8, 1977

Annuaire de l'Ecole Freudienne de Paris **57**

Translated by Jeffrey Mehlman in *October* 40, 1987

L'Acte psychanalytique, Séminaire XV (1967–1968)

Anonymous version, 1981 **69**

L'agressivité en psychanalyse (1948)

Revue française de psychanalyse, n. 3, 1948.

Ecrits, Seuil, 1966 **16**

Ecrits: A Selection, Norton, 1977 ("Aggressivity in Psychoanalysis")

A la mémoire d'Ernest Jones: Sur la théorie du symbolisme (1959)

La Psychanalyse, n. 5, 1959

Ecrits, Seuil, 1966 **42**

Allocution prononcée pour la clôture du Congrès de l'E.F.P., le 19 avril 1970 par son directeur

Text rewritten for *Scilicet*, n. 2/3, 1970

Transcription of the spoken text in *Lettres de l'Ecole Freudienne*, n. 8, 1971 **76**

L'Angoisse, Séminaire X (1962–1963)

Anonymous version, 1981 **52**

Au-delà du "Principe de réalité" (1936)

Evolution psychiatrique, n. 3/4, 1936, "Etudes freudiennes"

Ecrits, Seuil, 1966 **9**

C'est à la lecture de Freud . . . (1977)

Cahiers Cistre, n. 3, Nov. 1977, Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme **98**

La Chose freudienne ou sens du retour à Freud en psychanalyse (1955)

Evolution psychiatrique, n. 1, 1956.

Ecrits, Seuil, 1966 (numerous modifications) **29**

Ecrits: A Selection, Norton, 1977 ("The Freudian thing, or the meaning of the return to Freud in psychoanalysis")

Les Complexes familiaux dans la formation de l'individu: see La Famille

Compte rendu de hallucinations et délires de H. Ey (1935)

Evolution psychiatrique, n. 1, 1935 **7**

Compte rendu de le temps vécu. Etudes phénoménologiques et psychologiques d'E. Minkowski (1935)

Recherches philosophiques, 1935–1936, n. 5, **7**

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Quarto, n. 3, 1981 (Belgian supplement to the *Lettre mensuelle de l'Ecole de la Cause Freudienne*) **83**

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Scilicet, n. 1, 1968 **70**

De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité (1932)

Le François, 1932

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De l'impulsion au complexe (1938)

Summarized by the author in *Revue Française de psychanalyse*, 1, 1939, **11**

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De Rome 53 à Rome 67: La Psychanalyse, raison d'un échec (1967)

Scilicet n. 1, 1968 **70**

Le Désir et son interprétation, Séminaire VI, (1958–1959)

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La Direction de la cure et les principes de son pouvoir (1958)

La Psychanalyse, n. 6, 1961

Ecrits, Seuil, 1966 **40**

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Discours à l'E.F.P. (Dec. 1967)

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Recherches, Dec. 1968

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Marcelle Marini is a professor at the University Paris-VII and the author of *Histoire des femmes—XXe siècle*.

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