

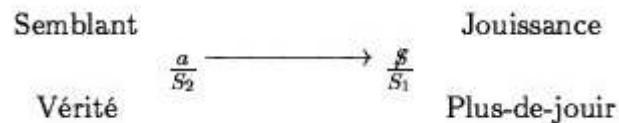
The Savoir of the Psychoanalyst, Seminar of 6/04/72

Translated by Jack Stone from Jacques Siboni's transcription.

As you know, I say what I think here. This is a feminine position, because in the final analysis thinking is something very particular.

As I write for you from time to time, I inscribed, during a little trip I made, a certain number of propositions of which the first is that one must recognize that the psychoanalyst is put, by the discourse--this is a term of mine--by the discourse that conditions him--which one calls, since me, the *discourse of the psychoanalyst*--in a difficult position, let us say. Freud called it impossible, *unmöglich*, which is perhaps a little strong; he was speaking for himself.

Well! Then there is the second proposition: he knows--from experience, which means that, however little he may have practiced psychoanalysis, he knows enough about it for what I am going to say--in any case he knows to have a common measure with what I say. This is completely independent of his being informed of what I say, since what I say aims, as it seems to me I have demonstrated this year, at situating his knowledge. It is a story of the *savoir* on (*sur*) the truth.



This is the place of the truth (*vérité*), for those who are coming here for the first time, this, of the *semblant*, this, of *jouissance*, and this, of the *plus-de-jour*, which I write in the abridged form: ``+ *de jour*". For *jouissance*, we will put *j*.

It is its relation to *savoir* that is difficult, not of course in what I say, since in the set of the psychoanalytic *no man's land* [in English] they do not know what I say. This does not mean that they know nothing of what I say, since this emerges from experience. But they have, of what they know of it, a horror, of which I can say truly simply that I understand them--"I can say" means: "I can say, if they hold to it"--but I understand them, I put myself in their place all the more easily because I am in it. But I understand it all the more easily because, like everyone, I hear what I say.

Nonetheless, this doesn't happen to me every day, because it isn't every day that I speak. In reality, I understand it, which is to say I hear what I say, on days--one or two, let's say--which immediately precede my seminar, because at that moment I begin to write for you. On other days, the thought of those I have had business with submerges me. I have to admit it to you, because at that moment, the impatience with what I have called--and thus I can again call, because it is rare that I return--of what I have called in *Scilicet* my failure, dominates me. *Voilà*.

Yes. They know. I remind you of this because the title I have to treat of here is "The Savoir of the (*du*) Psychoanalyst." *Du*, in this case evokes the *le*, a definite article in French; finally, it is what one calls definite. Yes! Why not some psychoanalysts, according to what I am telling you. That would be more conformed to my theme of this year, which is to say, *there is something of the one* (*y a d'un*). There are some who say they are such. I am all the less going to argue with their saying there are not others. I say *du*, why? Because it is to them that I speak despite the presence of a very large number of persons here who are not psychoanalysts. Thus

the psychoanalysts know what I say.

They know it, I have said to you, from experience, however little they might have, even if this is reduced to the didactic which is the minimal requirement for them to call themselves psychoanalysts.

For even if what I have called the *passé* has failed (*est manquée*), this will be reduced to their having had a didactic psychoanalysis, but, in the final analysis, this suffices for them to know what I am saying. The *passé* -- it is always in *Scilicet* that all this is dragged in; rather, it is the indicated place -- when I say that the *passé* has failed, this does not mean that they are not offered to the experience of the *passé*. As I have often marked, this experience of the *passé* is simply what I propose to those who are dedicated to exposing themselves for the sole purposes of informing themselves on a very delicate point and which consists, in sum--this is affirmed in the surest way, it is completely *a*-normal--a normal object *a*--in someone who has had a psychoanalysis wanting to be a psychoanalyst. There truly has to be a sort of aberration that is worth, was worth the trouble of being offered to all that one might gather of a testimony. It is indeed because of this that I have provisionally instituted this attempt at gathering so as to know why someone, who knows what a psychoanalyst is from its didactic, could still want to be an analyst.

I will not say any more about their position, simply because I have chosen, this year, "The *Savoir* of the Psychoanalyst" as being what I proposed for my return to Saint-Anne. This is not at all for managing the psychoanalysts. They have no need of me to be dizzied by their position; I will not augment this in saying it to them.

Yes! What could be done--I will perhaps do it at another moment--what could be done in a piquant manner, with a certain reference that I will only call "historical" in quotation marks--finally, you will see this when it comes, if I substitute--for those whose have devious ends (*fins finauds*), I will speak to them of the word *temptation*.

Here, I only speak of *savoir* and I remark that it is not a question of the truth on *savoir*, but of the *savoir* on the truth, and that this, the *savoir* on the truth, is articulated from the point I advance this year of the *there is something of the one*. There is something of the one and nothing more, but this is a very particular One, which separates the one from two, and it is an abyss.

I repeat, the truth--as I have already said--can only be half-said. When the time of flapping (*battement*) will have passed which will make it so I can respect its alternation, I will speak of the other face, of the half-true (*mi-vrai*): we must always separate the good grain of the *a*-half-true (*l'a-mi-vrai*)!

As I have perhaps just told you, I am just now returning from Italy where I have never been anything but pleased by my reception, even from my psychoanalyst colleagues! Thanks to one of them, I encountered a third who is completely on the same page, the same page as me, of course. He works with Dedekind, and he found it completely without me; I cannot say that, at the date when he began this work, I was not there already, but it is a fact that I spoke of it later than he, since I only speak of it now and he had written a very short piece on it. He has grasped the value in sum of some mathematical elements for making emerge something that truly concerns our experience of the analyst. Well, as is quite well seen--he did everything for that--he succeeded in making heard in some very well placed sectors of what one calls the I.P.A.-- the Avowed (*Avouée*) Psychoanalytic Institution, I will translate it--thus he has succeeded in making himself heard, but what is curious is that they didn't publish it. They didn't publish it, saying "You understand, no one will understand it." I should say that I am surprised because, in sum, they are rather in a hurry to cram the International Journal with the "of Lacan," in quotation

marks, of course; that is, things in the vein I am considered to represent among the incompetents of a certain linguistics. The more things there are in the wastepaper basket, naturally, the less this is discerned! Then why the devil have they believed they have had to create an obstacle in this case? Since for me it seems that this is an obstacle and that the fact that they say that the readers will not understand it is secondary. It is not necessary that all of the articles in the International Journal be understood. Thus, there is something in it that doesn't please them.

But it is obvious that, like what I come--not to name, because you are profoundly ignorant of its name; he has not yet succeeded in publishing anything--it is perfectly establishable, I do not lose hope that, following what will filter from my comments of today--and above all if they know that I have not named it--they will publish it. Truly, this has the air of my bearing it enough in heart that I would assist in it willingly. If it does not happen, I will speak to you of it a little more!

Let us return to the present. The psychoanalyst thus has an investment (*apport*) in what he knows, a complex one. He disowns it, he represses it (*le réprime*), to employ the term by which *refoulement*, *Verdrängung*, is translated in English, and even for him it happens that he does not want to know anything about it. And why not? What could it shock (*épater*)? Psychoanalysis, you will say to me, then what? I mean here the bla-bla-bla of whoever hasn't the least idea of psychoanalysis. I answer to anyone who might take the floor (*surgir de ce floor*), as they say, I answer: is it *savoir* that cures, whether that of the subject or that supposed in the transference? Or is it the transference, such as it is produced in a given analysis? Why *savoir*, of which I say that at the dimension of every psychoanalyst, why would *savoir* be, as I just said, avowed? It is from this question, in sum, that Freud took the *Verwerfung*, calling it a "a judgment which in the choice rejects." He adds, "which condemns," but I am condensing. It is not because the *Verwerfung* renders the subject mad, when it is produced in the unconscious, the same and from the same name from which Freud borrows it, that it does not reign over the world as a rationally justified power.

Some psychoanalysts, you are going to see, as opposed to the "the," some psychoanalysts--this is preferred, this prefers itself, you see. These are not the only ones. There is a tradition of this: medical tradition. For preferring oneself, one has never done better, save for the saints. The saints, S,A,I,N,T,S, yes, one speaks to you so much of others that I have to specify, because the others . . . well, we'll let it pass! The saints -- S,A,I,N,T,S --they prefer themselves also, they even ask no more than this, they are consumed with finding the best fashion to prefer themselves, while there are some that are so simple, as the medi-saints¹ show, they too. These are not saints; this, this, goes without saying.

There are few things as dreary to leaf through than the history of medicine. It might be recommended as an emetic or a purgative--it works as both. For knowing that *savoir* has nothing to do with truth, there is nothing more convincing. One can't even say that this goes as far as making the doctor a sort of provocateur. This does not prevent the doctor from arranging it for himself--and for reasons owing to their shared platform with the discourse of science having become more exigent--the doctors from arranging for themselves to bring psychoanalysis to their heel. And this--they know themselves there--this naturally all the more that the psychoanalyst being greatly troubled, as I am by it, greatly troubled by his position, was all the more disposed to be counseled by experience.

I must very much mark this historical point, which is, in my business, insofar as it important, altogether a key point, thanks to that conjuration against which an explicit article of

¹ *Méde-saints*, a pun on *médecins* (doctors, or physicians) [trans.].

Freud on *lay-analysis* is directed. Thanks to this conspiratorial brouhaha that was able to be produced a little after the war, I had lost the fight before having engaged in it.

Simply, I would like that one believe me about this, because--why? I will say why--if, this evening I testify--and it is not by chance that I do it at Sainte-Anne since I have told you that it is here that I say what I think--if I declare that is precisely on account of very much knowing it, at the time, that I lost in engaging in this fight.

There is nothing heroic about this, you know; a lot of fights are engaged in under these conditions. It is one of the foundations of the human condition, as the other says, and this succeeds no worse than any other undertaking. The proof, eh! The only problem--but only for me--is that this doesn't leave you very free; I say this in passing for the person who--I don't know when, maybe two seminars back--who interrogated me on whether or not I believed in freedom.

Another declaration I want to make and which, after all, indeed has its importance, since after all, I don't know, this is my inclination this evening, another declaration that is altogether proven--here, I ask that you believe me--that I very well grasped that the fight was lost, after all I was not so cunning: I perhaps believed I had to hurry along and that I could blow off (*foutrais en l'air*) *L'Internationale Psychanalytique* (Avowed), and here no one can say the contrary of what I am going to say, which is that I never let go of any of the persons I knew had to leave me before they went away themselves. And this was true from the moment when the fight was, in sum, for France, lost, which I have just alluded to, this little conspiratorial brouhaha of doctors, of psychoanalysts, from which emerged, in '53, the beginning of my teaching. On days when the idea of pursuing said teaching does not inhabit me, which is to say a certain number, it is obvious that I have, like all the fools, an idea of what this could have been for French Psychoanalysis (!) if I could have taught there where, for the reason I am saying, I was not disposed to let anyone go--I mean, as scandalous as were my propositions on the *Function and Field* . . . and so on and so forth . . . of *speech and language*--but I was disposed to smooth things over with even the hardest people among them, and at the point where we are now, no one among the psychoanalysts could have been the worse for it.

I have told you that I took a little tour of Italy. In these cases, I go also . . . why not? because there are a lot of people who like me. Regarding this, someone sent me a glass for my teeth. I would like to know who it was, to thank her, this person. Someone sent me a glass for my teeth. I say this for those who were at the Pantheon last time. I thank this person all the more because this wasn't a glass for my teeth. It was a marvelous little red glass, tall and shapely, into which I will put a rose, whoever it was who sent it to me. But I only received one, I must say that. Well, let's move on. There are people who like me a little in every corner, even in the halls of the Vatican. Why not, eh? There are indeed some people there. It is only there--this for the person who interrogates me on freedom--it is only at the Vatican that I know some free-thinkers. Me, I am not a free thinker: I am forced to hold to what I say, but there--how easy it is! Ah ! One understands how the French Revolution was brought on by the abbots. If you knew the freedom they have, my good friends, it would send shivers up your spine. Me, I try to lead them back to hard earth, but nothing can be done, they are out of control (*ils débordent*): psychoanalysis, for them, is outmoded! You see where it leads, free-thinking: they see clearly.

It was nonetheless a good job, eh? It had its good aspects. When they say it is outmoded, they know what they are saying. They are saying: it's screwed up, because nonetheless one must do a little better! I nonetheless say this to warn the people, the people who are in the mix, and particularly, particularly, of course, those who follow me, that they should look twice before involving their descendants in it, because it is very possible that the way things are going, this

will come up empty. Finally, it is uniquely to those who have to involve their descendants that I counsel prudence.

I have already spoken of what happens in psychoanalysis, but I must nonetheless clarify certain points that I have already taken up, and that consequently I believe myself able to treat of briefly at the point where we are: it is that this is the only discourse--and let us pay homage to it --this is the only discourse, in the sense where I have catalogued four discourses, it is the only one in which roguery necessarily leads to stupidity. If you knew right away that someone who came to you to ask for a didactic psychoanalysis was a rogue, but said to him: "No psychoanalysis for you, my dear! You will become as dumb as a cabbage." But one doesn't know it, it is quite carefully dissimulated; one nonetheless knows it after a certain time, roguery being always, not hereditary--it is not a question of heredity--but from desire, the desire of the Other from which the one involved has arisen. I speak of desire. It is not always the desire of his parents; it can be that of his grandparents, but if the desire from which he is born is the desire of a rogue, he will unfailingly be a rogue. I have never seen any exceptions to this, and it is even because of this that I have always been so tender toward the persons who I knew had to leave me, at least in the cases when it was I who had psychoanalyzed them, because I knew well that they had become altogether stupid.

I can't say I made it explicit, as I have told you is necessary. It is necessary when psychoanalysis is pushed to its conclusion, which is the least to be expected from the didactic analysis. If the psychoanalysis is not didactic, then it is a question of tact: you should leave the guy enough of his roguery for him to get by (*se démerde*) adequately. This is properly therapeutic; you should let him float. But for the didactic psychoanalysis, you can't do that, because God knows what that would lead to. Suppose there is a psychoanalyst who remains a rogue. This haunts everyone's thoughts! Don't worry: psychoanalysis, contrary to what is believed, is always truly didactic, even when someone stupid practices it, and I will even say all the more so. Finally, all that one risks is having some stupid psychoanalysts. But this, as I say to you, in the final analysis, is not a problem, because, nonetheless, the object *a*, at the place of the *semblant*, is a position that can be held. *Voilà!* One can also be stupid to begin with. This is very important to distinguish.

Well then! I have never found anything better, as for me, I have never found anything better than what I call the *matheme* for approaching something concerning the *savoir* on the truth, since it is there in sum that one has succeeded in giving it a functional scope. It is a lot better when it is Pierce who is occupied with it. He puts into play the functions zero and one, which are the two values of truth. On the other hand, he does not imagine that one can write *T* or *F* to designate the true and the false. I already indicated this in some sentences--I already indicated this at the Pantheon--concerning the there-is-something-of-the-one, that is. There are two steps: the *Parmenides*, and then we had to arrive at Set Theory for the question of such a *savoir*, which takes the truth as a simple function, and which is far from contenting itself with it, and which involves a real that has nothing to do with the truth--this is mathematics--nonetheless, throughout the centuries, it was necessary to believe that the mathematical dispensed with any question about this, since it was with a delay, and by the mediation of a logical interrogation, that it made a step be taken in this question which is central for what there is of the truth: that is, how and why *there is something of the one!* You will not excuse me, I am not the only one.

There is something of the one; around this one turns the question of existence. I have already made some remarks about this, that existence had never been approached as such before a certain epoch and that a lot of time was put into extracting it from essence. I have spoken of the

fact that there had not very properly been anything in day to day speech that might mean “to exist,” not that I am ignorant of *ἔξιστιμι, ἐξιστομαι*, but rather that I am establishing that no philosopher ever made use of them. However, it is here that something begins that might interest us. It is a question of knowing that which exists. It only exists from the One--with what is rushing in around us, I am myself forced to rush--Set Theory is the interrogation: why is there something of the one?

The One is not found just anywhere (*ça ne court pas les rues*), whatever you might think, including in this altogether illusory certitude, and illusory for a long time—this doesn't prevent anyone from holding to it—that you are One, you also. You are one . . . it suffices for you to raise your little finger to grasp this: not only are you not One, but you are, alas, innumerable, innumerable each of you for yourself. Innumerable even up to what you have been taught, which might be one of the good results of the psychoanalytic tributary, that you are, as the case may be, altogether finite--I tell you this very quickly, because I don't know how much longer I'm going to be able to continue--altogether finite for what there are of men--there it is clear--finite, finite, finite! for what there are of women, countable.

I'm going to try to explain to you briefly something that might begin to clear the path concerning this, since, of course, these are not things that leap immediately into view, above all when one doesn't know what these mean, finite and countable! But if you follow a little my indications, you will read no matter what works on Set Theory--because these are proliferating now--even those that go against it.

There is someone very nice whom I hope to see soon to excuse myself for not having brought him a book this evening that I have looked everywhere for and that is out of print, which he loaned me last time, and that is called *Cantor is Wrong*. It is a very good book. It is obvious that Cantor is wrong, from a certain point of view, but he is incontestably right, based on the fact alone that he has advanced innumerable descendants in mathematics, and that all it is a question of is this: what makes mathematics advance suffices for it to be defended. But even if Cantor is wrong from the point of view of those who decree it, we don't know how they know what the number is: all of the history of mathematics well before Cantor has demonstrated that there is no place where this might be demonstrable; there is no place where it is more true that the impossible is the real.

This began with the Pythagoreans who, one day, were hit over the head with what they indeed had to know--because they must no longer be taken for babies--that $\sqrt{2}$ was not commensurable. This is taken up again by the philosophers--and it is not because it came to us from the "Thaetatus" that we must believe that the mathematics of that époque was not up to the task and incapable of responding--that precisely from grasping that the incommensurable existed, one began to pose the question of what the number was.

I am not going to give you the whole story. There is a certain business of the square root of minus-one ($\sqrt{-1}$), a certain business of the square root of minus-one that has been called since then, one doesn't know why, imaginary. There is nothing less imaginary than the square root of minus-one as the consequences have proven, since it is from here that has emerged what one could call the complex number, which is to say, one of the most useful and most fecund things ever created in mathematics.

In short, the more the objections made to what concerns this entrance by the One, which is to say, the whole number, the more it is demonstrated that it is precisely from the impossible that in mathematics the real is engendered. And it is precisely because Cantor was able to engender something that is nothing less than the Russell's entire life's work, along with an

infinite number of other points that have been extremely fecund in Set Theory, that it is certain that, as regards the real, it is Cantor who is on the right track of what it is a question of.

If I suggest to you--I am speaking to the psychoanalysts--to put yourself a little on this page, it is precisely for the reason that there is something to be drawn from it in what is, of course, your little weakness (*péché mignon*²). I say this because you have business with some beings who think, who think because, of course, they can't do otherwise, who think like Telemachus, at least as Paul-Jean Toulet describes: "they think at their expense" (*`ils pensent à la dépense*"). Well, it is a question of knowing if you, analysts, and those you lead, spend or do not spend your time in vain.

It is clear that in this respect, the *pathos* of thought which can result for you from a short initiation--while it must not be too brief--to Set Theory, is something indeed of a nature to make you reflect on notions like existence, for example. It is clear that it is only beginning with a certain reflection on mathematics that existence has taken its sense. All that one might have said of it before this, by a sort of presentiment, a religious one notably, that is, that God exists, only has sense strictly in that putting the accent--I should put the accent here because there are people who take me for a master thinker--it is this, whether you believe in him or not, keep this in the little hollow of your ear--me, I don't believe in him, but no one gives a damn; for those who believe in him it's the same thing--whether one believes in him or not, in God, indeed tell yourselves that with God, in every case, whether one believes in him or doesn't believe in him, one has to count. It is absolutely inevitable.

This is why I have written again on the board this around which I have tried to make turn something concerning what there is of the so-called sexual rapport. Here is the table:

The Sexuation Formulas

$$\begin{array}{cc} \exists x.\overline{\Phi x} & \exists x.\Phi x \\ \forall x.\overline{\Phi x} & \forall x.\Phi x \end{array}$$

I'll start over. There exists one such that what there is of a subject determinable by a function which is that which dominates the sexual rapport, namely the phallic function--which is why I write it $\Phi(x)$ --there exists an x which determines from saying "no" to the function. You see where I am coming from; you see right away the question of existence tied to something of which we cannot fail to recognize that it is a saying (*dire*). It is a saying "no" (*dire non*) and I would say even more, that it is a *dire que non*.³ This is capital, this is precisely what indicates to us the exact point where we must take, for our formation, our formation as analysts, what Set Theory states: there is an *at-least-one* that *says que non*.

This is a point of reference (*un repère*), it is a point of reference, of course, which does not hold for an instant, which in no way teaches, nor is *teachable*, if we do not conjoin it with this *quantifying* inscription of four terms, with the quantifier called universal, $\forall x.\Phi x$, which is to say the point from which it can be said, as is stated in Freudian doctrine, that there is no desire, no libido--it's the same thing--except the masculine one. This is, in truth, an error which has all its worth as a point of reference.

² As in, for instance, "a little weakness for chocolate" [trans.].

³ *Que non* is an emphatic or indignant "no" [trans.].

That the three other formulas, there does not exist, this x , which is to say that it is not true that the phallic function is what dominates the sexual rapport and that, on the other hand, we must--I am not saying *we can* write it--at a level complementary to these three terms, we must write the function of the *not-all* as being essential to a certain type of relation (*rapport*) to the phallic function inasmuch as it founds the sexual rapport; here it is obvious what makes, of these four inscriptions, a set.

Without this set it is impossible to orient oneself correctly in what there is of the practice of analysis inasmuch as it has business with this something currently defined as being the man, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, this correspondent generally qualified as woman, who leaves him alone. This "leaves him alone" is not the fault of the correspondent, it is the fault of the man. But fault or no fault--this is not a business that we have to decide immediately; I am only signaling it in passage--what matters for the moment is interrogating the sense of what these four functions which are only two might have to do: the one, a negation of the function of the other, an opposed function . . . these four functions inasmuch as their *quantic* (*quanté*) coupling diversifies them.

It is clear that what the $\overline{\exists x}$, barred, means, which is to say the negation of $\Phi(a)$, is something that for a long time--and enough from the origin that one might say that one is absolutely flabbergasted (*confondu*) that Freud overlooked it-- $\overline{\exists x}$, negation of $\Phi(a)$, namely this *at-least-one!* this One all alone that is determined from being the effect of the *dire-que-non* to the phallic function is quite exactly the point under which we must put all that is up to the present said to be of the Oedipus for the Oedipus to be something other than a myth.

And this has all the more interest in that it is not a question of genesis, nor of history, nor of anything that might resemble--as it seems at certain moments that Freud may have stated--an event. It could not act as an event as something represented to us as being before any history. There is no event except what is connoted in something that is stated. It is a question of structure.

That one might speak of *all-man* as being subject to castration, this is why, in the most patent fashion, the myth of Oedipus is made.

Is it necessary to take to returning to mathematical functions to state this logical fact: it is that, if it is true that the unconscious is structured like a language, the function of castration is necessitated there; this is exactly what implies that something escapes there. And whatever it is that escapes there, even if it is not--why not, it's in the myth--something human, after all . . . but why not see the father of the primal murder as an orangutan? There are a lot of things that coincide with this in the tradition, the tradition from which it must all the same be said that psychoanalysis arises, the Judaic tradition. In the Judaic tradition, as I could have stated, the year when I didn't wish to give more than my first seminar on the names of the father, I nonetheless had the time to accentuate that in Abraham's sacrifice what is sacrificed is effectively the father. Which is nothing other than a ram. As in all human lines that respect themselves, its mythic descent is animal. So that, in the final analysis, what I said to you the other day about the function of the hunt for man, this is what it is a question of. I did not speak to you of it at great length, of course; I could have said more on the fact that the hunter loves his prey, such that the sons, in the event called primordial in Freudian mythology, they killed the father . . . like those of whom you see the traces in the caves of Lascaux. They killed him, my God, because, of course, they loved him, as what follows proves; what follows is sad. What follows is precisely that all the men $\forall x, A$ turned upside down, the universality of the men is subjected to castration. We will not call it mythic, from the point from which we speak, that there is one exception. This exception is the inclusive function: what can be stated of the universal except that the universal is

enclosed, enclosed precisely by the negative possibility? Very exactly, existence plays the role here of the complement, or, to speak more mathematically, of the edge. And this is how it includes that there is somewhere an all x , an all x that becomes a quite small (*tout petit*) a , I mean an A turned upside down of (a), $\forall a$, each time it is incarnated, incarnated in what one might call a being, a being at least that is only posed as being and namely as man (*à titre d'homme*).

This is quite precisely what makes it so that in the other column--and with a type of relation (*rapport*) that is fundamental--something can be articulated in what is ranged, can be ranged, for whoever knows how to think with these symbols, as the woman (*au titre de la femme*).

Just from articulating it in this way, we are made to feel that there is something remarkable, remarkable for you, that what is stated here is that there is not one that . . . in the statement, in the statement that it is not true that the phallic function dominates what there is of the sexual rapport being written as a falsification (*s'inscrire en faux*).

And to permit you to find yourselves here again by means of references that are a little more familiar to you, I will say, my God, since I have just spoken of the father, I will say what concerns this "there does not exist an x that is determined as subject in the statement of the *saying que non* to the phallic function" is properly speaking the virgin. You know that Freud made a great deal of the taboo of virginity, etc., and of other wildly folkloric stories about this business, and the fact that formerly virgins were not fucked by just anyone--there had at least to be a high priest (*grand prêtre*) or a minor functionary (*petit seigneur*)--finally, what does it matter?

This is not the important thing. The important thing in fact is what one might say concerning this vital function (*fonction du vif*), this vital function so striking in that, after all, it has only ever been of a woman of that one says she is virile. If you have ever heard, at least in our day, of a guy who is, show him to me, this would interest me! Here, to the contrary, if a man is all you want of the virtuous type, veer to the port side (*vire à bâbord*), guard against veering, veer what you like, the virile is on the side of the woman, she is the only one who believes in it. She thinks! This is even what characterizes her. I will explain to you soon--I have to say it to you right away--that this is why--I will explain to you in detail why--the virago is not countable, because she is situated, unlike the one, which is on the side of the father, she is situated between the one and the zero. What is between the one and the zero, this is well known and this is demonstrated even when one is wrong; this is demonstrated in the theory of Cantor, this is demonstrated in a fashion that I find absolutely marvelous.

There are at least some of you here who know what I am talking about, so I am going to indicate it briefly. It is altogether demonstrable that what is between the one and the zero--this is demonstrated thanks to decimals--one makes use of decimals in the system of the same name, decimal, and it is very easy to show that if you suppose--it has to be supposed--suppose that this is numerable, the method called diagonal can always allow you to create a new decimal sequence that is certainly not inscribed in what has been numbered. It is strictly impossible to construct this innumerable, to even give a fashion, as slim as it might be, of ranging it, which is indeed the least of things, because the numerable is defined as corresponding to the sequence of whole numbers.

Thus, it is purely and simply from something supposed--and concerning this one will quite willingly accuse Cantor, as is done in that book, *Cantor is Wrong*, of having quite simply created a vicious circle. A vicious circle, my good friends, but why not? The more a circle is

vicious, the more it is funny, above all if one can make something emerge from it, something like this little bird called the innumerable, which is one of the most eminent, most clever, most adhering-to-the-real-of-the-number things ever invented.

Well, let's let it go. The eleven thousand virgins, as is said in *The Golden Legend*, is the way to express the innumerable. Because eleven thousand, you understand, is an enormous figure. It is above all an enormous figure for virgins, and not only in this day and age.

Thus, we, we have pointed out these facts. Let's try now to understand what comes from them, of this *not-all*, which is truly the vital point, the point of origin of what I have written on the blackboard. For nowhere, up to now, in logic, has there been put, promoted, put forward the function of the *not-all* as such. The mode of thought, insofar as it is, if I can say, subverted by the lack of the sexual rapport, thinks and only thinks by means of the one. The universal is something that results from the envelopment of certain field by something that is of the order of the one, with this exception, which is the true signification of the notion of the set--it is quite precisely this: it is that the set is the mathematical notation of something where--alas! I am not here for nothing--which is a certain definition that I note with the S barred (\bar{S}), the subject, that is, the subject insofar as it is nothing other than the effect of the signifier, in other words, what I represent as a signifier for another signifier.

The set is the fashion in which, at a historical turning point, the people least made for bringing to light what there is of the subject, have found themselves, if I can say this, necessitated. The set is nothing other than the subject. This is indeed why it would not even know how to manage itself without the addition of the empty set (\emptyset).

Up to a certain point, I will say that the empty set is demarcated in its necessity from its being taken for an element of the set: that is, the inscription of the parentheses that designate the set with, as an element, the empty set $\{\emptyset\}$, is something without which any management of this function is unthinkable, of this function that--I repeat, I think I have sufficiently indicated it to you--was made very precisely at a certain turning point to interrogate at the level of common language--I stress common, because it is not at all here any metalanguage of whatever sort that reigns--to interrogate from the logical point of view, to interrogate with language all that there is of the incidence, in language itself, of the number, which is to say, something that has nothing to do with language--something more real than anything else, as the discourse of science has sufficiently manifested.

Not all--it lacked the bar--is quite precisely what results from this: not that nothing limits it, but that the limit is situated otherwise. What makes the *not-all*--if I can say so and I will say so to go more quickly--is this: that contrary to the inclusion in (???) of x "there exists the father who is situated by the *saying-no* in relation to the phallic function," inversely, it is inasmuch as there is the void, the lack, the absence of whatever it might be that denies the phallic function at the level of the woman, that, inversely, there is nothing other than this something that the *not-all* formulates of the position of the woman in regard to the phallic function. It is in fact, for her, not all. Which does not mean, under whatever incidence this might be, that she denies it. I will not say that she is other, because quite precisely the mode in which she does not exist in this function, of denying it, which is quite precisely this mode, is that she is what in my graph is inscribed by the signifier of this: that the Other is barred, $S(\bar{A})$.

The woman is not the place of the Other and, still more, she is inscribed quite precisely as not being the big Other in the function I give to the big A , that is, as being the place of the truth. And what is inscribed in the non-existence of what could deny the phallic function, just as I have here translated by the function of the empty set the existence of the *dire-que-non*, so it is from

absenting herself and even from being this *jouiscentre*, this *jouiscentre* that is yoked to what I will not call an absence, but a *dé-sence*--S,E,N,C,E--that the woman is posed for this signifying fact, not only that the big Other is not there--this is not her--but that it is altogether elsewhere, at the place where it situates speech.

It remains for me --since, after all, you have had the patience to continue to hear me until an hour that is already eleven--to point out what is of capital importance in what I am forcing on you here at the end of the year, a certain number of themes that are crystallizing, is to denote the gap that separates each of these terms inasmuch as they are stated.

It is clear that between the, $\exists x$, *there exists*, and the *there does not exist*--one does not have to speak gibberish--is existence.

$\exists x.\overline{\Phi x}$ existence $\overline{\exists x.\overline{\Phi x}}$

It is clear that between the *there exists one that is not* and the *there does not exist one that is not*, is contradiction:

$\exists x.\overline{\Phi x}$
contradiction
 $\forall x.\overline{\Phi x}$

When Aristotle emphasizes some particular propositions so as to oppose them to universals, it is between a positive particular in relation to a negative universal that he institutes contradiction. Here, it is the opposite: it is the particular that is negative and the universal that is positive.

Here, what we have between this there exists no x ($\overline{\exists x}$) . . . no Φ of x , which is the negation of any universality, what we have--I am doing no more than indicating it here; I will justify it in what follows--is the undecidable:

$\overline{\exists x.\overline{\Phi x}}$
undecidable
 $\overline{\forall x.\overline{\Phi x}}$

Between the two, \forall of x , of which all our experience shows, enough I think, that the situation is not simple, it is a question of what? We will call it lack, we will call it the flaw, we will call it, if you like, desire, and, to be more rigorous, we will call it the object *a*.

lack
flaw
 $\forall x.\overline{\Phi x}$ $\overline{\forall x.\overline{\Phi x}}$
desire
object *a*

Then, it is a question of knowing how, in the middle of all this--I hope that certain of you will have at the very least noted this--how in the middle of all this something functions that might resemble a circulation.

For this, one has to interrogate oneself on the mode in which are posed these four terms:

$\exists x.\overline{\Phi x}$ existence $\overline{\exists x.\overline{\Phi x}}$

contradiction undecidable

$\forall x. \Phi x$	lack flaw	$\overline{\forall x. \Phi x}$
	desire object <i>a</i>	

The $\exists x$, above to the left, is literally the necessary. Nothing is thinkable, above all by our function of thinking of us others, us men. Finally, a woman, she (*ça*) thinks, she even thinks from time to time "therefore I am," in which, of course, she is mistaken. But, finally, for what there is of the necessary, it is absolutely necessary--and this is what Freud gives us in this asleep-on-one's-feet story (*cette histoire à dormir debout*) of Totem and . . . On one's feet--it is absolutely necessary for thinking anything whatsoever about the relations--which are called human, one doesn't know why--in the experience installed in analytic discourse, it is absolutely necessary to pose that there exists one for whom castration, watching out for (*à la gare*) (???) Castration means what? It means that everything *makes one desire* (*tout laisse à désirer*), it means nothing else. Well, there it is! To think this, which is to say, beginning from the woman, there has to be one for whom nothing makes him desire. This is the story of the myth of Oedipus, but it is absolutely necessary, it is absolutely necessary. If you lose this, I absolutely do not see what might permit you to find yourself again here in any fashion. It is very important to find yourself again.

Well then, there it is, it is $\exists x$. I have already told you it is necessary. Beginning with what? Beginning precisely with what, my faith, I have just written for you there as undecidable, in that one could say absolutely nothing resembling anything whatsoever that might have a function of truth if one did not admit this necessary: there is at least one who says "no." I insist a little. I insist because I have not been able this evening--we have been disturbed--to say to you all the kind words I would have liked to say to you regarding this. But I had a good one, and since they are bothering me, I am going to bring it out for you all the same. It is the function of the impressing (*l'é-pater*⁴).

One is interrogated a lot on the function of the *pater familias*. It would be better to center what we might require of the function of the father. This story of paternal inadequacy (*carence*), what is one gargling about there? There is a crisis--it's a fact, this is not altogether false: the *é-pater* no longer impresses us. This is the only truly decisive function of the father.

I have already marked that this was not the Oedipus, that this was screwed up, that if the father was a legislator, this gives you President Schreber as a child. Nothing more. On no matter what plane, the father is the one who must impress the family. If the father no longer impresses the family naturally (???) but one will find better! It is not required that this be the carnal father, there is always one who will impress the family, which everyone knows is a pack of slaves. There will be others who will impress it. You see that the French language serves for a lot of things. I already explained this to you last time. I began with the thing, to melt (*fondre*⁵) or to found (*fonder*) from them (*d'eux*) a one. In the subjunctive they are the same thing: to found one must melt. There are some things that can only be expressed in the French language; this is why

⁴ *Épater* (hyphenated here to emphasize the "pater" component) is actually a little stronger than "to impress": it can also be translated as "to amaze" or "to shock" [trans.].

⁵ *Fondre* can also be translated as "to smelt," "to merge," "to blend" or "to dissolve." In any case, it has a different set of connotations than the English word "founder." Thus, consistent with the point Lacan is making here, this pun is not translatable into English [trans.].

there is the unconscious. Because equivokes are what found in the two senses of the word, and that's all there is to it.

If you interrogate yourself on the all in seeking out how it is expressed in each language, you will find a lot of things, some absolutely sensational things. Personally, I have looked into Chinese a lot because I cannot make a catalog of the languages of the entire world. I have also interrogated someone . . . thanks to the charming treasurer of our School, who made her father write how they say *all* in Yoruba. But it's crazy, you understand! I do this for the love of art, but I know well that in whatever fashion, I will find that in all languages there is a way to say *all*.

What interests me is the signifier, as One. It is what one makes use of in every language and the only interesting thing about the signifier are the equivokes that can emerge from it, things on the order of *fondre d'eux un Un*,⁶ and other stupidities of this kind. This is the only interesting thing, because for us, we will always find what there is of the all expressed: the *all* is necessarily (*forcément*) semantic.

The fact alone that I say I would like to interrogate all the languages resolves the question, since languages are precisely not all; this is their definition. On the other hand, if I interrogate you on the all, you understand. Yes, finally, the semantic returns to *translatability*. What other definition could I give for it? The semantic is that thanks to which a man and a woman only understand each other if they speak the same language. Finally, I am telling you all of this to give you some exercise and because I am here for that, and then also to open up your understanding a little bit on the usage I make of linguistics. Yes! I would like to finish now. For what there is of what necessitates existence, we depart precisely from this point that I just inscribed, of the gap of the undecidable, which is to say, between the not-all and the not-one. And after that, it goes here, to existence. Then it goes here. To what? to the fact that all men are potentially castrated (*sont en puissance de castration*). That goes to the possible. The universal is never anything other than that. When you say that "all men are mammals," this means that all possible men can be mammals. And after that, this goes where? It goes here, to the object *a*. It is with this that we are in relation (*rapport*). And after that, this goes where? It goes here where the woman is distinguished as not being *unifying*.

Voilà! To complete this it remains for us to go toward contradiction and to return from the *not-all*, which is in sum nothing other than the expression of contingency. You see here, as I have already signaled in its time, that the alternation between necessity, the contingent, the possible, and the impossible is not in Aristotle's order; for here it is a question of the impossible, which is to say, in the final analysis, of the real.

Well then, follow this little path, because we will make use of it in what follows. You will see something of it. *Voilà!* The four triangles in the corners would have to be indicated like this; the direction of the arrows is also indicated? Are you there? And, here, the (. . .)

⁶ Translatable as "to melt (or merge) them into a One" or as to "dissolve by them a one" (cf. above). *D'eux* can also be heard as a pun on *deux* (two) [trans.].

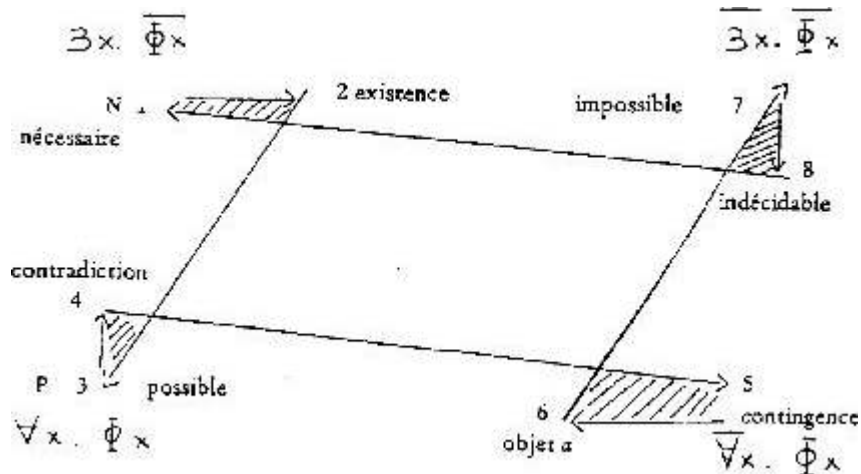


Figure 7.0.1: The Four Modes

Voilà ! I think I have done enough for this evening. I have no desire to end with a sensational peroration, but the question that, yes, it is written well enough. Necessary, impossible

...

X

- We can't hear!

LACAN

- Huh? Necessary, impossible, possible, and contingent.

X

- We can't hear anything!

LACAN

- I don't give a damn. *Voilà*! This is a path-clearing. You will hear what follows from it in about fifteen days. Since it is on the 14th that I will do my next seminar at the Pantheon. I'm not sure this won't be the last.