INTRODUCTION

The Z-shaped schema.
The object, lost and refound.
Pearls.
The object, anxiety, the hole.
The fetish and the phobic object.

This year we shall speak on a topic to which the historical evolution of psychoanalysis, or what is thus named, might give a central position in theory and in practice, whether in a way that is explicit or not.

This topic is the object relation.

Why did I not choose that when we began these seminars, since it was already current, primary, critical? Precisely for the reason which motivates the second part of my title -- and Freudian structures.

This topic could be treated, in effect, only after a certain distance had been taken on the question. We had first to consider the structures in which Freud has shown us that analysis takes place and operates, especially the complex structure of the relation between the two subjects present in analysis, the analysand, and the analyst. It is to this that our three years of commentary and criticism of Freud’s texts have been dedicated, as I shall recall for you briefly.

The first year dealt with the very elements of the technical management of the cure, that is, with the ideas of transference and resistance. The second year was concerned with the foundation of the Freudian experience and discovery, namely, the idea of the unconscious, which I believe I have sufficiently shown to be what obliged Freud to introduce the principles,
literally paradoxical on the dialectical plane, which figure in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Finally, during the course of the third year, I gave you a clear example of the absolute necessity of isolating that essential articulation of symbolism which is called the signifier, in order to understand anything at all, analytically speaking, of the strictly paranoiac field of the psychoses.

At the end of these three years of criticism, we are thus armed with a certain number of terms and schemas. The spatiality of the latter is not to be taken in the intuitive sense of the term schema, but in another perfectly legitimate, sense, which is topological -- it is not a matter of localizations, but of the relations between places, interposition, for example, or succession, sequence. Our elaboration culminates in a schema that we can call the schema, which is the following --

[Diagram, p. 12.]

This *schema initially provides a notation of the relation of the subject to the Other*. As it is constituted at the beginning of analysis, it is a relation of virtual speech by which the subject receives his own message from the Other, in the form of speech which is unconscious. This message is forbidden him, it is profoundly misconstrued [*méconnu*], it is deformed, arrested, intercepted, because of the interposition of the imaginary relation
between \( o \) and \( o' \), between the ego and the other, which is its typical object. The imaginary relation, which is essentially an alienated relation, interrupts, slows down, inhibits, usually inverts, and profoundly misconstrues the speech relation between the subject and the Other, the great Other, in so far as this is another subject, a subject par excellence capable of deceiving.

It is not vain to have introduced this schema into analytic experience, seeing how that is formulated today by an ever increasing number of analysts, who give prevalence in analytic theory to the object relation, without, however, sufficiently commenting on it. They recenter the dialectic of the pleasure principle and the reality principle upon it, and they found analytic progress upon a rectification of the subject's relation to the object, considered as a dual relation, which is, they then say, in speaking of the analytic situation, extremely simple. This relation of subject to object, which tends more and more to occupy the center of analytic theory, is precisely what we shall put to test.

Once the object relation considered as dual is taken to correspond precisely to line \( o-o' \) of our schema, can one thus construct a satisfactory whole from the phenomena offered to observation in analytic experience? Does this instrument all by itself allow us to reply to the facts? Can the more complex schema that we have suggested be put aside, indeed, must it be discarded?

That the object relation has become, at least in appearance, the principal theoretical element in analytical explanation, is something that I can demonstrate to you from a recently published collective work, to which, in
fact, the term collective applies particularly well.¹ I cannot say that I am inviting you to delve into it. You will see object relations overvalued and promoted from one end to the other in a way that is not always very satisfying in its articulation, but whose monotony and uniformity are surely striking. You will see the object relation promoted in an article entitled *Evolution de la psychanalyse*, and, as the final term in this evolution, you will see in the article, *La Clinique psychanalytique*, a presentation of clinical work which centers it entirely upon the object relation. Perhaps I might give you some idea of where such a presentation can lead.

Taken as a whole, the collection is quite striking. One sees analytic practitioners try to organize their thinking and the understanding they might have of their own experience around the object relation, without its seeming to give them full and complete satisfaction, but, on the other hand, not without its orienting their practice and penetrating it most profoundly. One cannot say that the fact that they conceive their experience in these terms is without consequence in their modes of intervention, in the orientation given to the analysis, and also its results. That is what one cannot possibly fail to recognize [*méconnaître*], in simply reading them. Analytic theory and practice, it has always been said, cannot be dissociated, and from the moment that one conceptualizes the experience in a particular way, it is inevitable that it will also be directed in that way. Certainly, the practical results can only be partially glimpsed.

To introduce the question of the object relation, and more precisely the question whether or not it is legitimate and sound to give it a central place in analytic theory, I shall remind you at least briefly of what this concept owes, or does not owe, to Freud himself. I shall do so because for us starting with a commentary on Freud is a sort of guide, and almost a technical limitation that we have imposed upon ourselves.

Moreover, this year I have sensed in you some questions, if not disquiet, as to whether I would or would not start off with Freudian texts. And no doubt it is very difficult, with regard to the object relation, to start

¹ For the identification of this volume, see *infra, Acknowledgments*. 4
from Freud's texts themselves, because the object relation is not in them. I am of course speaking of what is here very strictly taken to be a deviation in analytic theory. I must therefore start with recent texts and at the same time, with a critique of their positions. On the other hand, there is no doubt that we must ultimately refer to the Freudian position, and, at the same time, we cannot avoid dealing, even if very rapidly, with what revolves around the very notion of the object in the fundamental themes that are strictly Freudian.

We cannot do that at the beginning in a way that is fully spelled out. It is precisely at the end that we shall come back to it, and that we shall be able to articulate it.

I want, therefore, simply to make a brief reminder that this would not even be conceivable if there were not behind us three years of collaboration in textual analysis, and if we had not already encountered the theme of the object in its various forms.

Freud, of course, speaks of the object. The final part of Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality is called precisely "The Finding of an Object", "Die Objektfundung". One is implicitly speaking of the object each time that the notion of reality comes into play. One speaks of it in yet a third way
whenever the ambivalence of certain fundamental relations is brought into play -- namely, the fact that the subject makes himself an object for the other, the fact that there is a particular type of relation in which reciprocity with regard to an object is patent, and is even a constituent fact.

I would like to put the strongest emphasis on the three modes in which notions relative to the object before us appear. If you look at Chapter Three of the Three Essays, you will see something which was already there at the time that Freud wrote the *Entwurf*, a text which, I remind you, was only published by a sort of historical accident, for not only did Freud prefer not to publish it, but one might say that it was published against his will. Still, in looking at this first sketch of his psychology, we find the same formula with regard to the object. Freud insists that for man, every means of finding the object is, and is ever, only the pursuit of a drive [tendance] in which what is at stake is a lost object, an object to be refound.

It is not at all a matter of the object considered in modern theory as being the fully satisfying object, the typical object, the object par excellence, the harmonious object, the object that founds man in an adequate reality, in the reality which gives proof of maturity -- the famous genital object. It is striking to see that at the moment when he fabricates the theory of instinctual development as it was revealed in the earliest analytic experiences, Freud indicates that the object is grasped by means of a search for the lost object. The object that corresponds to an advanced state of instinctual maturation is an object found again, the refound object of early weaning, the object that first formed the point of attachment in the child’s earliest satisfactions.

It is clear that a discordance is established by the mere fact of this repetition. A nostalgia binds the subject to a lost object, and directs the entire effort of the search. It marks the newly found object with the sign of an impossible repetition, since this is precisely not the same object -- it could never be. The primacy of this dialectic puts a fundamental tension at the center of the subject-object relation, which means that what is sought is not sought in the same way as what will be found. It is through the search for a satisfaction past and outgrown that the new object is
sought, and it is found and embraced elsewhere than where it was sought. There is a fundamental distance introduced by the essentially conflictual element which all search for the object entails. This is the first form in which the relation to the object appears in Freud.

To give full weight to what I would underline here, we must resolve to articulate it in terms that are philosophically elaborated. If I intentionally do not do so here, it is because I reserve that for the moment when we shall return to this theme. But those for whom these terms already have some meaning because of their knowledge of philosophy can already perceive all the distance that separates the Freudian relation of the subject to the object from earlier conceptions, founded on the notion of an adequate object, an object anticipated in advance, adapted to the subject’s maturation. The Platonic perspective founds all apprehension of the object upon recognition, reminiscence of a type that is in some way preformed. This is separated, by all the distance that there is between modern experience and ancient experience, from the notion offered by Kierkegaard under the term repetition, repetition that is ever sought but never satisfied. By its nature, repetition is opposed to reminiscence. It is always as such impossible to satisfy. It is in this register that the Freudian notion of the refinding of the lost object is situated.

We shall retain this text, which clearly shows that Freud from the beginning situated the notion of the object within the framework of a profoundly conflictual relation between the subject and his world. How could it be otherwise since already, at that epoch, there is essentially question of the opposition between the reality principle and the pleasure principle?

The pleasure principle and the reality principle cannot be separated from each other. I would further say that they are implied and included in each other in a relation which is dialectical.

The reality principle is constituted only by what is necessary for the satisfaction of the pleasure principle. It is no more than its extension, and inversely, both in its dynamic and in its fundamental search, it implies the fundamental tension of the pleasure principle. Nonetheless -- and this is
the essential element in what Freudian theory contributes -- between the two there remains a gap, which we would not be able to distinguish if one were simply the continuation of the other. The pleasure principle in effect tends to be realized in profoundly unrealistic forms, while the reality principle implies the existence of an organization or a structure that is different and autonomous, from which it follows that what it grasps can be fundamentally different from what is desired. This relation itself introduces into the dialectic of the subject and the object another term, which is here posed as irreducible.

Just as the subject, we saw, is always vowed in his primordial demands to a return, a return which is impossible because it is a return, so reality is in fundamental opposition to what is sought by the drive, as the relation between the reality principle and the pleasure principle shows. In other terms, the satisfaction of the pleasure principle, always latent, underlying any exercise of creativity in the world, always tends more or less to be realized in a form that is somewhat hallucinatory. The underlying organization of the ego, that of the drive of the subject as such, always has the fundamental possibility of satisfaction by means that are unreal, hallucinatory. This is the other position that Freud strongly accentuates, as early as *The Interpretation of Dreams*, that is, beginning with his first fully developed formulation of the opposition between the reality principle and the pleasure principle.

These two positions are not, as such, articulated with each other. The fact that they appear in Freud as distinct indicates very well that it is not around the subject's relation to the object that development is centered. If each of the two terms finds its place at different points in the Freudian dialectic, it is for the simple reason that in no case is the subject-object relation central.

If this relation appears to be sustained in a way that is direct and without gap, this is only when what are at stake are relations that have since been called pregenital -- to see-to be seen, to attack-to be attacked, passive-active. The subject lives these relations in a way that always implies, more or less tacitly, more or less openly, his identification with
the partner. These relations are lived in a reciprocity -- the term is valuable here -- of ambivalence between the subject's position and that of the partner.

At this level, in effect, a relation is introduced between the subject and the object which is not only direct and without gap, but which is literally an equivalence between one and the other. It is this relation that has become the pretext for putting the object relation as such into the foreground. This relation of reciprocity between subject and object, which might well be called a mirror relation, in itself already poses so many questions that I have introduced the concept of the mirror stage into analytic theory in an effort to resolve them.

What is the mirror stage? It is the moment when the child recognizes his own image. But the mirror stage does far more than simply denote a phenomenon that occurs in the development of the child. It illustrates the conflictual character of the dual relation. All that the infant learns in the captivation by his own image is precisely the distance that exists between his internal tensions, the very tensions raised by this relation, and his identification with his image. That, however, is what has served as a theme, a pivot, for putting the subject-object relation into the foreground, and making it the phenomenal scale to which one might usefully refer what up until then had been presented in terms that were not only pluralistic but truly conflictual, introducing an essentially dialectical relation between the different terms.

One of the first to have sounded this new accent, though not so early as one believes, was Karl Abraham.

Up until then, the evolution of the subject had always been seen through a reconstruction, retroactively, with respect to a central experience, that of the conflictual tension between conscious and unconscious -- conflictual tension created by the fundamental fact that what is sought by the drive is obscure, so much so that what consciousness can recognize of it is first and before all a misrecognition [mêconnaissance]. It is not on the path of consciousness that the subject finds himself, there is something else and a beyond. As this beyond is fundamentally
misconstrued \([\text{méconnu}]\) by the subject, beyond the reach of his
knowledge, a question immediately arises as to its structure, its origin and
its meaning.

But this perspective was abandoned, on the initiative of a certain
number of noteworthies, followed by significant currents within
psychoanalysis. Everything was recentered with respect to the function of
an object, and more precisely, its final state. Whereas we go backwards in
order to understand how the terminal point is attained -- which is
moreover never observed because the ideal object is literally unthinkable --
in the new perspective, this ideal object is on the contrary conceived as a
aim, an end point, towards which a whole series of experiences, elements,
partial notions of the object contribute. This perspective has progressively
gained ground from the moment that Abraham formulated it in 1924 in
his theory of the development of the libido. His conception founds for
many the very law of analysis, frames everything that occurs there, forms
the system of coordinates within which the whole analytic experience is
situated, and determines its point of achievement, that famous ideal object
-- final, perfect, adequate -- which is presented as in itself marking a goal
attained, namely, the normalization of the subject.

2

On the avowal of those who are engaged on this path, the very progress
of analytic experience is to have put the subject's relations to his
environment into the foreground.

The accent on the environment constitutes a reduction of everything
that the analytic experience offers. It is a return to a completely
objectifying position which puts the existence of a particular individual
into the foreground, together with his more or less adequate, more or less
adapted relation to his environment. To illustrate that, I think that I can
do no better than to refer you to the formulations to be found on pages 761
to 773 of the collective work that we are discussing.
After it has been underlined that the progress of an analysis is a matter of the relations of the subject to his environment, we incidentally learn that this is particularly revealing in the case of little Hans, where the parents appear, we are told, to be without a personality of their own. We are not obliged to subscribe to this opinion. The important thing is what follows -- This was before the war of 1914, at a time when western society, sure of itself, asked no questions as to its own perenniality. Since 1926, however, the accent has been on anxiety, and the interaction of the organism and the environment. There is also the fact that the foundations of society have been shaken, anxiety before a changing world is a daily experience, individuals see themselves as different. It is an epoch in which physics questions itself, and relativism, incertitude, and probability seem to strip objective thought of its confidence in itself.

This reference to modern physics as the basis of a new rationalism should, it seems to me, go without comment. What is important is what is curiously admitted in an indirect fashion, which is that psychoanalysis is a sort of social remedy. That is what is put into the foreground, and presented as the characteristic motor element of its progress. It matters little whether that has a basis or not, since these things frankly seem to us of scant weight -- what is instructive is the very great lightness with which they are accepted.

This example is not unique, for the specific nature of this work is the collectivity operating within it, so much does it seem made by a curious homogenization, rather than by an articulation properly speaking.

The first article, to which I referred just before, states expressly that when all has been said, the general concept needed in our current understanding of the structure of the personality is to be obtained through the perspective which they say is the most practical and the most prosaic there could be, that of the social relations of the patient -- this last expression is underlined by the author.

I shall pass on other terms which have the character of a confession -- we understand that one might be troubled by all that is so unstable,

2 Sigmund Freud, Analysis of a Phobia in a Five Year Old Boy.
ungraspable, and artificial in such a conception of analysis, but this is not
due to the object itself of that discipline, which is an activity whose
variations over time no one would dream of contesting. That in effect, is
an explanation ever so lightly dusted with the different modes of approach
which derive from that line. That is not to say that it must satisfy us
completely, for I do not see that the objects of other disciplines are not
equally subject to variations over time.

Concerning the subject's relation to the world, we see the affirmation of
a parallelism at all times between the more or less advanced state of the
maturation of instinctual activities, and the structure of the Ego in a given
subject. In other words, after a certain point, the structure of the ego is
considered as the stand-in, and ultimately as the representation of the state
of maturation of instinctual activities at their different stages.

These are terms which, to some of you may not seem in themselves to
require much criticism. It matters little, for the question does not lie there,
and we shall see to what extent these terms can be retained. But their
consequence is the installation at the center of analysis of what appears
precisely like a typology in which there are pregental and genital types.

We find this, for example -- *The pregential type are individuals having
a weak Ego* -- and in them the coherence of the Ego depends strictly upon
the continuation of object relations with a significant object. Here we can
begin to ask some questions. We shall perhaps see shortly, in passing, in
the same text, where the notion of this unexplained significant object can
lead. The technical notion that it implies is the importance of pregential
relations within the analytic relation. The loss of these relations, or of
their object, which is synonymous here, since in this instance the object
exists only as a function of its relations with the subject, causes serious
disorders in the activity of the Ego, such as depersonalization phenomena,
and psychotic troubles. We find here a point where a test is sought which
would give proof of the profound fragility of the ego relations maintained
by the pregential type towards his object. *The subject tries to maintain his
object relations at all cost, using all sorts of arrangements to that end,
including a change of object through displacement, or symbolization, in
which the choice of a symbolic object arbitrarily charged with the same affective value as the initial object allows the subject not to find himself deprived of object relations. For him the term “auxiliary Ego” is fully justified.

The genital type, on the contrary, possess an Ego which does not see its strength and the exercise of its functions as depending upon the possession of a significant object. Whereas for the former, the loss of a person who is subjectively felt to be important -- to take the simplest example -- calls their individuality into question, for the latter such a loss, painful though it may be, in no way disturbs the soundness of the personality. They are not dependent upon a relation to an object. That does not mean that they can easily do without any relation to an object, which in any case is unfeasible practically, since object relations are so multiple and varied. It simply means that their unity is not at the mercy of the loss of contact with a significant object. When the rapport between the Ego and its object relation is taken into consideration, that is what differentiates them radically from the former.

Further on -- in all neurosis, normal development seems to have been stopped by the impossibility for the subject of resolving the last of the structuring conflicts of childhood, whose perfect liquidation, if one may express it that way, would end in that fortunate adaptation to the world which is called the genital object relation, which gives every observer the impression of a harmonious personality, and in analysis gives he immediate perception of a sort of crystalline limpidity of spirit, which is, I repeat, more a frontier than a reality [...].

Crystalline limpidity. We see just how far the notion of the perfection of the object relation can lead this author.

Whereas the drives in their pregenital form present the character of an untamable need for possession that is unlimited and unconditional, and include a destructive aspect, in their genital form they are truly tender and loving, and if the subject is not quite obliette, that is to say, disinterested, and if his objects are still fundamentally as narcissistic as in the preceding case, he is here is capable of understanding, of adaptation to the situation
of the other. Moreover, the intimate structure of his object relations shows that the participation of the object in pleasure of his own is indispensable to the subject's happiness. The preferences, the desires, the needs of the object are taken into the highest consideration.

That is sufficient to raise a very serious problem which we cannot if fact avoid asking -- what is meant by an issue from childhood, and an adolescence, and a maturity that are normal?

There is an essential distinction to be made, which both the notion of objectivity and the most elementary experience indicate. We can in no way confound the establishment of reality, -- with all the problems of adaptation which it implies by the fact that it resists, refuses, is complex with the notion more or less implicitly designated in these texts under the terms "objectivity" and "plenitude of the object". This confusion is articulated in such a way that objectivity is presented in one text as characteristic of the relation to the other in its highest form. On the contrary, there is surely a distance between what on one hand is implied by a certain construction of the world considered as more or less satisfying at a given epoch, and on the other hand, the establishment of the relation to the other on the affective, indeed feeling plane, including consideration of the needs, the happiness, the pleasure of the other. The constitution of the other as such, that is to say in so far as he speaks, in so far as he is a subject, will certainly take us much further.

We shall have occasion to come back to these texts, which are the work of those who truly know how to shit pearls. But it is not enough to cite them, or to formulate the humorous remarks which they sufficiently suggest by themselves. One must still make the progress that is required.

This extraordinarily simple conception of the analytic notion of instinctual evolution is far from being universally accepted.

Texts like those of (Glover, for example, would bring you back to a very different idea and exploration of object relations, which are named and
defined as such. You will see, when you look at these texts, that the
function of the object whose stages characterize the different periods of
individual development, is conceived in a completely different manner.

Analysis requires that one introduce a functional notion of the object
that is of a very different nature from that of a pure and simple
correspondent to the subject. It is not a matter of a pure and simple aptness
of the object with regard to a particular demand of the subject’s. The object
has a completely different role here. It is, one might say, placed against the
background of anxiety. The object is an instrument for masking and
guarding against the fundamental ground of anxiety which characterizes,
at different stages of his development, the subject’s relation to his world.
That is how at each stage the subject must be characterized.

I cannot, at the close of our meeting today, end without putting what I
am saying into relief by illustrating it with an example. It will suffice for
me to emphasize the classical fundamental Freudian conception of phobia.

Freud and all those who have studied phobia with him and after him
could not help noting that there is no direct relation between the object
and the alleged fear which colors it with its fundamental mark in
constituting it as such, as a primitive object. On the contrary, there is a
considerable distance between the fear in question, which can very well in
certain cases be a primitive fear and not be one in other cases, and the
object which is very essentially constituted in order to keep this fear at a
distance. The object encloses the subject within a certain circle, a rampart,
within which he is sheltered from his fears. The object is essentially linked
to the issue of a signal of alarm. It is above all an outpost against an
established fear. The fear gives the object its role at a determined moment
in a particular crisis of the subject, which is not, however, typical, or
evolutive.

Is this modern notion of phobia, if one may put it so, legitimately
affirmed? We shall criticize it as well, by showing that it is at the origin of
the idea of the object as it is promoted in the works of a [Glover] and in the
way of conducting analysis that is characteristic of his thinking and his

technique.
That it is a question of an anxiety which is castration anxiety, we are
told, has been little contested until recently. It is nevertheless remarkable
that the desire of reconstruction in the genetic sense should have come to
the point of trying to deduce from the flourishing of primitive phobic
objectal constructions the very construction of the paternal object, which is
taken to be its consequence and outcome. A report by Mallet on phobia, in
the collective work that I have cited, goes exactly in this direction, by a
curious reversal of the path which had allowed us to go from phobia back
to the idea of a certain relation with anxiety, and to establish the function
of protection played by the object of phobia with regard to this anxiety.

In another register, it is no less remarkable to see what the concepts of
the fetish and of fetishism become. I introduce this topic today in order to
show you that if we take things from the perspective of the object relation,
the fetish is found in analytic theory to fill a function of protection against
anxiety, and curiously, it is the same anxiety, castration anxiety. It does not
seem that the fetish should be expressly linked to castration anxiety by the
same slope, much as the latter is linked to the perception of the absence of
the phallic organ in the feminine subject, and to the denial of this absence.
It matters little. You cannot help but see that here too the object has a
certain complementary function with regard to something which appears
as a hole, indeed as an abyss in reality.

The question is to know whether there is something in common
between the phobic object and the fetish.

But putting the questions in these terms, and without ourselves
refusing to tackle the problems stemming from the object relation, perhaps
one must find the occasion and starting point for a critique in the
phenomena themselves. Let us agree to accept the question that is put to
us concerning the typical object, the ideal object, the functional object, and
all the forms of the object that you can think of for man, and let us thus in
effect approach the question in that light -- but then, let us not content
ourselves with uniform explanations for different phenomena. Let us
center our opening question, for example, on what constitutes the
difference between the function of a phobia and that of a fetish, in so far as
they are one and the other centered upon the same ground of a fundamental anxiety, against which one and the other may be invoked as a measure of protection or as a guarantee for the subject.

That is exactly where I have resolved to take my starting point. We shall set off from our experience in order to end at the same problems, thus proceeding in a way that is no longer mythic, or abstract, but direct, since we start with the objects that are offered us.

It is not enough to speak of the object in general, or of an object which would have, by I do not know what virtue of magical communication, the property of regularizing relations with all other objects, as if the fact of having succeeded in becoming a genital type were enough to resolve every question. What an object for a genital type might be from an essentially biological point of view, which is put into the foreground here, does not seem to me necessarily less enigmatic than one of the objects of daily human experience, a piece of money, for example.

Can one deny that the latter also raises in itself the question of its objectival value? The fact that, in a certain register, we lose it in so far as it is a means of exchange, or lose any other species taken into consideration for the exchange of any element whatever in human life transposed into its market value -- does that not in a thousand ways introduce a question that has been effectively resolved in Marxist theory by a term that, if not synonymous, is at least very close to that which we have just mentioned, namely, the fetish? In short, the notion of a fetish-object, that of the screen-object, and also the very singular function of that constitution of reality on which Freud from the beginning shed truly striking light, and about which we might wonder why it is no longer given its due value -- the notion of the screen memory as being especially constituent of each subject's past -- these are so many questions which deserve to be treated by themselves and for themselves.

They must also be analyzed in their reciprocal relations, for it is from these relations that the needed distinctions of field might arise which would allow us to define in detail why a phobia and a fetish are two different things.
What relation is there between the general usage of the word fetish and the precise employ of the term to designate a sexual perversion? That is how we shall introduce the topic of our next meeting, which will deal with phobia and the fetish.

It is by way of a return to experience that we shall be able to re-situate the term "object relation" and restore its true value.

21 November 1956

II

THE THREE FORMS OF LACK OF THE OBJECT

What is an obsessional?

The imaginary triad.

Phallicism and the imaginary.

Reality and Wirklichkeit.

Mr. Winnicott's transitional object.

This week, I have done some reading on your behalf. I have read what psychoanalysts have written on the subject that will be our own this year, that is, the object, and more particularly, the genital object.

The genital object, to call it by its name, is woman. Then, why not call it by its name?
So it was by a certain number of readings on female sexuality that I was gratified. It would seem more important that it be you who should do this reading than I. That would make it easier for you to understand what I shall be led to say on the subject. And then, these readings are very instructive from still other points of view, principally this one. Human stupidity gives an idea of the infinite, -- said Renan. Well, if he had lived in our time, he would have added -- and the theoretical digressions of psychoanalysts.

Do not suppose that I am assimilating them to stupidity. No, but they are of an order capable of giving an idea of the infinite. It is in fact striking to see to what extraordinary difficulties the minds of different analysts have been submitted in the aftermath of Freud's so abrupt and astonishing statements.

What did Freud, always all alone, bring to this subject? -- what I shall say today will probably not go beyond that. It is this. The idea of a harmonious object, by its nature completing the subject-object relation, is perfectly contradicted by the experience -- I do not even say by the analytic experience, but just by the common experience of the relations between man and woman. If harmony in this matter were not something problematic, there would be no analysis at all. Nothing is more precise than Freud's formulations on this point -- there is, in this register, a gap, something that does not work, which does not mean that this suffices to define it. The positive statement that it does not work is in Freud, you will find it in Civilization and its Discontents, as well as in New Lectures on Psychoanalysis, lesson 31.

That brings us back to our questions about the object.

1

I remind you that the common forgetting of the notion of the object is not at all so accentuated in outline if one follows the way that Freudian experience and doctrine situate and define this object.
The object appears at first in a quest for the lost object. The object is always an object found again, the object itself caught in a quest, which is opposed in the most categorical way to the idea of an autonomous subject, in which the idea of a complementary object ends.

In the same way, I already underlined the last time the idea of the object hallucinated against the background of an anxiety-provoking reality. This is the object as it arises from the exercise of what Freud calls the primary system of pleasure. Completely opposed to that in analytic practice, there is the idea of the object reduced in the final account to the real. It is a question of rediscovering the real. This object appears, no longer against a background of anxiety, but against the background of common reality, if one may say so, and the term of the analytic quest is to perceive that there is no reason to be afraid of it. Fear is a term which must be distinguished from that of anxiety.

Finally, the third theme in which the object appears if we follow it in Freud, is that of an imaginary reciprocity, namely, that in every relation of the subject with the object, the place of the related term is simultaneously occupied by the subject. Thus identification with the object is the basis of every relation to it.

It is evidently to this last point that the practice of object relations in modern analytic experience is most attached, with as a result what I shall call an imperialism of identification. Since you can identify with me, since I can identify with you, it is surely of us two the one whose ego is best adapted to reality who is the better model. In the final count, on an ideal plane, the progress of an analysis comes down to identification with the ego of the analyst. Such a partiality in the management of the object relation can condition an extreme deviation. That has been most especially illustrated in practice with obsessional neurosis.

Obsessional neurosis is, as most of those who are here believe, a structuring notion which can be expressed somewhat like this. What is an obsessional? In sum, he is an actor who plays his role and guaranties a certain number of acts as if he were dead. The play to which he delivers himself is a way of sheltering himself from death. It is a living game.
which consists in showing that he is invulnerable. To this end, he exercises a domination which conditions all of his approaches to others.

One sees him in a sort of exhibition in which he tries to show just how far he can go in the exercise, which has all the characteristics of a game, including its illusory characteristics -- that is to say just how far the other can go, the small other, who is only his alter ego, the double of himself. The game unfolds before an Other who watches the play. He himself is only there as a spectator, the very possibility of the game and the pleasure that he takes residing in that. On the other hand he does not know what place he occupies, and that is what is unconscious in him. What he does, he does as an alibi. One must catch a glimpse of that. He understands that the game is not being played at the place where he is, and that is why almost nothing that happens has a veritable importance for him, but that does not mean that he knows the place from which he sees it all.

Who is it who leads the game, in the end? We know that it is he himself, but we can make a thousand errors if we do not know where this game is played. Hence the notion of the object, the significant object for this subject.

It would be wrong to believe that this object could be sketched in terms of the dual relation, with the aid of the notion of the object relation as it is elaborated by the author in question. You will see where that leads. It is clear that, in this very complex situation, the notion of the object is not immediately given, since it participates in an illusory game, a game of aggressive retort, a game of trickery, which consists in going as close as possible to death while being out of range of all the blows, because the subject has, in some way, killed his desire in advance. He has, one might say, mortified it.

The notion of the object here is infinitely complex, and deserves to be accentuated at every moment if we want at least to know of what object we are speaking. We shall try to give this notion of the object a uniform usage, which will allow us to find our bearings in our vocabulary.

It is a notion which I shall not say is fleeting, but which appears as extremely difficult to close in upon. To reinforce our comparison, let us
say that it is a matter of demonstrating what the subject has articulated for this other spectator that he is without knowing it, and at whose place he puts us to the extent that the transference advances.

I ask you to take the case of the obsessional in the author to whom I am referring, and to read what, according to him, represents the progress of the analysis. You will see that the management of the object relation consists in this case in doing something which would be the analog of what would happen if you were watching a circus act, in which Auguste and Chocolat are administering each other, in alternation, a series of slaps. You have left the arena for fear of receiving these blows, whereas, on the contrary, the subject gives them because of his aggressivity. At that, Monsieur Loyal arrives and says — *Let’s see, all of this is unreasonable, each of you eat your baton, and that way you will have it in the right place, you will have interiorized it.* That is, in effect, one way of resolving the situation and giving it an outcome.

One can accompany it with a little song that is truly imperishable, by a certain N* who was a sort of genius. Those who did not know him at the time when he played in a Paris cabaret can have no idea of the unholy character that he could give to the exhibition of a clown with a simple hat. As black as it seemed, this sort of office, of mass, of ritual, at which one could assist, then, — if one has not seen it, perhaps one cannot understand what the object strictly speaking means. What appeared in outline, or in the background, is the profoundly oral character of the imaginary object relation. In taking the dual relation as real, practice cannot escape the laws of the imaginary, and the outcome of this relation to the object is the fantasy of phallic incorporation.

Why? Not only does experience not follow the ideal notion that we might have of its accomplishment, but this notion only puts its paradoxes that much more into relief, in such a way that the whole accomplishment of the dual relation, to the extent that one approaches it, makes that privileged imaginary object which is called the phallus surge up into the foreground. That is the step that I am trying to have you take today.
The notion of the object relation is impossible to understand, and even
to exercise, if one does not introduce the phallus as an element. I do not
say as a mediating element, because that would be to take a step that we
have not yet taken together, but as a third. That is what is put into the
foreground by the schema which I gave you at the end of last year, in
concluding the analysis of the signifier to which the exploration of
psychosis led us, but also as an introduction to what I intended to propose
to you this year concerning the object relation. It is our inaugural schema.

[Diagram, p. 29]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Phallus} \\
\text{Mother} \\
\text{Child}
\end{array}
\]

THE IMAGINARY TRIAD

The imaginary relation, whatever it may be, is modeled upon a certain
relation that is effectively fundamental -- the mother-child relation, with
all that it has of the problematic. This relation surely is well designed to
give the idea that it is a matter of a real relation, and this is, in effect, the
point towards which the whole theory of the analytic situation is currently
directed. One tries to reduce it in the end to being only the development of
the mother-child relation, and one discovers in everything that follows
this genesis, traces and reflections of the initial position.

But, it is impossible, even for those authors who make it the
foundation of the whole analytic genesis, to bring in this imaginary
element without there appearing as a key point, at the center of the
concept of object relations, what we can call the phallicism of the analytic
experience. That is demonstrated as much by experience as by the
 evolution of analytic theory, and I shall try to make you see, in the course
of this lecture, the impasses that result from every attempt to reduce this imaginary phallicism to any real given whatsoever. In effect, when one seeks the origin of the whole analytic dialectic in the absence of the trinity of the terms symbolic, imaginary, real, one can in the end only refer to the real.

By way of giving you a last detail, and putting a final touch on my description of the manner in which the dual relation is handled in a certain orientation and theorization of analytic experience, I shall again refer to the first article in the collective work of which I have spoken.

When the analyst, entering into the imaginary game of the obsessional, insists on making him recognize his aggressivity, that is to say, in making him situate the analysis in the dual relation, in what I just called a reciprocal relation, the text gives as evidence of the subject's misconstruction [méconnaissance] of the situation the fact that he never wants to express his aggressivity, and expresses it only by showing a slight annoyance provoked by the technical rigidity. The author thus admits that he insists on perpetually leading the subject back to the theme of aggressivity, as if it were the central theme. The author adds, in a way that is significant, that in the end everyone knows that annoyance and irony belong to the class of aggressive manifestations. Is it evident that annoyance is characteristic of the aggressive relation? One knows very well that aggression can be provoked by every other sentiment, and that it is not at all to be excluded, for example, that the sentiment of love might be at the source of an aggressive reaction. As for saying that a reaction like that of irony is, by its nature, aggressive, that does not seem to me compatible with what the whole world knows, namely, that far from being an aggressive reaction, irony is above all a way of questioning, a form of question. If there is an aggressive element, it is structurally secondary with regard to the element of the question.

That shows you in what a reduction of the field such a conception of the object relation ends, and I resolve never to speak of it again starting from this moment.
We are thus led to the fundamental question with which we must begin because to it we must return, and it is the question with which we shall end. The whole ambiguity of the question concerning the object and its management in analysis comes down to this -- is the object real or not?

We reach this question both by way of the vocabulary elaborated for our use here -- symbolic, imaginary, and real -- and also by the most immediate intuition.

When someone speaks to you of the object relation in terms of access to the real, as the access that must be obtained at the end of analysis, what does that represent for you straight off? Is the object real or not? Is what is found in the real the object?

That is worth the trouble of asking. Without even going to the heart of the problematic of phallicism which I am introducing today, one can see, because it is a truly salient point of analytic experience, that the whole dialectic of individual development, as well as the whole dialectic of an analysis, turns around a major object, which is the phallus. We shall see in greater detail that one must not confound the phallus with the penis.

When, around the years 1920-1930, an immense debate which occupied the whole analytic community was ordained around the notion of phallicism and the question of the phallic phase, what was at stake was in fact a matter of distinguishing the penis as a real organ with functions definable by certain real coordinates, from the phallus in its imaginary function. Were it only for that, it would be worth the trouble of our asking ourselves what the notion of the object means.

One cannot say that the phallus is not a prevailing object in the psychoanalytic dialectic, an object of which the individual has an idea as such. Though it was never formulated that the isolation of this object was only conceivable on the imaginary plane, that remains nonetheless what you see coming up in every line of what Freud wrote at a certain date and in what one or another author replied -- Helene Deutsch, Melanie Klein,
Ernest Jones, in particular. The concept of phallicism in itself implies the distinction of the category of the imaginary.

But even before going into that, let us ask what is meant by the reciprocal position of the object and the real. There is more than one way of tackling the question, for, as soon as we tackle it, we see very well that the real has more than one meaning. Some of you, I think, will not hesitate to breathe a little sigh of relief -- Finally, he is going to talk about that famous real, which has until now remained in the shadows. In fact, we need not be astonished at that, for the real is at the boundary of our experience.

This position with regard to the real is very well explained by the screen of our experience, whose conditions are highly artificial, contrary to what we are told when the situation is presented as being absolutely simple. Still, we can only refer to the real in theorizing. But what do we mean when we invoke the real? It is scarcely probable that we should all have the same notion at the outset, but it is possible that we can all arrive at certain distinctions or dissociations essential to the management of the term real, or reality, if we look closely at how it is used.

When one speaks of the real, one may intend several things. It is a question first of the whole of what effectively happens. That is the concept implied by the German term Wirklichkeit, which has the advantage of distinguishing in reality a function which the French language does not easily allow us to isolate. It is what implies in and of itself every possibility of effect, of Wirkung. It is the whole of the mechanism.

I shall only make some reflections in passing here, to show how much psychoanalysts remain prisoners of categories that are really foreign to everything to which their practice should, it seems to me, have introduced them, I would say, with ease, as to the very notion of reality. If it is conceivable for a mind in the mechanico-dynamic tradition, which goes back to the 18th century, to the attempt by La Mettrie and by Holbach to develop the man-machine, that everything occurring in mental life must be referred to something which is proposed as material, how can this perspective have the least interest for an analyst?-- when the very
principle of the exercise of his function plays in a succession of effects for which it is accepted by hypothesis, if he is analyst, that they have their own order. If he follows Freud, if he understands what directs the whole spirit of the system, the perspective that he must take of it is an energetic perspective.

Matter, that primitive \textit{Stoff}, exercises such a fascination on the medical mind that one imagines one has said something when one says, in a way that is completely gratuitous, that we too, like other physicians, place an organic reality at the source of everything that works in analysis. Freud said that as well, only one must go to the place where he said it, and see what function it has. He gave this reality a completely different weight. The reference by analysts to an organic basis corresponds to nothing other than a sort of need for reassurance, which pushes them endlessly to take up this refrain in their texts the way one knocks on wood -- \textit{In the end, we are only dealing with superficial mechanisms}. Everything must be referred, in the end, to things we shall perhaps one day know, a principal matter that is at the origin of all that occurs. There is a sort of absurdity in that for an analyst, in as much as he accepts the order of efficacy in which he functions.

Let me make a simple comparison in order to demonstrate it. It is a little as if someone in charge of a hydro-electric factory in the middle of the current of a large river, the Rhine for example, spoke of what happened in this machine in terms of the moment when the land was still virgin and when the waters of the Rhine flowed in abundance. But, it is the machine that is at cause in the accumulation of any energy whatever, in this instance electric power, which can later be distributed and put at the service of consumers. What is accumulated in the machine has above all the strictest ratio with the machine. To say that the energy was already there in a virtual state in the current of the river does not advance us at all. It means, strictly speaking, nothing, because the energy, in this instance, only begins to interest us from the moment that it is accumulated, and it is only accumulated at the moment when machines come into action. No doubt they are animated by a propulsion which
comes from the current of the river, but to think that the current of the river is the primitive order of the energy, to confuse with a notion of *mana* something belonging to a very different order that we call energy, to want with all one's might to find in something which was there from all eternity the permanence of what is accumulated at the end as the element of *Wirkung*, of a possible *Wirklichkeit* -- that could only come to the mind of someone completely mad.

The need that we have to confound the *Stoff*, or the primitive matter, or the impulse, or the flux, or the drive, with what is really at play in the exercise of analytic reality, represents nothing other than a misconstruction of the symbolic *Wirklichkeit*. The conflict, the dialectic, the organization, the structuration of elements that are composed and built up, give what is at stake a completely different energetic weight. It is a misconstruction of the very reality in which we move, to preserve the need of speaking of an ultimate reality as if it were elsewhere than in this exercise itself. I can truly qualify such a reference in this instance as *superstitious*. It is a sort of sequel to the postulate known as organicist, which can have literally no meaning in the analytic perspective. I shall show you that there is no longer any meaning of this sort where Freud apparently made much of it.

There is another use made of the notion of reality in analysis, which is much more important, and which has nothing to do with the preceding notion. Reality is, in fact, also brought into play in the dual principle, the pleasure principle and the reality principle. This is a matter of something completely different, because the pleasure principle does not exercise itself in a way that is less real than the reality principle. I even think that analysis is made in order to demonstrate it. The use of the term reality here is completely other.

There is a contrast that is rather striking. This usage that was shown to be so fruitful at the beginning, which allowed the introduction of the terms primary system and secondary system into the order of the psychic mechanism, appears, as the progress of analysis advances, more problematic, but in a way that is very fugitive. To see the distance between
the first use made of the opposition between the two principles, and the point at which we have now arrived by a certain sliding, one must almost refer, which happens from time to time, to the child who says that the king is totally nude. Is this child blessed? Is he a genius? Is he a jolly fellow? Is he a savage? No one will ever know. He is surely someone who was rather a liberator.

Well, that happens from time to time. One sees analysts come back to a sort of primitive intuition, and realize that everything that they had said up until then explained nothing. That is what happened to Mr. Winnicott in a little article in which he speaks of what he calls the transitional object\(^1\) -- let us think of it as transition of object or transitional phenomenon.\(^2\)

Mr. Winnicott simply notes that we are always highly interested in the function of the mother, and that we consider it absolutely decisive in the child’s apprehension of reality. That is to say that for the dialectical and impersonal opposition of the two principles, the reality principle and the pleasure principle, we have substituted actors. No doubt these subjects are very ideal, no doubt this is rather a sort of figuration, or an imaginary puppet show, but that is what we have come to. We have identified the pleasure principle with a certain object relation, namely, the relation to the maternal breast, while we have identified the reality principle with the fact that the child must learn to do without it.

Mr. Winnicott very rightly notes under what conditions everything goes well -- for it is important that everything go well, and we make all that goes badly derive from a primordial anomaly, frustration, a term which becomes a key in our dialectic. Winnicott has us note that in sum, for things to go well, that is, in order for the child not to be traumatized, the mother must operate so as always to be there at the moment when she is needed, that is, precisely by coming at the moment of the child’s delirious hallucination and providing the real object which satisfies him. There is thus at the beginning, in the ideal mother-infant relation, no sort

---

1 English in the original.
2 ...transition d’objet ou phénomène transitionnel.
of distinction between the hallucination of the maternal breast, which arises in principle from the primary system according to the notion that we have of it, and the encounter with the real object that is in question.

If everything goes well, the child has thus no way of distinguishing what belongs to the order of satisfaction founded on the hallucination linked in principle to the functioning of the primary system, and the apprehension of the real which fills him and satisfies him completely. Thus the mother must progressively make the child learn to suffer frustrations, and at the same time to perceive, through a certain inaugural tension, the difference that there is between reality and illusion. This difference can be installed only through a disillusionment, when, from time to time, the reality does not coincide with the hallucination rising from desire.

Winnicott simply has us note in the first place that within such a dialectic, it is inconceivable that anything at all should be elaborated that could go further than the notion of an object which corresponds strictly to the primordial desire. The extreme diversity of objects, instrumental as well as fantasmatic, which intervene in the development of the field of human desire, is unthinkable in such a dialectic, when one incarnates it in two real actors, the mother and the child. Secondly, it is a fact of experience that, even in the very young child, we see the appearance of objects that Winnicott calls transitional objects because we cannot tell on what side they belong in the reduced and incarnate dialectic of hallucination and the real object.

All of the child's objects of play are transitional objects. The child has no need for one to give him toys in the strict sense of the word, since he makes them with everything that falls into his hands. These are transitional objects. We cannot ask whether they more subjective than objective, for they are of another nature. Although Mr. Winnicott does not take the step of naming them thus, we shall quite simply call them imaginary.

In their work, which is certainly very hesitant, full of detours and confusions, we see that it is nevertheless to these objects that authors are
led when they try to explain the origin of a fact like the existence of the sexual fetish. They are led to seek as well as they can the common points between the child's object and the fetish that will occupy the foreground of objectual demands with the major satisfaction that it can have for a subject, namely, his sexual satisfaction. They see in the child the ever so slightly privileged handling of some slender object, a handkerchief stolen from the mother, the corner of a sheet, some part of reality accidentally placed within his reach, which appears during a period that, although it is called transitional here, does not, however, constitute an intermediate period, but rather a permanent period in the child's development. They are hence led almost to confound these two types of object, without asking themselves about the distance that there might be between the erotization of the fetish-object and the first apparition of the object as imaginary.

What is forgotten in such a dialectic -- a forgetting which necessitates those forms of substitution which I emphasize with regard to Winnicott's article --, is that one of the most essential springs of the analytic experience is the notion of lack of the object. And that has been so since the beginning.

Never, in our concrete experience of analytic theory, shall we be able to do without a notion of object lack as being central. This is not a negative, but the very spring of the subject's relation to the world.

From its origin, analysis, the analysis of neurosis, began with the notion of castration, a notion so paradoxical that one can say that it has still not been completely worked out.

We think that we are still speaking about it as they spoke of it in Freud's time. That is totally erroneous. We speak of it less and less, and we are wrong. What we speak about much more is frustration. There is still a third term of which we are beginning to speak, or more precisely, we shall
see how necessary it was to introduce this notion, by what route and by what imperative, and that is the notion of privation.

Those three things are not at all equivalent. They have to be distinguished. I shall point some things out simply to try to make you first understand what there is here.

Let us start with the term whose usage is most familiar, the notion of frustration.

What difference is there between a frustration and a privation? Let us start with that, since Jones introduces the notion of privation with it, and says that the two are experienced in the same way in the psychic system. That is something very risky. It is clear that if we must refer to privation, it is in as much as phallicism, namely the demand for the phallus, is, as Freud says, the major point of the whole imaginary play in the conflictual progress that the analysis of the subject describes. Now, one can only speak of privation with respect to the [real] in so far as it is something completely different from the imaginary. That is not where the phallic demand operates. It appears extremely problematic, in fact, that a being defined as a totality should sense himself deprived of something that by definition he does not have. We shall thus say that privation, in its nature as a lack, is essentially a real lack. It is a hole.

The idea that we have of frustration if we simply refer to the use of the word when we speak, is that of an injury. It is a lesion, a damage which, as we are used to seeing it at work when we follow the way that we make it come into play in our dialectic, is never anything but an imaginary injury. Frustration is by essence the domain of a claim. It concerns something that is desired but not owned, but that is desired without reference to any possibility of satisfaction or acquisition. In essence, frustration is the domain of exigencies that are unleashed and without law. The center of the notion of frustration, in so far as it is one of the categories of lack, is an imaginary wrong. It is situated on the imaginary plane.

After these two remarks, it will perhaps be easier for us to perceive what goes on in castration, whose essential nature, Wesen, has been much more abandoned than it has been developed.
Castration was introduced by Freud in a way that was absolutely coordinated with the notion of the primordial law, with what there is of a fundamental law in the prohibition of incest and in the structure of the Oedipus complex. There, if we think about it now, is the meaning of what was first stated by Freud. It is by a sort of mortal leap into experience that Freud placed so paradoxical a notion as that of castration at the center of the decisive, formative, major crisis which is the Oedipus complex. We can only marvel at it after the fact, for it is certainly marvelous that we dream only of not speaking about it. Castration can only be classed in the category of the symbolic debt.

Symbolic debt, imaginary harm, and real hole, or absence -- that is what allows us to situate those three elements that we shall call the three terms of reference for the lack of the object.

No doubt that will appear to certain people as not going without some reserve. They are right in so far as one must hold strictly to the central notion that it is a question of categories of the lack of the object, for this to be valuable. I say lack of the object and not object, because to situate ourselves with regard to the object, we shall have to ask the question -- what is the object that is lacking in these three cases?

It is at the level of castration that this is most clear. What is lacking in castration in so far as it is constituted by the symbolic debt, that something which the law sanctions and which gives it its support and its inverse, which is punishment -- it is completely clear that this is not, in our analytic experience, a real object. It is only in the law of Manou that it is said that he who has slept with his mother must cut off his genitals, and holding them in his hand, go straight towards the west until death overtake him. We have, until the new order, observed such things only in excessively rare cases, which have nothing to do with our experience, and which seem to merit explanations that remain elsewhere in a very different order than that of the structuring and normalizing mechanisms ordinarily put into play in our experience.

The object is imaginary. The castration in question is always that of an imaginary object. There is a point in common between the imaginary
character of the lack in frustration and the imaginary character of the object in castration, the fact that castration is an imaginary lack of the object, which has facilitated our belief that frustration can take us more simply to the heart of the problem. But it is not at all necessary for the lack and the object, and even a third term that we shall call the agent, to be on the same plane of these categories. In fact, the object of castration is an imaginary object, and that is what must make us ask what this phallus is, which one has taken so long to identify as such.

The object of frustration, on the other hand, is very much, in its nature, a real object, however imaginary the frustration may be. It is always a real object which is troubling the child, for example, the subject elect in our dialectic of frustration. That will help us ourselves to understand this evidence whose terms demand a bit more metaphysical management than we are used to when we speak of those criteria of reality of which we were speaking just before -- the object of privation is never anything other than a symbolic object.

That is completely clear -- how can something not be in its place, not be in a place where precisely it is not? From the point of view of the real, that means absolutely nothing. Everything that is real is always and obligatorily in its place, even when one disturbs it. The real has for its characteristic the fact that it sticks to the soles of one's shoes. You can convulse the real as much as you want, it nevertheless remains that our bodies will still be in their places after the explosion of an atomic bomb, in their places as morsels. The absence of something in the real is purely symbolic. It is in as much as we define by law that it must be there, that an object is lacking from its place. There is no better reference than this -- think of what happens when you ask for a book in the library. They tell you that it is missing from its place, it can be just beside it, it still remains that in principle it is missing from its place, and it is in principle invisible. That means that the librarian lives entirely in a symbolic world. When we speak of privation, it is a matter of a symbolic object, and nothing else.

That may seem a bit abstract, but you will see how useful it will be to us later in detecting the sleight of hand thanks to which one gives solutions
which are not solutions to problems which are false. One makes, you will see, desperate efforts to break with what seems intolerable, which is the completely different evolution of what one calls sexuality in man and in woman -- and that in order to bring the two terms back to a single principle. But, there is perhaps from the beginning something which allows us to conceive in a way that is very simple and clear why the evolution in the two sexes is very different.

I simply want to add a notion that will also have its bearing later, that of the agent. I am making a jump here which requires that I come back to the imaginary triad of the mother, the child, and the phallus, but I do not have the time to do that. I simply want to complete the chart. The agent also plays its role in the lack of the object.

With regard to frustration, we have the pre- eminent notion that it is the mother who plays the role of the agent. But is this agent symbolic, imaginary, or real? And what is the agent in castration? Is it symbolic, imaginary, or real? What is the agent in privation? Does it truly have any sort of real existence, as I pointed out just before? These are questions that at least deserve to be asked.

I shall, at the end of this session, leave them open. If the answer could perhaps be sketched here, or even be unequivocally deduced, it would still not be satisfying at this point, because the notion of the agent goes beyond the framework to which we are limited today, that of the first question concerning the relation between the object and the real. We have remained in the categories of the imaginary and the real, whereas the agent is the manifestation of another order here.

You nevertheless see that the qualification of the agent on these three planes is a question that is manifestly suggested to us by the beginning of the construction of the phallus.

28 November 1956

Agent

Erection -> Imaginary Mother

Erection -> Real Father

Erection -> Imaginary Father
III

THE SIGNIFIER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

The image of the body and its signifier.
The factory of the id.
The signifier, the signified and death.
The transmission of the object by signifier.
Its imaginary discordance.

Last night you heard a lecture by Mme Dolto on the image of the body. Circumstances had it that I could say nothing other than all the good that I thought of it. If I had had to speak of it, it would have been to situate that work with regard to what we are doing here, which is, in sum, teaching, and that is something I am reluctant to do in a context of scientific work, which is of a completely different nature. So I am not displeased not to have had to do so.

If we begin now with the image of the body as it was presented to us last night, so as to situate it with regard to this seminar, I would say -- something that you know sufficiently well and which is eminently evident -- (the image of the body is not an object.)

If we spoke last night of the object, it was so as to try to define the stages of development, and in fact, the notion of the object is important in that respect. It remains nevertheless that not only is the image of the body not an object, but it could never even become an object. This very simple
remark, which was made by no one except in an indirect fashion, will allow you to situate the status of the image of the body exactly in opposition to other imaginary formations.

We have to deal in effect in analytic experience with objects about which we can raise the question of their imaginary nature. I do not say that they are of an imaginary nature, but that this is the central question that we ask, as an introduction to the clinical level which is of interest now in the notion of the object. That does not mean that we should hold to the hypothesis of the imaginary object, or that we should start off with it -- we start off with it so little that it is precisely what we are questioning.

This possibly imaginary object as it is given to us in actual fact in analytic experience is already known to you. To fix an idea of it, I have already taken two examples, which I said I would take as a center -- phobia and the fetish.

You would be wrong to think that these objects have already revealed their secrets. Far from it. No matter what exercise, acrobatics, contortion, or fantasmatic genesis one attempts, it still remains quite mysterious that at certain epochs of their lives, children, male or female, believe they need to be afraid of lions, the lion not being an object encountered in their experience with excessive frequency. It is difficult to conjure up from that the form of a primitive given which would be for example inscribed in the image of the body. One can try, as one can try anything, but there still remains some residue. Now, the residues in scientific explanations are always what it is most fruitful to consider, and in any case, it is surely not by making them vanish that one progresses.

Similarly, you have been able to observe that the number of sexual fetishes is extremely limited. Why? Apart from shoes, which have so astonishing a role there that one can ask how it is that we do not give that more attention, we barely find garters, socks, brassieres, and other things -- all worn close to the skin. The principal one is the shoe. How was it possible to be a fetishist in the time of Catullus? There too, there is a residue.
These are the objects about which we shall ask whether they are imaginary objects. How to conceive their kinetic value in the economy of the libido? Does it belong to the order of what emerges from a genesis, that is, from an ectopia with regard to a certain typical relation? Do these objects simply arise from the typical succession of what one calls stages?

Whatever the case, these objects, if they are objects, with which you had to deal last night, are highly embarrassing to us. To see the interest aroused in the audience, and the length of the discussion, the theme is fascinating. At first sight it concerns, as was said, constructions which order, organize, articulate, a certain lived experience. But what is most striking is the use that is made -- and whose efficacy one does not for an instant doubt -- by the operator, in this instance, Mme Dolto. There is certainly a fact there that can only be situated by starting with the notions of signified and signifier, and which can be understood only after that. Mme Dolto uses this object, or supposed object, this image, as a signifier. It is as a signifier that the image comes into play in the dialogue, it is as a signifier that it represents something. This is particularly evident from the fact that no image is sustained by itself. It is always in relation to another of these images that each takes on a crystallizing, orienting value, that it penetrates the subject in question, that is, the young child.

We are thus led back once again to the notion of the signifier.

1

Since it is a question here of teaching, and since nothing is more important than our misunderstandings, I shall begin by underlining that I have been able to verify, directly and indirectly, that some of the things which I said the last time when I spoke of the concept of reality were not understood.

I said that psychoanalysts had a concept of reality so mythical that it is close to what has hindered the progress of psychiatry for decades, and from which one might have thought that psychoanalysis had been delivered. This hindrance is to go seeking reality in something that has a more
material character. To make myself understood, I gave the example of the hydroelectric factory, and I said that it was as if, before the different accidents that could arise, including the suspension of the factory's activity, its enlargement or its repair, one thought that one could reason valuably by referring to the primitive matter that comes into play to make it work; in this instance, the waterfall.

On this point someone came and said to me -- What are you looking for there? Remember that for the engineer, the waterfall is everything. You speak of the energy accumulated in the factory, but this energy is nothing other than the transformation of the potential energy which is given in advance by the site where we have installed the factory. To calculate it, it is enough for the engineer to measure the height of the sheet of water with regard to the level to which it will fall. Everything is already given in the potential energy. The power of the factory is already determined by anterior conditions.

This objection calls for several remarks. First, in speaking to you of reality, I began by defining it as Wirklichkeit, by the efficiency of the system, in this instance the psychic system. On the other hand, I wanted to make the mythic character of a certain conception of reality precise, and I situated it for you with the example of the factory. I did not have the time to introduce the third perspective under which the theme of the real can appear, which is precisely the emphasis placed on what is there before.

We are constantly dealing with it. It is certainly a legitimate way to consider reality, to latch onto what is there before the exercise of a symbolic functioning, and that is even what is most solid in the mirage which supports the objection that was made to me. I am not at all denying that there may be something that was there before. For example, before I comes to be, there was something, there was the id. It is simply a matter of knowing what this id is.

Someone said to me that, in the case of the factory, what was there before was the energy. I never said anything else. But between the energy and the natural reality, there is a whole world. The energy begins to come into account only at the moment when you measure it. And you think of
measuring it only at the moment when factories function. It is because of them that you are obliged to make numerous calculations, among which in effect there enters that of the energy which you will have at your disposal. In other terms, the concept of energy is effectively constructed upon the need of a productive civilization wanting to take its bearings in its accounts -- what work is it necessary to expend to obtain an available recompense of efficiency?

This energy, for example, is always measured between two established points. There is no absolute energy in a natural reservoir. There is energy in the reservoir in relation to a lower level into which the liquid will flow when you add an outlet to the reservoir. But in itself alone, an outlet is not enough to allow you to calculate the energy -- it is in relation to the lower level of water that the energy can be calculated.

But that is not the question. The question is that certain natural conditions must be realized in order for there to be the least interest in calculating the energy. Any difference of level that is there in the flow of the water, whether it be in streams or in droplets, can still potentially carry a certain value of reserve energy, simply, it is of interest to no one. It is still necessary for the materials which will come into play in the use of the machine to be already present in nature, in a certain privileged fashion, and to put it plainly, in a way that is signifying. One installs a factory only where certain privileged things are present in nature as usable, as signifying, and in this instance, as measurable. One must already be on the track of a system taken to be signifying. That is not at all to be contested.

The important thing is the comparison that I made with the psychic system. Let us see now how that is sketched.

Freud was brought by the energetic concept to forge a notion that we must use in analysis in a way that is comparable to that of energy. It is a notion which, like that of energy, is entirely abstract, and which consists in a simple question of principle, designed to allow a certain play of thought. It simply allows one to posit, and still in a way that is virtual, an equivalence, the existence of a common measure, between manifestations
which qualitatively appear to be extremely different. It is a question of the notion of libido.

There is nothing that is less tied to a material support than the concept of libido in analysis. One marvels that Freud, in the Three Essays, should have spoken for the first time, in 1905, of the psychic support of the libido in terms such that the later diffusion of the concept of a sexual hormone scarcely require a modification of this passage. There is no marvel in it. The reference to a chemical support is, strictly speaking, without any importance regarding the libido. Freud says as much—whether there is one, whether there are many, whether there is one for femininity and one for masculinity, or two or three for each, whether they are interchangeable, or whether there is one and only one, as may in fact very possibly be the case, does not have any sort of importance, for, in any case, analytic experience makes it necessary for us to believe that there is only one sole and unique libido. Thus Freud immediately situates the libido on a plane which is, if I may say so, neutralized, as paradoxical as the term may seem.

The libido is what links the behavior of beings amongst themselves, which will give them for example a position which is active or passive—but, Freud tells us, this libido has active effects in every instance, even in the passive position, for an activity is necessary in order to adopt the passive position. Thus Freud comes to indicate that the libido is thus always present in a form that is efficacious and active, an aspect which rather relates it to the masculine position. Freud goes as far as positing that only the masculine form of the libido is within our reach.

How paradoxical all that would be were it simply a question of a concept there only to allow us to incarnate a liaison of a certain type, which is produced at a particular level, which is properly speaking the imaginary level, where the behavior of one living being in the presence of another living being attaches itself to him by links of desire, longing, which in effect is one of the essential springs of Freudian thought for organizing what is at stake in all sexual behavior.
We are accustomed to considering the Es as an agency which has the greatest relation to the drives, the instincts, the libido. Now, what is the Es? To what does the introduction of the concept of the factory allow us to compare it? Well, precisely to the factory, as it would appear to someone who knew absolutely nothing of how it worked. An untutored person who knows nothing about it, seeing it, thinks that perhaps the genie of the current plays games inside and transforms the water into light or force.

The Es is what in the subject is capable, by the intermediary of the message of the Other, of becoming I. That is still the best definition.

If analysis has given us anything, it is this – the Es is not a brute reality, nor simply something that was there before. The Es is already organized, articulated, as the signifier is organized, articulated.

That is equally true for what the machine produces. All the force already there can be transformed, with this difference, that it is not only transformed, but can also be accumulated. That is even the main interest in the fact that it is a question of a hydroelectric factory, and not simply a hydromechanical factory, for example. Though all this energy was there before, still, once the factory has been constructed, no one can deny that there is a sensible difference, not simply in the landscape, but in the real.

The factory is not constructed by the operation of the Holy Spirit. More precisely, it is constructed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and if you doubt it, you are wrong.

It is precisely in order to remind you of the presence of the Holy Spirit, which is absolutely essential to the progress of our understanding of analysis, that I am developing this theory of the signifier and the signified for you.

Let us take that up on another level, that of the principle and the pleasure principle.

By what right are the systems, primary and secondary, opposed? If one stays solely with what defines them from the outside, one can say this
much -- what occurs in the primary system is governed by the pleasure principle, that is to say, the drive to return to rest, while what occurs in the reality system is defined by what forces the subject to conduct a detour in, as one says, external reality. Now, nothing in these definitions gives the sense of what emerges of a conflictual and dialectical character in the use of these two terms in practice, in its concrete use, to which you are given daily. You never use either one of these systems without providing it with a particular index, which is in some way, for each, its own paradox, often neatly avoided, but never forgotten in practice.

The paradox of the pleasure principle is this. What occurs at this level appears without a doubt, as it is shown to you, tied to the law of the return to rest, to the tendency to a return to repose. Nevertheless, if Freud introduced the concept of the libido, and he said it formally, it is really because pleasure in the concrete sense, Lust, has an ambiguous sense in German, which he underlines -- it is both pleasure and desire, that is, the state of repose but also the erection of desire. These two terms, though they appear contradictory, are none the less effectively tied in experience.

No less a paradox is to be found with regard to reality. Just as in the pleasure principle there is on one side a return to rest, but on the other, desire, so there is not only reality, against which one is bruised, but also getting around it, the detour from reality.

That appears much more clearly if we bring into correlation with the existence of the two principles, two terms which link them and allow them to function dialectically -- namely the two levels of speech expressed in the notions of the signifier and the signified.

I have already situated the course of the signifier or of concrete discourse, for example, in a sort of parallel superposition with the course of the signified, in which and as which the continuity of lived experience is presented, the flux of drives in a subject, and between subjects.

[Schema, p. 47]
This representation is all the more valuable in that nothing can be conceived, not only of speech, or of language, but of the phenomena present in analysis, unless one admits the essential possibility of a perpetual sliding of the signified under the signifier, and of the signifier over the signified. Nothing in analytic experience can be explained except by this fundamental schema.

This schema implies that what is a signifier of one thing can become at any instant the signifier of something else, and that all that is present in desire, the drive, the libido of the subject, is always marked by the imprint of a signifier — which does not exclude that there may be something else in the drive or in desire, something which is not in any way marked by the imprint of the signifier. The signifier is introduced into natural movement, into desire, or into the demand,¹ a term to which the English language resorts as to a primitive expression of appetite, qualifying it with exigency, although appetite as such is not marked with the laws proper to the signifier. Thus one can say that desire comes to belong to the signified.

The intervention of the signifier poses a problem which led me to remind you just before of the existence of the Holy Spirit. We saw last year what it was for us, and what it is in the thought and the teaching of Freud. The Holy Spirit is the entry of the signifier into the world.

That is very certainly what Freud brought us under the term of the death instinct. It is a matter of that limit of the signified which is never attained by any living being, or even, which is never attained at all, except in exceptional cases, probably mythic, since we encounter it only in the late texts of a certain philosophical experience. It is nevertheless something which is virtually at the limit of man’s reflection on his life, which permits him to glimpse death as the absolute, impassable condition of his existence, as Heidegger expresses it. The relations of man with the signifier as a whole are very precisely tied to this possibility of suppression, the putting into parenthesis of all that is lived.

¹ English in the original.
We shall put what is at the basis of the existence of the signifier, of its presence in the world, into our schema, as the efficacious surface of the signifier in which the latter in some way reflects what one could call the last word of the signified, that is of life, of what is lived, of the flux of emotions, the libidinal flux. This is death, in so far as it is the support, the base, the operation of the Holy Spirit by which the signifier exists.

[Schema, p. 48]

---

death

signifier

signified

SCHEMA OF PARALLELS (2)

Is this signifier which has its own laws, whether or not they are recognizable in a given phenomenon, what is designated by the Es? We ask the question -- and we shall resolve it. In order to understand anything at all of what we are doing in analysis, we must reply -- yes.

The Es at stake in analysis is a signifier that is already there in the real, a signifier that is not understood. It is already there, but it is a signifier, it is not I do not know what primitive and confused property coming from I do not know what pre-established harmony, an hypothesis to which those whom I shall not hesitate on this occasion to call weak minds always return.

In the first row among them is a Mr. Jones, and I shall tell you later how he approaches the early development of woman and her famous castration complex, which has posed an insoluble problem for all analysts since they first came into the light of day.

The error is to start with the idea that there are thread and needle, the girl and the boy, and between one and the other a pre-established primitive harmony, such that if some difficulty shows up, it can only be because of some secondary disorder, some process of defense, some purely
accidental and contingent event. When one imagines that the unconscious means that what is in one subject is made to divine what should respond to him in another, one is doing nothing other than to suppose a primitive harmony.

To this conception, Freud's very simple remark in the *Three Essays* stands opposed, which is that it is a real pity that nothing in the development of the child, and particularly in his relation to sexual images, shows that the rails of a free access of man to woman and vice versa have already been constructed. It is in no way a matter of a meeting to which the only obstacles are accidents that can arise along the route. What Freud says is precisely the contrary, namely, that the child's sexual theories, which will make their imprint on the development of a subject, on all his history, and on all that the relation between the sexes will be for him, are tied to the first maturity of the genital stage, which occurs before the complete development of the Oedipus, namely, the phallic phase.

If this phase is called phallic, it is not this time in the name of a fundamental energetic equality which is only there for the convenience of thought, it is not because there is only one libido, but because on the imaginary plane, there is only one primitive representation of the state, of the genital stage - the phallus as such.

The phallus is not the male genital apparatus as a whole, it is the male genital apparatus, exception made of its complement, the sacks, for instance. The erected image of the phallus is what is fundamental here. There is only one. There is no choice apart from a virile image or castration.

I am not validating what Freud said. I am indicating that this is his point of departure when he reconstructs development. One can go looking for natural references to this idea discovered in analysis, and that is what everything that precedes the *Three Essays on Sexuality* did. But analysis underlines precisely that experience makes us discover a host of accidents which are far from being so natural as all that.

What I am putting at the principle of analytic experience here is the concept that there is a signifier already installed and structured. There is a
factory ready made, and it functions. It is not you who have made it. This factory is language, which has been functioning for as long as you can remember. Literally, you cannot remember beyond it -- I am speaking of the history of humanity as a whole. For as long as there have been signifiers that function, the psychic system of subjects has been organized by the very play of these signifiers. Because of this, the Es that you go looking for in the depths, is not something so natural as all that, and it is even less natural than images. In fact, the existence in nature of the hydroelectric factory made by the operation of the Holy Spirit is the very contrary of the concept of nature.

The scandal of this fact -- that is where the analytic position rests.

When we approach a subject, we know that there is already in nature something that is his Es, and which is structured according to the mode of a signifying articulation marking all that acts upon this subject with its imprints, its contradictions, and its profound difference from natural coaptations.

I thought it necessary to recall these positions which seem to me fundamental. Behind the signifier, I have placed on the schema this reality behind it, which is completely veiled to the signified, and also to the use of the signifier -- the possibility that nothing of what is in the signified exists. The death instinct is nothing else, in fact, than there to make us perceive that life is improbable and completely caducous. Concepts of this sort have nothing to do with any sort of living exercise, for the living exercise consists precisely in making one's own way in existence exactly like all those who have preceded us in the same true to type lineage.

The existence of the signifier is not linked to anything other than the fact, for it is a fact, that discourse exists, and that it is introduced into the world against a background which is more or less known or misconstrued, and it is all the same curious that Freud should have been led by analytic experience to be able to do nothing other than to characterize it by saying that the signifier functions on the ground of a certain experience of death.

The experience in question has nothing to do with any sort of lived experience. If our commentary on Beyond the Pleasure Principle two years
ago could show anything, it was that what is at stake is nothing other than a reconstruction, motivated by certain paradoxes of the experience, precisely by that of this inexplicable phenomenon -- that the subject is led to behave in a way that is essentially signifying, in repeating indefinitely something that is for him, strictly speaking, mortal.

Inversely, in the same way that death is reflected in the background of the signified, so the signifier borrows a whole series of elements linked to a term that is profoundly engaged in the signified, namely, the body. Just as there are already in nature certain reservoirs, so in the signified there are a certain number of elements, which are given in experience as accidents of the body, but which are taken up again in the signifier, and which give it, if one may say so, its first arms. It is a matter of things which are ungraspable and yet irreducible, among which the phallic term, the pure and simple erection. A stone elevated to a vertical position is one of its examples, the notion of the human body in so far as it is erect is another. It is thus that a certain number of elements all linked to corporal stature, and not simply to the lived experience of the body, constitute the first elements, borrowed from experience, but completely transformed by the fact that they are symbolized. Symbolized means that they have been introduced into the place of the signifier as such, which is characterized by being articulated according to logical laws.

If I made you play the game of odds and evens recently when we spoke of the death instinct, if I have taught you to write series of plus and minus signs grouped in twos or threes in a temporal sequence, it was to remind you that there are laws behind which stand the laws of the signifier, present from every beginning, implicit, certainly, but impossible not to encounter.

Let us return now to the point where we left things the last time, which is on the plane of analytic experience.
The central relation to the object, the one which is dynamically creative, is that of lack. In analytic experience, all Findung of the object, Freud tells us, is a Wiederfindung.

One must not read the Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality as if it were a work written in one spurt. Certainly, there is no work of Freud's that has not been subject to revision. All have notes added later, and modifications of the text are extremely frequent. But if the Traumdeutung, for example, is enriched by this, it is without any of its original equilibrium being changed. On the other hand, if you read the first edition of the Three Essays, you will not come back to it -- for you will recognize none of the themes that are familiar to you in the book that you usually read, with the additions made principally in 1915, several years after the Einführung des Narzissmus. That is the first of the important things for you to keep in mind in studying this text. Everything that concerns the pregenital development of the libido is conceivable only after the appearance of the theory of narcissism, and once the sexual theories of the child have been isolated, with their major misunderstandings, which consist, Freud says explicitly, in the fact that the child has no notion either of the vagina nor of sperm, nor of generation. That is their essential defect. The promotion of the notion of the phallic phase will come to an end only after the last edition of the Three Essays, in the article of 1923 on Infantile Genital Organization. This crucial moment of genitality in development remains outside the limits of the Three Essays. But if these do not entirely reach a conclusion, their progress in the research on the pregenital relation as such is still only explained by the importance of the sexual theories. That goes for the theory of the libido itself.

The chapter entitled The Theory of the Libido concerns the concept of narcissism as such. We can account for the origin of the very idea of the theory of the libido, Freud tells us, once we have a concept of an Ich-libido as a reservoir of the libido which constitutes objects, and he adds, with regard to this reservoir -- we can only get a little glimpse of it over the walls. In sum, this is the notion of narcissistic tension, of man's relation to the image, which introduced the idea of a libidinal common measure, and
at the same time, that of a central reserve from which every relation to objects is established, in so far as being fundamentally imaginary. In other words, one of the essential articulations is the subject's fascination by the image, which is always, finally, only an image that he bears within himself. That is the final word in the theory of narcissism.

If we have since, in a particular analytic orientation, been able to recognize an organizing value in fantasies, it is in as much as we have not supposed a pre-established harmony, a natural accord between object and subject. As the Three Essays in their first and original version show, the development of infantile sexuality is characterized by being staged over two periods. Because of the latency period, that is, of the latent memory traversing this period, the first object, which is precisely the mother, is remembered in a way that has not been susceptible to change, which is, says Freud, irreversible, so that the object will always be only an object found again, wiedergefunden, and will remain marked by the first aspect of the object. Thus there is always an essential division, fundamentally conflictual, in the refound object, and by the very fact of its refinding there is always a lack of accord in the object that is refound with regard to the object that is sought. That is the notion with which the first Freudian dialectic of the theory of sexuality is introduced.

This fundamental experience supposes that there is, in the course of the latency period, a conservation of the object in memory, unbeknownst to the subject, that is to say, a signifying transmission. This object then enters into discord and plays a disturbing role in every later object relation of the subject. It is in this framework, at certain selected junctures and at certain times of this evolution, that the strictly imaginary functions are revealed. Everything arising from the pregenital relation is taken into this parenthesis. Into a dialectic which is first, essentially, in our vocabulary, a dialectic of the symbolic and the real, the imaginary layer is then introduced.

The introduction of the imaginary, since become so prevalent, only occurs beginning with the article on narcissism, is articulated with the theory of sexuality only in 1915, is only formulated with respect to the
phallic phase in 1920, but is then affirmed in a way that is so categorical that from then on, it appears disturbing, and plunges the entire analytic audience into perplexity, so much so that it is in relation to the Oedipus that there was situated a dialectic called, at that time, pregenital, and not, I have you note, pre-Oedipal.

The term pre-Oedipal was introduced with regard to feminine sexuality, and that, ten years later. In 1920, the pregenital relation was used to designate the memory of experiences which are preparatory to the Oedipal experience, but which are only articulated in the latter. The pregenital relation can only be understood by starting with the signifying articulation of the Oedipus. The images and the fantasies that form the signifying material of the pregenital relation themselves come from an experience made of the contact between signifier and signified. The signifier takes its material somewhere in the signified, in a certain number of vital relations, effectively exercised or lived. It is only later that this past is grasped, and that the imaginary organization is structured, which appears above all, when we encounter it, with the character of being paradoxical. It is more opposed to than in accord with the idea of a regular harmonious development. On the contrary, it is a matter of a critical development, in which, from the origin, the objects, as one calls them, of different periods, oral and anal, are already taken for something other than what they are. These are objects that have already been worked over by the signifier, and which appear submitted to operations from which it is impossible to extract the signifying structure.

That is precisely what we designate by the various concepts of incorporation, which organize them, dominate them, and permit their articulation.

How is one to organize this experience? As I told you the last time, it is around the notion of the lack of the object.

I have shown you the three levels of this lack that it is essential to situate each time that there is a crisis, an encounter, an effective action, with regard to the search for the object, which is always in itself a critical
search. These levels are the following -- castration, frustration, privation. What they are as lack, the central structure of each, is essentially different for the three.

In the lessons that will follow, we shall place ourselves at the exact point where modern theory and current practice are installed. Analysts today in fact reorganize analytic experience by beginning with the level of frustration, and neglect the concept of castration, which was nevertheless Freud's original discovery, along with the Oedipus. Thus I shall start the next time with an example that I took at random from volume 3-4 of The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, published in 1949, which contains a lecture by a student of Anna Freud, Arnaliese Schnurmann.

The latter saw a phobia develop during a short period of time in one of the children confided to the care of Anna Freud's Hampstead Nursery. We shall read this observation, one among a thousand others, and we shall see what we can understand in it. We shall also try to see what is understood by its reporter, who records with all the appearance of an exemplary fidelity, which does not exclude the use of pre-established categories. What she collects is sufficient to give us an idea of a temporal succession during the course of which a phobia appears, then disappears, namely a privileged imaginary creation, which prevails for a certain time, and which has a whole series of effects on the behavior of the subject. We shall be able to appreciate whether it is truly possible for the author to articulate what is essential in this observation by starting with the concept of frustration as it is currently conceived, as related to the privation of a privileged object, that of the stage which the subject has reached at the moment of the appearance of the said privation. Effect more or less regressive, which can even be progressive in certain cases, why not? -- but can a phenomenon like that of phobia be understood by its sole situation in a certain chronological order? Are things not better explained if one refers to the three terms that I have enumerated? That is what we shall see.

I shall simply underline what these three terms mean. In castration, there is a fundamental lack that is situated, as a debt, in the symbolic chain,
In frustration, the lack can only be understood on the imaginary plane as an imaginary injury. In privation, the lack is purely and simply in the real, a real limit or gap.

When I say that in privation, the lack is in the real, that does not mean that it is in the subject.--For the subject to accede to privation, he must conceive the real as being: other than it is, that is, he must already have symbolized it. The reference to privation as it is put forth here consists in posing the symbolic before -- before we can say things that are reasonable. It is thus opposed to the genesis of the psychic system which is usually given to us.

In the psychogenesis currently given to us in analysis, everything happens as in an idealistic dream -- each subject is like a spider and must draw from himself, the thread of his web. He is there to envelop himself in the silk of his cocoon, and his whole conception of the world must be drawn from himself and from his images. One thus sees the subject secrete from himself successive relations in the name of I do not know what pre-established maturation, with objects which will end by being the objects of the human world that is our own. One gives oneself up to such an exercise because there is in fact every appearance that psychoanalysis makes it possible. But that is because, in this experience, one wants to retain only the aspects that tend in this direction, while each time that one gets enmeshed, one thinks one is dealing only with a difficulty in language, whereas it is a manifestation of the error into which one has wandered. Somatognosia, the image of the body as a signifier, shows this very well.

We cannot pose the problem of the object relation correctly unless we begin with a certain framework that must be considered as fundamental to understanding. This framework, or the first of these frameworks, is that in the human world, the lack of the object provides the structure as well as the beginning of objectal organization. This lack of the object must be conceived at its different stages in the subject -- with regard to the symbolic chain, which escapes him in its beginning as in its end -- at the level of frustration, where he is in fact installeed in a lived experience that is unthinkable for him - - but we must also consider this lack in the real, for
when we speak here of privation, it is not a matter of a privation that is fully conscious. Privation is the center of reference that we need. These days everyone uses it, the trick being simply at a certain moment, and that is how Mr. Jones proceeds. To make privation the equivalent of frustration. Privation is in the real, entirely outside the subject. For the subject to apprehend privation, he must first symbolize the real. How is the subject led to symbolize it?

How is frustration introduced into the symbolic order? That is the question we are asking and we shall see that the subject is neither isolated nor independent, and it is not he who introduces the symbolic order.

It is striking that no one spoke last night of a major passage in what Mme Dolto brought us, which is that, according to her, the only children of either sex who become phobic are those whose mother had to deal with some trouble in the object relation tying to her parent—her own, the mother’s—of the opposite sex. That an idea which surely makes something other than the relation of the child and the mother intervene, and that is why I have posited the trio of the mother, the child and the phallus.

There is always in the mother, apart from the child, the demand for the phallus, which the child symbolizes or realizes, more or less. The child, who has his relation with the mother, knows nothing about this. When we spoke yesterday evening of the image of the body with regard to the child, there was one thing that must have been apparent to you -- this image of the body, if it is effectively the child, if it is even accessible to the child, is it, for all that, thus that the mother sees her child? That is a question that was not asked at all.

Similarly, at what moment is the child capable of perceiving that what his mother desires in him, what saturates and satisfies her in him, is his phallic image for her, the mother? What possibility does the child have of acceding to this relational element? Is it on the order of a direct effusion, or indeed, by a projection? Is that not to suppose that every relation

\[2 \ldots \text{ressentie.}\]
between subjects is of the same order as the relation of Mme Dolto with her subject? I am astonished that no one asked her if, apart from herself, who sees all these images of the body, and one or another analyst, male or female, of her school, there were anyone else who could see them too? That, however, is the point that is important.

The fact that, for the mother, the child is far from being only the child, since he is also the phallus, constitutes an imaginary discordance, which raises the question of knowing how the child, male as well as female, is induced, or introduced into it. That is within the reach of experience. Certain elements which can be disengaged show, for example, that the child only accedes to it after a period of symbolization, but that in certain cases, he arrives at the imaginary injury in some way that is direct -- not his injury, but that of the mother with regard to the imaginary phallus. Is this an imaginary element which is reflected in the symbolic? Or is it on the contrary a symbolic element which appears in the imaginary? These are the crucial points around which we frame the question that is so essential in the development of phobia.

So as not to leave you completely famished, and as a way of already lighting my lantern, I shall tell you again that we must question fetishism with the triple schema of the mother, the child, and the phallus. It is another question than that of phobia, and it will surely take us far.

---

[Schema, p. 57]

```
fetishism

Mother ——— Phallus ——— Child

SCHEMA OF FETISHISM
```

Why does the child come more or less to occupy the position of the mother with regard to the phallus? Or on the contrary, in certain very particular forms of dependence, where anomalies may present themselves
with all the appearance of the normal, the position of the phallus with regard to the mother? Why is he led there? What is at play is the link that the child establishes between the phallus and the mother. To what extent does he put something of himself there? Is the relation mother-phallus given to the child in a way that is spontaneous and direct? Does everything happen simply because he looks at his mother and perceives that it is a phallus that she desires? It does not seem so. We shall come back to that.

Phobia, when it develops, is not at all of this order. It does not rest upon the link cited above. It constitutes another mode of solution to the difficult problem introduced by the relations of the child and the mother. I already showed you last year -- for there to be three terms in this trio, there must be an enclosed space, an organization of the symbolic world, which is called the father. Well, phobia belongs rather to that order. It concerns this encircling tie. Starting from a particular critical moment, when no path of another nature is open for the solution of the problem, phobia constitutes a call to rescue, an appeal to a singular symbolic element.

In what does its singularity consist? Let us say that it is in always appearing as extremely symbolic, that is, extremely distant from the imaginary. At the moment when it is called to rescue, to maintain the essential solidarity menaced by the gap introduced by the apparition of the phallus between the mother and child, the element which intervenes in phobia has a character that is veritably mythical.

5 December 1956
IV

THE DIALECTIC OF FRUSTRATION

Frustration is the true center of the mother-child relation.
A return to the Fort-Da.
The mother, from the symbolic to the real.
The child and the phallic image.
The phobia of the little English girl.

[Format chart, p. 59]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENT</th>
<th>LACK OF OBJECT</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>Castration</td>
<td>imaginary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Symbolic Debt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imaginary Injury</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>Privation</td>
<td>symbolic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real Hole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here is the chart at which we have arrived, which allows us to articulate with precision the problem of the object as it is posed in analysis.

The lack of rigor in this matter, the confusion that analysts have experienced, have resulted in a curious sliding.

Analysis began with a notion which I shall call scandalous, regarding the affective relations of man. I believe I have already several times underlined what in analysis provoked so much scandal at the outset. It is not so much that it gave a value to the role of sexuality and that it played a part in the fact that this has become a common topos -- in both cases, nobody dreams of taking offense at that any longer. But it is precisely that it introduced along with this notion, and much more than it, its paradoxes, namely, that the approach to the sexual object presents an essential difficulty which is of an internal order.

It is singular that since then, we have glided towards a harmonious notion of the object.

To let you measure the distance between this notion and what Freud himself articulated with the greatest rigor, I have chosen one of the most significant citations concerning the object, not the object objection. Even those who are most ill-informed note that Freud's work contains many things concerning the object -- the choice of the object, for example --, but that the notion itself of the object relation is in no way underlined, or cultivated, or placed in the foreground of the question. Here, extracted from his article on The Instincts and their Vicissitudes, is Freud's sentence -- *The object of the drive is that through which the instinct can attain its goal. It is what is most variable in the instinct, not at all something that was attached to it at the origin, but something which is subordinated to it solely by its aptness for appeasing it. One could also say the possibility of appeasing it. It is a question of satisfaction in so far as, according to the pleasure principle, the aim of the drive is to arrive at its own appeasement.*

The notion that there is no pre-established harmony between the object and the drive is thus articulated. The object is literally tied to it only by conditions that are particular to it. In short, one gets out of it as one can.
is not a doctrine, it is a citation. But it is one citation among others that go in the same direction. The question now is to articulate the conception of the object which is at play here, and towards that end, to see by what detours Freud leads us to make us understand its effective agency.

We have already succeeded, thanks to several points, which are themselves further developed in Freud, in highlighting the notion that the object is always only an object found again, after a primal Findung, and thus the Wiederfindung, the refinding, is never satisfying. Besides, we have seen from other characteristics that the object is on one hand, inadequate, and that on the other, it even partially evades a conceptual grasp. We are now led to examine the fundamental notions more closely, and in particular to scrutinize the one that is placed at the center of current analytic theory, the notion of frustration.

To what extent has this notion become necessary? To what extent does it need to be rectified? It is our task to do a critique which will make it usable, and compatible with the basis of analytic doctrine, namely, with what is still fundamentally Freud’s thought, where, as I have underlined many times, the notion of frustration is marginal.

I have reminded you of what is present from the outset in the givens -- castration, frustration, and privation. Those are three terms whose differences it is fruitful to note.

What is castration about?

Castration is essentially tied to the symbolic order as instituted, which implies a long coherence, from which the subject can in no case be isolated. The connection between castration and the symbolic order is given evidence by all our earlier reflections, as well as by this simple remark -- in Freud, from the outset, castration was linked to the central position given to the Oedipus complex as the articulating element essential to the whole evolution of sexuality. If I have written *symbolic debt* on the table, it is because the Oedipus complex already implies in
itself from the beginning, and fundamentally, the notion of the law, which absolutely cannot be eliminated from it. The fact that castration is at the level of the symbolic debt is sufficiently justified, and even demonstrated, I think, by this considered remark, which all of our earlier reflections support. Thus, I will continue.

What is the object at cause, or that is put into play, in the symbolic debt instituted by castration? As I indicated the last time, it is an imaginary object, the phallus. At least, that is what Freud states here, and I will set off from that today, in order to try to push the dialectic of frustration a bit further.

Frustration. It occupies the central position on this chart, which has nothing in itself to introduce either a misalignment or a disorder into your understanding. By putting the accent on the notion of frustration, we are not departing much from the notion that Freud puts at the center of analytic conflict, which is the notion of desire. The important thing is to understand what frustration means, how it was introduced, and what it concerns.

The notion of frustration, when it is placed in the foreground of analytic theory, refers to the first age of life. It is tied to the investigation of traumas, fixations, impressions, deriving from pre-Oedipal experience. That does not imply that it is external to the Oedipus complex -- in a sense it provides a prepared turf, a base, and a foundation. It models the experience of the subject, and prepares certain inflections in him, which will give the slope along which the Oedipal conflict will come to be inflected, in a way that is more or less decided, in a direction that can be atypical or heterotypical.

What is the mode of relation to the object at play in frustration? It clearly introduces the question of the real. Here, in effect, with the notion of frustration, there is introduced into the conditioning, the development of the subject, a whole cortege of notions which one translates into a language of quantitative metaphors -- one speaks of satisfaction, of gratification, of a certain sum of good deeds which are adapted, adequate, at each stage of the development of the young subject, and whose more or
less complete saturation, or on the contrary, whose absence, is then considered as an essential element. It is a matter of real conditions, which we are supposed to have to detect in the subject’s past, by means of the analytic experience.

This interest in real conditions which bursts out in a given piece of current analytic literature is, on the whole, absent from the first analytic observations, or at least it is articulated differently on the conceptual level. The proofs to which this remark awakens us are not lacking. It is enough to refer to the texts to see the threshold that has been crossed in the analytic investigation of the child by the sole fact of this displacement of interest in the analytic literature. That will be easy for you to measure, at least for those of you who are familiar enough with the three notions on the chart to be able to recognize them easily.

Frustration is thus considered as an ensemble of real impressions, lived by the subject at a period of development at which his relation to a real object is centered usually on the so-called primitive image of the maternal breast, in relation to which will be formed what I just a while ago called its first slope, inscribing the first fixations, those that allow the description of the different instinctual stages. Starting there, one has been able to articulate the relations of the oral stage and the anal stage, with their phallic and sadistic subdivisions, etc. -- and to show that they are all marked by an element of ambivalence, which makes the very position of the subject participate in the position of the other, so that the subject is two, and always participates in a dual situation without any general assumption of his position being possible. In short, we have here the imaginary anatomy of the development of the subject.

Simply limiting ourselves to that, let us see where it leads. We are thus in the presence of a subject who is in a position of desire with regard to the breast in so far as it is a real object. There we are taken to the heart of the question -- what is the nature of this relation, the earliest that the subject has with the real object?

On this matter, analytic theorists have found themselves in a discussion which teems with misunderstandings. Freud having spoken of
a liyed stage of auto-eroticism, some have maintained the notion by interpreting this auto-eroticism as the primitive relation of the infant with the primordial maternal object. Others have objected that it was difficult to relate many details of direct observation of mother-child relations to a notion that seemed founded on the fact that the subject knows only himself, for these seem to contradict the statement that there are no effective relations of the subject with an object. What could be more manifestly external to the subject than that object which is the first nourishment par excellence, of which, in fact, he has the most urgent need?

There is a misunderstanding born of a confusion here, which has confounded the discussion, and ended in formulations so diverse that I cannot enumerate them before having gone further in the conceptualization of what is at stake. I will simply remind you of the theory of Alice Balint, which we have already discussed.

This theory would reconcile the notion of auto-eroticism as it is given in Freud with what seems to be imposed by the reality of the object with which the child is confronted at a very primitive stage of his development. It ends with an articulate and striking conception that Mr. and Mrs. Balint call Primary Love. According to them, it is the only form of love in which egoism and the gift are perfectly reconcilable, in as much as a perfect reciprocity is established between what the child demands of the mother and what the mother demands of the child, a perfect complementarity of the two poles of need.

This conception is perfectly contrary to the whole of clinical experience. We are perpetually dealing with the evocation in the subject of the mark of all that could arise of truly fundamental discords. The theory of this so-called perfect and complementary primitive love moreover carries the signature of this discordance in its very wording. I am thinking of the remark of Alice Balint, in *Mother Love and the Love of the Mother*, that where relations are natural, that is to say, amongst savages, the child is always kept in contact with the mother. Elsewhere, in the land of dreams, in the Garden of the Hesperides, the mother always has the infant on her
back. In fact, the notion of a love so strictly complementary and seemingly destined of itself to find its reciprocal constitutes an evasion so little compatible with a correct theorization, that the authors end by admitting that this position is ideal, if not idéactive.¹

I have taken this example only to introduce what will be the motor element of our critique of frustration, namely, Kleinian theory. It is clear that the fundamental representation given by Kleinian theory is not at all that of the theory of Primary Love, and that is why it is amusing to see by what bias the theoretical reconstruction that she proposes is attacked.

There fell into my hands a certain bulletin, that of the Belgian Association of Psychoanalysts. In its table of contents one finds authors who figured in the volume to which I alluded in my first lecture, which is centered on an optimist view -- shameless and completely uncritical -- of the object relation. In this more confidential bulletin, things are attacked with more nuances, as if it were from lack of assurance that one showed a bit of shame, and one let it show only in distant places where surely, if anyone learned of it, it would only appear the more meritorious.

Thus one finds in this bulletin an article by MM. Pasche and Renard, which reproduces the critique that they made of the Kleinian positions at the Congress of Geneva. They reproach Melanie Klein with having a theory of development which, they say, would locate everything within the subject in a preformed manner. The whole Oedipus complex with its possible development would be already included in the instinctual givens, and the different elements, already potentially articulated, would have nothing more to do than to emerge. The authors ask for a comparison of that with the way that, for some, in the theory of biological development, the whole oak must already be contained in the acorn. For such a subject, nothing would come from the outside. From the beginning there would be primitive aggressive drives --, then the return shocks from these aggressive drives, felt by the subject as coming from the outside, namely from the maternal field, and through their intermediary, the progressive

¹ We retain the French, for its condensation of the words "idea," "ideal," and "active."
construction of the totality of the mother, which, they say, can only be conceived as a preformed schema, after which the so-called depressive position is inaugurated.

Without taking these criticisms one after another as we would need to in order to appreciate them at their just value, I would simply like to underline the formulation in which the whole paradoxically ends, which forms the heart of the article.

The authors seem fascinated by the question of how what is contributed from the outside is inscribed in development. They believe that they find in Melanie Klein that it is already given in a constellation that is internal at the beginning, in such a way that it would not be astonishing later to see the notion of the internal object prevalent in the foreground, and predominant. They thus arrive at the conclusion which they believe can be drawn from the Kleinian contribution -- that it is about a notion of a schema, preformed by heredity, which, they underline, is very difficult to represent. So, they say, the child is born with inherited instincts, in the face of a world which he does not perceive, but which he remembers, and which he will then have -- not to form, starting with himself or with anything else, nor to discover through a series of strange and lucky finds, but to recognize.

The Platonic character of this formulation cannot escape us, and most of you will recognize it. This world which one has only to remember is established with the aid of a certain imaginary preparation, to which the subject is now and henceforth adequate. This is formulated in the name of criticism, and even of opposition. But we will have to see in the proof not only if this critique does not go against all that Freud has written, but also if the authors are not really much closer than they believe to the position for which they reproach Melanie Klein. For it is really they who indicate that there already exist in the subject, in his heredity, in the state of preformed schemata, ready to appear at a specified point, all the elements which will permit the subject to adapt himself to a series of stages which are not called ideal only because they are precisely memories for the
subject, and very precisely phylogenetic memories, which will provide him a type and a norm.

Is that what Melanie Klein wanted to say? It is strictly unthinkable to maintain that it is. If there is precisely one thing of which Melanie Klein gives us the idea -- and is this not just what is criticized by the authors? -- it is that the earliest situation is chaotic, is veritabily anarchic. What is characteristic at the origin is the sound and fury of the drives, and it is precisely a matter of knowing how something like an order can be established starting from there.

That there is something mythic in the Kleinian conception is not to be doubted. These fantasies, it must be understood, have only a retroactive character. It is in the construction of the subject that we see them reprojected onto the past, starting with points that may be very precocious. But why can these points be so precocious? How can Mrs. Klein take a subject at the extremely advanced age of two and a half years, and like the pythoness before a mantic or divinatory mirror, retroactively read in his past nothing less than the Oedipal structure? There has to be some reason for that.

Without doubt, there is some sort of mirage here, and there is no question of following her when she says that the Oedipus complex was already there in the forms, themselves in morsels, of the penis moving amongst the brothers and sisters in that sort of field defined by the interior of the maternal body. But that this articulation should be revealed in a certain relation with the child, and that it should be articulable very precociously, is surely something that poses a fertile question.

This theoretical, purely hypothetical articulation, puts at the outset a given which, while it may better satisfy our idea of natural harmonies, is still not consonant with what experience shows.

All of that, it seems to me, begins to indicate the bias by which we can introduce something new into the confusion regarding the primordial mother-child relation.
One is wrong not to begin with frustration, which is the true center when it is a question of situating the early relations of the child. Still, one must have a just notion of this central concept. A great deal becomes clearer if we approach it in the following way -- there are two sides to frustration at the beginning, and we shall find them bracketed until the end.

There is on one hand, the real object. It is certain that an object can begin to exercise its influence in the relations of the subject well before it has been perceived as an object. The object is real, the relation direct. It is only as a function of a periodicity in which holes and deficiencies can appear, that the subject's particular mode of relation will be established, which in no way requires the admission that there is even for him a distinction between a me and a not-me. It is the same, for example, in the auto-erotic position in Freud's sense of the term, in which there is no constitution of the other properly speaking, nor any conceivable approach to a relation.

On the other hand, there is the agent. In effect, the object only has an agency, only begins to function, in relation to a lack. And in this fundamental relation which is the relation to the lack of the object, there is room to introduce the notion of the agent, which allows us to give an essential formulation to the general position of the problem. In this instance, the agent is the mother.

To demonstrate it, it will suffice for me to remind you of what we have already studied during these last years, namely what Freud has articulated concerning the original position of the child with regard to games of repetition, which he grasped so brilliantly in the child's behavior.

The mother is something other than the primitive object. She does not appear as such from the beginning, but, as Freud has underlined, only starting from the moment of the first games, games of the seizure of an object which is perfectly indifferent in itself, and without any sort of biological value. It is a ball in this instance, but it could also be anything at
all that a small child of six months can throw beyond the pale of his crib, in order to get it back it again later. This coupling of presence-absence, articulated extremely precociously by the child, connotes the first constitution of the agent of frustration, which at the origin is the mother. We can write S(M) as the symbol of frustration.

Concerning the mother, we are told that at a certain stage of development, that of the depressive position, she introduces a new element of totality, which is opposed to the chaos of part objects which characterized the preceding stage. Well, this new element is very precisely presence-absence.

The latter is not simply posed as such objectively, but is worked out by the subject. We already said that in our studies last year -- for the subject, presence-absence is articulated in the register of the call. The maternal object is called precisely when it is absent -- and when it is present, it is rejected, in the same register as it is called, by a vocalization.

Certainly, this scansion of the call is far from giving us the whole symbolic order straight away, but it shows us the beginning. It thus allows us to disengage a distinct element of the real object relation, which later will offer the subject precisely the possibility of establishing a relation with a real object, with its scansion, and the marks or traces that remain of it. This is what gives the subject the possibility of linking the real relation to a symbolic relation.

Before showing that in a way that is more clear, I simply want to indicate what is implied by the sole fact that the pair of opposites presence-absence is introduced into the child's experience. What is introduced here is what naturally tends to disappear at the moment of frustration. The child is thus placed between the notion of an agent, which already participates in the order of symbolicity, and the pair of opposites presence-absence, the connotation plus-minus, which gives us the first element of a symbolic order. No doubt this element is not sufficient by itself alone to constitute one, since there must next be a sequence, arranged as such, but in the opposition plus and minus, presence and absence, there is already
virtually the origin, the birth, the possibility, the fundamental condition, of a symbolic order.

The question now is the following -- how to conceive the moment of veering when the primordial relation to the real object opens into a relation that is more complex? What is the turning point at which the mother-child relation opens towards elements that will introduce what we have called a dialectic? I think that we can formulate it in a way that is schematic by asking the following question -- what happens if the symbolic agent, the essential term in the relation of the child to the real object, the mother as such, does not respond? If to the call of the subject, she no longer responds?

Let us give the answer ourselves. She falls from her place of honor. Whereas she had been inscribed in the symbolic structuration that made of her an object present-absent in response to the call -- she becomes real.

Why? Until then, she existed in the structuration as an agent, distinct from the real object which is the object of satisfaction for the child. When she no longer responds, when, in some way, she no longer responds except when it pleases her, she exits from the structure, and she becomes real, that is to say she becomes a power. That, please note, is also the beginning of the structuration of the whole of reality for what follows.

Correlatively, a reversal of the object's position is produced. As long as it is a question of a real relation, the breast -- let us take it as an example --, can be made to be as enveloping as one wants. On the other hand, from the moment that the mother becomes power, and as such real, and that it is upon her that the child's access to objects clearly depends, what happens? These objects which up until then had been purely objects of satisfaction, become objects of gift deriving from this power. And now they too, in the same way, neither more nor less than the mother up until the present, are susceptible of entering into the connotation presence-absence, as dependent on this real object which is henceforth the maternal power. In short, objects in the sense that we intend here, which is not metaphorical, objects that can be grasped, possessed -- I leave aside the question, a question of observation, as to whether the notion of the not-
me² initially enters through the image of the other or through what is possessable --, the objects that the child wants to keep around him are no longer so much objects of satisfaction, but are rather the mark of the value of that power which can not respond, and which is the mother's power.

In other terms, the position is reversed -- the mother has become real, and the object symbolic. The object is valued as evidence of the gift deriving from the maternal power. The object thence has two orders of satisfying properties, it is twice over a possible object of satisfaction -- as before, it satisfies a need, but it also symbolizes a favorable power.

That is extremely importance to retain, if one recalls that one of the most cumbersome notions of theory since it has become, according to one formulation, a genetic psychoanalysis, is that of the omnipotence of thought, of omnipotence. It is easy to impute it to all that is farthest from us. But is it conceivable that the child has a notion of omnipotence? Perhaps in effect, he has the essential of it, but that does not mean that the omnipotence in question is his. That would be absurd. To think it is to end in impasses. The omnipotence in question is that of the mother.

At the moment that I am describing, when the mother becomes real, it is she who is omnipotent, not the child. It is a decisive moment, in which the mother passes into reality from a symbolization that is completely archaic. And at that moment, the mother can give anything at all. It is erroneous and completely unthinkable that the child could have a notion of his omnipotence. Not only does nothing in his development indicate that he has, but almost everything that interests us in this development and in the accidents that embellish it is there to show us that his so-called omnipotence, and the checks that it encounters, count for naught in the question. What counts, you will see, are the deficiencies, the disappointments, which touch upon the mother's omnipotence.

This investigation may seem a bit theoretical. It at least has the advantage of introducing some essential distinctions, and of preparing the way for openings which are not those that one currently takes. You will see now where they have already led us.

---

² English in the original, doubled by the French, "non-moi."
Here, then, is the child, in the presence of something that he has realized as a power. What had been situated up until then on the plane of the first connotation presence-absence, suddenly passes to another register, and becomes something that can refuse itself, and which has in its possession all that the subject might need. And even if he has no need, from the moment that it depends upon this power, it becomes symbolic.

Let us now pose the question by starting from a completely different point.

Freud tells us that in the world of objects, there is one whose function is paradoxically decisive, namely, the phallus. This object is defined as imaginary. It is in no way possible to confound it with the penis in its reality. It is properly speaking its form, its erected image. This phallus has so decisive a role that a nostalgia for it, like its presence, or its agency in the imaginary, are, it seems, more important even for the members of humanity who lack the real correlate, namely, women, than for those who can assure themselves of having it in reality, and whose whole sexual life is yet subordinated to the fact that they really assume its use imaginarily, that in the end, they assume it as licit, as permitted -- that is to say, men.

For us that is a given. Starting there, let us consider our mother and child who, according to Michaël and Alice Balint, form only a single totality of needs, just as the Mortimer couple in Jean Cocteau have only a single heart. Nevertheless, I will keep them on the blackboard as two circles exterior to one another.

Freud, for his part, says that the woman counts the phallus among her essential object lacks, and that this has the strictest rapport with her relation to the child. For a simple reason -- if the woman finds a satisfaction in the child, it is precisely in as much as she finds in him something that calms, more or less well, her need for the phallus, and saturates it. By not taking that into account, we misconstrue [méconnaître]
not only Freud's teaching, but the phenomena that are manifest at every moment in experience.

So we have the mother and the child in a certain dialectical relation. The child expects something from the mother, and he also receives something from her. We cannot not introduce that here. Let us say, in a way that is approximate, in the style of the Balints, that the child can believe that he is loved for himself.

The question is then -- what happens to the extent that the image of the phallus is not completely absorbed by the image of the child? Where there is a diplopie, a division of the so-called primordial desired object? Far from being harmonious, the relation of the mother and child is doubled, on one side by the need for a certain imaginary saturation, and on the other, by what there might be of effective real relations with the child, at a primordial, instinctual level, which remains definitively mythical. There is always for the mother something that remains irreducible in what is at stake. In the end, if we follow Freud, we will say that the child taken as real symbolizes the image. More precisely -- the child as real takes on for the mother the symbolic function of her imaginary need -- the three terms are there.

Every sort of variant can be introduced here. All sorts of situations that are already structured exist between the mother and the child. From the moment when the mother is introduced into the real as a power, for the child there opens the possibility of an object which as such is intermediary, the object of the gift. The question is to know at what moment and how, the child can be introduced directly into the structure of the symbolic-imaginary-real, as it is produced for the mother. In other words, at what moment can the child enter into -- and assume in a way, as we will see, that is more or less symbolized -- the imaginary, real, situation of the relation to what the phallus is for the mother? At what moment can the child, to some extent, feel himself dispossessed of something that he demands from the mother, in perceiving that it is not he who is loved, but a certain image.
There is something here that goes much further. The child realizes this phallic image on himself, and it is there that the narcissistic relation properly speaking intervenes. At the moment when the child learns the difference between the sexes, to what degree does this experience fit in with what is given him in the presence of his mother and in her actions? How is the recognition of this third imaginary term, which is the phallus for the mother, inscribed? Even more, the notion that the mother lacks the phallus, that she is herself desirous not only of something other than himself, but that she is simply desiring, that is to say, is limited in her power -- this will be for the subject more decisive than everything else.

The last time I introduced the observation of a phobia in a little girl, and I shall indicate its interest right away.

Because it was during the war, and because it is one of Anna Freud's students who made the observation, all sorts of fortunate conditions were present. The child is observed from one end to the other, and by a good observer. In fact, she understands nothing. She understands nothing because the theory of Anna Freud is false. As a consequence, the facts put her into a state of astonishment which produces all the precision of the observation -- everything is noted day by day --, and its fecundity.

The little girl, who is two years and five months old, having perceived that boys have a pee-pee maker, as Little Hans expresses it, begins to function in a position of rivalry. She does everything to do as the little boys do. This child was separated from her mother not only because of the war, but because the mother had lost her husband at the beginning of the war. She comes to see her daughter, the presence-absence is regular, and when she comes, she plays little games of approach -- she comes on tiptoe, and distills her arrival. In short, one sees her function as symbolic mother. So all goes very well, the child has real objects which she wants when the mother is not there, and when the mother is there, the latter plays her role as symbolic mother. This little girl, having made the discovery that boys have a pee-pee maker, wants to imitate them, and also to manipulate theirs. A drama is produced around this issue, but does not entail any consequences.
The observation is given as being that of a phobia, and in fact, one fine night, the little girl wakes up, seized by a holy terror. A dog is there, and it wants to bite her. She wants to get out of her bed, she has to be put into another, and the phobia evolves over a certain time.

Is the phobia a consequence of the discovery of the absence of the penis? Why do we ask the question? Because the dog is clearly a dog which bites, and which bites the sex. That we know to the degree that we analyze the child, that is, in so far as we follow and understand what she says. The first really long and articulate sentence that she pronounces -- she is a bit
Behind in her development -- is to say that the dog bites the leg of the naughty boy, and this is a plain acting\textsuperscript{3} of her phobia.

You also see the relation that is there between the symbolization and the object of the phobia. Why the dog? We will talk about that later. But what I want you to note is that the object of the phobia is there as the agent that removes what had at first been more or less accepted as absent.

Are we going to make a short-circuit in things and say that in phobia it is simply a matter of a passage to the law? -- that is to say, the intervention of an element which is, as I told you just before, provided with power, in order to justify what is absent as being absent, because it was bitten off, taken away?

The schema that I have tried to articulate today certainly goes in that direction. One clears this obstacle at every moment. Mr. Jones, for example, says very clearly -- after all, the superego is perhaps for the child only an imaginary alibi, whereas anxieties, on the other hand, are primordial, primitive. In other words, culture, with all of the prohibitions that it implies, is something in decline, in whose shelter there will come to repose what is fundamental, namely, the anxieties in their unconstituted state. There is something just in this conception -- that is really the mechanism of phobia. But the mechanism of phobia is the mechanism of phobia, and to understand it as does M. Pasche at the end of the article of which I have spoken, to the point of saying that it fundamentally explains the death instinct, for example, or again that the images of the dream are only a way for the subject to garb his anxieties, to personalize them as one might say, that is to come back again to the same idea, namely the misrecognition \textit{[méconnaissance]} of the symbolic order, which would then be only a sort of apparel and pretext covering something more fundamental. Is that what I want to tell you, when I bring in this observation of a phobia? No.

The interest of the observation is that it indicates with precision the mother's absences over the course of the month that precedes the blossoming of the phobia. Certainly, the time needed for the phobia to

\textsuperscript{3} English, as such, in the original.
break out is much longer, four months roll by between the child's discovery of her aphallicism and the blossoming of the phobia, but something had to happen during that interval. First, the mother ceased coming to visit, because she had fallen ill, and an operation was necessary. The mother is no longer the symbolic mother, she has been missing, but nothing happens. She comes back, she plays again with the child, and still nothing happens. She comes back leaning on a cane, weakened, she has no longer either the same presence or the same gaiety, or the same weekly relation of approach and going away that make her a sufficient point of anchorage for the child. And it is at this moment, thus at a third, very distant, time, that the phobia arises.

We will thus discover thanks to the observation that the aphallicism was not enough, that there had to be this second rupture in the alternating rhythm of the mother's coming—coming back. The mother at first appeared as someone who could be lacking, and this lack is inscribed in the child's reaction and behavior -- the child is very sad, she must be encouraged, yet there is no phobia. The child then sees her mother in a weakened form, leaning on a cane, sick, tired -- and the next day the dream of the dog breaks forth, and the phobia installs itself. Nothing is more significant and paradoxical in the observation, unless it is one other point, which I am going to tell you.

We shall speak again of this phobia, and of the way that therapists have attacked it, and have thought that it could be understood. I simply want to point out the question that arises concerning the antecedents of the phobia. From what moment does the phobia become necessary? From the moment when the mother lacks the phallus. What thus determines the phobia? What finds an equilibrium in it? Why is it sufficient? We shall tackle that the next time.

There is another point that is no less striking. After the phobia, the Blitz ends, the mother takes the child back, and she remarries. The little girl finds that she has a new father and a new brother, the son of the stepfather. This brother that she acquires all of a sudden and who is about five years older than she, begins to play all sorts of games with her that are both
adoring and violent. He asks her to show herself nude, and clearly gives himself up to an activity which is entirely linked to the interest that he takes in her as being without a penis. And the psychotherapist is astonished -- that would have been a fine occasion for the phobia to break out again.

In effect, the fundamental theory on which the whole therapeutics of Anna Freud is founded indicates that it is to the extent that the ego is more or less well informed of reality that discordances are established. The presence of the man-brother, a personage who is not only phallic but who also bears a penis, who presentifies her lack to her, should this not be the occasion for the little girl to fall ill again? Far from it, there is not a trace of mental disturbance, she has never been better.

In addition, we are told why -- it is that she is clearly preferred to this boy by her mother. Nevertheless, the father is sufficiently present to introduce precisely a new element, of which we have not yet spoken, but which is essentially linked to the function of phobia, namely a symbolic element, situated beyond the relations with the mother, beyond her power or impotence, and by implication disengaging from the mother the idea of power as such. In short, it is a substitute for what appears to us to have been saturated by the phobia, the fear of the castrating animal as such, which is said to have been the essential element of articulation allowing the child to pass through the grave crisis she entered when faced with the maternal impotence. The child now finds her need saturated by the maternal presence, by that of the father, and in addition by her relation with the brother.

But does the therapist see as clearly as that? This relation in which she is already the girl of the brother, is pregnant with all sorts of pathological possibilities. We can perceive in another respect that at this moment she has become all entire something which is worth more than the brother. She will surely become that girl-phallus about which so much is said. It is a matter of knowing to what degree she will not later be

4 English in the original.
5 English in the original.
implicated in this imaginary function. But for the moment, there is no essential need to be filled by the development of the phallic fantasy, because the father is there and he is sufficient. He is sufficient for maintaining a sufficient distance between the three terms of the relation mother-child-phallus, so that the subject does not have to maintain it by giving of herself, by putting there something of herself.

How is this separation maintained, by what way, by what identification, by what artifice? That is what we shall begin to attack the next time in taking up this observation again. We shall thus be introduced to what is most characteristic in the pre-Oedipal object relation, namely, the birth of the object as fetish.

12 December 1956

V

ON ANALYSIS AS BUNDLING \(^1\)
AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The drive under the naked eye.

\(^1\) English in the original.
The true nature of the anacritic relation.

The fetishist solution.

The paroxysm of perversion.

The transitory perversion of a phobic patient.

The analytic conception of the object relation has already known a certain historical realization. What I am trying to demonstrate takes it in a direction that partly differs, and partly remains the same -- but the sole fact that it is inserted here in a different constellation gives it in every respect a signification that is different.

At the point at which we have arrived, it would be well to punctuate the signification that the object relation takes when it is put at the center of their conception of analysis by the group of those who make more and more of it. In recently rereading certain of their articles, I could see that this formulation, which has been affirmed over the course of years, is now gathering pace, and ends in a conception that is very firmly articulated.

Not long ago, I wished ironically that someone, in some text, truly present the concept of the object relation as it is conceptualized in a certain orientation. My wish has been amply fulfilled by more than one, and if the formulation was rather an enfeebling of it by the one who had introduced this concept with regard to obsessional neurosis, Bouvet, others have made an effort at precision.

1

The article of MM. Pierre Marty and Michael Fain on L'Importance de la motricité dans la relation d'objet (The Importance of Motricity in Object Relations), published in the January-June 1955 number of the Revue française de psychanalyse, gives you a living example of the dominant conception. So I am going to summarize this work, while warning you that things will certainly appear to go much further when you read the article itself, than in the few words that I can pronounce here.
The relation between the analysand and the analyst is conceived from the outset as being established between a subject, the patient, and an external object, the analyst. To express it in our vocabulary, the analyst is conceived as being real. The couple is supposed in itself alone to be the animating element of the analytic development. The tension of the analytic situation is conceived on the following basis -- between a subject, lying on the couch or not, and the external object that is the analyst, the only thing in principle that can be established and manifested is what is called the primitive relationship of the drive. This is normally manifested by motor activity -- that is the presupposition for the development of the analytic relation.

It follows that we shall find the final word of what happens at the level of the drive in small traces carefully observed, in the subject's different sketches at motor reaction. It is there that the drive, in some way, is localized, and experienced as living by the analyst. The subject being forced to contain his movements by the relation as established in the analytic convention, it is precisely here that there is localized in the mind of the analyst what must become manifest, that is to say, the drive as it is emerging.

In the end, the situation as it is basically conceived can only be exteriorized in an erotic aggression. If the latter does not manifest itself, it is because it is agreed that it will not become manifest, but it is to be hoped that its erection will surge up, if one can say that, at every instant. It is precisely to the degree that, within the analytic convention, because of the rule, the motor manifestation of the drive cannot occur, that we shall be allowed to perceive what interferes with the constituent situation, and that we shall see superimposed on the relation with the external object a relation with an internal object. According to the article in question, the subject in fact has a relation with an internal object, which is the person who is present, but caught in the imaginary mechanisms already instituted within the subject, and become the object of a fantasmatic relation. Between this imaginary object and the real object, there exists a certain discordance, with regard to which, at every moment, the analyst will be
judged, gauged, and will have to model his interventions. As there is, according to this conception, no one else to enter into play in the analytic situation, apart from those who are there, one of these authors, followed by all the others, has been led to give a certain value to the notion of the neurotic distance that the subject imposes on the object. The fantasmatic, or internal, object will have to be, at least in this suspended position it is in, and in a way that is lived by the subject, reduced to a real distance, which is that between the subject and the analyst. It is thus that the subject will realize his analyst as a real presence.

The authors are going very far here. I have already several times alluded to the fact that one of these authors, it is true during the postulancy of his career, had given as the crucial turning of an analysis the moment when his analysand could smell him. This was not a metaphor, it was not a matter of his being able to smell him psychologically, it was the moment when the patient had perceived the odor of the analyst. The appearance of this relation of scent, its position in the foreground, is a mathematical consequence of such a conception of the analytic relation. From the moment that the latter is conceived as a real position, simply restrained, within which little by little a distance must be realized, which is the active and actual distance with regard to the analyst, it is certain that one of the most direct modes of the relation to the other will be that apprehension from a distance provided by scent.

Know that I have not taken an exceptional example here, but that this has been repeated several times. It really seems that one is tending more and more in this milieu to give a pivotal importance to such modes of apprehension.

That, then, is how one arrives at conceptualizing the analytic position when one believes that it is inscribed in the situation of a real relation between two personages, that they are separated in this enclosure by a conventional barrier, and that something must be realized there. Having seen the theoretical formulation, let us now see its practical consequences.

It is clear from the beginning that so exorbitant a conception cannot be pushed to its final consequences. On the other hand, if what I am teaching
you is true, even if the practitioner shares such a conception, the situation in which he operates still does not really become what the said conception stipulates. It is not enough to conceive it as such for it to be as one conceives. One will draw it askew because of the way in which one conceives it, but what it really is remains all the same what I am trying to express for you by the schema which shows the intervention and crossing of the symbolic relation and the imaginary relation, one serving as the filter of the other. The situation is not annulled however much one misconstrues it, and that shows the insufficiency of this conception very well. But inversely, this insufficiency can be of some consequence in the manner of bringing the whole situation to a good term.

It is thus that the analytic situation comes to be conceived as a real situation, in which an operation of reduction of the imaginary to the real is accomplished. Within the framework of this operation there unfold a certain number of phenomena which will allow us to situate the different stages in which the subject remained more or less stuck, or fixed, in the imaginary relation. One thus accomplishes what one calls the exhaustion of his various essentially imaginary positions, and the pregenital relation becomes more and more the essential of what is explored in analysis.

The only thing that is in no way clarified by such a conception of the analytic situation, and it is not negligible since everything is there, can be expressed thus -- one does not know why one is there talking. One does not know it, but that does not, however, mean that one can do without it. Nothing is said about the function of language and speech in this position. We shall also see the special value that is given to a single impulsive verbalization, to cries towards the analyst of the sort -- Why don't you answer me? You will find it in these authors, punctuated in the most precise way. A verbalization has importance for them only in so far as it is impulsive, that is to say, is a motor manifestation.

In what does this operation of regulating the distance to the internal object, to which all of technique is submitted, end? Our schema allows us to conceive it.
The line a-a' concerns the imaginary relation, which links the subject as more or less discordant, divided, open to fragmentation, to the narcissistic unifying image, which is that of the small other. On the line S-A, which is not yet one, since it must be established, the relation of the subject to the Other is produced. The Other is not simply the other who is there, but is literally the place of speech. There is already structured in the speaking relation, this beyond, this great Other beyond the other whom you apprehend imaginarily, this supposed Other who is the subject as such, the subject in whom your speech is constituted because he can not only receive it, perceive it, but can also respond to it. It is on this line that everything that is of the transferential order is established, the imaginary playing there precisely the role of filter, indeed, of obstacle. Of course, in every neurosis, the subject has already, one might say, his own ruling order. The order with regard to the image in effect serves him in both understanding, [*entendre*] and not understanding what there is to understand in the place of speech.

Let us not say any more than that. If our effort, our interest, bears uniquely on the imaginary relation which is there in a transverse position with regard to the advent of speech, if everything is misconstrued in the relation between the imaginary tension and what must be realized, brought to light, concerning the unconscious symbolic relation -- and yet it is the whole analytic doctrine that is there in its potential state --, if we forget that there is something which must allow the subject to achieve himself, to realize himself both as history and as intention, if we neglect the link between the imaginary relation and the symbolic, and the impossibility of the symbolic ascent which constitutes neurosis, if we do not ceaselessly think of each with regard to the other, if we only interest ourselves in what those who hold this conception call the distance from the object, and in order to annihilate it, so much is it likely if one is interested only in that -- that it will be sufficient for you to know that we already have the results. Yes, subjects have already come to us who have passed by this style of understanding and proof. What is absolutely certain in a certain number of cases, and precisely in cases of obsessional neurosis,
is that by making the entire development of the analytic situation a pursuit of the reduction of this famous distance which is said to be characteristic of the object relation in obsessional neurosis, we shall obtain what one could call paradoxical reactions of perversion.

We have already observed phenomena that are completely out of the ordinary, which scarcely existed in analytic literature before this technical mode was put into the foreground. I am thinking, for example, of the explosion, the precipitation of a homosexual attachment for an object which was in some way paradoxical, which remained there like an artifact, a sort of glaze or crystallization of an image around the objects which were within the subject's reach. The phenomenon can show a quite durable persistence.

All that is not astonishing if we refer to the imaginary triad.

2

At the point to which I had pushed things the last time, you saw the beginning of a line of research that concerned the imaginary triad mother-child-phallus, as a prelude to the coming into play of the symbolic relation, which occurs only with the fourth function, that of the father, introduced by the dimension of the Oedipus.

The triangle is in itself pre-Oedipal. It is only isolated by abstraction, and interests us only in as much as it is then taken up again in the quartet which is constituted by the entry into play of the paternal function, beginning with what we could call the fundamental disappointment of the child. This is produced when he recognizes -- we have left open the question of how -- not only that he is not the sole object for his mother, but that what interests the mother, an interest more or less strongly accentuated according to the case, is the phallus. Starting with this recognition, he must perceive in the second place that the mother is truly deprived, that she herself lacks this object. That is the point at which we had arrived the last time.
I showed it to you by alluding to the case of a transitory phobia in a very young child. It is a highly favorable case for studying phobia, because the events occur at the border of the Oedipal relation. There is at first a double imaginary disappointment -- discovery by the child of the phallus that she lacks, then, later, perception that the mother, this mother who is at the boundary of the symbolic and the real, also lacks the phallus. There follows an appeal made by the child to a term which could sustain this unsustainable relation. Thus the blossoming of the phobia, with the surging up of that fantasmatic being, the dog, which intervenes here as properly speaking responsible for the whole situation, the one who bites, who castrates, thanks to which the whole situation is thinkable, symbolically livable, at least for a provisional period.

When the harnessing of the three imaginary objects is broken, there is more than one solution possible. This solution is always invoked, whether the situation be normal or abnormal.

What happens in the normal Oedipal situation? It is by the intermediary of a certain rivalry between the subject and the father, punctuated by an alternating identification in the relations, that something is established which will allow the subject to see phallic power conferred, within certain limits, precisely those which introduce him to the symbolic relation, to phallic potency. That occurs differently according to the position, girl or boy.

For the boy, it is completely clear. I told you the other day that the child as real is taken by the mother as the symbol of her lack of the object, of her imaginary appetite for the phallus. The normal issue of this situation is that the child symbolically receives the phallus that he needs. But for him to need it, he must first have been menaced by the agency of castration, which is originally the paternal agency. It is on the symbolic plane, that is to say here on the plane of a sort of pact, of right to the phallus, that the virile identification which is at the basis of the normative Oedipal relation is established.

I will introduce a lateral remark here, concerning the formulations that one finds written by Freud to introduce the distinction between the
anaclitic relation and the narcissistic relation. They are extremely singular, indeed, paradoxical.

In the types of libidinal relation in the adolescent, Freud distinguishes two types of love object, the object of anaclitic love, which bears the mark of an early dependence on the mother, and the object of narcissistic love, which is modeled on the narcissistic image of the subject, which we have tried to elaborate here by showing its roots in the specular relation to the other.

The word anaclitic, though we owe it to Freud, is really poorly made, for it does not truly have in Greek the meaning that Freud gives it, which is indicated by the German word Anlehnnung -- it is a relation of leaning against. That also lends itself to all sorts of misunderstandings, and some have gone so far as to make a defensive reaction of this leaning against. In fact, if one reads Freud, one sees perfectly well that it is a matter of a need for support, which asks only an opening on the side of a relation of dependence.

If one pushes further, one will see that there are singular contradictions in the formulation of opposition that Freud gives for these two modes of relation, anaclitic and narcissistic. He is very curiously led to speak of the anaclitic relation as a need to be loved which is much greater than the need to love. Inversely, and very paradoxically, the narcissist suddenly appears in a light that is surprising. In effect, an element of activity seems inherent in the very particular behavior of the narcissist. The latter appears active in as much as, up until a certain point, he always misconstrues the other. That is just the contrary of the need to love in which Freud garbs him, and which he gives him as an attribute, making of him in some way the natural locus for what, in another vocabulary, we call the oblative, which can only be disconcerting.

It is, once again, in a misconstruction of the position of intersubjective elements that the paradoxical perspectives have their origin, and also their justification.

Where the anaclitic relation is interesting, that is when it persists in the adult, it is always conceived as a pure and simple survival, or
prolongation, of what one calls an infantile position. Freud, in his article on libidinal types, calls this neither more nor less than the erotic position, which shows very well that it is the most open position. One misconstrues its essence in not perceiving this -- it is in so far as the male subject, in the symbolic relation, is invested with the phallus as such, as belonging to him and as being a legitimate exercise for him, that he becomes the bearer of the object of desire for the object which succeeds the maternal object, the object that is refound, and marked by the relation to the early mother who is in principle his object in the normal Oedipal position -- and this since the origin of Freud's communication -- namely, woman. It is in so far as the woman depends on him, on the phallus of which he is thenceforth the master, the representation, the depository, that the position becomes anaclitic.

The relation of dependence is established in as much as, identifying with the other, the objectal partner, the subject knows that he is indispensable to her, that it is he and he alone who satisfies her, because in principle he is the sole depository of this object which is the object of the mother's desire. It is as a function of such an achievement of the Oedipal position that the subject is in a position which we can qualify, from a certain perspective, as optimal with regard to the object that is refound, successor of the early maternal object with regard to which he becomes, himself, the indispensable object, and knows himself to be indispensable. One part of the erotic life of subjects who participate in this libidinal version is entirely conditioned by the need, once experienced and assumed, of the Other, the maternal woman, in so far as she needs to find in him her object, which is the phallic object. That is what makes the essence of the anaclitic relation, in contrast to the narcissistic relation.

This parenthesis is intended to show you the usefulness of putting the dialectic of the three first objects into play, with the fourth term, namely the father, which embraces them all and links them in the symbolic relation. This term introduces the symbolic relation, and with it the possibility of transcending the relation of frustration or of object lack in the relation of castration, which is something completely different, for it
introduces this object lack in a dialectic in which one takes and one gives, one institutes and one invests, in short, a dialectic which confers on this lack the dimension of a pact, a law, a prohibition, and particularly, that of incest.

Let us come back to our subject, and ask ourselves what happens if, because of a default in the symbolic relation, the imaginary relation becomes the rule and the measure in the anaclitic relation. It can happen, in fact, that an accident of development or a historic incident damages the links of the mother-child relation with regard to a third object, the phallic object, which is both what the woman lacks and what the child has discovered as lacking in the mother. Dis-accord, or non-link, or destruction of links, a coherence is lacking. To re-establish it, there are other modes than the symbolic. There are imaginary modes, which are not typical.

There is for example the child's identification with the mother. Starting with an imaginary displacement with regard to his maternal partner, the child will make the phallic choice in her place, and will realize for her the assumption of her longing towards the phallic object.

---

[Schema, p. 85]

Schema of fetishism (2) (Spanier, page 87)

SCHEMA OF FETISHISM (2)

---

2 English in the original.
This schema is nothing other than that of the fetishist perversion. It is, if you will, one example of a solution. There is a way that is more direct. Other solutions exist for access to the lack of the object. Already on the imaginary plane, the lack of the object properly constitutes the human path, that of the realization of mar's relation to his existence, in so far as it can be put into question. That is already enough to make of him something different from the animal, and from all of the animal relations that are possible on the imaginary plane. This imaginary access to the lack of the object is accomplished within certain specific, extra-historical conditions, which is how the paroxysm of perversion always presents itself.

Perversion in effect has the property of realizing a mode of access to that beyond of the image of the other which characterizes the human dimension. But it realizes it only in moments like those that are always produced in paroxysms of perversion, moments of syncope within the history of the subject. One observes a convergence or a rise towards the moment which can be very significantly qualified as a passage à l'acte, a shift into action. During this passage à l'acte, something is realized, which is fusion, and access to a beyond. The Freudian anaclitic theory formulates this transindivdual dimension as such, and calls Eros the union of two individuals, in which each is torn from himself and for an instant that is more or less fragile and transitory, indeed even virtual, is a constituent part of this unity. Such a unity is realized at certain moments in perversion, but the specific of perversion is precisely that this unity can only be realized in moments that are not symbolically ordained.

In fetishism, the subject himself says that in the end he finds his object, his exclusive object, all the more satisfying because it is inanimate. That way at least, he can be at peace, assured of not having any

---

3 We are retaining the French expression passage à l'acte as a formal term with no technical English equivalent. It occurs in French texts frequently coupled with the English term acting out, which French authors give in English, as being without a technical equivalent in French.
disappointments. To love a slipper is really to have the object of one's desires within reach. An object deprived of every subjective, intersubjective, indeed trans-subjective property is more secure. As for realizing the condition of lack as such, the fetishist solution is incontestably one of the most conceivable, and one finds it realized effectively.

The specific of imaginary relations being that they are always perfectly reciprocal, since they are mirror relations, we must also expect to see from time to time in the fetishist the appearance of a position, not of identification with the mother, but of identification with the object. That is effectively what we shall see occur during the course of an analysis of a fetishist, for this position as such is always what is most satisfying. That for a brief instant the fascinating illumination of the object which was the maternal object should satisfy the subject does not suffice to establish the erotic balance of the whole. And in fact, if it is with the object that he momentarily identifies, he will then lose, one could perhaps say, his primitive object, namely the mother, and will consider himself to be a destructive object for her. This perpetual play, this profound double vision, marks the entire fetishist manifestation.

That is so evident that one Phyllis Greenacre, who seriously tried to go deeply into the foundation of the fetishist relation, offers the formula that it seems that one is in the presence of a subject who would like, with extreme rapidity, to show you his own image in two opposing mirrors. This formula came out of her just like that, without her knowing at the moment very well why, for it was like a fly in the soup, but she suddenly had the feeling that that was it -- the subject is never there where he is for the good reason that he has left his place, he has passed into the specular relation of the mother with the phallus, and he is alternatively at one and the other position. There is stabilization only in so far as one grasps this unique, privileged, and at the same time impermanent symbol, which is the precise object of fetishism, namely, the something which symbolizes the phallus.
Thus it is on an analogous, if not identical, plane of relations that we can conceive as by nature essentially perverse what the results, at least transitory, show, in a certain management of the analytic relation, when one centers it entirely on the object relation by bringing in only the imaginary and the real, and when one rules the whole accommodation of the imaginary relation on a pretended real of the analyst's presence.

That is what we are going to see now.

In my Rome Report,\(^4\) I made an allusion to the use of this type of object relation in analysis. I compared it then to a sort of bundling pushed to its supreme limit as a psychological trial.

This little passage may have passed unnoticed, but I enlighten the reader by a note which specifies that bundling is a very precise practice, which still exists in the sort of cultural islands where old customs persist. Stendhal talks of it as a particularity of Swiss fantasies, and it is also encountered in the south of Germany, a geography which is not indifferent.

Bundling is a conception of amorous relations, a technique, a pattern\(^5\) of relations between male and female, which consists in this -- in certain conditions, having to do with a partner who approaches the group in a way that is privileged, one allows that, as a manifestation of hospitality, someone of the household, generally the daughter, may offer that he share her bed, on condition that no contact take place. Hence, the word bundling -- the girl is frequently enveloped in a sheet, so that all the conditions for approach are there, except the last. What could pass for a happy fantasy of


\(^5\) English in the original.
mores in which we may perhaps regret not participating -- it might be amusing -- merits a certain attention, for there is nothing forced in saying that seventeen or eighteen years after the death of Freud, the analytic situation has paradoxically come to be conceived and formalized in this way.

In the article of Fain and Marty, there is a report of a session in which all of the movements of the patient are noted to the extent that she manifests something which might be oriented towards the analyst, a sort of more or less restrained, more or less distant, impulse [élan] towards the one who is behind her back. The text is quite striking, and as it has appeared since I wrote my report, it proves that I have forced nothing in saying that it is to this end, and its psychological consequences, that the practice of analysis has been reduced in a certain conception of it.

We frequently find these paradoxes in the uses and customs of certain cultural islands, as for example in that Protestant sect of Dutch origin, on which someone has done some rather advanced studies, and which has very precisely preserved the local customs related to a religious group, the Amish sect. No doubt all of that springs today from remains that are not understood, but we can find a coordinated and deliberate formulation of it in a whole tradition that one could call religious or even symbolic. Everything that we know of the practice of courtly love and of the sphere in which it was localized in the Middle Ages, implies a very rigorous technical elaboration of the amorous approach, which included long restrained stays in the presence of the loved object, aiming at the realization of that beyond which is sought in love, the beyond which is properly erotic. Once one has the key, one finds points of emergence of these techniques and these traditions explicitly formulated in other cultural climates, for this sort of research into the realization of love has been propounded several times in the history of humanity in a way that is completely conscious.

What is aimed for and effectively attained is without any doubt a beyond of the physiological short-circuit, if one may put it so. To attain it, a deliberate use of the imaginary relation as such is made. These practices
may seem perverse in the eyes of the naïve. In reality, they are no more perverse than any other regulation of amorous approach in a definite sphere of mores, or, as one puts it, *patterns*. That is worth signaling out as a point of reference, in order to know where we stand.

Let us now take the case which is described in the little bulletin cited the last time, which reports the sincere questions of the members of a certain group concerning object relations. We have here, from the pen of someone who has taken a rank in the analytic community, Ruth Lebovici, the observation of what she justly calls a phobic subject.

This phobic subject, whose activity had been rather reduced, has arrived at an almost complete inactivity. His most manifest symptom is the fear of being too tall, and he always presents himself in a posture that is extremely bent over. Almost everything in his relations with a professional milieu has become impossible for him. He leads a reduced life in the shelter of the family milieu, but is not without a mistress, older than he by fifteen years, who was provided him by his mother. He is in this constellation when the analyst takes him on, and begins to tackle the question with him.

The diagnosis is finely made, and that of phobia does not pose any difficulty, despite the paradoxical fact that the phobogenic object does not seem to be external at first sight. It is, however, in that we see the appearance at one moment of a repetitive dream which is the model of an exteriorized anxiety. In this particular case, the object is only discovered at a second try. It is a perfectly recognizable phobic object, a marvelously illustrated substitute for an entirely deficient paternal image -- after a certain time, one obtains the emergence of the image of a man in armor, provided with a particularly aggressive instrument which is nothing other than a tube of *fly-tox*, which will destroy all those tiny phobic objects -- insects. The subject is revealed to fear being tracked and suffocated in the dark by this man in armor, and this fear is not for naught in the general equilibrium of this phobic structure.

---

6 English in the original.
The analyst who has charge of the subject published the observation under the title *Perversion sexuelle transitoire au cours d’un traitement psychoanalytique* (A Transitory Sexual Perversion during Psychoanalytic Treatment). It is thus not a forcing on my part to introduce the question of the perverse reaction, since, according to the author herself, the interest of the observation lies in that.

It is little to say that the author is not at peace. She has perfectly perceived that the reaction which she calls perverse -- it is a label -- has appeared in very precise circumstances in which she has her part. The fact that she raises the question about this moment proves that she is conscious that the question is there. What has happened? Having finally gotten a glimpse of the phobic object, the man in armor, she interpreted it as being the phallic mother. Why the phallic mother when it is truly a man in armor with all of his heraldic character? During this whole observation, the questions that the author raises are reported with a fidelity that I believe is incontestable, and in every case, they are well underlined. The author wonders in particular about the following point -- *Have I made an interpretation that was not right?* That proves already that she is conscious the question is there.

In fact, immediately afterwards, a perverse reaction appeared, and they then engaged in nothing less than a period of three years in which the subject first developed stages of a perverse fantasy which consisted of imagining himself urinating, seen by a woman who, highly excited, comes to solicit him to have amorous relations with her. There was then a reversal of this position, with the subject, masturbating or not, watching a woman urinating. Finally, in a third stage, there was the effective realization of this position -- the subject discovered in a cinema a little space providentially provided with windows thanks to which he could effectively observe women in the w.-c. next door while he himself was in his own cell, rejoicing, or masturbating.

---

7 *S'esboudissant.* Lacan uses the archaic spelling of a word that is already in archaic or literary use, *s'éboudir,* "to rejoice," as in,"to rejoice my soul."
The author herself wonders about the determining value of her mode of interpretation in the precipitation of what at first had the air of a fantasmatic crystallization of an element that was evidently a component part of the subject, and which is not the phallic mother, but the mother in her relation with the phallus. But the author gives us the key to this idea that the phallic mother is also there, when she asks about the general conduct of the treatment, and observes that she herself has been, in the end, much more prohibiting than the mother had ever been. Everything makes it appear that the entity of the phallic mother is produced here because of what the author calls her own counter-transferential position. In following the analysis closely, one absolutely cannot doubt it. Since the imaginary relation develops not without the aid of the analytic false move, let us see what is there on the analyst's side.

First, the subject reports a dream in which, finding himself with a person of his past towards whom he declares he has amorous impulses, he says he is hindered by the presence of another feminine subject who also played a role in his history, and whom he had seen urinate in front of him at a much later period of his childhood, that is, past the age of thirteen. The analyst intervenes in the following way — *No doubt you prefer to interest yourself in watching a woman urinate than to make the effort to go after another woman who might please you, but who is married.* The interpretation is without a doubt a bit forced, for the masculine personage is only indicated by associations, but the analyst thinks of thus reintroducing the truth, I mean the Oedipus complex. One must admit that to have the alleged husband of the mother intervene in order to reintroduce the Oedipus complex has all the character of a provocation, above all if one knows that it is the husband of the analyst who sent the patient to her. It is at precisely this moment that the turn is produced, the
progressive turning in the fantasy of observation, from the sense of being observed to that of himself observing.\(^8\)

Secondly, as if that were not enough, in response to a demand by the subject to slow down the rhythm of the sessions, the analyst replies -- You are manifesting your passive positions now, because you know very well that you will in no way obtain that. At that moment, the fantasy crystallizes completely, which proves that there is something more. The subject, who understands a certain number of things in his relation of impossibility with regard to attaining the feminine object, ends by developing his fantasies within the treatment itself, and speaks for example of his fear of urinating on the couch, etc. He begins to have those reactions that indicate a certain narrowing of the distance to the real object, such as spying the legs of the analyst, which the latter notes, by the way, with a certain satisfaction. There is in fact something that is at the boundary of the real situation, as if we were witnessing the constitution of not the non-phallic mother, but the aphallic. What in fact is at the source of the institution of the fetishist position, is very precisely that the subject stops at a certain level of his investigation and his observation of the woman, with regard to whether she has or does not have the organ in question.

This position little by little leads the subject to say to himself -- My God, this can only be resolved if I go to bed with my analyst. He says it. The analyst, who begins to find that this is getting a bit on her nerves, then makes this remark -- You are amusing yourself now, scaring yourself with something that you know very well will never happen. Later, she asks herself anxiously -- Have I done well in saying that?

In fact, anyone might wonder about the degree of mastery in an intervention like that one. This somewhat brutal reminder of the conventions of the situation is entirely in accord with the idea of the analytic position as real. It is just after this intervention which brings things to a head, that the subject passes definitively to the act, and finds in the real the perfect place, the chosen place, which is, he says, the set-up of

\(^{8}\) Italics in the original.
the little urinal in the Champs Elysées. This time he is truly at the right
real distance from the object, from whom he is separated by a wall, and
whom he can very well observe, not as a phallic mother, but as a mother
who is aphallic. He suspends his erotic activity at that for a certain time,
having found here so great a satisfaction that he declares that up until the
moment of this discovery, he had lived like an automaton, but now
everything is changed.

That is what things came to. In giving you a resume of this observation,
I wanted simply to put you within an ace of the fact that the concept of the
distance from the object-analyst, taken as a real object, this notion taken as
a reference, cannot be without effects, and that they are perhaps not in the
end the most desirable effects.

I am not telling you how the treatment ends. One would need to
examine it carefully, for each detail is rich in what it teaches. The last
session is avoided, the subject also makes some varicosity operate.
Everything is there, the timid attempt at an access to castration, and a
certain liberty that can derive from it. After that it is judged that this is
sufficient, the subject returns to his mistress, the same that he had at the
beginning, who is fifteen years older than he, and as he no longer speaks of
his great height, it is considered that the phobia has been cured.
Unfortunately, he no longer thinks of anything other than the size of his
shoes. They are much too large, and he loses his balance, or they are too
small and they squeeze his feet, so that the turning, the transformation of
the phobia is complete. After all, why not consider that as the end of the
analytic work? From the experimental point of view, it is surely not
without interest.

The so-called right distance from the real object — it is like a sign of
recognition among initiates — is given as acquired, and reaches its height at
the moment when the subject in the presence of his analyst perceives the
smell of urine. The analyst considers that this is the moment when the
distance from the real object — all throughout the observation it is
indicated that this is the point in which every neurotic relation errs — is
finally accommodated to its just extent. Of course, this fact coincides with the apogee of the perversion.

This is not, strictly speaking, a perversion -- and the author does not dissimulate it --; it is rather an artifact. Such phenomena, while they may be permanent or extremely durable, are still susceptible to rupture or to dissolution, sometimes quite abruptly. Thus, in this case, after a certain time the subject gets himself caught by a female usher, which occurs on the day after he visits the particularly propitious place that the real had offered him at the right moment.

Yes, the real always offers all that one needs at the right moment, when one has finally been regulated to the right distance by the right paths.

19 December 1956
PERVERSE PATHS OF DESIRE
THE PRIMACY OF THE PHALLUS
AND THE YOUNG HOMOSEXUAL GIRL

Freud, the girl, and the phallus.
The signifier Niederkommt.
The lies of the unconscious.
The service of The Lady.
The beyond of the object.

Today we are going to take a leap into a problem that normally we should have encountered much further on in our discussion if we had been proceeding step by step. The problem is that of the perversion, in quotation marks, the most problematic that there is from the perspective of psychoanalysis, namely that of feminine homosexuality.

Why have I proceeded thus? Partly, by contingency. But it is certain that we could not possibly examine object relations this year without encountering the feminine object.

The problem is not so much one of knowing how we encounter the feminine object in analysis. That gives us matter enough for edification -- the subject of this encounter is not natural. I demonstrated that sufficiently last trimester, in the first part of this seminar, when I reminded you that
from the moment of her encounter by man, the feminine subject is always called upon to inscribe herself in a sort of refinding, which places her from the start in a position characterized by the ambiguity between natural relations and symbolic relations. This ambiguity is precisely where, as I am trying to demonstrate, the analytic dimension resides.

The problem now is what the feminine object thinks about it, what her path is from her first approaches to the natural and primordial object of desire, namely, the maternal breast. This path is even less natural than for the masculine subject. How does the feminine object enter into this dialectic?

It is not for nothing that today I am calling the woman object, because she must at some moment of this dialectic enter into the function of the object. Only, this position is highly unnatural, since it is a position at second remove, which has no interest in being qualified as such other than because it is a subject who takes it.

Feminine homosexuality has been given a particularly exemplary value in psychoanalysis for what it has been able to reveal of the stages of the woman's path and of the arrests that can mark her destiny.

What at the outset is natural or biological does not cease to find a reference on the symbolic plane, where it is a matter of subjective assumption, in that the subject herself is caught in the symbolic chain. It is really there that there is question of the woman as subject, in as much as she must make a choice, about which analytic experience teaches us that no matter where it falls, it will be a compromise between what there is to attain and what cannot be attained. Feminine homosexuality is encountered each time that the discussion bears upon the stages that the woman must traverse in order to accomplish her symbolic completion. We must on this point make an exhaustive study of a certain number of texts, starting, for what is by Freud, with 1923, the date of his article on *Infantile Genital Organization*.
In this text Freud poses the primacy of phallic assumption as a principle. The phallic phase, the terminal stage of the first epoch of infantile sexuality, which is accomplished with the entry into the latency period, is a typical phase for the boy as for the girl. Genital organization gives the formula for it. It is attained by both sexes. The possession or the non-possession of the phallus is the principal differential element. There is not at this point any realization of male and female, there is awareness of that which is provided with the phallic attribute and that which is not provided with it, and not being provided with it is considered as equivalent to being castrated.

I will be precise -- for one and the other sex, that is founded upon an error, Maldonne, and this error is itself founded on an ignorance -- it is not a matter of misconstruction [méconnaissance], but of real ignorance. On one hand, ignorance of the fecundating role of the male's semen -- on the other hand, ignorance of the very existence of the feminine organ.

These absolutely enormous statements demand some exegesis to be understood. We hardly find ourselves here before a description to be taken at the level of real experience.

An objection has often been raised, moreover with the greatest confusion, by authors who entered the action later. A very great number of facts lead us to admit that at least in the girl, a lived presence is effectively revealed -- if not of the real role of the male in the act of procreation, at least of the existence of the feminine organ. That there is in the early experience of the little girl something that corresponds to a localization of the vagina, that there are emotions, indeed even a precocious vaginal masturbation, can scarcely be contested. That is at least found in a certain number of cases. Hence the debate as to whether the predominance of the phallic phase in the girl must be attributed to existence of the clitoris, whether the libido -- let us make this term synonymous for all erogenous experience -- is at the beginning exclusively concentrated on the clitoris,

1 Maldonne. The word literally means "badly given." The term is used in card games to mean a bad deal or a false hand. "Error" is the accepted figurative sense.
and is only diffused at the end of a long and painful displacement, which requires a whole long detour.

It is surely not in these terms that Freud's affirmation must be understood. If one situates it thus, too many facts which are, moreover, confused allow us to raise all sorts of objections, as Karen Horney, for example, has done. Her objections are determined by realist premises, which imply that all méconnaissance supposes in the unconscious a certain knowledge of the coaptation of the two sexes and that in consequence, there could not be a prevalence in the girl of the organ which does not properly belong to her, except on the ground of a denial of the existence of the vagina, for which one would then have to account. From these hypotheses it is accepted a priori that one will try to retrace the genesis of the term phallic with regard to the girl. If we go into the details, we shall see that it is only a reconstruction, whose necessity derives from a certain number of theoretical premises, in part expressed by the author herself, which tend towards a misunderstanding of Freud's affirmation. The last fact to which the author refers, the primordial experience of the vaginal organ, is marked with uncertainty, and the reference that is made to it remains very prudent, even reserved.

Freud's affirmation is founded on his experience. Though it is advanced with prudence by him, indeed with that portion of uncertainty which is so characteristic in his presentation of this discovery, it is still affirmed as primordial. It is a fixed point. The paradoxical affirmation of phallicism is the very pivot on which theoretical interpretation must be developed. It is what we shall try to do.

Eight years later, in 1931, Freud writes something even more astounding about feminine sexuality, which takes his statement of 1923 further. In the interval, an extremely active discussion had arisen among his students, which contains a harvest of speculations, whose trace one finds in Karen Horney, in Jones, and in others, and which constitutes a veritable jungle growth of approximations. After having had to devote myself to that during this vacation, it seemed to me extremely difficult to give an account of it without falsifying it, in so far as it is distinguished by
the profoundly unmastered character of the categories that are put into play.

To give an account of this debate and be understood, one cannot proceed otherwise than by mastering it, and mastering it is already to change its axis and nature completely, and thus, to a certain degree, not to give a truly just perspective of what is at stake. This problem is really correlative with the second aim of our work this year, which is to show, in parallel with the theoretical examination of object relations, how analytic practice itself is inflexibly engaged in a deviation that cannot be mastered.

To return to the precise instance that concerns us today, it seemed to me this morning that one exemplary image, gleaned from one of these articles, could be retained from the mass of facts.

All of the writers admit that at the turning point in her evolution, at the moment of entering the Oedipus complex, the little girl begins to desire a child from the father as a substitute for the missing phallus, and that the disappointment of not receiving it plays an essential role in making her turn back from the paradoxical path by which she entered the Oedipus complex, namely, identification with the father, to take up the feminine position again. To show in this regard that the privation of the child desired from the father can come into play with a pressing incidence, and can precipitate the movement of the Oedipus, which is given as being always essentially unconscious, one of the authors cites as an example the case of a little girl, who, being in analysis, was found according to him to have, by that fact, more light than another might on what was happening in her unconscious. Following some enlightenment that had been given to her, she got up every morning and asked if the little child from her father had arrived, and if it would come today or tomorrow. And it was with rage and tears that she asked this every morning.

This detail seems to me exemplary of what is at stake in this deviation in analytic practice, a reference which is always there to accompany our theoretical exploration of the object relation. We can put a hand on the way in which a certain mode of understanding and attacking frustrations leads the analyst, in reality, to a style of intervention whose effects are not
only doubtful, but are manifestly opposed to what is at stake in the process of analytic interpretation. The notion we might have that a child given by the father appears at a given moment of evolution as an imaginary object, a substitute for that missing phallus which plays an essential role in the evolution of the little girl, cannot be legitimately brought into play just at any time and anyhow. It can only be brought in later, or even at a contemporary stage, on the condition that the child, in so far as the subject has to deal with it, enters into the play of a series of symbolic resonances concerning what the subject has experienced in the past -- possessive or destructive reactions at the moment of the phallic crisis, with what that carries of the truly problematic at the stage to which it corresponds. In short, everything that relates to the prevalence or predominance of the phallus at a particular stage in the child's evolution only has its incidence after the fact.

The phallus can only be brought into play in so far as it is necessary, at a given moment, to symbolize some event, whether it be the late arrival of a child for someone who is in a close relation with the child, or even more, when for the subject herself the question of her own motherhood and possession of a child is raised. To bring in an element that is not inscribed in the symbolic structuration of the subject, to precipitate, by speech, on the symbolic plane, a certain relation of imaginary substitution for what is at that moment lived by the subject in a totally different way, is already to sanction an organization, and to introduce a sort of legitimacy. It is literally to consecrate frustration as such, and to install it at the center of experience.

Frustration can only be legitimately introduced as such in interpretation if it has effectively passed to the level of the unconscious, as the correct theory tells us. At the beginning, frustration is only an evanescent moment. It only has a function for us, analysts, and on a purely theoretical plane, as an articulation of what has happened. Its realization by the subject is by definition excluded, because it is extraordinarily unstable. Frustration, as it is lived at the outset, is of importance or interest only in so far as it opens into one or the other of the
two planes that I have distinguished -- castration or privation. In fact, castration is nothing other than what installs the necessity of frustration in its true order, which transcends it and installs it in a law that gives it another value. It is also what consecrates the existence of privation, because the idea of privation is in no way conceivable on the plane of the real. A privation can only be effectively conceived for a being who articulates something on the symbolic plane.

We can understand all that very well in those interventions that are supportive in character, psychotherapeutic interventions, like for example the one that I alluded to rapidly the other day in speaking of the little girl in the care of a student of Anna Freud.

This little girl, you recall, presented the beginning of a phobia, which surged up in connection with the experience that she had had of being effectively deprived of something, in conditions different from the situation in which the child in this morning's example was caught. I showed you in what sense the phobia was a necessary displacement, and where its spring lay -- not in the fact that she did not have the phallus, but in the fact that her mother could not give it to her, and even more, that she could not give it because she did not have it herself.

The psychotherapist's intervention consists in saying to the child -- and she is right -- that all girls are like that. That might make you think that it is a matter of a reduction to the real, but it is not. The child knows very well that she does not have the phallus, but she does not know that this is the rule. That is what the therapist teaches her. The latter thus makes the lack pass onto the symbolic plane of the law. This intervention nevertheless remains debatable, and the psychotherapist questions its efficacy, which is only momentary. The phobia begins again, and is stronger, and will only be reduced when the child has been reintegrated into a complete family.

Why? In principle, her frustration should on the contrary seem to her even greater than before, since now she is confronted with a step-father, that is to say, a male who enters into the play of the family whereas up until then the mother had been a widow. She is also confronted with an
older brother. If the phobia happens finally to be reduced, it is because, literally, the subject no longer needs it as a substitute for the absence in the symbolic circuit of every phalloform element, that is to say, males.

These critical remarks above all bear on the use of the term frustration. This use is legitimized in a certain way by the fact that the essential in this dialectic is the lack of the object, rather than the object itself. Frustration thus replies very well in appearance to a conceptual notion. But what is at stake is the instability of the very dialectic of frustration.

Frustration is not privation. Why? Frustration bears upon something of which you are deprived by someone from whom you justly expect what you have asked. What is thus at play is less the object than the love of the one who can give this gift. The object of frustration is less the object than the gift.

We find ourselves here at the origin of the dialectic of frustration, in as much as it is still at a distance from the symbolic. This initial moment is always evanescent. In effect, the gift only appears at the beginning in the air of a certain gratuity. It comes from the other. What there is behind the other, namely the whole chain because of which the gift comes, is still not perceived, and it is only later that the subject will be able to perceive that the gift is much more complete that it had at first seemed, that it concerns the whole human symbolic chain. At the beginning, there is only the confrontation with the other and the gift which surges up.

The gift, if it is given as such, in every case makes the object vanish as object. If the demand is satisfied, the object passes into the background. If the demand is not satisfied, the object vanishes with equal certainty.

Only, there is a difference. If the demand is not satisfied, the object changes in its signification. What in effect justifies the word frustration? There is frustration -- the word implies this -- only if the subject enters a claim, in as much as the object is considered to be demanded by right. At this moment, the object enters into what one could call the narcissistic air of the subject's belongings.

In both cases, I underline, the moment of frustration is an evanescent moment. It opens into something which projects us onto another plane.
than the plane of pure and simple desire. The demand in effect implies something that human experience knows well -- which means that it can never really be fulfilled as such. Satisfied or not, it is annihilated, reduced to nothing at the following stage, and is soon projected onto something else -- either onto the articulation of the symbolic chain of gifts, or onto the closed and absolutely inextinguishable register which is called narcissism, thanks to which the object is for the subject both something that is himself and is not himself, and by which he can never be satisfied, precisely in the sense that it is himself and not himself at the same time. The entry of frustration into a dialectic which situates it by legalizing it, and which also gives it a dimension of gratuity, is a condition necessary to the establishment of the symbolized order of the real in which the subject will, for example, install certain permanent privations as existing and accepted.

If one misconstrues this condition, various reconstructions of the experience and of the effects linked to the fundamental lack of the object become manifest, and introduce a whole series of impasses. The error is to want to deduce everything from desire considered as a pure element of the individual -- desire, with everything that it entails as repercussions, satisfactions, and disappointments. But the whole chain of experience can literally be conceived only by first positing the principle that nothing is articulated and built up in experience, nothing is installed as a properly analyzable conflict, unless it is from the moment when the subject enters into an order which is the order of symbols, a legal order, a symbolic order, a symbolic chain, an order of symbolic debt. It is solely starting with the entry of the subject into an order which exists prior to everything that happens to him, events, satisfactions, disappointments, that everything through which he approaches his experience -- namely, what one calls his lived experience, that confused thing that is there before -- is ordered, articulated, takes on meaning, and can be analyzed.

I can make you appreciate the soundness of this reminder -- it should be only a reminder--, nowhere better than by taking some of Freud's texts, and having you encounter them in all naïveté.
Several people spoke last night of a dubious, paradoxically wild side in certain texts of Freud. They even alluded to elements of adventure, or of diplomacy -- though one does not see why. That led me to choose for my part to bring you one of Freud's most brilliant texts, and I would almost say one of the most troubling, which may conceivably appear archaic to you, indeed out of style. It is the *Psychogenesis of a Case of Female Homosexuality*.

I would like to recall the essential articulations for you.

It concerns the daughter of a good Viennese family. For a good Viennese family in 1920, to send someone to Freud was to take a very great step. If they resolved to do it, it is because the daughter of the house -- eighteen years old, beautiful, intelligent, of a very high social class -- has become an object of concern to her parents. A very singular event has occurred -- she is running after someone older than she by ten years, a woman of the world. All sorts of details given by the family indicate that this world could perhaps be qualified as *demi-monde* according to the classification reigning then in Vienna, and considered respectable.

The attachment of the young girl, which everything reveals as events proceed to be truly passionate, puts her in a rather painful relation to her family. What follows lets us learn that these relations are not external to the inauguration of the situation. To put it plainly, the fact that it absolutely enrages the father is certainly a motive for the young girl, not in sustaining this passion, but in conducting it as she does. I am thinking of that tranquil piece of defiance with which she pursues her assiduity towards the woman in question, awaiting her in the street, the way in which she partially publicizes her affair. Without her making a demonstration of it, it is enough so that her parents, and especially her father, are ignorant of nothing. We are also told that the mother is not absolutely someone of whom one can be sure, that she has been neurotic, and that she does not really consider this so bad, or at least so serious.
They come to Freud and ask him to put things in order. He very pertinently signals the difficulties presented by a treatment when it is a question of satisfying the demands of the entourage, and very justly remarks that one does not do an analysis on command, the way one constructs a villa. He then introduces reflections on analysis that are still more extraordinary, and which will not fail to appear outmoded to some.

Freud indicates precisely that this analysis did not reach its term, but that it allowed him to see very much further, and that is why he is communicating it. Certainly, he points out, it did not allow him to change much in the destiny of this young girl. To explain, he introduces an idea which is not without foundation, although it may appear out of use, a schematic idea that must incite us to come back to certain early givens rather than to find ourselves more manageable ones. This idea is that there are two stages in an analysis -- the first, which consists in assembling everything that it is possible to know, the second, in which it is a matter of bending the resistances which still hold perfectly even though the subject already knows a good deal.

The comparison that he then introduces is not one of the least stupefying -- before a voyage one assembles the luggage, which is always complicated enough, and then one must embark and follow one's way. This reference from someone who had a phobia of railway trains and of voyages is rather piquant.

What is more enormous still is that during all of this time, he has the sentiment that effectively, nothing is working. On the other hand, he sees very well what has happened, and highlights a certain number of stages.

There was in the childhood of the subject a moment which seems not to have occurred when she was all alone, when she was able to learn from the elder of her two brothers the difference which made of her someone who did not have the essentially desirable object, the phallic object. Nevertheless, he says, the young girl had never been neurotic, no hysterical symptom was brought into the analysis, nothing in the childhood history is remarkable with regard to pathological consequences. That is why it is clinically striking to see such a late flowering of an
attitude which appears frankly abnormal to all, namely, the singular position that she occupies with regard to this ever so slightly denigrated woman.

The passionate attachment that she shows to the latter ends in an explosion, which leads her to the consultation with Freud. If it has come to the point of confiding her to him, it was in effect because a marked event had occurred.

The young girl, in her attitude of gently flirting with danger, used to go walking with the lady almost under the windows of her own house. One day, the father comes out and sees them. As he finds himself before other people as well, he throws them a blazing glance, and goes off. The lady demands to know who this person is -- *It is papa, he doesn’t seem happy.* The lady then takes the thing very badly. She had had until then a very reserved attitude with the young girl, indeed was more than cold, had not at all encouraged her assiduity, had not especially desired to have complications. So she tells her -- *Under these circumstances, we will no longer see each other.* There are in Vienna some little railways that run in a belt. They are not very far from one of the little bridges that cross them. And so the girl throws herself down. She falls, *niederkommt.* She breaks a few bones, but gets out of it.

Thus, Freud tells us, up until the moment when this attachment appeared, the young girl had had a development that was not only normal, but one which made everyone think that it was oriented very well. Did she not, *at thirteen or fourteen,* behave in such a way as to raise hopes of the most favorable development in the orientation of the feminine vocation, that of motherhood? She took care of a little boy belonging to friends of her parents so tenderly that the two families became close. However, all at once, this sort of maternal love which seemed in advance to make of her a model mother, is suddenly arrested and it is then that she begins -- for the adventure in question was not the first -- to frequent women whom Freud describes as already mature, and who are, it appears, a sort of maternal substitute.
Still, this schema does not really hold for the last person, the one who really incarnated the dramatic adventure in the course of which the analysis began, and also the problematic of a declared homosexuality. The subject in effect declares to Freud that for her there is no question of abandoning anything whatever in her pretensions, or in her object choice. She will do all that is necessary in order to deceive her family, but she will continue to maintain her ties with the person for whom she is far from having lost her taste, and who was moved enough by this extraordinary mark of devotion so as to become much more accommodating.

Freud makes some very striking remarks with regard to this relation declared and maintained by the subject, and gives them the value of an explanatory sanction, both for what occurred before the treatment, for example the suicide attempt, and for his own defeat. The first seem very pertinent. The second also, but perhaps not entirely as he understands them himself. It is the particularity of Freud's observations always to leave us extraordinary clarification, even on points which have in some way escaped him. I am alluding here to the observation of Dora, where Freud saw clearly later -- he intervened with Dora at the very time when he misconstrued her homosexuality, namely, the orientation of her question towards her own sex. Here one finds a misconception that is analogous, but it is much more instructive because much more profound.

Other remarks that Freud makes without completely exploiting them, which are none the less interesting, have to do with what was at stake in the suicide attempt, the significative act by which the crisis is crowned. The subject is intimately tied to the rise of the tension, until the moment that the conflict bursts out, and the catastrophe occurs.

How does Freud explain it? By starting with the normal orientation of the subject towards the desire to have a child from the father. It is under this heading, according to him, that we must conceive the original crisis which made the subject engage in precisely the opposite direction. There was in effect a veritable reversal of the subjective position, which Freud tries to spell out. It is a question of one of those cases in which the disappointment due to the object of desire is translated by a complete...
reversal of position -- the subject identifies with this object, which, as Freud spells out in a note, is equivalent to a regression to narcissism. When I essentially make the dialectic of narcissism the relation ego-little other, I am doing nothing other than making evident what is implicit in all the ways in which Freud expresses himself.

What then is the disappointment which operates the reversal? At the moment, towards her fifteenth year, when the subject was engaged on the way to taking possession of the imaginary child -- and she was sufficiently occupied with that for it to mark a date with regard to her past --, her mother really has another child from the father. The patient makes the acquisition of a third brother. That is the key point.

It is also the detail that appears exceptional in this observation. It is not banal that the intervention of a little brother brought into the world like that should have as a result so profound a reversal of a subject's sexual orientation. It is thus at this moment that the girl changes position. It is now a question of seeing where that is best interpreted.

We must, according to Freud, consider the phenomenon as reactionary. The term is not in the text, but it is implied, since he supposes that the resentment towards the father continues to play. This fact has the major role. This link in the situation explains the whole way that the adventure is handled. The girl is clearly aggressive towards her father. The suicide attempt follows the disappointment produced by the fact that the object of her attachment contraries her in some way that is homologous. It is not a matter of a counter-aggressive phenomenon, of a return onto the subject of aggression towards the father, combined with a sort of crumbling of the whole situation on its primitive givens, which symbolically satisfies what is at stake by a precipitation, a leveling of the objects that are truly at play. In short, when the young girl falls to the bottom of the little bridge, she accomplishes a symbolic act, which is nothing other than the niederkommen of a child being-born. It is the term used in German to say that one is "dropped."  

2 "Dropped," in the sense that one says that an animal "dropped its young."
Thus we are led to the last and original meaning of the situation.

In the second category of the remarks that Freud makes, it is a matter of explaining in what way the situation was without issue in the treatment. In as much, he says, as the resistance was not conquered, all that one could say to the patient never went further than interesting her enormously, without her abandoning her most recent positions. She maintained it all, one would say today, on the plane of intellectual interest. He metaphorically compares the reactions of the young girl with that of a lady to whom one shows various objects, and who says, from behind her lorgnette, -- *How nice!*

Freud nevertheless signals that one cannot speak of the absence of all transference. He denotes with very great perspicacity the presence of transference in the patient's dreams. In parallel with the unambiguous declarations that the patient makes of her determination to change nothing in her behavior towards the lady, her dreams announce an astonishing refloowering of the finest orientation, the anticipation of the arrival of some handsome and satisfying spouse, no less than that of the advent of an object, the fruit of this love. In short, the idyllic, almost forced character of the spouse announced by the dream appears so consonant to their common enterprise, that anyone who was not Freud would have taken the greatest hope from it.

Freud is not deceived. He sees a transference in it. It is the double of that kind of game of counter-lure that she played in response to the disappointment by the father. In effect, she has not been only provocative and aggressive with him, she has not vaunted herself shamelessly, she has made concessions to him. It was only a matter of showing him that she was deceiving him. Freud recognizes that there is something analogous in these dreams, and that their transferential significance is there -- she reproduces her fundamental position with him, the cruel game that she played with her father.
We cannot avoid here coming back to the basic relativity of the
symbolic formation, in as much as it is the fundamental line of what
constitutes the field of the unconscious for us. That is what Freud
expresses in a way that is extremely just, and which errs only in being a bit
too emphatic, when he says -- *I believe that the intention of leading me
into error was one of the formative elements of this dream. It was also an
try to gain my interest and my good disposition, probably in order to
disillusion me that much more profoundly.*

The point that is apparent here is that of the intention imputed to the
subject of captivating him, Freud, in order to make him fall from his
heights, in order to make him fall from that much higher since he is taken
captive in the situation. To hear the emphasis of this sentence, there is no
doubt that there was what we call a counter-transferential action. The
dream is deceptive, Freud retains only that, and immediately enters into a
discussion which it is fascinating to find in his pen. If the typical
manifestation of the unconscious can be deceitful, he can hear in advance
the objections that will be made to him. *If the unconscious also lies to us,
what can we trust?* his disciples will say. He gives them a long explanation
in which he shows how that can occur, and from which he concludes that
it in no way contradicts the theory.

The explanation is ever so slightly tendacious, but it still remains that
what is put into the foreground by Freud in 1920 is exactly this -- the
essential of what is in the unconscious is the relation of the subject to the
Other as such, and this relation basically implies the possibility of being
accomplished through a lie. In analysis, we are in the order of lies and of
truth.

Freud sees that very well. But something, it seems, escapes him, which
is that there is a real transference there, and that the path is open for him
to interpret the desire of deceiving. Instead of taking this path, let us put it
a bit grossly, he takes the thing as directed against him.

*It is also, he says, an attempt to wind me around her finger, to captivate
me, so that I will find her very pretty.* This additional sentence is
sufficient for our instruction. This young girl must be ravishing, if, as with
Dora, Freud is not completely free in the affair. In affirming that the worst is promised him, which he wishes to avoid, he senses himself disillusioned. That is to say that he is entirely ready to make himself illusions. In putting himself on guard against these illusions, he has already entered the game. He realizes the imaginary play. He makes it become real because he is within it. And that does not fail.

How does he interpret? He says to the young girl that she intends to deceive him as she is accustomed to deceiving her father. That comes down to cutting short immediately at what he has realized as the imaginary relation. His counter-transference could have served him in a certain way -- but on condition that it was not a counter-transference, that is to say, on the condition that he not believe it, that he not be in it. To the extent that he is, and that he interprets too precociously, he makes the desire of the young girl enter into the real, whereas it was only a desire, and not an intention, to deceive him. He gives body to this desire. He operates with the patient exactly as the therapist intervened with the little girl, in giving the thing a symbolic stature.

That is what is at the heart of this slide of analysis into the imaginary, which has become more than a snare, a plague, from the moment that it was installed as doctrine. We see a transparent extreme example here, which we cannot misconstrue because it is in the text. With his interpretation, Freud makes the conflict break out, and gives it body, whereas it was precisely, as he senses himself, a matter of something completely different -- of revealing the discourse of lies that was in the unconscious. Freud tells her that all of it is designed against him, and in fact, the treatment does not go much further, and is interrupted. In wishing to unite, Freud has separated.

Something much more interesting still is emphasized by Freud without his interpreting it -- it is the nature of the young girl's passion for the person in question.

It has not escaped him, in fact, that this is not a homosexual relation like others, although in truth, the specific of homosexual relations is to present all of the variety of common heterosexual relations, and perhaps
some additional variations. By saying that this type of object choice belongs to the type that is *männliche*, and by explaining what he means by that, Freud underlines admirably and articulates with an extraordinary relief that it is a question here of a platonic love at its most exalted.

It is a love that does not demand any other satisfaction than the service of the lady. It is truly a sacred love, one could say, or courtly love in its most devoted form. Freud adds some words like *Schwämerei*, which has a very particular meaning in the cultural history of Germany -- it is exaltation that is at the basis of the relation. In short, he situates the relation of the young girl to the lady at the highest degree of the symbolized love relation, posited as service, as institution, as reference. It is not simply an attraction that is suffered, or a need, it is a love which, in itself, not only does without satisfactions, but very precisely aims at nonsatisfaction. It is the very order in which an ideal love can bloom -- the institution of lack in the relation to the object.

No doubt the situation that the case presents is exceptional, but it is of interest only when it is taken on its own terms. It is exceptional because it is particular. That is to say that it is clarified when the categories of the lack of the object are appropriately brought into function. Do you not then see joined here in a sort of knot the three stages of a process which goes from frustration to the symptom? -- if you are willing to take the word symptom as the equivalent of the word enigma, since we are in the course of interrogating it.

At first we have a reference to the imaginary object, lived in a way that is innocent. It is the child that interpretation allows us to conceive of as a child received from the father. As has already been said, female homosexuals in fact, contrary to what one might believe, but as analysis makes clear, are subjects who have at some moment made a very strong paternal fixation.

Why does a true crisis ensue? It is because a real object then intervenes. A child is given by the father, it is true, but precisely to someone other, and to the person who is closest.
It is then that a veritable reversal occurs. The mechanism of it is explained. But I think it is highly important to perceive that what is in question was already instituted on the symbolic plane. It was on the symbolic plane, and no longer in the imaginary, that the subject was satisfied by that child, as by a child given her by the father. If that sustained her in the relation among women, it is that the paternal presence as such was already installed for her, the father par excellence, the fundamental father, the father who will always for her be every man who will give her a child. The presence of the real child, the fact that the object is there for an instant, real, and that it is materialized by the fact that it is the mother at her side who has it, leads her back to the plane of frustration.

What is the most important thing that then occurs? Is it the turn that leads her to identify with the father? It is understood that this plays its role. Is it the fact that she becomes herself that latent child which can in effect niederkommen when the crisis reaches its term? Perhaps we could know after how many months that occurred if we had the dates, as for Dora. But that is not what is most important. What is most important is this -- that what is desired is beyond the woman who is loved.

The love that the young girl devotes to the lady aims at something other than herself. Freud seems, and it is not for nothing, to reserve for masculine experience this love which lives purely and simply in the order of devotion, and which carries the attachment of the subject to the supreme degree of his annihilation in the Sexualüberschätzung. Such a love, in effect, normally blossoms in a cultural relation that is highly elaborated and institutionalized. The reflection of the fundamental disappointment at this level, its passage onto the plane of courtly love, the issue that the subject finds in this form of love, pose the question of what in the woman is loved beyond herself, which brings into question what is truly fundamental in everything that has to do with love in its perfection.

What is, properly speaking, desired in the woman who is loved is precisely what she lacks. And what she lacks in this instance, is precisely that primordial object for which the subject tried to find an equivalent in the child, the imaginary substitute, to which she returns.
At the extreme of love, in the most idealized love, what is sought in the woman is what she lacks. What is sought beyond her is the central object of the whole libidinal economy -- the phallus.

9 January 1957
SOMEONE IS BEATING A CHILD\textsuperscript{1}
AND THE YOUNG HOMOSEXUAL GIRL

*Intersubjectivity and desubjectivization.*

*The image, mill of perversion.*

*The symbolic of the gift.*

*Frustration, love, and jouissance.*

*A permutative schema of the case.*

We ended our meeting the last time by trying to summarize a case
of female homosexuality presented by Freud. I dealt with its peripeties,
but also, in passing, sketched what one could call its structure. In fact, the
case would not have much importance beyond the picturesque if we were
not pursuing it on the grounds of a structural analysis.

It will be useful to return to this structural analysis. It is only by
taking it further, and as far as possible, that there can be interest in
psychoanalysis in engaging in it.

That there is a lack in psychoanalytic theory is what I seem to see rising
up at every moment. It is to reply to this lack, it will not be ill to remind
you, that we pursue our efforts here.

\textsuperscript{1} *On Bat un enfant.* The French translation of Freud's title, *Ein Kind wird Geschlagen* (A Child is Being Beaten) makes of the impersonal "one" the grammatical subject of the sentence. *Someone is Beating a Child* is the English rendering of the French title.
This lack is sensible everywhere. I sensed it again recently reactivated in my thought upon seeing the proposals of Miss Anna Freud confronted with those of Mrs. Melanie Klein.

No doubt Miss Anna Freud has since then watered down her wine, but she founded the principles of her analysis of children on remarks like this -- there cannot be a transference in the child, at least, there cannot be a transference neurosis. As children are still within the creative situation of neurotic tension, in the primary relation with the parents, with things still in course of being played out, there cannot, according to her, be a transference properly speaking.

Another remark of the same nature -- as children still have a relation with the objects of their inaugural attachment, the analyst must change his position, and profoundly modify his technique, since he must intervene entirely on the current plane.

Here Miss Anna Freud pays homage, as though by presentiment, to the essential function of language in the analytic relation. The child surely, she says, has a relation to language different from that of the adult, and must be taken [into analysis] with the help of means of play, which provide the technique that is appropriate. The situation does not allow the analyst to offer himself to the child in a position of neutrality or receptivity, in which he would seek above all to welcome speech, to allow it to flourish, and on occasion, to give it echo. I would say then that the engagement of the analyst in another relation than the relation of speech, though it is not developed, nor even really conceived, is still indicated.

Mrs. Melanie Klein argues to the contrary that nothing is more similar to the analysis of an adult than the analysis of a child, and that even at a very early age, what is going on in the child’s unconscious has nothing to do with the real parents, contrary to what Miss Anna Freud declares. Already between the ages of two and a half years and three, the situation is completely modified with regard to what one can verify in the real relation, and a dramatization that is profoundly foreign to the child’s actual current family relation develops. Thus, for example, a subject raised as an only child by an elderly aunt who lives far away from the parents,
which puts the child into an isolated and dual relation with a single person, nevertheless reconstituted a whole family drama with a father, mother, and even with rival brothers and sisters -- I cite. What one must reveal in psychoanalysis is not, basically, to be found in a pure and simple immediate relation with the real, but has already been inscribed in a symbolization.

Must we accept the affirmations of Mrs. Melanie Klein? These affirmations rest on her experience, and this experience is communicated to us in observations which sometimes push things to the point of the strange. You see the cauldron of a sorceress or divine, in the depths of which mell, in an imaginary global world which gives the idea of the maternal body as container, all the primordial fantasies present from the origin, and tending to be structured in a drama which seems preformed, the whole machine at every moment demanding the surge of the most aggressive instincts for its movement. If we cannot fail to be struck by the evidence that this entire phantasmagoria is adequate to the unique givens that Mrs. Melanie Klein deals with, we cannot at the same time not wonder what we have before us, and what this dramatic symbolism can really mean, which seems to be ever more complete the further one goes back in time. Everything is as though, the closer we come to the origin, the more certainly the Oedipus complex was there, developed and ready to come into action. That merits at least that we ask one question.

This question, once asked, springs up everywhere, and we are going to find it again on the precise path down which I shall lead you for the moment, which is that of perversion.
What is perversion? Even within a psychoanalytic group, one hears the most discordant replies to that.

Some, believing that they follow Freud, say that we must come back purely and simply to the idea of the persistence of a fixation on a partial drive. This is thought, somehow unscathed, to cross the whole dialectic which tends to be established by the Oedipus complex. It does not suffer the fates which tend to reduce the other partial drives, unifying them in a way that makes them end at last in the genital drive, which is the ideal unifying drive. Perversion is thus a matter of an accident in the evolution of the drives. In a classical translation of Freud's notion that perversion is the negative of neurosis, these analysts want purely and simply to make of perversion an entity in which the drive is not elaborated.

Others, however, who are not for all that either the most perspicacious or the best, but who have been instructed by experience, and by the evidence that is truly imposed in analytic practice, try to show that perversion is very far from being a pure element that persists, and that it too is part of what is realized through all the dramatic crises, fusions and defusions that a neurosis traverses, presenting the same dimensional richness as the latter, the same abundance, the same rhythms, the same stages. They try thus to explain that perversion is the negative of neurosis by pushing into the foreground a formulation like this, inspired by the whole play through which an analysis of the reduction of defenses is pursued -- what is at stake in perversion is the eroticizing of the defense.

I wouldn't mind. That makes quite a picture. But in fact, why should it be eroticized? That is the whole question. Whence comes this eroticizing? Where is the invisible power situated which could project what seems to arrive here as a sort of superfluity, a coloration, a change of quality, a libidinal satisfaction? In fact, the thing is not unthinkable, but the least one could say is that it is not thought through.
One must not suppose that Freud had never considered giving us an idea of that to elaborate. I would even further say -- we have in Freud himself an example which proves that his formula, according to which perversion is the negative of neurosis, is not to be taken as one has taken it for a long time, as if it were enough simply to hear that what is hidden in the unconscious when we are with a neurotic is, in perversion, in plain view, and somehow in a free state. It is really something else that Freud is suggesting with the concise formula that we find in him, and our analysis must find its true meaning. We shall first try to follow Freud, we shall attempt to see how he conceives the mechanism of a phenomenon that one can qualify as perverse, indeed that of a categorical perversion, then we shall finally be able to see what he means when he affirms that perversion is the negative of neurosis.

Let us look at things a little more closely, by taking a study that should be famous, *Ein Kind wird geschlagen*, the *Contribution to the Study of the Origin of Sexual Perversions*.

It is characteristic that Freud’s attention bears upon a sentence which he takes as his title rather than merely being content with a clinical label. It is a sentence taken directly from the statements of patients when they address the theme of those fantasies that one could generally qualify as sado-masochistic, whatever role and function they may take on in a particular case.

Freud tells us that he is centering his study on six cases, which are all of obsessional neurosis, four of women, and two of men. In addition, there is his experience of all the other cases of which he has not himself as great an understanding. So there is, it seems, a resume of a considerable mass of experience, and an attempt to organize it.

When the subject declares that he is bringing what his fantasy is into the treatment, he expresses it in a way that is remarkable in its imprecision, leaving open questions to which he can only reply with great difficulty. In truth, he cannot at first give a satisfactory response, for he can scarcely say anything further to characterize his fantasy. In addition, he
does not do it without showing a sort of aversion, indeed a sort of shame or sense of indecency.

There is a rather remarkable fact to emphasize here. Whereas the masturbatory practices that are more or less associated with these fantasies entail no weight of guilt for subjects, on the contrary, when it is a question of formulating these fantasies, not only is there very often great difficulty, but it provokes in them a great sense of aversion, repugnance, guilt. The distance between the fantasmatic or imaginary use of these images and their spoken formulation is really of a nature to make us prick up our ears. This behavior on the part of the subject is already a signal that marks a limit -- it is not the same thing to play mentally with the fantasy and to speak of it.

What does this fantasy, which in its typical formulation is expressed -- Someone is beating a child -- signify for subjects? Freud tells us what his experience has shown him. We shall not get to the end of this article today. I shall simply bring out certain elements that directly concern the path on which we had started the last time, in approaching the problem through the case of the young homosexual girl.

The progress of analysis shows, according to Freud, that this fantasy is substituted, by a series of transformations, for other fantasies, which have had an entirely understandable role at one moment in the subject's evolution. It is the structure of these states that I would suggest to you, in order to let you recognize elements which are absolutely manifest on the sole condition that one has one's eyes open, at least to this dimension in which we are trying to advance, and which can be summed up under the heading -- subjective structure. In other words, to give its true power to what often appears in theory as an ambiguity, indeed as an impasse or an antimony, we shall try to determine at what level of subjective structure the phenomenon occurs.

There are three stages, Freud tells us, in the history of the subject, which can be scanned to the extent that this history opens under analytic pressure and allows one to rediscover the origin of the fantasy.
Freud indicates in the first part of his discussion, which we shall not bring into the foreground this time, that he will limit himself to what happens in women, for reasons that he will explain later, and which we ourselves shall leave aside for today.

The first fantasy that one can find, says Freud, when one analyzes the facts, takes the following form -- *My father is beating a child who is the child that I hate.*

This fantasy seems more or less tied in the history of the subject to the introduction of a brother or a sister, a rival who appears at some moment, as much by his presence as by the care that is given him, to frustrate the child of its parents' affection. It is especially a question of the father here. Without insisting on this point, we shall not omit noting that it is a matter of a girl, seen at a certain moment when the Oedipus complex has already been constituted, and the relation to the father instituted. The pre-eminence of the figure of the father in a fantasy that is completely primitive cannot be unrelated to the fact that it is a question of a girl. But let us leave the explanation of the problem for the future.

The important thing is that we touch here at the outset upon a historical perspective that is retroactive. The subject formulates and organizes a primitive dramatic situation starting from the point we are at in the analysis, in a way that is inscribed in his current speech and by his present power of symbolization. Thus we rediscover through the progress of the analysis what will present itself as something primitive, as the most profound primordial organization.

The fantasmatic situation has the manifest complexity of including three personages -- there is the agent of punishment, there is the one who suffers it, and there is the subject. The one who suffers is named as a child whom the subject hates, and that he sees as fallen from the parental preference which is at stake, while he senses himself privileged by the fact that the other falls from this preference.

A triple dimension and tension are implied here. There is the relation of the subject with two others between whom relations are motivated by an element centered on the subject. *My father,* one can say, by way of
accentuating this sense, is beating my brother or my sister out of fear that I do not believe he prefers me. A causality, a tension, a reference to the subject, taken as a third, in whose favor the thing occurs, animates and motivates the action bearing on the second personage, the one who suffers. The third who is the subject is presented in the situation as the one under whose eyes this must occur, to let him know that something is given to him, the privilege of preference, of precedence.

Thus there is the idea of fear, that is to say a sort of anticipation, a temporal dimension, a tension in advance, introduced as a motor within the triple situation. And there is a reference to a third as subject, in as much as the subject must believe or infer something from a certain behavior which bears upon the second subject. The latter is taken in this instance as the instrument of communication between the two subjects, which is finally a communication about love, since it is at the expense of this second that what he receives is declared for the one who is the central subject, namely the expression of his wish, of his desire to be preferred or loved. It is thus a question of a formation that is already dramatized and reactive, the issue of a complex situation, which supposes the triple intersubjective reference, with all that it introduces of a temporal reference and scansion.

The introduction of the second subject is necessary. Why? Because for what must be bridged between one subject and the other, he is the instrument, the spring, the medium, the means. We thus find ourselves before a full intersubjective structure, in the sense that it is established by the complete seal of speech. The point is not that the thing has been spoken, but that the ternary situation set up in the primitive fantasy in itself bears the mark of the intersubjective structure which all full speech constitutes.

Let us go on to the second stage.

The latter represents, with regard to the first, a situation that is reduced, in a very particular way, to two characters. I follow Freud's text, which explains, without leaning on it, or rather which describes it as a reconstructed stage which is indispensable in understanding the
motivation of what occurs in the history of the subject. This second stage produces the fantasy -- *I am being beaten by my father*.

This situation, which excludes every dimension other than that of the relation between the subject and the agent who is beating could lead to all sorts of interpretations. But they themselves will remain marked by the greatest ambiguity. Whereas the first fantasy covers an organization, a structure which gives a direction that one could indicate by a series of arrows, the second presents a situation so ambiguous that one might wonder for a moment to what measure the subject participates in the action of the one who aggresses and beats him. It is the classic sadomasochistic ambiguity. To resolve it, one must conclude with Freud that it is linked to the essence of masochism, but that the ego is in this instance strongly accentuated.

The subject is in a reciprocal position with the other, which is also exclusive. It is either he or the other who is beaten. Here it is he. Something is indicated by that, but is not however resolved. One can, and the continuation of the discussion shows it, see in the very act of being beaten a transposition or the displacement of an element perhaps already marked by eroticism.

The very fact that one can speak in this instance of the essence of masochism is indicative. At the preceding stage, Freud said, the situation, extremely structured as it was, was pregnant with every possibility. It was neither sexual, nor especially sadistic, it contained these characteristics in potential. Precipitation in one direction or another, but remaining ambiguous, is marked in the second stage.

The second stage is dual, with the whole problematic that this raises on the libidinal plane. The subject is included with the other in a relation that is dual, and thus ambiguous. One finds that *either/or* which is so fundamental to the dual relation. Freud says that we are almost always forced to reconstruct this stage, so fugitive is it. This fugitive quality is so truly its characteristic that the situation is very quickly precipitated into the third stage.
In the third stage, the subject is reduced to his most extreme point. One apparently finds the subject here in a third position, in the form of a pure and simple observer, as in the first stage. After the reduction of the first intersubjective situation with its temporal tension, and the passage to the second situation, which is dual and reciprocal, one comes to the desubjectivized situation which is that of the terminal fantasy -- namely, Someone is beating a child.

In this Someone, the paternal function is vaguely found, but in general the father is not recognizable, there is only a substitute. In addition, Freud wanted to respect the formulation of the subject, but it is often a question not of one child but of several. The fantasmatic production makes it explode, multiplying it into a thousand copies, which well shows the essential desubjectivization that is produced in this relation.

In effect, a radical desubjectivization of the whole structure remains, and at this level the subject is no longer there except as reduced to the state of a spectator, or simply an eye, that is to say, what always at the limit, at the point of the final reduction, characterizes every sort of object. To see it one needs, not always a subject, but at least an eye, which can be only a screen on which the subject is instituted.

How can we translate that into our language, at this precise point in our process? To refer to our schema, the imaginary relation, more or less fantasized, is inscribed between the two angles a-a' of the relation, more or less marked by specularity and reciprocity between the ego and the other. But here we find ourselves in the presence of an element which takes its place on the line S-A, namely unconscious speech, which one has had to discover through all the artifices of the analysis of transference. It is also very much this -- By beating the child who is the child that I hate, my father is showing me he loves me. Or this -- My father is beating a child from fear that I believe I am not preferred. Or any other formula that brings out in any way whatever one of the accents of this dramatic relation. What is excluded, what is not present in neurosis, but whose evolutions are yet manifest in all of its constituent symptoms, is found here in an element of the clinical picture, which is the fantasy.
How does this fantasy present itself? It bears in itself the evidence, still very visible, of signifying elements of the speech articulated at the level of that trans-object, if one may put it so, which is the great Other, the place where unconscious speech is articulated, the S in so far as it is speech, history, memory, articulated structure.

Perversion, or rather, to limit ourselves here, the perverse fantasy, has a property that we can now disengage.

There is something here like a symbolic reduction that has progressively eliminated the whole subjective structure from the situation, leaving only a residue that is entirely desubjectivized, which is in the end enigmatic, because it retains the whole charge -- but a charge not revealed, not constituted, not assumed by the subject -- of what in the Other is the articulated structure in which the subject is engaged. All of the elements are there in the perverse fantasy, but all that is signification is lost, namely, the intersubjective relation. What one could call signifiers in a pure state are maintained without the intersubjective relation, devoid of their subject. We have instead a sort of objectification of the signifiers of the situation. What is indicated here of a fundamental structuring relation in the history of the subject, at the level of perversion, is at once maintained and contained, but is so under the form of a pure sign.

Is this anything other than what we encounter in perversion? Think now of what you know, for example, about the fetish, which you are told is to be explained by that beyond which has never been seen, and for good reason, -- the penis of the phallic mother. It turns out, most often after a brief analytic effort, that this is linked by the subject, at least in the memories that are still accessible to him, to a precise situation -- the child stops in his observation, that is at least his memory, at the hem of his mother's dress. You notice here a remarkable concordance with the structure of what one could call the screen memory, namely, the moment when the chain of the memory stops. It stops in effect at the hem of the dress, no higher than the ankle, just where one finds the shoe, and that is very much why the latter can, at least in certain cases that are particular, but exemplary, take the function of a substitute for what was not seen, but
which is articulated, formulated, as being truly for the subject something
that the mother possesses, namely the phallus, imaginary no doubt, but
essential to her symbolic function as phallic mother.

With the fantasy we find ourselves before something of the same order,
which fixes the course of memory, reduced to the state of the
instantaneous, by arresting it at that point which is called the screen-
memory. Think of the way that a cinemactic movement which unfolds
rapidly might stop suddenly at some point, freezing all of the characters.
This instantaneousness is characteristic of the reduction of the full
signifying scene articulated in subject after subject to something that is
immobilized in the fantasy, which remains charged with all of the erotic
values included in what the scene expressed, and of which it is both
evidence and support, the last remaining support.

We touch there upon the question of how what one could call the mill
of perversion is formed, namely, the valorization of the image. It is a
question of the image in so far as it remains the privileged evidence of
something which, in the unconscious, must be articulated, and put into
play again in the dialectic of the transference, that is, which must again
take on its full dimension within the analytic dialogue.

The imaginary dimension thus appears prevalent each time that there
is a question of perversion. This imaginary relation is on the way to what
passes between the subject and the Other, or more exactly what, belonging
to the subject, is left to be situated in the Other, in so far precisely as it is
repressed. It is speech which is very much that of the subject, but as it is, by
virtue of its nature as speech, a message that the subject must receive from
the Other in an inverted form, it can also very well remain in the Other,
and constitute the repressed and the unconscious, thus inaugurating a
relation that is possible but not realized.

Possible, -- that does not say it all -- there must also be some
impossibility here, without which it would not be repressed. It is very
much because there is this impossibility in ordinary situations that we
need all of the artifices of the transference to render passable, once again
formulable, what must be communicated by the Other, the great Other, to
the subject, in so far as the I of the subject comes into being.

Freudian analysis gives us this indication in the clearest way, and
everything is developed still much further than what I am saying here. In
this instance, Freud notes very clearly that the problem of the constitution
of every perversion must be tackled by beginning with the perspective of
the Oedipus complex, going through the avatars, the adventure, the
revolution of the Oedipus.

It is stupefying that one should have even thought of understanding
Freud’s formula that perversion is the negative of neurosis as its
somewhat popular translation has it. Perversion would be a drive that has
not been elaborated by the Oedipal and neurotic mechanism, a pure and
simple survival, the persistence of an irreducible partial drive. Freud, on
the contrary, in this important article, and at many other points, indicates
sufficiently that any perverse structuration, as primitive as we may
suppose -- at least among those that come to our knowledge as analysts -- is
articulable only as a means, a link, an element of something that, when all
is said, can be conceived, understood, and articulated only in, by and for
the process, organization, and articulation of the Oedipus complex.

We shall now try to inscribe our case from the other day, that of the
young homosexual girl, onto our schema of the crossed relation of the
subject and the Other.

Symbolic signification, the whole actual genesis of the subject, must
take place and be established on the axis S-A. On the other hand, the
imaginary interposition a-a’ is that in which the subject finds his status,
his structure as object, recognized as such by him, installed in a certain
me-ness with regard to objects which are immediately attractive to him,
which correspond to his desire, in so much as he is engaged on the
imaginary rails that form what one calls his libidinal fixations.
Although we shall not push this exercise to its final term today, we can attempt a resume. One can distinguish five stages in the major phenomena of the installation of this perversion -- whether we consider it as fundamental or acquired matters little. In this instance, we know when its presence was indicated, then established, then precipitated, and we have its springs and its origins. It is a perversion that was formed late, which does not mean that it did not have its premises in very early phenomena. Let us try to understand the avenues which Freud himself has disengaged.

Let us begin with a state that is primordial. At the moment of puberty, towards thirteen or fourteen years, this young girl cherishes an object, a child for whom she cares, to whom strong ties of affection bind her. She thus shows herself in the eyes of all to be particularly well oriented in the direction that they wish for her, namely, the typical vocation of woman, that of maternity.

On this base, something then occurs, which leads to a sort of about face, and leads her to become interested in love objects marked with the sign of femininity. These are women in a more or less maternal, neo-maternalizing, position.

She will finally led to a passion literally qualified as devouring for that person whom we call, and not without cause, the lady. In effect, she treats this lady in a style that is rich with elements which are chivalric and properly masculine, with a passion offered without demand, desire, or even hope of return, with the character of a gift, with a love projecting even beyond any sort of manifestation by the beloved. In short, we have there one of the most characteristic forms of the love relation in its most highly cultivated forms.

How to conceive this transformation? I have given you the first stage and the result -- between the two something happens. Freud tells us what. We are going to take this up and show its implication in the very terms which served to analyze the position.

Let us set off from the phallic phase of the genital organization. What is the meaning of what Freud tells us with regard to it? Just before the latency period, the child subject, masculine or feminine, arrives at the
phallic phase, which indicates the point of realization of the genital.
Everything is there, up to and including the choice of object. There is,
however, something which is not there, namely, the full realization of the
genital function, structured and organized in a way that is real. There
remains in effect a fantasmatic element, essentially imaginary, which is
the prevalence of the phallus, meaning that there are for the subject two
types of beings in the world -- beings who have the phallus, and those who
do not have it, that is to say, who are castrated.

These formulas of Freud suggest a problematic from which authors
cannot exit when they want to justify it by motives which could be
determined for the subject in the real, and they are thence forced to have
recourse to extraordinary modes of explanation. I have already told you
that I shall keep the latter in parentheses, but the general style can be
summed up somewhat like this. Given that, as everyone knows,
everything is already divined and inscribed in the unconscious drives, and
given that the subject already has, by nature, preformed, that what will
render the cooperation between the sexes adequate, it must be that the
phallic prevalence is some sort of formation in which the subject finds an
advantage, and that there is in it a process of defense. It is in fact not
inconceivable from this perspective, but that is only to push the problem
away. And that in effect engages authors in a series of constructions which
only refer the whole symbolic dialectic back to the origin, and which
become precisely more and more unthinkable the further one goes back
towards the origin.

It is easier for us than for these authors to admit that in this instance,
the phallus turns out to be that imaginary element -- this is a fact, which
one must take as fact -- by which the subject, at the genital level, is
introduced into the symbolic of the gift.

The symbolic of the gift and genital maturation, which are two
different things, are, however, linked by a factor which is included in the
real human situation, namely, the rules installed by the law as to the
exercise of genital functions, in so far as they effectively come into play in
interhuman exchange. It is because things take place at this level that the
link between the symbolic of the gift and genital maturation is so close. But for the subject, this has no internal, biological, or individual coherence. It appears, on the contrary, that the fantasy of the phallus, at the genital stage, takes on value within the symbolic of the gift. Freud insists on this -- the phallus does not have the same value for the one who really possesses the phallus, that is to say the male child, and for the child who does not possess it, that is to say the female child -- and for good reason.

The female child is introduced into the symbolic of the gift in so far as she does not possess the phallus. It is in so far as she phallicizes the situation, that is, in so far as it is a question of having or not having the phallus, that she enters the Oedipus complex. The boy, as Freud underlines, does not enter by this route, he exits by it. At the end of the Oedipus complex, at the moment when on a certain plane he realizes the symbolic of the gift, he must make a gift of what he has. The girl, if she enters the Oedipus complex, enters in so far as what she does not have is to be found in the Oedipus complex.

_What she does not have_ -- what does that mean? We are already here at a level where an imaginary element enters into a symbolic dialectic. For in a symbolic dialectic, what one does not have is every bit as extant as the rest. Simply, it is marked by a minus sign. Thus she enters with this minus, as the boy does with the plus. It still remains that there must be something, if one can add a notation, plus or minus, presence or absence. What is at stake, and what is at play there is the phallus. That, Freud says, is the spring of the girl’s entry into the Oedipus complex.

Within this symbolic of the gift, all sorts of things can be given in exchange, so many things, surely, that it is why we see so many equivalents of the phallus in symptoms.

Freud goes much further still, and you will find indication of that in his _Someone is Beating a Child_, formulated in raw terms. Why do so many pre-genital elements come into play in the Oedipal dialectic? Why do frustrations at the oral and anal levels tend to occur and come to realize the frustrations, the accidents, the dramatic elements of the Oedipal relation, when according to the premises, the latter should be satisfied only
in the genital elaboration? Freud’s answer points towards what is obscure for the child in what occurs at the genital level, of which of course he has no experience -- the objects that are part of pre-genital relations, he says, are more accessible to verbal representation, *Wortvorstellungen*.

Yes, Freud goes so far as to say that if the pregenital objects are put into play in the Oedipal dialectic, it is in so far as they lend themselves more easily to verbal representation. The child can say to himself more easily that what the father gives the mother is his urine, because he knows very well the use, the function and the existence of his urine as an object. It is easier to symbolize, that is to say, to provide a plus or a minus sign, for an object that already has a certain realization in the child’s imagination. That remains, despite everything, difficult to seize, and difficult of access, for the girl.

The girl’s first introduction into the dialectic of the Oedipus complex consists, according to Freud, in this, that the penis that she desires is the child that she hopes to receive from the father as a substitute. But in the example that concerns us, that of the young homosexual girl, it is a question of a real child. The girl cares for a real child, which is in the picture.

[Schema, p. 124]
On the other hand, what does this child that she cares for satisfy in her? The imaginary phallic substitution, by which, as subject, she is constituted, without knowing it, as the imaginary mother. If she is satisfied in caring for this child, it is because she thus acquires the imaginary penis of which she is fundamentally frustrated, which I notate by writing the imaginary penis with a minus sign. I am doing nothing other than underlining something which is characteristic of the original frustration -- every object introduced by a realized frustration can only be an object that the subject takes in the ambiguous position which is that of an appurtenance to his own body.

If I am underlining it, it is because with regard to the early mother-child relation, one puts the whole accent on the passive aspect of frustration. One considers that the child has its first experience of the relation between the pleasure principle and the reality principle in the frustrations which he senses in the mother, and following that, you see the terms frustration of the object or loss of the object of love used indifferently. But if there is one thing on which I have insisted in the preceding lessons, it is the bipolarity, or the very marked opposition which there is between the real object in so far as the child can be deprived of it, namely, the mother's breast, and on the other hand, the mother, in so far as she is in a position of granting or not granting this real object.

This distinction between the breast and the mother as a total object is made by Mrs. Melanie Klein. She clearly distinguishes the partial objects, on one hand, and on the other, the mother in so far as she is instituted as a total object, and can create in the child that famous depressive position. That is one way to see things. But what is avoided is that these two objects are not of the same nature. It remains in effect that the mother, as agent, is instituted by the function of a call -- that she is already, in her most rudimentary form, an object marked and designated with a possibility of plus or minus in the form of presence or absence -- that the frustration realized by whatever is related to the mother is a frustration of love -- that everything that comes from the mother in response to the call is a gift, that it is to say, something other than the object. In other terms, there is a
radical difference between, on one hand, the gift as a sign of love, which aims radically at something other, a beyond, the love of the mother, and on the other hand, the object, whatever it may be, that comes in for the satisfaction of the child’s needs.

The frustration of love and the frustration of jouissance are two distinct things. The frustration of love in itself is pregnant with all of the intersubjective relations which may later be constituted. The frustration of jouissance is not pregnant with anything at all.

Contrary to what is said, it is not the frustration of jouissance that engenders reality, as Mr. Winnicott has very well perceived, though not without the usual confusion that we find in analytic literature. We cannot found the least genesis of reality on the fact that the child has or does not have the breast. If he does not have the breast, he is hungry, and he continues to cry. In other words, what does the frustration of jouissance produce? It produces at most a new thrust of desire, but no sort of constitution of any object whatever. This is very much why Mr. Winnicott is led to have us note what is really striking in the child’s behavior, which allows us to clarify that there is effectively a progression, which requires an original explanation.

It is not simply because the child is deprived of the mother’s breast that he creates a fundamental image of it, and not just any sort of image either. The image must in itself be taken as an original dimension. It is not the
breast, but the tip of the breast that is essential here, the *nipple.* The phallus is substituted for it and superimposed upon it. The two have in common the character of being able to arrest us, in so far as they are constituted as images.

What follows the frustration of the object of *jouissance* in the child is an original dimension that is maintained in the subject as an imaginary relation. It is not simply an element polarizing the launching of desire, like the lure that always orients animal behavior. There is something significative in the plumes or the fins of the adversary which makes it an adversary, and one can always locate what individualizes the image in the biological realm. This is no doubt also present in man, but accentuated in a way that is observable in the child’s behavior, where the images are referred to the fundamental image which gives him his global stature. It is a matter of that form of the whole which he latches onto, the form of the other, an image around which subjects can group themselves and disband as belonging or not-belonging.

In sum, the problem is not that of knowing to how great a degree narcissism is elaborated, it is on the contrary to recognize what the function of narcissism is in the constitution of an object world as such. That is why Winnicott spends time on those objects which he calls transitional.

Without them, we would have no evidence of the way that the child could constitute a world by starting with his frustrations. Certainly the child constitutes a world, but one must not say that it is with regard to the object of the desires of which he was frustrated at the origin. He constitutes a world in as much as, going towards something that he desires, he can encounter something by which he is bruised or by which he is burned. It is not at all an object which would be engendered in any way whatever by the object of desire, it is not something modeled by the stages of the development of desire in so far as that is instituted and organized in the child’s development. It is something else. The object, in so far as it is engendered by frustration, leads us to admit the autonomy of the

---

2 English in the original.
imaginary production in its relation to the image of the body. It is an ambiguous object, which is between the two, and with regard to which one can speak neither of reality nor of unreality. That is how Mr. Winnicott expresses it, with a great deal of pertinence, even if it must be regretted that instead of dealing with the problem which provides the introduction of this object into the symbolic order, he comes to it as though despite himself, because one is really forced to reach it from the moment that one has taken this path.

Transitional objects are those objects, half real, half unreal, to which the child holds and to which he is more or less hooked on, for example a little corner of his sheet, or the tip of a bib. This is not observed in all children, but in most of them. Mr. Winnicott clearly sees the ultimate relation between these objects and the fetish, which he is wrong to call a primitive fetish, but which is in fact at the origin.

Mr. Winnicott spends time on this and says that after all, this object which is neither real nor unreal, to which we grant neither a full reality nor a fully illusory character, is like your philosophical notions and your religious system, all in the midst of which lives a good English citizen who knows in advance how to behave. Whatever doctrine you might hold in religious or in philosophic matters, no one would dream of saying that you believe as strong as steel, no one would dream of taking it away from you. It is a matter of a domain that is between the two, in which things are instituted with the character of demi-existence. This character is well marked by the fact that no one normally thinks of imposing upon others, as an object to which they must adhere, the authenticity or the strong as steel reality of what he promotes as a religious idea or a philosophic illusion. In short, the instituted world of the British Isles indicates to each that he has the right to be mad, on the condition of remaining mad separately. It is there that madness would truly begin, if one wished to impose his private folly on all subjects, each constituted in a sort of nomadism of the transitional object.

Mr. Winnicott is not wrong, it is really in the midst of all this that life is to be situated. How could we organize the rest if there were not that?
Let us come back to the case of our young girl in love, of whom it is said that she has her transitional object, the imaginary penis, when she takes care of a child. What is needed for her to pass to the third stage, that is, to the second stage of the five situations that we shall not get through today?

She is homosexual, and she loves like a man, says Freud, männliches Typus -- though the translator has translated -- feminine. She is in the virile position. That is translated thus by our schema -- the father, who was at the place of the great A in the first stage, passes to the level of the ego. In a′ there is the lady, the object of love who is substituted for the child. At A, the symbolic father, that is, what is beyond the loved subject in love at its most elaborated point. What in love is loved is in effect what is beyond the subject, it is literally what he does not have. If the lady is loved, it is in so far precisely as she does not have the symbolic penis, but she has all that she needs to have it, because she is the object elect of all the subject's adoration.

[Schema, p. 128]

Child

Imaginary Father

Real Lady

Symbolic Penis

THE YOUNG HOMOSEXUAL GIRL (2)

A permutation is thus produced which makes the symbolic father pass into the imaginary, through the subject's identification with the function
of the father. Simultaneously, the real lady comes to the position on the right, as an object of love, just by having precisely that beyond, the symbolic penis, which is found at first at the imaginary level.

What occurs between the two?

The characteristic of the observation, which appears in the second stage, and which we find again in the fourth, is that a real action has been introduced on the plane of the imaginary relation by the father, this symbolic father who was in the unconscious.

For the desire of the penis, there is for the girl, in effect, substitution of the child that the father will give her, an imaginary or a real child. In the present case, it is already disquieting enough that the child is real, while the father remains unconscious as progenitor, and all the more so as the child is real. Only, here the father really gives a child not to his daughter, but to the mother. Now for this child that she desired unconsciously, the girl gave him a real substitute, in which she found her satisfaction, a touch which already shows an accentuation of need in her, which gives the situation its drama. One understands after that that the subject has been frustrated in a very special way, when the real child coming from the father, in so far as he is symbolic, is given to her own mother.

That is what is characteristic in the observation. When one says that it is because of some accentuation of the instincts, or of the drives, or of some primitive drive, that things turn in the direction of a perversion, has one really taken a strong start from those three elements which are absolutely essential, on the condition that they are distinguished, which are the imaginary, the symbolic and the real?

You can see that if the situation is revealed for reasons that are highly structured to be a relation of jealousy, and if the imaginary satisfaction to which the girl gives herself has taken an untenable character, it is in so much as the real is introduced, a real which replied to the unconscious situation on the plane of the imaginary. By a sort of interposition, the father is now realized on the plane of the imaginary relation, he enters effectively into play as imaginary father, and no longer as symbolic father.
From there on, another imaginary relation is inaugurated, and the girl completes it as she can.

This relation is marked by the fact that what had been articulated in a way that was latent at the level of the great Other, begins to be articulated in an imaginary way, in the style of perversion, and it is for this reason and not for any other that it will end in a perversion. The girl identifies with her father and takes his role. She becomes herself the imaginary father. She also keeps his penis, and becomes attached to an object which does not have, to which necessarily she must give this something which it does not have.

This need to set love on the axis not of the object, but on what the object does not have, puts us just at the heart of the love relation and of the gift. It is this something that the object does not have, which makes the tertiary constellation of this subject’s history necessary.

It is there that we shall take things up again the next time, in order to study in depth the dialectic of the gift as it is first experienced by the subject, and to see its other face, which we left aside just before. For if I have accentuated the paradoxes of frustration with regard to the object, I have not yet said what the frustration of love offered, nor what as such it signified.

16 January 1957
DORA AND THE YOUNG HOMOSEXUAL GIRL

The symbolic insistence of the transference.

Potent father, impotent father.

Love, lack, and the gift.

Dora between question and identification.

Perverse metonymy, neurotic metaphor.

This fascicule, the second number of the review La Psychanalyse, contains certain texts which will allow you to find a new attempt at a logic, and to find it in a place where it is particularly lively, that is to say in our practice. I am alluding to the famous game of odds and evens, and I refer you to the introduction that you will see I have given to my lesson on The Purloined Letter.

You will easily locate the three temporal moments of subjectivity in so far as it is related to frustration, on the condition of taking the latter in the sense of lack of the object, if you first reflect on the zero position of the problem, namely the opposition, the institution of the pure symbol plus or minus, presence or absence, which is nothing other than an objectively verifiable position of the game's givens.

The second moment is to be found in the fact that the declaration you make in saying even or odd, is a sort of demand by which you put yourself in a condition of being gratified or not by the other's response, but since this other already has the dice in his hands, it no longer depends on
him that what is in his hand will satisfy your demand. Thus you have here the second stage of the dual relation, in so far as it institutes the call and its response, on which frustration is established. You can see its absolutely evanescent character, literally impossible to satisfy.

If the game has any interest, it is very evidently because you introduce the third dimension which gives it its meaning, that of the law, in a form which is always latent to the exercise of the game. In fact, from the point of view of the one who demands, what is at stake? The other is evidently called upon to suggest a regularity at every moment, in other words, a law, which at the same time he tries to steal from him. The institution of a law or of any regularity conceived as possible -- he who proposes the hidden part of the game, steals it at every instant from the other, all the while suggesting its birth. It is at this moment that what is fundamental in the game is established, which gives it its intersubjective meaning, situating it in a dimension that is no longer dual, but ternary.

It is on this essential dimension that the value of my text rests, namely that it is necessary to introduce three terms if one is to begin to articulate something that resembles a law. In following those three intersubjective moments we shall try to see how the object is introduced into the symbolic chain. For by the sole fact that it comes within our reach, under our jurisdiction in analytic practice, the object must really enter into this chain.

That is what we had reached the last time, in the history of our case of feminine homosexuality.

We had arrived at what I called the third moment, the moment that is constituted in the following way, which I shall sum up by taking a first situation chosen arbitrarily as the situation at the start.

It is already, please note, to make a concession to a progressive point of view, to admit this chronological ordering of terms from the past towards the future. We do it to facilitate things by coming more quickly to what is habitually done in the dialectic of frustration, without forgetting that by
conceiving it in a summary fashion, that is, without distinguishing the planes of the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic, one ends in impasses which I hope to make you sense the further we advance.

But for the moment, we shall try to establish the principles of the relations between the object and the constitution of the symbolic chain. At first we have the position of the young girl when she is still at the stage of puberty. The first symbolic and imaginary structuration of this position is made in a way that is classic, as ordained by theory. The equivalence penis-imaginary child installs the subject as imaginary mother with regard to that beyond which is the father, intervening as a symbolic function, that is to say, as the one who can give the phallus. The power of the father is then unconscious. This is after the decline of the Oedipus complex, and the father, as the one who can give the child, is unconscious.

It is at this stage that there occurs, one could say, the fatal moment in which the father intervenes in the real by giving a child to the mother, which is to say, that he makes of this child, with which the subject is in an imaginary relation, a child that is real. Something is realized, which, as a consequence, can no longer be sustained by her in the imaginary position in which she had been installed. We find ourselves now at the second moment. The intervention of the real father with regard to the child of which she is thus frustrated, produces the transformation of the whole equation, which is hence posed in the following terms — the imaginary father, the lady, the symbolic penis.

By a sort of inversion, the relation of the subject with her father, which was situated in the symbolic order, passes into the imaginary relation. Or, if you will, there is a projection of the unconscious formula, that of the first equilibrium, into a relation that is perverse, in quotation marks, an imaginary relation, namely, her relation with the lady. That is the third moment.

[Format schema, p. 133]
Imaginary father __________ Symbolic penis

THE YOUNG HOMOSEXUAL GIRL (3)

Thus, after a first application of our formulas, we have the position of the terms at stake, a position no doubt enigmatic, and over which we can for a moment pause. It is, however, useful to note that these terms, such as they are, impose a structure, that is to say, if we were to change the position of one of them, we would have to resituate all the others, and never just anywhere. Let us now try to see what that might mean. Its signification is given by the analysis.

What does Freud say at the crucial moment of this observation? Because of the particular conception that he has taken of the position in question, and because of an intervention that he makes in this direction, he crystallizes the position between him and the patient in a way that is not satisfying, since, he himself states, it is at this moment that the analytic relation is broken off. Whatever Freud thinks of it, one is far from being led to put the whole charge to an impasse in the patient's position. His own intervention, his conception, his presuppositions concerning her position, must really count for something in the rupture of the situation.

Let us review what this position is, and how Freud formulates it. He says that the resistances of the patient were insurmountable. How does he materialize these resistances? What examples does he give? What meaning does he give them? He sees them expressed particularly in a dream which, paradoxically, could have given great hope, namely that the
situation was becoming normalized. It is in effect a dream about a union, _conjuge_, a fecund marriage. The patient has submitted herself to an ideal husband, and has children by him. In short, the dream manifests a desire that goes in the direction of what, if not Freud, at least society, represented here by the family, could best wish as the outcome of the treatment.

Fortified by all that the patient is telling him of her position and her intentions, Freud, far from taking the text of the dream at the letter of the word, sees in it only a ruse of the patient's, intended expressly to disappoint him, more exactly to give him illusions and to disillusion him, both at the same time, as in that practice which I alluded to earlier, in the intersubjective game of guessing. That supposes, as Freud notes, that one could object _—But then, the unconscious can lie?_ Freud stops for a long time at this point, discusses it, and takes care to reply in a way that is very well articulated.

Freud takes a passage from _The Interpretation of Dreams_. He also takes it up in another observation, which we shall get to a little later, the case of Dora,\(^1\) on which I recently gave, following a report by Lagache on transference, a short intervention summing up the positions through which I think that one must conceptualize the case.\(^2\)

_The Traumdeutung_ introduces a comparison between capitalist and entrepreneur with regard to the relation between unconscious desire and preconscious desire. Preconscious desire is the entrepreneur of the dream, but the dream would not have enough to set itself up as representing what is called the unconscious, if there were not another desire, which gives the foundation of the dream, and which is an unconscious desire. Thus Freud makes a strong distinction between the two desires, up to but not quite drawing the final consequences. There is room to make a distinction between what the patient brings in his dream, which is from the level of the unconscious, and the factor of the dual relation, which consists in the fact that he is addressing someone when he recounts the dream in

---

1. _Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria._
analysis. It is in this sense that I say that a dream that is produced during the course of an analysis always carries a certain direction towards the analyst, and this direction is not always necessarily the unconscious orientation.

The whole question is to know if one must put the accent on the intentions that Freud says are openly admitted by the patient -- those of playing with her father -- the patient herself manages to formulate it -- the game of deception, pretending to let herself be treated, and maintaining her position, her fidelity to the lady. Must what is expressed in the dream be conceived purely and simply in the perspective of deception, that is, in its preconscious intentionalization?

It does not seem so, for if we look at it closely, what do we see formulated? Without doubt it is in a dialectic of deception, but what is formulated in the unconscious, at the first as at the third stage, is, when it is brought back to the signifier, what was deflected at the origin, namely her own message coming from the father under an inverted form, under the form of you are my wife, you are my master, you will have a child from me. This is, at the entry into the Oedipus, or in so far as the Oedipus has not been resolved, the promise on which the entry of the girl into the Oedipus complex is founded. It is there that the position begins, and in the dream a situation is articulated that fulfills this promise. It is always the same content of the unconscious that declares itself.

If Freud hesitates before this content, it is, very precisely, because he has not arrived at a pure formulation of what transference is. In effect there are in the transference an imaginary element and a symbolic element, and in consequence, a choice to be made. If transference has a meaning, if there is a meaning in what Freud later brought us, with the notion of Wiederholungszwang, on which I have taken care to spend a year to make you see what that might mean, it is because it is in so far as there is an insistence proper to the symbolic chain as such that there is transference.

Certainly, by definition, this insistence proper to the symbolic chain is not assumed by the subject. Still, the sole fact that it is reproduced, and that it comes to the third stage as existing and formulating itself in a dream,
permits one to say that the dream, even if it seems to be a deceitful dream in that it is on the imaginary level and in direct relation with the therapist, is nonetheless, and by itself alone, the representation of the transference in the proper sense. It is there that Freud could have securely placed his confidence and intervened boldly. He would have needed a notion of transference founded on a less vacillating position and he would have had to conceive very precisely that transference occurs essentially on the plane of symbolic articulation.

When we speak of transference, when something takes its meaning from the fact that the analyst becomes the place of the transference, it is very precisely in so far as it is a matter of symbolic articulation as such, and this, certainly, before the subject has assumed it, as one sees here in something that is a transference dream. If Freud notes all the same that something was produced that was on the order of transference, he does not draw its strict consequences from it, or the correct method of intervening.

This remark is not valid only for one particular case. We also have another case where the problem opens on the same plane, in the same way, except that Freud makes an error that is exactly the contrary. It is the case of Dora.

The two cases balance each other admirably. They intersect. First, because the confusion between the symbolic position and the imaginary position is produced in opposing ways in the two cases. But much more because, in their total constellation, they correspond strictly, almost so much that one can be organized with regard to the other as the positive form of a negative. I would say that there is no better illustration of Freud's formula that perversion is the negative of neurosis.

Still, one must develop that.

Let us quickly recall the terms of Dora's case for what they have in common with the constellation that is present in the case of the young homosexual girl.
In the case of Dora we have exactly the same characters -- in the foreground a father, a daughter, and also another lady, Frau K. It is all the more striking in that it is again around the lady that the whole problem turns, although the thing is dissimulated to Freud in the daughter's presentation of the situation.

She is a young hysterical, whom they bring to him because of some symptoms she has had, minor, no doubt, but still quite marked. The situation became intolerable following a sort of demonstration or attempt to commit suicide which ended by alarming her family. The father presents her to Freud as a patient, and this passage in the consultation is an element which in itself alone, no doubt, denotes a crisis in the social group in which a certain equilibrium had been maintained up until then. Nevertheless, this singular equilibrium had in fact already been broken for two years, because of a position which is at first dissimulated to Freud, namely that the father had as mistress a certain Frau K., married to a gentleman named Herr K. This couple lived in a sort of quartet with the couple formed by the father and daughter. The mother is absent from the situation.

We see already, as we advance, the contrast with the preceding situation. In the case of the young homosexual girl, the mother in effect is present, since it is she who ravishes the father's attention from the daughter, and introduces the element of real frustration which will be the determinant in the formation of the perverse constellation. On the other hand, in the case of Dora, it is the father who introduces the lady, and seems to keep her there, while in the first case, it is the daughter who introduces her.

What is striking is that Dora immediately lets Freud know her extremely keen demand for justice concerning the affection of her father, who, she says, has been ravished from her by this liaison. She immediately demonstrates to Freud that she had always been aware of the existence of this liaison, of its permanence and its importance, and that she has become unable to tolerate it any longer. All of her behavior shows her claim to justice with regard to this relation.
Freud then takes a step, the first step in Freudian experience, the most decisive for its properly speaking dialectical quality. He leads Dora back to the following question -- *What you are rising up against as a disorder, is it not something in which you have yourself participated?* And in fact, Freud very quickly gives evidence that, up until a critical moment, this position had been sustained in the most efficient fashion by Dora herself. She showed herself more than complacent to this singular position, she was really its pivot, protecting the private meetings of the couple of the father and the lady, even substituting on one occasion for the lady in her functions, indeed, by taking care of her children. On the other hand, to the extent that one goes farther into the structure of the case, it appears clear that she had a very special tie with the lady, that she was her confidante, and that she went, it seems, extremely far with her in confidences.

The case is of a richness such that one can still make discoveries in it, and this rapid reminder cannot in any way replace an attentive reading. Let us signal out among others the interval of nine months between the hysterical symptom of appendicitis and the fact that makes it take root -- the scene by the lake -- which Freud believes he discovers because the patient gives it to him in a symbolic fashion, but if one looks closely, one notes that in reality it is a question of fifteen months. And these fifteen months have a meaning, because the number fifteen appears everywhere in the observation, and this element is useful in our understanding, in that it is founded on numbers and on a purely symbolic value.

I can only remind you today of the terms in which the problem is presented all throughout the observation. No doubt Freud later perceived that if he went wrong, it was because of a resistance in the patient to admitting the amorous relation that linked her to Herr K., as Freud suggested to her with all of the weight of his insistence and his authority. He goes as far as to indicate in a note that without doubt there was an error on his part, and that he should have understood that the homosexual attachment to Frau K. was the veritable signification both of the institution of Dora's primitive position, as well as of her crisis. But the
important thing is not only that Freud should recognize it after the fact, for all through the observation, you can read that he remains in the greatest ambiguity concerning the real object of Dora's desire.

In what terms should we articulate the position of the problem? Here again, it is a matter of giving a possible formulation for this ambiguity, which is in some way unresolved. It is clear that Herr K., as a person, has a prevalent importance for Dora, and that something like a libidinal bond is established with him. It is also clear that something of another order, also of very great weight, at every instant plays its role in the libidinal bond of Dora with Frau K. How to conceive one and the other in a way which would justify, and which would allow one to conceive both the progress of the adventure, and the moment at which it is arrested, its crisis, the point of rupture in the equilibrium?

I made, five years ago, a first approach to this observation, where, in conformity with the structure of hysteria, I indicated that the hysterical is someone who loves by procuration, and you will find it in a host of observations -- the hysterical is someone whose object is homosexual -- the hysterical approaches this homosexual object by identification with someone of the other sex. It was a first approach that was in some way clinical.

I went further. Starting with the narcissistic relation as the foundation of the ego, in so far as it is a matrix, Urbild, of the constitution of the imaginary function which is called the ego, I showed that we had traces of it in the observation. The situation of the quadrille in effect can only be understood in so far as the ego -- only the ego -- of Dora has made an identification with a male character, that she is Herr K., and that men for her are so many possible crystallizations of her ego. In other terms, it is by the intermediary of Herr K., and in so far as she is Herr K. -- it is at the imaginary point constituted by the personality of Herr K., that Dora is attached to the person of Frau K.

I went still a bit further, and I said -- Frau K. is someone important. Why? She is important only because she is the object of a choice among other objects. She is not important only because she is invested with the narcissistic function which is at the basis of all inamoration, Verliebtheit.
No, as the dreams indicate, and it is around the dreams that the essential of the observation turns, Frau K. is Dora's question.

Let us try now to transcribe that into our present formulation, and to situate what, in this quartet, can be organized on our fundamental schema.

Dora is a hyster, that is to say someone who has arrived at the level of the Oedipal crisis, and who both was able and unable to get through it. There is a reason for that -- it is that her own father, in contrast to the father of the homosexual, is impotent. The whole observation rests on the central notion of the father's impotence. Thus we have an occasion to demonstrate the value, and in a way that is particularly exemplary, of what the function of the father might be with regard to the lack of the object through which the girl enters into the Oedipus complex. What is the father's function in so far as he is a donor?

This situation rests on the distinction that I have already made regarding primitive frustration, the frustration that can be established in the relation of the child to the mother. There is an object of which the child is frustrated. But after the frustration, his desire remains. Frustration has a meaning only in as much as the object, as an appurtenance of the subject, remains after the frustration. The mother then intervenes on another register -- she gives or she does not give, but it is in as much as the gift is a sign of love.

Here, then, is the father, who is designed to be the one who symbolically gives this missing object. In the case of Dora, he does not give it, because he does not have it. The phallic deficiency of the father crosses the whole observation like a fundamental note, constituting the position. But, there again, is it on a single plane that we find it? Is it purely and simply with regard to this lack that the crisis will be developed? Let us observe what is at stake. What is giving? Is there not another dimension introduced into the object relation when it is carried to the symbolic degree by the fact that the object can be given or not? In other terms, is it ever the object that is given? That is the question, and in the observation of Dora, we see one of its issues, which is exemplary.
In fact, she is very attached to this father from whom she does not symbolically receive the virile gift, so attached that her history begins exactly at the age of the issue from the Oedipus, with a whole series of hysterical accidents clearly linked to manifestations of love for this father who, at that moment, more than ever, decisively appears as a father who is sick and injured, struck down in his very vital powers. The love that she has for this father is strictly correlative and coextensive with the diminution of the latter.

Thus we have a very clear distinction. What intervenes in the love relation, what is demanded as a sign of love, is always only something that is valuable only as a sign. Or, to go still further, there is no greater gift possible, no greater sign of love, than the gift of what one does not have. But note well that the dimension of the gift exists only with the introduction of the law. As all of sociological reflection affirms, the gift is something that circulates, the gift that you give is always the gift that you have received. But when it is a matter of a gift between two subjects, the cycle of gifts still comes from somewhere else, for what establishes the relation of love is that the gift is given, if one can say that, for nothing.

The nothing for nothing is the principle of the exchange. This formula, like every formulation in which the ambiguous nothing intervenes, seems to be the very formula that would express interest, but it is also the formula of the purest gratuity. In the gift of love, something is given for nothing, and which can be only nothing. In other words, what makes the gift is that a subject gives something in a way that is gratuitous, in that behind what he gives is all that he lacks; it is that the subject sacrifices beyond what he has. It is the same, moreover, with the primitive gift, as it
was practiced effectively at the origin of human exchange, in the form of *potlatch.*

Imagine a subject charged with every possible benefit, every wealth, a subject who had the fullness of all that one could have. Well, a gift coming from him would in no way have the value of a sign of love. Believers imagine that they can love God because God is supposed to contain a total plenitude, a fullness of being. But if this recognition with regard to a god who might be whole is even thinkable, it is that at the basis of all belief, there is still something that remains -- this being who is supposed to be whole, without a doubt lacks the thing that is principal in being, namely, existence. At the basis of all belief in god as perfectly and totally munificent, there is the notion of I do not know what that is always missing in him, and which allows one always to suppose that he might not exist. There is no other reason to love God, if it is not that perhaps he does not exist.

What is certain is that Dora is at a moment when she loves her father. She loves him precisely for what he does not give her. The whole situation is unthinkable outside of this primitive position, which is maintained until the end. One must now conceive how it could have been supported, tolerated, given that the father engages before Dora in something else, which Dora even seems to have induced.

The observation rests on the following ternary group -- the father, Dora, Frau K.

---

Frau K.       Dora       Father

---

DORA

---

3 English in the original.
The whole situation occurs as if Dora had to ask herself the question --
What is it that my father loves in Frau K.? Frau K. appears as something
that her father can love beyond herself. What Dora is attached to is what is
loved by her father in another, in as much as she does not know what it is.
That is very consonant with what the whole theory of the phallic object
supposes, which is that the feminine subject can only enter into the
dialectic of the symbolic order by the gift of the phallus. The real need
which springs from the female organ as such, from the physiology of the
woman, is not denied by Freud, but it is never given as entering as such in
the establishment of the position of desire. Desire aims at the phallus in so
far as it must be received as a gift. To this end, the phallus, absent or
present elsewhere, must be brought to the level of the gift. And it is in so
far as it is brought to the dignity of the object of the gift that it makes the
subject enter into the dialectic of exchange which will normalize all his
positions, up to and including the essential prohibitions which found the
general movement of exchange. It is within this that the real need whose
existence Freud never dreamed of denying, which is linked to the female
organ, has its place and is satisfied laterally, but it is never symbolically
located as something which might have a meaning. It is always essentially
in itself problematic, placed in advance of a certain symbolic crossing.
That is really in fact what is in question during the deployment of all
the symptoms, and all throughout the observation. Dora asks herself --
What is a woman? And it is in as much as Frau K. incarnates the feminine
function as such, that she is for Dora the representation of that into which
the latter projects herself as being the question. Dora is on the path of a
dual relation with Frau K., or rather Frau K. is what is loved beyond Dora,
and that is why Dora senses herself interested in this position. Frau K.
realizes what she, Dora, can neither know nor understand in this situation
in which she finds no place to lodge. What is loved in a being is beyond
what he is, that is, in the end, what he is lacking.
Dora is situated somewhere between her father and Frau K. In so far as
her father loves Frau K., Dora feels satisfied, on the condition, it is
understood, that the position be maintained. This position is moreover
symbolized in a thousand ways. Thus the impotent father substitutes by all the means of the symbolic gift, including material gifts, for what he cannot realize as a virile presence, and he in effect makes Dora benefit in passing, with a munificence which is bestowed equally upon the mistress and the daughter, thus making the latter participate in the position.

Nevertheless, that is no longer enough, and Dora tries to restore access to a position oriented in the opposite direction. I mean that it is no longer vis-à-vis the father, but vis-à-vis the woman whom she has before her, Frau K., that she tries to re-establish a triangular situation. Here there intervenes Herr K., through whom the triangle could effectively be closed, but in the position that is inverse.
In the interest of her question, Dora considers Herr K. as participating in what is symbolized by the question side of the presence of Frau K., namely, adoration, expressed by a very clear symbolic association of Frau K. to the Sistine Madonna. Frau K. is the object of adoration for all who surround her, and it is as a participant in this adoration that Dora finally situates herself with regard to her. Herr K. is the means by which she normalizes this position, in trying to reintegrate the masculine element in the circuit.

When does she strike him? Not when he courts her nor when he says that he loves her. Not even when he approaches her in a manner that is intolerable for a hysterical. It is at the moment when he says to her -- *Ich habe nichts an meiner Frau*. The German formula is particularly expressive, it has a particularly lively sense, if we give the term *nothing* its full weight. What he says in sum withdraws him from the circuit as constituted, whose order is established thus --
Dora can well admit that her father loves in her, and by her, what is beyond, Frau K., but for Herr K. to be tolerable in his position, he must occupy the function that is exactly inverse and in balance. That is, Dora must be loved by him beyond his wife, but in so far as his wife is something for him. This something is the same thing as that nothing which has to be beyond, namely, Dora, in this instance. He does not say that his wife is nothing for him, he says that, as far as his wife is concerned, there is nothing. We find the an in a thousand German expressions, for example in the expression *Es fehlt ihm an Geld*. It is an intimacy, an association, in the beyond of what is lacking. That is precisely what we discover here. Herr K. wants to say that where his wife is concerned, there is nothing -- *My wife is not in the circuit*.

What results? Dora cannot tolerate his being interested in her in so far as he is interested only in her. The whole situation is broken off with that. If Herr K. is interested only in her, then her father is interested only in Frau K., and from there on she can no longer tolerate it. Why?
In the eyes of Freud, she enters into a typical situation. As Claude Lévi-Strauss explains in *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, the exchange of ties of alliance consists exactly in this -- *I have received a woman and I owe a daughter*. This alone, which is the very principle of the institution of exchange and of the law, by itself makes of the woman a pure and simple object of exchange. She is integrated into it by nothing. In other terms, if she has not herself renounced something, that is, precisely the paternal phallus conceived as object of the gift, she can conceive nothing, subjectively speaking, which she might receive from others, that is from another man. To the extent that she is excluded from the first institution of the gift and of the law in the direct relation of the gift of love, she can live this situation only by feeling reduced purely and simply to the state of an object.

That is very much what happens at this moment. Dora absolutely revolts, and begins to say -- *My father is selling me to another man*. It is in effect the clear and perfect statement of the situation, in so far as she is maintained in a half-light. In fact, it really is a way for the father to repay the complacency of Frau K.'s husband, to tolerate in a veiled fashion that the latter should carry on this courtship of Dora to which he has been given for years.

Herr K. is thus revealed as not being part of a circuit in which Dora could either identify with herself, or believe that she, Dora, is his object beyond the woman by whom she is attached to him. There is a rupture of the links, which are no doubt subtle and ambiguous, but endowed with a direction, a perfect orientation, which permit Dora to find her place in the circuit, even if it is in a way that is unstable. The situation is disequilibrated, Dora sees herself fall to the role of pure and simple object, and she thence begins to demand her rights. She demands what she had been very disposed until then to consider that she received, even by the intermediary of another, which is the love of her father. From that moment on, since it is totally refused to her, she demands it exclusively.
Dora and our homosexual girl are thus implicated in two situations and two orders that are distinct. What difference emerges from that?

In order to go quickly, and to end on something that will make an impression, I shall say something that will be confirmed later.

If it is true that what is maintained in the unconscious of our homosexual girl is the father’s promise, *You will have a child from me*, and if in her exalted love for the lady, she shows, as Freud tells us, the model of a love that is absolutely disinterested, a love for nothing, do you not see that everything happens as if the girl wished to show her father what true love was, this love that her father had refused her? No doubt there is in the unconscious of the subject the thought that the father is involved with the mother because he finds more advantages there, and in fact, this relation is fundamental in the whole entry of the child into the Oedipus — that is to say, the crushing superiority of the adult rival. What the girl demonstrates to her father here is how one can love someone not only for what he has, but literally for what he does not have, for this symbolic penis that she well knows she will not find in the lady, because she knows very well where it is, namely with her father, who is not, this one, impotent.

In other terms, what one calls, approximately, the perversion in this case, is expressed between the lines, by contrasts and allusions. It is a way of speaking about something else entirely, while necessarily implying, by the rigorous progress of the terms at play, a counterpart, which is precisely what one wants to make the other hear. You find there what I have in the past called metonymy, which consists in making something understood while talking about something completely other. If you do not get to know this fundamental notion of metonymy in all its generality, it is inconceivable that you will arrive at any notion whatever of what a perversion might mean in the imaginary.

Metonymy is the principle of what one could call realism in the realm of fabulation and of art. A novel, which is made of a heap of small, sensible details of the real which mean nothing, has no value if it does not
make a meaning beyond them vibrate harmonically. Thus, at the
beginning of War and Peace, the theme which arises from the nude
shoulders of the women counts for something else. If the great novelists
are supportable, it is in so far as everything that they apply themselves to
showing us has a meaning, not at all symbolically, or allegorically, but
through what they keep at a distance. It is the same for the cinema -- when
a film is good, it is because it is metonymic. And in the same way, the
function of the subject's perversion is a metonymic function.

Is it the same thing for Dora, who is a neurotic? It is something
completely different. If we refer to the schema, we will find that in
perversion we have to do with a signifying behavior which indicates a
signifier which is further away in the signifying chain, in that it is linked
to it by a necessary signifier. In the case of Dora, Dora as subject is placed at
every step under a certain number of signifiers in the chain. She finds in
the situation a sort of perpetual metaphor.

Literally, Herr K. is her metaphor, because Dora can say nothing of what
she is. Dora does not know what place to take, nor where she is, nor what
use she serves, nor what use love serves. She simply knows that love
exists, and she finds a historization for it, in which she finds her place in
the form of a question. This question is centered by the content and
articulation of all her dreams -- the jewel box, Bahnhof, Friedhof, Vorhof --
which signify nothing other than this question. In short, it is in so far as
Dora asks herself what it is to be a woman that she expresses herself as she
does, by her symptoms. These symptoms are signifying elements, but that
is to the extent that a perpetually moving signified runs beneath them,
which is the way in which Dora is implicated and interested.

It is to the extent that it is metaphorical that Dora's neurosis takes on
meaning, and can be unraveled. Freud wanted to introduce into this
metaphor, or wanted to force, the real element which tends to be
reintroduced into every metaphor, by saying to Dora, What you love is
precisely this. Of course, something tended to be normalized in the
situation by the entry of Herr K., but this something remained in a
metaphorical state.
The proof is that sort of pregnancy which Dora produced after the crisis of the rupture with Herr K., and which Freud perceived with that prodigious intuitive sense of meanings that he had. It is in fact a strange significative miscarriage, which occurs at the term of nine months, Freud says, because Dora says it herself, acknowledging in effect that there was something like a pregnancy. It was in fact a matter of fifteen months, which is beyond the normal term for a pregnancy. It is significant that Dora sees in it the last resonance of that link by which she remains tied to Herr K. We find there the equivalence of a sort of copulation which is translated into the order of the symbolic in a purely metaphorical fashion. Once again, the symptom here is only a metaphor. It is for Dora an attempt to join in the law of symbolic exchanges, in relation to the man with whom she can unite or not unite.

In contrast, the birth that is also found at the end of the observation of the homosexual girl, before she comes into Freud's hands, occurs in the following way -- suddenly, she throws herself from a little railway bridge. That occurs at the moment when the real father intervenes once again to show his irritation and his vexation, an intervention which sanctions the woman who is with her in saying to her that she no longer wishes to see her. The young girl is thus deprived of her last resources. Until then, she had been frustrated enough of what ought to have been given her, namely the paternal phallus, but she had found a way to maintain desire through the imaginary relation with the lady. The latter rejecting her, she can no longer bear anything. The object is definitively lost, and this nothing in which she was instituted in order to show her father how one can love, has no longer even a reason for being. At this moment, she attempts suicide.

As Freud underlines, that also has another meaning, that of a definitive loss of the object. The phallus which is decidedly refused to her falls, niederkommt. The fall here has the value of a definitive privation, and also is the mimicry of a sort of symbolic giving birth. You find there the metonymic side of which I was speaking. If Freud can interpret the act of throwing herself from a railway bridge at a critical and terminal moment
of her relations with the lady and the father as a demonstrative way of making herself into this child that she has not had, and at the same time destroying herself in a last significative act of the object, it is founded purely on the existence of the word *niederkommt*.

This word metonymically indicates the final term, the term of suicide, in which the young homosexual girl expresses what is at stake, and which is the one and only spring of her whole perversion, namely, in conformity with what Freud has many times affirmed concerning the pathogenesis of a certain type of female homosexuality, a stable and particularly strong love for the father,

23 January 1957

THE FETISH OBJECT
THE FUNCTION OF THE VEIL

The symbolic phallus.
How to realize the lack.
The screen memory, an arrest at the image.
The alternation of perverse identifications.
The structure of reactionary exhibitionism.

Pursuing our reflections on the object, I shall today propose to you what can be deduced with regard to a problem that materializes the question of the object in a way that is particularly sharp -- namely, the fetish and fetishism.

You will again see the fundamental schemas that I have tried to bring you recently, which are particularly well expressed by those paradoxical affirmations -- what is loved in the object is what it lacks -- one gives only what one does not have.

This fundamental schema, which implies in every symbolic exchange, whatever the meaning of its functioning, the permanence of the constitutive character of a beyond of the object, permits us to cast new light on a perversion which has taken an exemplary role in analytic theory, and lets us establish differently what I might call its fundamental equations.
It is thus a question of fetishism.

The question of fetishism is broached by Freud in two fundamental texts which range between 1904 and 1927, and if others take up the question again later, these two are the most precious -- the paragraph on fetishism in the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* and the article entitled *Fetishism*.

Freud says straightaway in this article that the fetish is the symbol of something, but that we shall no doubt be disappointed by what he will tell us, for a lot has been said about the fetish since people first began talking about analysis, and Freud has spoken of it too. This something is, once again, the penis.

Only, immediately afterwards, Freud underlines that this is not just any penis. This precision scarcely seems to have been exploited in its structural basis, that is, for the fundamental suppositions that it implies when one reads it naively for the first time. To spell it out, the penis in question is not the real penis, it is the penis in so far as the woman has it -- that is to say, in so far as she does not have it.

I underline this vacillating point where we must stop a moment in order to perceive what is ordinarily avoided. For someone who does not use our keys, it is simply an affair of misconception of the real -- it is a matter of the phallus which the woman does not have, and which she must have for reasons belonging to the child's dubious relation to reality. That is the common path, which habitually sustains all sorts of speculations as to the future, the development and the crises of fetishism, and as I have been able to ascertain by an ample reading of everything that has been written about fetishism, it leads to all sorts of impasses.
I am going to try, here as always, not to go too far into what is really the forest of the analytic literature. In fact, there is a subject here which, to be treated effectively, would demand, not only hours, but indeed a detailed history, for there is nothing as delicate, indeed as painstaking, as situating the precise point where a subject matter eludes us because the author is avoiding a crucial point in a discrimination. Thus I shall give you, in one part of what I am going to present, the more or less decanted result of my reading, and I shall ask you to follow me.

In order to avoid the wandering into which authors have been led over the years if they avoided this point, and to give its just position to what is at stake, the differential nerve is the following -- it is not at all a question of a real phallus in so far as, being real, it exists or does not exist -- it is a question of a symbolic phallus, in as much as it is its nature to be present in an exchange as absence, absence functioning as such.

In effect, everything that can be transmitted in the symbolic exchange is always something that is as much absence as presence. It is made to have this sort of fundamental alternation, which means that having appeared at one point, it disappears, in order to reappear at another. In other words, it circulates, leaving behind it the sign of its absence at the point whence it came. In still other terms, the phallus in question, we recognize immediately, is a symbolic object.

On one side, a structural cycle of imaginary menaces is established by the object, which limits the conduct and use of the real phallus. That is the meaning of the castration complex, and it is in this that the man is caught. But there is also another use, which is, one might say, hidden by the more or less fearful fantasies in the man's relation to prohibitions which may concern the use of the phallus -- this is the symbolic function of the phallus. It is in as much as it is there or is not there, and only in as much as it is there or is not there, that the symbolic differentiation between the sexes is established.

The woman does not have this phallus, symbolically. But not to have the phallus symbolically is to participate in it by virtue of its absence, and is thus in some way to have it. The phallus is always beyond every relation.
between man and woman. It can on occasion become the object of an imaginary nostalgia for the woman, in that she has only a very little phallus. But this phallus which she may experience as insufficient is not the only one that enters into function for her, since, in as much as she is caught in the intersubjective relation, beyond her, there is for the man this phallus which she does not have, that is to say the symbolic phallus, which exists here as absence. This is completely independent of the inferiority that she may feel on the imaginary plane for what she has of a real participation in the phallus.

This symbolic penis, which I placed the other day on the schema of the young homosexual girl, plays an essential function in the girl's entry into the symbolic exchange. It is in as much as the girl does not have this phallus, that is also to say in so far as she has it on the symbolic plane, it is in so far as she enters into the symbolic dialectic of having or not having the phallus, that she enters into that ordered and symbolized relation which constitutes the difference between the sexes, an interhuman relation assumed, disciplined, typified, ordered, stricken with prohibitions, marked, indeed, by the fundamental structure of the law of incest. That is what Freud means when he writes that it is by the intermediary of what he calls the idea of castration -- and which is precisely this, that she does not have the phallus, but that she does not have it symbolically, thus she is able to have it -- that the girl enters into the Oedipus complex, while it is by this route that the boy exits from it.

We see here what justifies, structurally speaking, the androcentrism which, in the schematization of Lévi-Strauss, marks the elementary structures of kinship. Women are exchanged between lines founded on the male line of descent, chosen precisely because it is symbolic and improbable. It is a fact, women are exchanged like objects between male lines. They enter by an exchange, that of the phallus which they receive symbolically, and in exchange for which they give the child which takes on an ersatz function for them, a function of substitution, of equivalence with the phallus, by which they introduce a natural fecundity into the symbolic patrocentric genealogy, sterile in itself. It is in as much as they are tied to
this unique central object, characterized by the fact that it is precisely not an object, but an object that has suffered a symbolic valorization in the most radical way, it is by the intermediary of the relation to the phallus, that they enter into the chain of symbolic exchange, that they are there installed, that they there assume their place and their value.

You find that expressed in a thousand ways once you have seen it. What does the fundamental theme that the woman gives herself express if you look at it closely? -- if not the affirmation of the gift. Here we come back to concrete psychological experience, as it is given to us, which, on this occasion, is paradoxical. In the act of love, it is the woman who receives, really, she receives much more than she gives. Everything indicates, and analytic experience stresses this, that there is no position that is more that of the captor, or indeed more devouring, on the imaginary plane. If that is reversed into its contrary affirmation, that the woman gives herself, it is in so far as it must be true symbolically, namely, that she must give something in exchange for what she receives, that is to say, for the symbolic phallus.

Thus we have the fetish, Freud tells us, which represents the phallus as absent, the symbolic phallus. How can one not see that this sort of initial reversal is necessary if we are to understand things which would otherwise be paradoxical? For example, it is always the boy who is the fetishist, never the girl. If everything were on the plane of deficiency, or even of imaginary inferiority, of the two sexes it would rather be in the one which is really deprived of the phallus that fetishism should declare itself most openly. But that is not at all the case. Fetishism is extremely rare in women, in the proper and individualized sense in which it is incarnated in an object which we can consider as corresponding in a symbolic way to the phallus which is absent.

Let us try first to see how this singular relation of the subject to an object which is not an object can be engendered.
The fetish, analysis tells us, is a symbol. In this regard, it is almost placed
from the beginning on the same footing as every other neurotic symptom.

But if, with fetishism, it is a not a question of neurosis, but of a
perversion, that is not self-evident. That is how things are classified
nosophologically speaking, for reasons of clinical resemblance which no doubt
have a certain value, but from the point of view of analysis, one must look
at it quite closely in order to confirm it in structure. In reality, many
authors show some hesitation here, and go so far as to place fetishism on
the boundary between the perversions and the neuroses, precisely because
of the electively symbolic character of the crucial fantasy.

Having started from the top with structure, let us pause for a moment
at that point of interposition which has it that what is loved in the object
of love is something which is beyond. This something is nothing, no
doubt, but has the property of being there symbolically. Because it is a
symbol, not only can it, but it must, be this nothing. What can materialize
for us, most clearly, this relation of interposition, which causes what is
aimed at to be beyond what is there? -- if it is not this, which is truly one of
the most fundamental images of the human relation to the world -- the
veil, the curtain.

The veil, the curtain in front of something, is still what best allows us to
give an image of the fundamental situation in love. One can even say that
with the presence of the curtain, what is beyond as lack tends to be realized
as image. On the veil, absence is painted. This is nothing other than the
function of the curtain, whatever it may be. The curtain takes on its value,
its being, and its consistency, by being precisely that on which absence is
projected and supposed. The curtain is, one could say, the idol of absence.
If the veil of Maya is the metaphor most commonly used to express the
relation of man to all that captivates him, that is no doubt not without
reason, but surely pertains to the sentiment that he has of a certain
fundamental illusion in all of the relations woven from his desire. It is
really there that man incarnates, makes an idol of his sense of that nothing
which is beyond the object of love.
You must keep this fundamental schema in mind if you want to situate correctly the elements which come into play in the establishment of the fetishist relation, at whatever moment we might consider it.

[Schema, p. 156.]

Subject  Object  Nothing

Curtain

SCHEMA OF THE VEIL
Here are the subject, and the object, and that beyond which is nothing, or which is yet the symbol, or the phallus in so far as it is lacking in woman. But from the moment that the curtain is in place, on it can be painted something that says -- the object is beyond. The object can then take the place of the lack, and can also as such be the support of love, but this is in so far as it is precisely not the point to which desire is attached. In a certain way, desire appears here as a metaphor for love, but what draws it, that is, the object, itself appears in so far as illusory, and in so far as it is valorized as illusory.

The famous splitting\(^1\) of the ego when the fetish is at issue is explained by saying that the castration of the woman is both affirmed and denied by it. That the fetish is there means precisely that she has not lost the phallus, but at the same stroke, one can make her lose it, that is, castrate her. The ambiguity of the relation to the fetish is constant, and is ceaselessly manifested in the symptoms. This ambiguity which proves to be lived, an illusion sustained and cherished as such, is at the same time lived in a fragile equilibrium which is at every moment at the mercy of the curtain's falling or of its being raised. This is the relation at stake in the relation of the fetishist to his object.

Freud, when we follow his text, speaks of _Verleugnung_ with regard to the fundamental position of denial in the relation to the fetish. But he also says very clearly that it is a matter of making this complex relation _stand upright, aufrecht zu halten_, as though he were speaking of a decor. The language of Freud, at once so imagistic and so precise, provides terms which have their full value here. _The horror of castration_, he says, _has in this creation of a substitute, set in place a monument to itself_. The fetish is a _Denkmal_. The word _trophy_ does not enter in here, but in fact, it is there, behind the _sign of a triumph, das Zeichen des Triumphes_. Often, authors, at the approach of the typical phenomenon of the fetish, will speak of what

---

\(^1\) English in the original.
the subject uses to herald his relation with the sex.\textsuperscript{2} Freud makes us take one step further here.

Why does that occur? Why is it necessary? We will come to that. As always, one presses ahead too quickly. If one first goes to the why, one enters immediately into a chaos, a pandemonium of all the drives, which crowd in to explain why the subject may be more or less distant from the object, and feel arrested or menaced by it, in conflict with it. Let us stay for the moment with the structure.

The structure is here, in the relation of the beyond and the veil. On the veil can be imaged, that is to say, established as imaginary capture and place of desire, a relation to a beyond which is fundamental in every establishment of the symbolic relation. It is a matter here of a descent onto the imaginary plane of the ternary rhythm subject-object-beyond. In other words, in the function of the veil, it is a question of the projection of the intermediary position of the object.

Before going further and tackling the exigency which causes the subject to need a veil, we are going to see another way in which there is an institution of a symbolic relation in the imaginary.

I spoke to you last time, in dealing with perverse structure, of metonymy, and also of allusion, and of the relation between the lines, which are higher forms of metonymy. In the clearest way, Freud does not say anything other, short of using the word \textit{metonymy}. What constitutes the fetish, the symbolic element which fixes the fetish and projects it onto the veil, is specially borrowed from the historical dimension. It is the moment of the history at which the image is arrested.

I remember having in the past used the comparison of a film that is suddenly frozen, just before the moment when what is sought in the mother, namely the phallus which she has and which she has not, must be seen as presence-absence, and absence-presence. The rememoration of the history is arrested and suspended at the moment just before.

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Le sexe}. The French word, like the English, has a range of significations. In an absolute sense, women are called, simply, "the sex." \textit{Le sexe} also designates the sexual organ of either men or women.
I am speaking of the rememoration of the history because there is no other meaning that one can give to the term screen-memory, which is so fundamental in Freudian phenomenology and conceptualization. The screen-memory, the *Deckerinnerung*, is not simply an instantaneous moment, it is an interruption of the history, a moment at which it is arrested and fixed, and in which it simultaneously indicates the continuation of its movement beyond the veil. The screen-memory is linked to the history by a whole chain, it is a break in this chain, and it is thus that it is metonymic, for the history, by its nature, continues. In breaking there, the chain indicates its continuation henceforth veiled, its absent continuation, namely, the repression which is at stake, as Freud clearly says.

We are speaking of repression only in so far as there is a symbolic chain. If one can designate as the point of repression a phenomenon which can pass for imaginary, for in a certain way the fetish is an image, and a projected image, it is that this image is only the boundary point between the history in so far as it continues, and the moment at which it is interrupted. It is the sign, the indication of the point of repression.

If you read Freud's text attentively, you will see that this way of articulating things gives full weight to the expressions that he uses in the clearest way.

Once again, we see the relation to the object of love, and the relation of frustration by the object distinguished. These are two different relations. It is through a metaphor that love is transferred to desire which is attached to the object as illusory, whereas the constitution of the object is not metaphoric but metonymic. It is a point in the chain of the history at which the history is arrested. It is the sign that it is here that there begins the beyond which the subject constitutes. Why? Why must the subject constitute this beyond? Why is the veil more precious to a man than the reality? Why does the order of this illusory relation become an essential constituent, necessary to his relation with the object? That is the question raised by fetishism.
Before going further, you can already see all sorts of things becoming clearer, up to and including the fact that Freud gives as the first example of an analysis of a fetishist that marvelous story of a pun. A man who had passed his early childhood in England and who came to Germany to become a fetishist, always looked for a little gleam on the nose, which he had seen before, *ein Glanz auf die Nase*. That does not mean anything other than a glance at the nose, which nose itself was, of course, a symbol. The German expression only transposed the English expression which came from his earliest years. What you see coming into play here, and projected into a point on the veil, is the historical chain, which can even contain a whole sentence, and much more, a sentence in a forgotten language.

What are the causes for the establishment of the structure of fetishism? On that subject, the grammarians certify nothing.
Authors have been highly embarrassed for some time. On one hand, we cannot lose contact with the notion that the genesis of fetishism is essentially articulated with the castration complex. On the other hand, it is in pre-Oedipal relations, and nowhere else, that it appears most certain that the phallic mother is the central element, the decisive spring. How to join the two things?

Authors do it with more or less ease. Simply observe the ease -- moderate, in fact, that the members of the English school are able to have here, thanks to the system of Mrs. Melanie Klein. The latter structures the first stages of the oral drives, particularly in their most aggressive moment, by introducing the presence of the paternal penis through a retroactive projection, that is to say, by reactivating the Oedipus complex in the earliest relations with objects in so far as they are introjectable. One thus has an easy access to material which allows the interpretation of what is at stake. As I have not yet launched into an exhaustive critique of the meaning of Mrs. Melanie Klein's system, we shall leave aside for the moment what one or another author can bring in with regard to it. In order to stay with what we ourselves have brought to light, let us start off with the fundamental relation which is that of the real child, the symbolic mother, and her own phallus, which for her is imaginary.

This is a schema to be handled with caution, for it is concentrated on one same plane, whereas it in fact corresponds to several planes, and it comes into function at successive stages in the history. For a long time, in effect, the child is not able to appropriate the relation of imaginary ownership which creates a profound division in the mother with regard to him. We shall try this year to elucidate that question. We are on the way to seeing how and at what moment this comes into play for the child, how the child's entry into the relation to the symbolic object comes about, in so far as the phallus is its major currency. There are temporal, chronological questions, questions of order and of succession, which we shall try to
approach from the point of view of pathology, as the history of psychoanalysis teaches us to do.

What do the observations show us when we examine them closely? They show us phenomena that appear in correlation with that singular symptom which places the subject in an elective relation with a fetish, the fascinating object inscribed on the veil, around which his erotic life gravitates. I say gravitates because it is well understood that the subject retains a certain freedom of movement, which one perceives when one analyzes, rather than simply making a clinical description. In taking an observation, one sees very clearly elements that I have already spelled out today, and that Binet had already noted, for example that striking point of the screen-memory which fixes the arrest at the hem of the mother's dress, or at her corset, or again the essentially ambiguous relation that the subject has with the fetish, a relation of illusion, lived as such, and as such preferred, with the particularly satisfying function of an inert object, fully at the mercy of the subject to manipulate in his-erotic relations. All of that can be seen in an observation, but analysis is necessary to get a bit closer to what happens each time that, for whatever reason, the recourse to the fetish founders, weakens, is exhausted, or simply fails.

The amorous comportment, and more simply, the erotic relation of the subject, is summarized in a defense. You can check that by reading, in the International Journal, the observations of Sylvia Payne, XX-2, of Mr. Gillespie, of Mrs. Greenacre, of Mr. Dugmore Hunter, XXXV-3, or studies that have appeared in the Psycho-Analytic Study of the Child.

This was also glimpsed by Freud, and is articulated in our schema. Freud tells us that fetishism is a defense against homosexuality, and Mr. Gillespie notes that the line between the two is extraordinarily fine. In short, we find an alternation of identifications in the amorous relations with the object which organize this cycle in the fetishist. Identification with the woman, confronted with the destructive penis, the imaginary phallus of the primordial experiences of the oral-anal stage, centered on the aggressivity of the sadistic theory of coitus -- and, in fact, many of the experiences which analysis brings to light show an observation of the
primitive scene perceived as cruel, aggressive, violent, indeed, murderous. Inversely, identification of the subject with the imaginary phallus, which makes of him a pure object for the woman, which she can devour, and at the limit, destroy.

This oscillation between the two poles of the primitive imaginary relation confronts the child in a manner that one can call brutal, before the establishment of the relation in its Oedipal legality through the introduction of the father as subject, center of order and legitimate possession. The child is delivered up to the bipolar oscillation of the relation between two irreconcilable objects, which in any case ends in an outcome that is destructive, indeed murderous. That is what one finds at the base of amorous relations each time they arise in the life of the subject, take on their first shape, and try to attain some order. In one way of understanding analysis, which is precisely the modern way, and which on this point is not without similarity to my own path, it is here that the analyst intervenes in order to make the subject perceive the alternation of these positions as well as their signification. One can say that, in a certain fashion, he introduces the symbolic distance necessary for the subject to perceive the meaning.

The observations are extremely rich and fruitful when they show, for example, the thousand forms that there can be, in the actuality of the subject's early life, of a fundamental incompleteness, which delivers him up to the imaginary relation by the path either of identification with the woman, or with the place taken by the imaginary phallus, that is to say, in any case, in an insufficient symbolization of the ternary relation. Authors very frequently note the sometimes repeated absence of the father in the subject's history, the deficiency, as one says, of the father as a presence -- he leaves on a voyage, for war, etc.

Even more, one notes a particular type of subjective position, sometimes singularly reproduced in fantasies, that of a forced immobilization. This is sometimes manifested in a binding of the subject that has actually taken place, of which there is a very fine example in the observation by Sylvia Payne. Following an extravagant medical
prescription, a child had been prevented from walking up until the age of two years, with secure bands confining him to his bed. That was not without some consequence. The fact that he lived so closely observed in the bedroom of his parents put him in the exemplary position of being completely given up to a purely visual relation, with no attempt at muscular reaction coming from him. His relation to his parents was assumed by him with the sort of rage and choler that you can imagine. If cases this exemplary are rare, certain authors have insisted on the fact that the phobia of some mothers who keep the child at a distance from their contact a little as if it were a source of infection, is certainly not for naught in the prevalence given to the visual relation in the constitution of the primitive relation with the maternal object.

Much more instructive than such an example of the vitiation of the primary relation, is the pathological relation that appears as the inverse, or the complement, of the libidinal tie to the fetish. Fetishism is in effect a class that nosologically includes all sorts of phenomena whose affinity or kinship with fetishism is indicated to us in some way by our intuition.

That a subject like the one of whom Mrs. Payne speaks should be attached to a raincoat would appear to be of the same nature as if he were attached to shoes. We are not mistaken in thinking that. Structurally speaking, however, the raincoat itself accommodates relations and indicates a position that is a bit different from those entailed by a shoe or a corset. These objects are themselves, directly, in the position of a veil between the subject and the object. It is not the same with the raincoat, or with other sorts of more or less enveloping fetish garments. One must also allow a place to the special quality of rubber. This feature, encountered very frequently, cannot but conceal some last mystery, which no doubt could be clarified psychologically by the sensory quality which the touch of rubber has in itself. Perhaps there is something here that can, more easily than other things, be taken as a double for the skin, or again, which has its special capacities for isolation. Whatever the case concerning the structure itself of the relations which are confided in certain centers where the observation is taken analytically, one sees that the raincoat plays a role
which is not exactly that of the veil. It is rather something behind which the subject centers himself. He situates himself, not in front of the veil, but behind it, that is, at the place of the mother, adhering to a position of identification in which the latter needs to be protected, here by envelopment.

This is what gives us the transition between cases of fetishism and cases of transvestism. The envelopment does not belong to the order of the veil, but is a protection. It is a question of an aegis, in which the subject identified with the feminine personage envelopes himself.

Another typical relation, sometimes especially exemplary, is that of the explosions of exhibitionism in certain truly reactionary cases, and indeed, on occasion, its alternation with fetishism. That is always observed when the subject tries to get out of his labyrinth because something real that has been brought into play places him in an unstable equilibrium, in which a crystallization is produced, or a reversal of his position. That is very manifestly illustrated by the schema of the Freudian case of female homosexuality, where the introduction of the father as a real element makes the terms change places, so that what was situated in the beyond, the symbolic father, comes to be taken in the imaginary relation, while the subject takes a homosexual position which is demonstrative with regard to the father.

We also have some very fine cases in which one sees the subject, in so far as he has tried to accede to a full relation under conditions of artificial realization, with a forcing of the real, express what was symbolically latent
in the situation by an acting out,³ that is to say on the imaginary plane. We have an example of this with the subject who for the first time attempts a real relation with a woman, but who engages in this position of experience by going in there to show what he can do. He succeeds more or less well thanks to the help of the woman, but in the hour that follows, and when nothing up to the present had let one foresee the possibility in him of such symptoms, he gives himself up to a most singular and very highly calculated exhibitionism, which consists of showing his sex as an international train is passing, so that no one can catch him with his hand in the sack. The subject has here been forced to give issue to something that was implicit in his position. His exhibitionism is only the expression or the projection onto the imaginary plane of something whose symbolic underpinnings he had not himself fully understood, namely, that the act he has just committed was, when all has been said, only that of trying to show -- to show that he was capable of having a normal relation like anyone else.

We find this sort of reactionary exhibitionism on several occasions in observations which are very close to fetishism, or even which are frankly observations of fetishism. It is a question, one senses clearly, of delinquent acts which are equivalents of fetishism. Melitta Schmideberg presents, for example, a man who had married a woman almost two times taller than he, a veritable household à la Dubout, in which he played the role of the ubuesque victim, the butt and scapegoat. One fine day this man, who was doing his best faced with the horrible situation, learned that he was to become a father. He rushed into a public garden and began showing his organ to a group of young girls.

Mrs. Schmideberg, who seems a bit too Anna-Freudian here, finds all sorts of analogies with the fact that the father of the boy had already been ever so slightly a victim for his wife, and that he had succeeded in disengaging himself from the situation by getting caught one day with a maid, which by arousing jealous outrage, put his spouse a little bit at his mercy. That explains nothing. Mrs. Schmideberg avoids the major point of

³ English in the original.
the thing. She believes that she has analyzed a perversion, that she has done a short analysis. There is no need to marvel at it, for it is not a matter of perversion at all, and she has not at all done an analysis. She leaves aside the fact that it is by an act of exhibitionism that the subject became manifest on this occasion. There is no other way to explain this act than by referring to that mechanism of release by which what comes as a surplus in the real, symbolically inassimilable, tends to cause the precipitation of what is at the basis of the symbolic relation, that is, the equivalence phallus-child.

Being unable in any way able to assume this paternity, being unable even to believe in it, this good man went to the right place to show the equivalent of the child, namely, what then remained to him of the use of his phallus.

30 January 1957

---

4 English in the original.
IDENTIFICATION WITH THE PHALLUS

Transvestism and the use of clothing.

Showing ≠ exposing to view.

Girl = Phallus.

The object and the ideal in Freud.

Frustration of love and satisfaction of need.

The last time, I took a step towards the elucidation of fetishism, which is a particularly fundamental example of the dynamics of desire.

Desire interests us to the highest degree for a double reason. On one hand, we have to deal with desire in our practice. It is not a constructed desire, but a desire with all its paradoxes, just as we have to deal with an object in all of its paradoxes. On the other hand, it is clear that Freudian
thinking began with these paradoxes. In particular, where desire is concerned, it began with perverse desire. It would really be a pity to forget this in our attempt at unification or reduction, when we have to deal with the most naïvely intuitive theories to which psychoanalysis has recourse today.

I have, from time to time, some echoes of the way that you receive the bit of novelty that I bring each time, at least I hope. But this little step that I took surprised some, who were already quite satisfied with the theory of love as I had presented it, in which love is founded on the fact that the subject addresses the lack that is in the object. That had already furnished some with the occasion for a meditation which seemed sufficiently enlightening, though they had some trouble in perceiving that to the subject-object relation, there were added a lack and a beyond. I brought in an additional complication the last time, with a term situated in front of the object, namely the veil, the curtain, the place where imaginary projection occurs. Here there appears what will become the figuration of the lack, the fetish, which can be the support offered to something which takes its name precisely there -- desire, but desire in so far as it is perverse. It is on the veil that the fetish comes to figure precisely what is lacking beyond the object.

This schematization is intended to install the successive planes which should allow you to find your bearings a bit better in certain cases, with their perpetual ambivalence and confusion, where the yes is equivalent to a no, where what is aimed in one direction equals what is aimed in precisely the contrary direction -- in short, with all that, unfortunately, analysts habitually call, in order to get out of the embarrassment, ambivalence.

At the very end of what I said the last time about fetishism, I showed you the apparition of a position that was in some sense complementary.
The latter also appears in the phases of the structure of fetishism, indeed in the fetishist's attempts to rejoin that object from which he is separated by something whose function and mechanism, of course, he himself does not understand. This position, which can be called the symmetrical, corresponding, opposite pole of fetishism, is the function of transvestism.

In transvestism, the subject identifies himself with what is behind the veil, with that object in which something is lacking. Authors have seen it clearly and said it in their language -- the transvestite identifies with the phallic mother, in so far, however, as she veils the lack of the phallus.

Transvestism takes us very far into the question. Moreover, we did not need to wait for Freud in order to broach the psychology of clothing. In every use of clothing, there is something that participates in the function of transvestism. If the immediate, current, common understanding of the function of clothing is to hide the pudenda, the question must be complicated be it ever so little in the eyes of the analyst. It would be sufficient if someone among the authors who speak of the phallic mother were willing to see the meaning of what he is saying. Clothing is not only made to hide what one has, in the sense of having it or not, but also precisely what one does not have. Both functions are essential. It is not a matter, essentially and always, of hiding the object, but also of hiding the lack of the object. It is a simple application, in the case of the imaginary dialectic, of what is too often forgotten, namely the presence and the function of the lack of the object.

Inversely, in the massive use that is made of the scotophilic relation, one always implies as following of itself that the act of showing oneself is absolutely simple, that it is the correlative of the activity of seeing, of voyeurism. There too, one dimension is deliberately forgotten.

It is not true that always and in every instance, the subject simply shows himself, in as much as showing himself is the correlative pole for the activity of seeing. It is not a question simply of the subject's implication in a couple based on visual capture. There is in scotophilia a supplementary dimension of involvement, which is expressed in language by the presence of the reflexive, that form of the verb which exists in other
languages and which is called the middle voice. Here that would be to give oneself to be seen, to expose oneself to view. By combining both of these dimensions, one can say that, in a whole range of activities confounded under the heading of the voyeurist-exhibitionist relation, what the subject gives to be seen in showing himself is something other than what he shows. One is thus wrong to tie all of that into what is massively called the scoptophilic relation.

Authors like Fenichel, who are very bad theoreticians under their apparent clarity, but who are not for all that without analytic experience, have perceived it very well. If the effort at theorization in some of his articles ends in a desperate check, you sometimes find some very pretty clinical pearls there, and even the presentiment of a whole order of facts which, by a sort of flair that the analyst fortunately takes from his experience, are grouped around a chosen theme of the analytic articulation, starting with a branch of fundamental imaginary relations. Around scoptophilia or transvestism, for example, are grouped slender stems of fact which are distinguished from one another in phenomenology, but in which the author more or less obscurely senses a kinship, an association.

Thus, while informing myself about a whole vast and insipid literature in order to take account of the point to which analysts have penetrated in a real articulation of these facts, I was interested recently by an article of Fenichel's, which appeared in the Psychoanalytic Quarterly, volume XVIII, no. 3, 1949, which has to do with what he calls the equation Girl = Phallus, which is not without relation, as he himself notes, with the well-known series of equations feces = child = penis. Although one sees a flagrant lack of orientation manifested here which makes us continually wish for a logic that were exempt from it, it emerges from the facts encountered in analysis and brought together by the author, that the child can be taken as the equivalent of the phallus in the unconscious of the subject, particularly the feminine subject. That in sum is the phylum of the proposal -- everything is tied to the fact that the child is given to the mother as a substitute, or even equivalent, of the phallus.
Many and various facts are gathered into the same parenthesis, which does not leave one very surprised. When I spoke of the child, it was not particularly about the feminine child, whereas this article is especially concerned with the girl. It starts with traits that are well known in the fetishist, or quasi-fetishist specifics of certain perversions, which indicate that the girl can be considered as the equivalent of the phallus of the subject. The analytic givens also indicate that the girl, indeed in a general way, the child -- can conceive herself as an equivalent of the phallus, can manifest this in her behavior, and live the sexual relation in a way that requires that she herself bring the phallus to her masculine partner. That is sometimes seen even in the details of her preferred position in the act of love, when she embraces her partner, curling up into a ball in a certain part of the latter's body. This sort of fact cannot fail to strike us and to hold our interest. It must be added, finally, that in certain cases, the masculine subject can also give himself to the woman as being what he lacks, himself bearing the phallus as what he lacks, imaginarily speaking.

The facts brought into relief and gathered here are taken in one and the same equation, towards which the whole seems to point. But, these are facts belonging to extremely different orders. In the four orders of relations that I have just sketched, the subject is absolutely not in the same relation to the object when he brings, or gives, or desires, or even substitutes himself for it. Once our attention has been drawn to these headings, we cannot but see that the grouping of these facts under the equivalence thus instituted goes well beyond a simple theoretical exegesis. That the little girl might be the object of a prevailing attachment for one type of subject gives evidence of a function that one could call mythic, which is distinct both from perverse illusions and from a whole series of literary constructions which we can group according to the authors, under more or less illustrious headings.

Some are willing to speak of a Mignon type. You all know Goethe's creation, the bohemian Mignon, whose bisexual position is underlined by the author himself, and who lives with a sort of enormous, brutal, and manifestly super-paternal protector, who is named Harfner. He serves in
sum as a superior servant, but she is at the same time of great necessity for him. Goethe says somewhere of this couple -- Harfner, of whom she has the greatest need, and Mignon, without whom he can do nothing. We find coupled there power incarnate in its massive, brutal state, and on the other side, that without which it is deprived of efficacy, that which is lacking in power itself, and which is in the end the secret of its true power. This something is nothing other than a lack.

That is the final point in which we find the famous magic that analytic theory always attributes in such a confused way to the idea of omnipotence. As I have already said, the structure of omnipotence is not, contrary to what one might believe, in the subject, but in the mother, that is to say in the primitive Other. It is the Other who is all-powerful. But behind this omnipotence, there is the ultimate lack on which her power depends. From the moment that the subject perceives, in the object from which he expects omnipotence, this lack which makes her powerless, the last resort of omnipotence is referred beyond, namely to where, to the maximum, something does not exist. This is what, in the object, is nothing but a symbolism of lack, fragility, littleness. It is there that the subject stresses the secret and the true spring of omnipotence. That is what makes the interest of what today we call the Mignon type, which is reproduced in literature in a very great number of examples.
Three years ago, I was on the point of announcing a lecture on *Le Diable amoureux* by Cazotte. There are few testaments so exemplary of the most profound divination of the imaginary dynamic that I am trying to develop before you, especially today. I remembered it as a major illustration of what is at issue, one which accentuates the meaning of this magic being beyond the object, to which a whole series of idealizing fantasies can be attached.

The story begins in Naples, in a cavern where the author delivers himself up to an invocation of the devil, who, after the appropriate formalities, does not fail to appear. He shows himself in the form of a formidable camel's head furnished with especially large ears, and he says to the author in the most cavernous voice there could be -- *What do you want? Che vuoi?*

This fundamental interrogation gives us the most striking illustration of the function of the superego. But the interest does not lie there -- it is that this same being is supposed to transform himself, once the pact is concluded, into a little dog that, by a transition which surprises no one, becomes a ravishing young man, then a ravishing young girl, the two never ceasing until the end to intermingle in a perfect ambiguity. This beloved personage, who has a significant name, Biondetta, for a while becomes for the narrator the surprising source of every felicity, accomplishes all his desires, procures the magical satisfaction of all that he can wish. The whole meanwhile bathes in an atmosphere of fantasy, of dangerous irreality, of permanent menace, which does not fail to give an accent to everything around it. The situation is resolved at the end by a sudden rupture of this always more accelerated and mad course, and by the catastrophic dissipation of the mirage at the moment when, as it is fitting, the subject returns to the castle of his mother.

Another novel, by Latouche, *Fragoletta*, presents a curious character, clearly transvestite, about whom, up until the end, nothing is finally brought into the light, unless it is for the reader. It is about a girl who is a boy, and who plays a role functionally analogous to what I have just

---

1 *The Devil in Love.*
described as the *Mignon* type. There are details, refinements there, that I leave to you. The whole ends in a dual in the course of which the hero of the novel kills Fragoletta who appears to him as a boy without his recognizing her, which shows very well the equivalence between a certain feminine object of *Verleibheit*, and the other as rival. This is the same other who is at issue when Hamlet kills the brother of Ophelia.

What we have seen at work here is a fetishized or fee character -- it is the same word, both going back to *factiso* in Portuguese, from which, historically, the word *fetish* is born, and which is none other than the word *factice*, factitious. This ambiguous feminine being incarnates, in some way, beyond the mother, the phallus that she lacks, incarnates it all the better in not possessing it herself, being rather engaged as a whole in its representation, its *Vorstellung*. We have there one more function which clarifies the relation of falling in love as it can be established in perverse paths of desire. These can be exemplary in enlightening us on the positions to distinguish when we analyze desire.

And now we are finally led to ask the question of what is subjacent, perpetually brought into cause by this very critique, namely, the notion of identification.

The notion of identification is present in Freud’s work from the beginning -- latent, emerging at every moment, then disappearing again. There are already hints of it in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Its major explanation is attained in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, which includes a chapter, VII, expressly consecrated to identification.

This chapter has the specific of showing us, as happens very often in Freud, and that is the value of his work, the author’s greatest perplexity. Freud avows his difficulty, indeed, his powerlessness to exit from the dilemma posed by the perpetual ambiguity that appears between two terms that he specifies, namely identification and the choice of the object. The two terms appear in a great number of cases to act as substitutes for one.
another, with the most disconcerting power of metamorphosis, so that the
transition itself cannot be grasped. There is, however, a clear need to
maintain the distinction between the two, for, as Freud says, it is not the
same to be on the side of the object or on the side of the subject. That an
object becomes the object of choice is not the same thing as its becoming
the support of the subject’s identification.

This fact is formidably instructive in itself. It is no less instructive to see
the disconcerting facility with which everyone seems to accept, and to use
both one and the other in a strictly equivalent way, without asking any
more about it, whether it is a question of observation or of theorization.
When one asks more, one produces an article like that of Gustav-Hans
Gruber in Imago, in 1937 -- Les Deux Espèces de mécanismes
d’identification --, which is really the most numbing thing that one can
imagine, for everything appears resolved for him by the distinction
between active identification and passive identification. When one looks
more closely, it is impossible not to see, and he himself perceives, that the
two poles active and passive are present in every kind of identification, so
that we really must come back to Freud, and take up point by point the way
that he himself articulates the question.

Chapter VIII of Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, which
follows the chapter on identification, begins with a sentence that
immediately brings into the atmosphere something purely different from
what we are in the habit of reading -- Linguistic usage remains, even in its
caprices, always faithful to a Wirklichkeit, some effective reality, whatever
it may be.

I would like to point out in passing that Freud began to deal with
identification in the preceding chapter, by speaking of the father as the
example by which we enter most naturally into this phenomenon. We
arrive at the second paragraph, and here is an example of the bad French
translations of Freud’s texts. We read in the German text -- At the same
time as this identification with the father, perhaps also a little bit earlier --
which is translated as a little bit later --, the little boy begins to direct his
libidinal desires towards his mother, -- and one can wonder, with this translation, if the identification with the father should not be preliminary.

We find another example in the passage that I want to reach this morning, and that I have chosen as the most condensed and the most appropriate for showing you Freud's perplexities. It is about the state of being in love and its relation with identification. If one follows Freud's text, identification is a most primitive, most fundamental function, in that it implies a choice of object, but a choice of object which still needs to be articulated in a way that itself is very problematic, for Freudian analysis links it profoundly to narcissism. In order to go as far as one can go in the direction that Freud articulates perfectly, let us say that this object is a sort of other ego in the subject. It is a question then of knowing how to articulate the difference between identification and Verliebtheit in its highest, fullest manifestations, known under the name of fascination, enfeoffment, Hörigkeit, which is easy to describe. We read in the French translation -- In the first case, the ego is enriched by the qualities of the object, is assimilated to the latter -- whereas it is only necessary to read
what Ferenczi\(^2\) has said, which is introject. It is a question of the relation between introjection and identification.

In the second case it is impoverished, being given entirely to the object, effaced before it, as they translate it in French. That is not at all what Freud says, which is -- object that he has put in the place of his most constituent element. That is entirely erased in the French sentence, in which one does not see that being effaced before it translates something so articulate.

Freud stops here at the opposition between, on one hand, what the subject introjects and by which he is enriched, and on the other hand, what takes from him something of himself, and impoverishes him. In fact, Freud had earlier paused for a long time over what happens in the state of being in love, where the subject is dispossessed more and more of all that is of himself, to the benefit of the loved object. He is filled with humility and falls into a complete subjection with regard to the object of his investment. This object for whose benefit he is impoverished is the very same that he puts in the place of his most important constituent element, Bestandteil.

That is the approach that Freud takes to this problem. He pursues it by turning back -- for he does not neaten up his movements, he advances, and noticing that all is not complete, he retraces his steps -- in order to say that this description makes oppositions appear that, in reality, do not exist, nicht bestehen, from the economic point of view. From the economic point of view, it is a matter neither of enrichment nor of impoverishment, for even the state of being in love can be conceived as an introjection of the object into the ego.

The following distinction bears perhaps upon the most essential points -- In the case of identification, the object is volatilized and disappears in order to reappear in the ego, which undergoes a partial transformation, after the model of the object that has disappeared. In the other case, the substituted object is found to be endowed with every quality by the ego, and at its expense.

\(^2\) Thus in the original.
That is what the French text says. Why should the object become volatile and disappear in order to reappear in the ego, after having undergone a partial transformation along the lines of the object of the model that has disappeared? It would be better to refer to the German text - perhaps another distinction is the essential one. In the case of identification, the object has been lost - this is a reference to that fundamental notion which we have found ever since the beginning. The formation of the object, as Freud explains it, rests upon the fundamental notion of the object lost -- or abandoned. It is thus not a question of an object which becomes volatile, or which disappears, because, precisely, it does not disappear. It is then re-erected anew in the ego, and the ego is transformed partially according to the model of the lost object.

In the other case -- that of Verliebtheit -- the object is preserved, erhalten geblieben, and as such it is overinvested, überbesetzt, on behalf of and at the expense of the ego.

But this distinction in its turn raises a new reflection: is it really certain that identification supposes the abandon of the investment of the object? Can one not also have an identification with an object that is kept? And before entering into this particularly thorny discussion, we must also stop a moment at the consideration which we are presenting, that there is another alternative in which the essence of this state of things can be conceived, and which is namely that the object may be put at the place of the Ich or of the Ich-Ideal, of the ego or of the ideal of the ego.

This is a text whose project leaves us highly embarrassed. Nothing very clear results, it seems, from these movements forwards and backwards. The very place to be given to the object in these different moments of departure and return, according to whether it is constituted as the object of identification or as the object of amorous capture, is marked by an ambiguity which Freud makes patent, and it remains almost entirely in a state of interrogation. At least the interrogation has the merit of being made, and it is that alone that I wished to highlight. One cannot say that this is Freud's testamentary text, even if it is one of those in which he reaches the height of his theoretical elaboration.
Let us now try to take up the problem again by beginning with the bearings that we have gained from our elaboration of the relations between frustration and the constitution of the object.

It is a matter first of conceiving the link which we commonly establish between identification and introjection, in our practice and in our way of speaking. You have, moreover, seen it appear from the beginning of the piece by Freud that I have just read to you.

I am proposing the following -- the underlying metaphor in introjection is an oral metaphor. One speaks of introjection and incorporation without differentiating them. One commonly allows oneself to slide into articulations given in the Kleinian epoch. One refers, for example, to the famous constitution of primitive objects, which are divided conveniently into good and bad. One speaks of the introjection of objects, considered as simple givens present in that famous primitive world without limit where the subject is thought to make a whole of his own englobement in the maternal body. In this usage, introjection is held to be a function strictly equivalent and symmetrical to that of projection. So the object is perpetually in a sort of movement that makes it pass from the outside to the inside, in order then to be pushed from the inside back into the outside, when it becomes too intolerable in the interior. That leaves introjection and projection in a perfect symmetry.

It is against this abuse, which is very far from being a Freudian abuse, that what I shall try to articulate for you is constructed.

In the cure of a fetishist, for example, we observe manifest bulimic impulses, which are correlative to a turning point in the symbolic reduction of the object with which we happen to be preoccupied more or less successfully in the perverse. How to conceive this correlation, the evocation of the oral drive at this precise moment? Its conceptualization is impossible, it is impossible to construct any order at all not only in our thinking but also in our practice and in the clinic, if we hold to the vague
notion that is always at our disposal in these cases -- the subject is regressing, one says, because, naturally, he is there for that. Thus, at the very moment when the subject is progressing in the analysis, that is to say, trying to get some perspective concerning his fetish, he regresses. You can always say it, and no one will come and contradict you.

I am saying, on the contrary, that each time that the drive appears in analysis or elsewhere, it must be conceived, as to its economic function, with regard to the unfolding of a relation that is symbolically defined. Does not the primitive schema that I have given you of the symbolic structure of love give us something that clarifies it?

Let us start off from the support of the first love relation, that of the mother who is the object of the call, and thus an object as much absent as present. On one side, there are her gifts, which are signs of love, and as such are only that, that is to say, by this fact they are annulled in so far as they are anything other than signs of love. On the other side, there are the objects of need, which she presents to the child in the form of her breast. Do you not see that between the two, it is a matter of balance and compensation? Each time that there is frustration in love, this is compensated by the satisfaction of a need. It is in as much as the mother is lacking to the child who calls her, that he latches onto her breast, and that this breast becomes more significant than anything else. When he has it in his mouth and is satisfied by it, on one hand, the child cannot be separated from the mother, and on the other hand, it leaves him nourished, rested, and satisfied. The satisfaction of need is here the compensation of the frustration of love, and it begins at the same time to become, I would almost say, an excuse for it.

The prevalent value taken by the object, in this instance the breast or the nipple, is founded on this -- a real object takes on its function as part of the object of love, it takes its signification as symbolic, and the drive is addressed towards the real object which is part of the symbolic object. As real object it becomes a part of the symbolic object. It is here that there opens up every possible understanding of oral absorption and its so-called regressive mechanism, which can intervene in every love relation. From
the moment that a real object which satisfies a real need has been able to become an element of the symbolic object, every other object capable of satisfying a real need can come to take its place, and first among them, that object which is already symbolized, but also perfectly materialized, which is speech.

To the extent that oral regression to the primitive object of devotion enters as a compensation in the frustration of love, this reaction of incorporation gives its model, its mold, its Vorbild, to that sort of incorporation which is the incorporation of certain words among others, which is at the origin of the early formation of what one calls the superego. What the subject incorporates under the name of the superego is something analogous to the object of need, not that it is in itself the gift, but in so far as it is the substitute for the lack of the gift, which is not at all the same.

Again, starting from that, the fact of possessing or not possessing a penis can take a double meaning, and enter by two paths that are at first very different in the imaginary economy of the subject. First, the penis can at a given moment situate itself as object in the lineage and at the place of that object which is the breast or the nipple. It is thus an oral form of incorporation of the penis which plays a role in the determination of certain symptoms and certain functions. But there is another way in which the penis enters into the imaginary economy. It may enter not as an object that compensates for the frustration of love, but in so far as it is beyond the object of love, and is lacking in the latter.

Let us call one the penis, which is still an imaginary function in as much as it is imaginarily that it is incorporated. The other is the phallus that is lacking in the mother, and which is beyond her and her power of love.

It is about the phallus in so far as it is lacking that I have been asking this question since I began this year’s seminar — at what moment does the subject discover that it is lacking? When and how does he make this discovery? — starting with which he will find himself engaged in coming himself to be a substitute for it, that is to say, choosing another path in the
refinding of the object of love that vanishes, by himself bringing it his own lack.

This distinction is capital, and allows us today to pose a first plan of what is more or less required for this moment to occur.

We have symbolic structuration and a possible introjection, which is as such the most characteristic form of primitive Freudian identification. It is in a second phase that Verliebtheit occurs. The latter is not conceivable, is articulated nowhere, if not in the register of the narcissistic relation, otherwise called the specular relation, as he who speaks to you here has defined and articulated it.

I remind you that it is at a date that can be situated, and which, necessarily, is not before the sixth month, that the relation to the image of the other occurs, which gives the subject the matrix around which will be organized for him what I would call his lived incompleteness. It is precisely the fact that he is in default. It is with regard to this image which appears as total, not only fulfilling, but source of jubilation because of the specific relation that man has to his own image, that he realizes that something may be lacking in him. It is in so far as the imaginary enters into play that, on the foundation of the first two symbolic relations between the object and the child's mother, it can appear that in the mother, as in himself, something may be imaginarily lacking. It is in the specular relation that the subject has the experience and the apprehension of a possible lack, that something beyond can exist, which is a lack.

It is only beyond the narcissistic realization, and in so far as a tense, profoundly aggressive to-ing and fro-ing begins to be organized between the subject and the other, around which will be constructed, crystallized, successive layers of what will constitute the ego, that something is introduced which makes there appear to the subject, beyond what he himself constitutes as an object for the mother, the idea [forme] that the object of love is taken, captive, held, in something which he himself, as object, does not succeed in extinguishing -- namely, a nostalgia, which is related to the very lack in the object of love.
All this, at the point we have reached, rests on the effect of transmission, which makes us suppose -- because experience imposes it upon us, and because Freud remained completely attached to it up until the last moment of his formulations -- that no satisfaction by any real object whatsoever that comes in as a substitute can ever manage to fulfill the lack in the mother. Besides the relation to the child, the lack of the phallus remains in her, as the point of attachment of her insertion into the imaginary. It is only after the second phase of imaginary specular identification with the image of the body, which is at the origin of his ego and which will provide its matrix, that the subject can realize what is lacking in the mother. The specular experience of the other as forming a totality is a preliminary condition. It is in relation to this image that the subject realizes that in himself too something can be lacking. The subject thus bears beyond the object of love this lack for which he can be led to substitute himself, in proposing himself as the object which can fulfill it.

I have led you today up to the presentation of a form that you must keep in mind so that we can take things up again at this point the next time. What does this form correspond to? What you see being traced here is a new dimension and a new property of what is presented in the completed subject, in whom the functions called superego, ideal of the ego, and ego are differentiated. It is a matter of knowing, as Freud says very well at the end of his article, what this object is that, in Verliebtheit, comes to put itself in the place of the ego or of the ideal of the ego.

In what I have up until now explained about narcissism, I have had to put the accent on the ideal formation of the ego, I mean the formation of the ego in so far as it is an ideal formation, in so far as it is from this ideal of the ego that the ego will detach itself. I have not sufficiently articulated the difference that is there. But simply open Freud with his fruitful obscurities, and look at the diagrams which pass from hand to hand without anyone's ever thinking for a single instant of reproducing them. What do you find at the end of this chapter? This diagram on which he places the egos of three different subjects.
It is a question of knowing why subjects commune in the same ideal. Freud explains that there is an identification of the ideal of the ego with objects which are thought to be the same. Simply, if one looks at the schema, one sees that he has taken care to link these three objects with an external object, which is behind them all. Do you not find a striking resemblance there with what I have been explaining to you? With regard to the *Ich-Ideal*, what is at issue is not simply an object, but something that is beyond the object, and which comes to be reflected, as Freud says, not purely and simply in the ego, which no doubt feels something and can be impoverished by it, but in something which is in the very sub-basements of the ego, in its first forms, in its first exigencies, and in sum, on the first veil, and which is projected there in the form of the ideal of the ego.

I shall begin again next time at the point where I am leaving you, with the relation of the ideal of the ego, the fetish, and the object, in so far as it is the object that is lacking, which is to say, the phallus.

6 February 1956
XI

THE PHALLUS AND THE UNSATIATED MOTHER

The gift replies to the call.
The substitution of satisfactions.
The erotization of need.
The mirror, from jubilation to depression.
The role of the imaginary phallus as signifier.

I intend to take up again today the terms in which I am trying to formulate the necessary recasting of the notion of frustration. Without such a recasting, it is possible that the split will not cease to grow greater between the dominant theories in psychoanalysis today, what one calls its current tendencies, and Freudian doctrine, which in my eyes constitutes nothing less than the sole correct conceptual formulation of the practice that this very doctrine founded.

What I shall try to articulate today will perhaps be a little more algebraic than usual, but everything that we have done earlier has prepared for it.

Before beginning, let us accentuate what has been revealed in some of the terms that we have been led to articulate up until now.
I have tried to situate frustration in a tripartite table between castration, with which Freudian doctrine began, and privation, to which certain authors refer it. Let us say that it is referred in different ways.

Psychoanalysis today puts frustration at the heart of all the faults whose analyzable consequences are marked in the symptoms that come up in our field. We must understand it as a fundamental experience if we are to make valuable use of it, for if analytic experience has brought it into the foreground among the terms in use, that cannot be absolutely without reason. Though its prevalence does not profoundly modify the economy of our thinking when we are in the presence of neurotic phenomena, it nevertheless leads to impasses, as I am trying to demonstrate, I hope with success, through a good number of examples. To the extent that you make a practice of reading psychoanalytic literature with an open eye, you will see these impasses always more patent.

We shall first posit that frustration is not the refusal of an object of satisfaction in the pure and simple sense. Satisfaction means satisfaction of a need, and I do not need to insist on that point.

Usually, when one speaks of frustration, one uses the word without looking any further — we have frustrating experiences, we believe that they leave traces. We simply forget that, if things are to be so simple, it would be useful to explain why the desire which has thus been frustrated should have that characteristic which Freud accentuates so strongly from the beginning, and whose enigma the whole development of his work is precisely designed to question, namely, that in the unconscious, desire is repressed, and indestructible.

This property is strictly speaking inexplicable from the sole perspective of need. All the experience that one has of what happens in an animal economy shows us that. The frustration of a need entails diverse modifications which are more or less supportable for the organism, but if there is one thing that is evident and confirmed by experience, it is that it
does not engender the maintenance of desire as such. Either the individual succumbs, or the desire is modified, or it declines. In no case is a connection imposed between frustration and the permanence of desire, indeed, its insistence, to use the term that I was led to put in the foreground when we spoke of the repetition compulsion.

Besides, Freud never speaks of frustration. He speaks of Versagung, which is inscribed much more precisely under the concept of annulation, in the sense that one speaks of annulling a treaty, or of a retreat from an engagement. That is so true that one can even sometimes put the Versagung on the opposite side, for the word can mean both promise and rupture of promise. This is very often the case with words preceded by ver-, a prefix which is essential in German, and which holds an eminent place in the choice of words in analytic theory.

Let us say straightaway that the triad frustration-aggression-regression, if it is given like that, is very far from having the seductive character of immediately comprehensible signification that one supposes. It is enough to consider it for an instant to see that it is not comprehensible in itself. There is no reason not to take any other series whatsoever. Completely at random I will say frustration-depression-contrition -- I could invent many others. It is thus a matter of our posing the question of the relations between frustration and regression. That has never been done in a way that is satisfactory. I am not saying that what has been done is false, I am saying that it is not at all satisfactory, because the concept of regression itself has not been elaborated in this instance.

Frustration thus is not the refusal of an object of satisfaction. It is not to be found in that. I want to unfold a sequence regarding this, such that you can retain its principal articulations in order to see if they are useful, and as I shall be content to follow them with a series of formulas that have already been worked out here, I am relatively dispensed, except by allusion, from making a proof.

Let us submit ourselves to that path which consists in taking things from the beginning -- I do not say the beginning of development because it does not have the character of a development, but from the earliest
relation of the child to its mother. We can say that, at the origin, 
frustration -- not just any frustration, but the frustration which is usable in 
our dialectic -- is only thinkable as the refusal of a gift, in so far as the gift is 
the symbol of love.

In saying that, I am saying nothing that is not clearly written in 
Freud. The fundamental character of the love relation, with all that it 
implies of elaboration not at a first remove, but at a second, does not 
simply imply before one an object, but a being. That is given in many 
passages in Freud as the relation at the beginning. What does that mean? It 
does not mean that the child has done the philosophy of love, and that he 
distinguishes, for example, between love and desire. It means that he is 
already in a bath which implies the existence of the symbolic order. We 
find proofs of it is his behavior. Certain things happen which are only 
conceivable if the symbolic order is already present.

We always encounter an ambiguity here which is born from the fact 
that we have a science which is a science of the subject, not a science of the 
individual. But, we succumb to the need to start with the subject, 
forgetting that the subject as subject cannot be identified with the 
individual. Even if the subject is detached, as an individual, from the 
order which concerns him as subject, this order nonetheless exists. In fact, 
the law of intersubjective relations profoundly governs those on whom 
the individual depends, and thus implicates him in that order, whether he 
is conscious of it as an individual or not. There is a desperate attempt, 
which is yet tried again and again, to have the image of the father rise up 
from the anxieties of the child in the dark. I am alluding here to what 
someone named Mallet articulates about primitive phobias. This effort can 
be made only with the aid of threads as thick as one's arm. The order of 
paternity exists as such, whether or not the child has experienced infantile 
terrors, which only come to have a clear meaning in the intersubjective 
father-child relation, which is profoundly organized symbolically and 
forms the subjective context in which the child develops his experience. 
The experience of the child is at each moment taken and retroactively
reworked by the intersubjective relation in which he is engaged by a series of starts, which are starts only because, precisely, they will take hold.

I have talked about the gift. The gift implies the whole cycle of exchange, into which the subject is introduced as primitively as you may imagine. The gift exists only because there is an immense circulation of gifts which covers the whole intersubjective ensemble. The gift arises from a beyond of the object relation, since it supposes behind it the whole order of exchange into which the child has entered, and it can only arise from that beyond with a character which constitutes it as properly symbolic. Nothing is a gift that is not constituted by the act which has previously annulled or revoked it. It is against a background of revocation that the gift arises, it is on this ground, and as a sign of love, at first annulled in order later to reappear as pure presence, that the gift is given or not given in reply to the call.

I shall say more. I am speaking of the call because it is there in the foreground, in the first stage of speech, but remember what I told you when we were dealing with psychosis. I said that the call was essential to speech. I was wrong to stop there, since the structure of speech implies in the Other that the subject receive his own message under an inverted form. We have not yet reached that level, but the call, already, cannot be sustained in isolation, as is well shown by the Freudian image of the little child with his Fort-Da. Already at the level of the call, he must have his contrary facing him. To call situates him. If the call is fundamental, and founds the symbolic order, it is because what is called can be pushed away again. The call is already an introduction to speech, and is totally engaged in the symbolic order.

The gift replies to the call. The call makes itself heard when the object is not there. When it is there, the object appears essentially as being only the sign of the gift, which is to say that as an object of satisfaction, it is nothing. It is there precisely to be pushed away as this nothing. This symbolic game thus has a fundamentally disappointing character. That is the essential articulation, with regard to which satisfaction is situated and takes its meaning.
I do not mean to say that there is not for the child, playing this


game, a satisfaction accorded to something that would be pure vital


rhythm. I am saying that all satisfaction called up in frustration comes in


against the background of the fundamentally disappointing character of


the symbolic order. The satisfaction here is only a substitute, a


compensation. The child crushes what is disappointing in the symbolic


play in the oral seizure of the real object of satisfaction, the breast in this


instance. What puts him to sleep in this satisfaction is precisely his


disappointment, his frustration, the refusal that he has experienced.


The dolorous dialectic of the object, both there and never there, at


which he practices, is symbolized in that exercise so brilliantly caught by


Freud in its pure state, in its detached form. It is the basis of the relation of


the subject to the couple presence-absence, relation to presence on the


ground of absence, to absence in as much as it constitutes presence. The


child crushes the fundamental insatiability of this relation in satisfaction.

He stills the game by an oral capture. He stifles what springs from the


relation which is fundamentally symbolic.


After that, there is nothing astonishing for us in the fact that it is


precisely in sleep that the persistence of desire should manifest itself on


the symbolic plane. I would underline, in this instance, that even the


desire of the child is never linked to a pure and simple natural satisfaction.

Look at the so called extremely simple dream of the child, for example that


of the little Anna Freud. She says in her dream -- Raspberries, custard etc.

All of these objects are transcendent objects for her. They have already


entered the symbolic order so well that they are precisely forbidden objects.

Nothing forces us to believe that little Anna Freud was hungry that night,

on the contrary. What is maintained in the dream as a desire, certainly

expressed without disguise, but with the whole transposition of the

symbolic order, is the desire of the impossible.


If you are still capable of doubting that speech plays an essential role

here, I would have you note that if little Anna Freud had not articulated it

in words, we should never have known anything about it.
Let us pursue the dialectic of frustration, and ask ourselves -- what happens at the moment when the satisfaction of need comes into play and is substituted for a symbolic satisfaction?

By the mere fact that it is a substitution, it suffers a transformation. When the real object itself becomes a sign in the demand for love, that is to say, in the symbolic request, it immediately entails a transformation. Which? As I am saying that the real object then takes on the value of a symbol, I could say that it has thus become a symbol, or almost, but that would be only a pure and simple sleight of hand. What takes on a symbolic accent and value is the activity, the mode of apprehension, which puts the child in possession of the object.

That is how orality becomes what it is. Being an instinctual form of hunger, it is the bearer of a libido that conserves the body itself, but it is not only that. Freud wondered about the identity of this libido -- is it the libido of the conservation of life or sexual libido? Certainly it aims at the conservation of the individual, it is even what entails the destructo, but precisely because it has entered into the dialectic of substitution for satisfaction in the demand for love, it is also very much an eroticized activity. It is libido in the strict sense, and sexual libido.

All of that is not vain rhetorical articulation, but replies otherwise than by evasion to the objections that some people who are certainly not excessively fine -- for example M. Charles Blondel, in the latest issue of *Etudes Philosophiques* consecrated to the centenary of Freud -- have been able to make to certain analytic remarks, on the subject of the erotization of the breast, for example. This author says in one of his articles, as Mme Favez-Boutonier reminds us -- *I am willing to understand it all, but what do they make of the case in which the child is not nourished at his mother's breast, but by the bottle?* It is precisely to this objection that what I have just constructed for you replies. From the moment that it enters into the dialectic of frustration, the real object is not in itself indifferent, but it need not be specific. Even if it is not the breast of the mother, it loses for all
that none of the value of its place in the sexual dialectic, whence arises the erotization of the oral zone. It is not the object which plays the essential role in that, but the fact that the activity has taken on an eroticized function on the plane of desire, which is organized in the symbolic order.

I would have you note in passing that this goes so far that it is possible for the same role to be played where there is no real object at all. It is in fact only a matter of what gives rise to a satisfaction which substitutes for symbolic saturation. That alone can explain the true function of a symptom like that of anorexia [anorexia mentale]. I have already said that anorexia is not a not eating but an eating nothing. I insist -- it means to eat nothing. Nothing -- that is precisely something which exists on the symbolic plane. It is not a nicht essen, it is a nichts essen. This point is indispensable for the understanding of anorexia. What happens in specific is that the child eats nothing, which is something other than a negation of the activity. He uses this absence savored as such vis-à-vis what he has facing him, namely the mother on whom he depends. Thanks to this nothing, he makes her depend on him. If you do not understand that, you can understand nothing not only of anorexia, but also of other symptoms, and you will make the greatest errors.

I have thus situated the moment of reversal which introduces us into the symbolic dialectic of oral activity. Other activities are then also caught up in the libidinal dialectic. But that is not all that happens. Inversely, and because of it, at the moment when the symbolic reversal of the substitute activity is introduced into the real, the mother, who was until then the subject of the symbolic demand, the simple locus in which presence or absence could become manifest, which raises the question of the unreality of the early relation to the mother, becomes a real being. In effect, being able to refuse indefinitely, she can literally do all. As I have told you, it is here, -- and not with regard to I do not know what hypothesis of a sort of megalomania which projects onto the child what is only in the analyst's mind -- that the dimension of omnipotence appears for the first time, Wirklichkeit, which in German identifies efficacy and reality. The
essential efficacy appears first as the omnipotence of the real being on whom, absolutely and without recourse, the gift or non-gift depends.

I am telling you that the mother is primordially all-powerful, that we cannot eliminate her from this dialectic, that this is an essential condition for understanding anything at all of value. I am not telling you, with Mrs. Melanie Klein, that the mother contains everything. That is another affair, to which I allude only in passing. We can now glimpse how it is possible that all of the primitive fantasmatic objects are to be found together in the immense container of the maternal body. That it is possible, Mrs. Melanie Klein has brilliantly shown, but she has always been highly embarrassed in explaining how it was possible, and her adversaries have not missed the chance to argue that she was dreaming. Of course, she was dreaming, and she was right to dream, because the thing is possible only by a retroactive projection of the whole ensemble of imaginary objects into the womb of the maternal body. They are there in effect, since the mother constitutes a virtual field of symbolic annihilation [néantisation], from which all objects henceforth will each in turn draw their symbolic value. Simply taking the subject at a slightly more advanced level, for example a child at about the age of two, it is not at all astonishing that she should find the objects retroactively reprojected. And one could say in a certain sense that, since, like everything else, they were ready to arrive there one day, they were there already. At this point, the child finds himself in the presence of maternal omnipotence.

Since I have just made a rapid allusion to the paranoid position, as Mrs. Melanie Klein calls it, I shall add that we may suspect that the depressive position which then takes its first form, according to her, is not without a rapport to the relation to omnipotence. It is a sort of reduction to nothing [anéantisation], a micromania, which is the contrary of megalomania. But let us take care not to go too quickly, because that is not given in itself by the sole fact that the mother, come to light as omnipotent, is real. In order for a real omnipotence to engender a depressive effect in the subject, he must still be able to reflect upon himself, and upon the contrast of his powerlessness. Clinical experience allows us to situate this point at around
the sixth month, as Freud has noted, and at which the phenomenon of the mirror stage is produced.

You will object that I have taught that at the moment when the subject-seizes the totality of his own body in his specular reflection, when he completes himself in some way in the other who is whole, and becomes present to himself, it is rather a feeling of triumph that he feels. That is a reconstruction, which is not without confirmation in experience, and the jubilatory character of this encounter is not to be doubted. But it is useful here not to confound the two things.
There is, on one side, the experience of mastery, which will give the relation of the child to his own ego an essential element of *splitting*,¹ of distinction from himself, which will remain until the end. There is, on the other hand, the encounter with the reality of the master. In as much as the form of mastery is given to the subject in the form of a totality that is alien to himself, but closely linked to him and dependent on him, it is jubilation, but it is otherwise when, once this form has been given to him, he encounters the reality of the master. Thus the moment of his triumph is also the expression of his defeat. When he finds himself in the presence of this totality in the form of the maternal body, he must realize that it does not obey him. When the reflected specular structure of the mirror stage comes into play, the omnipotence of the mother is then reflected only in a clearly depressive position, and in the child's sense of powerlessness.

This is where what I alluded to just before in talking about anorexia comes in. One could go a bit quickly and say that the sole power that the subject retains against omnipotence is to say no with regard to action, and to introduce the dimension of negativism, which is not unrelated to the moment towards which I am aiming. I would nevertheless have you note that experience shows us, and not without reason, that it is not with regard to action and under the form of negativism that resistance against omnipotence in the relation of dependence is elaborated -- it is with regard to the object, which appears under the sign of nothing. It is with regard to the object annulled as symbolic that the child puts his dependency in check, precisely by nourishing himself on nothing. It is here that he reverses his relation of dependence, making himself by this means master of the avid omnipotence to make him, who depends upon it, live. From there on, her omnipotence depends upon his desire, it is at his mercy, at the mercy of the manifestations of his caprice, at the mercy of his omnipotence.

¹ English in the original.
We thus really need to keep in mind that the symbolic order is, if one may say so, the layer necessary for the entry into play of the first imaginary relation on which the play of projection and its contrary occurs.

To illustrate it now in psychological terms -- but this is a degradation in comparison to the first explanation that I have just given you -- the intentionality of love very precociously constitutes, before any beyond of the object, a structuration that is fundamentally symbolic, which is impossible to conceive other than by saying that the symbolic order itself is as such already instituted and present. Experience demonstrates it. As Mrs. Susan Issacs noted a long time ago, from a very early age the child distinguishes a punishment from an accidental blow. Even before speech, a child does not react in the same way to an accidental hurt and a slap.

I will leave you to meditate on what that implies. You will tell me that it is curious that the animal too, at least the domestic animal, knows. This objection is easy to overturn. It just proves that the animal can arrive at the sketch of a beyond which puts him in a very special relation of identification to the one who is his master. But precisely because, in contrast to man, the animal is not inserted by all his being into an order of language, that leads to nothing further, unless it is that he is a good little dog. Still, it remains that he arrives at something as elaborated as distinguishing between the fact that someone taps him on the back and the fact that someone gives him a correction.

Since we are for the moment clarifying the outlines, you have perhaps seen a sort of notebook that came out in December 1956 as the fourth number of the International Journal of Psycho-Analysis. It seems that someone must have said to himself that there was something interesting in language after all, and it seems that certain people were called upon to reply to the command. The article by M. Loewenstein is marked by a prudent distance not devoid of skill, which consists, after a citation of several lateral characters in Hamlet, in recalling that M. Saussure taught that there are a signifier and a signified. In short, one shows that one is a little bit aware, but that awareness remains absolutely without connection to our experience, except for underlining that one
must be aware of what one is saying. Seeing the level of elaboration at which it remains, I pardon the author for not citing my teaching -- we are much further along in it.

There is also a Mr. Charles Rycroft, who, in the name of the Londoners, tries to add a bit more, and to do, as in sum we are doing, the analytic theory of intrapsychic agencies and their articulation. Perhaps one needs to remember, says the author, that the theory of communication exists. Thus he recalls that when a child cries, there is a certain total situation, which includes the mother, the cry, the child. In consequence, we are in the midst of the theory of communication -- the child cries, and the mother receives his cry as a signal, a signal of need. If we began with that, suggests the author, perhaps we could succeed in reorganizing our experience.

In what I am in the course of teaching, it is absolutely not a question of that. As is shown by what Freud points out in the child's behavior, the cry in question is not taken as a signal. It is a question of a cry in as much as it calls for a response. It calls, if I may say so, against the background of response. The cry is produced in a state of things in which, not only is language already instituted for the child, but the latter already bathes in a milieu of language, and it is by virtue of the pair in alternation that he grasps it and articulates his first scraps of phrases.

The Fort-Da is essential here. The cry we are concerned with in frustration is inserted into a synchronic world of cries organized in a symbolic system. The cries are already virtually organized in a symbolic system. The human subject is not merely warned by the cry, as by something that, each time, signals an object. It is false, fallacious, riddled with errors, to pose the question of the sign when it is a question of the symbolic system. From the origin, the cry is designed so that one will take act from it, indeed so that one must, beyond, render account of it to an other. One has only to see the child's essential need to receive those formed and articulated cries which are called words, and the interest he takes in the system of language in itself. The prototype of the gift is precisely the gift of speech, because in fact the gift is here, if I may say so, equal to its principle. From the beginning, the child is nourished as much
by words as by bread. As the Evangelist says, man does not perish alone by what goes into his mouth, but also by what comes out of it.

You have perceived -- more exactly, you have not perceived, but I would like to underline it for you so as to conclude this theme --, the term of regression can take on a weight here in which it would not ordinarily appear to you.

The term regression is applicable to what happens when the real object, and at the same time the activity which is designed for attaining it, come to be substituted for the symbolic demand. The fact that the child crushes his disappointment in his saturation and satiation in contact with the breast or with any other object at all is what will permit him to enter into the necessity of the mechanism, which has it that a symbolic frustration can always be followed by a regression. The former opens the door to the latter.
We must now construct the following stage, and for that, we must make a *jump.*

We could content ourselves with noting, but that would be artificial, that starting with the opening given to the signifier by the entry of the imaginary, everything follows of itself. In effect, all the relations to one's own body that are established by the intermediary of the specular relation, all of the body's appurtenances, come into play and are transformed by their advent in the signifier. That excrement becomes for a certain time the preferred object of gift is certainly not surprising, since it is very evidently in the material offered to him in relation to his own body, that the child can find the real made to nourish the symbolic. That retention can become refusal cannot surprise you either. In short, the refinements and the richness of the phenomena which analytic experience has discovered with regard to anal symbolism, are not made to detain us here for long.

If I spoke to you of a *jump,* it is that we must now see how the phallus is introduced into the dialectic of frustration.

Here again, beware of vain demands for a natural genesis. If you are hoping to deduce the fact that the phallus plays a prevalent role in the whole of genital symbolism from some constitution of the genital organs, you will never succeed. You will only give yourselves up to contortions like those that I hope to show you in detail, those of Mr. Jones, when he tries to give a satisfactory commentary on the phallic phase as Freud affirmed it, without elaboration, and to show us how it comes about that the phallus that she does not have should have such an importance for the woman. It is very droll to see.

In fact, the question absolutely is not there. The question is first and before all a question of fact. That is a fact. If we had not discovered in the phenomena the prevalence, the pre-eminence of the phallus in the whole imaginary dialectic that presides over the adventures, the avatars, and also the checks and failures of genital development, in fact, there would be no problem.

---

2 English in the original.
Certain authors wear themselves out trying to show that the feminine child must also have her own sensations in her belly, and that her experience is without any doubt, and perhaps from the beginning, distinct from the boy's. That goes without saying, but that is absolutely not the question, as Freud has noted. If, as he says, the woman has much more difficulty than the boy in making the reality of what happens in the uterus or in the vagina pass into a dialectic of desire that satisfies her, it is in effect because she must pass by something to which she has a relation that is completely different from the man's, namely, by something she is lacking, which is to say, the phallus. But the reason which explains why that is so is certainly not to be deduced from anything which has its origin in some physiological disposition. One must begin with the existence of an imaginary phallus.

The imaginary phallus is the pivot of a whole series of facts which require it as a postulate. One must study that labyrinth in which the subject habitually is lost, and can even come to be devoured. The thread for getting out of it is given by the fact that the mother lacks a phallus, that it is because she lacks it that she desires it, and that it is only in so far as something gives it to her that she can be satisfied.

That may appear literally stupefying. Well, one must start with what is stupefying. The first virtue of knowledge is to be able to confront what does not follow of itself. That it should be the lack which is the major desire, we are perhaps somewhat prepared to admit, if we admit that this is also the characteristic of the symbolic order. In other terms, it is in so far as the imaginary phallus plays a role as a major signifier that the situation appears as it does. The signifier is not something that each subject invents in accord with his sex or his dispositions, or the folly that presided at his birth. The signifier exists. That the role of the phallus as signifier must be subjacent leaves no doubt, since analysis was needed to discover it, but it is none the less essential.

Let us quit the terrain of analysis for a moment to take up the question that I posed to M. Lévi-Strauss, the author of Elementary Structures of Kinship. What did I say to him? You situate the dialectic of
the exchange of women across lineages. By a sort of postulate, or choice, you posit that one exchanges women across generations. I have taken a woman from another line, I owe the following generation or another line, another woman. If that is accomplished by preferential marriages with cross-cousins, things will circulate very regularly in a circle which will have no reason either to close in upon itself or to break, but if it is with parallel cousins, rather bothersome results can occur, for the exchange tends to converge after a certain time, and to result in breaks and pieces. Thus I ask -- And if you made the circle of exchanges by reversing things, and saying that it is the female lineages which produce men and exchange them? Because in the end, we are already alert to the fact that the lack of which we are speaking in woman is not a real lack. Everyone knows that they can have the phallus, that they have them, phalli, and moreover, they produce them, they have sons, phallopores. Consequently, one can describe the exchange across the generations in an inverse order. One can imagine a matriarchate in which the law would be -- I have given a son, I want to receive a man.

Lévi-Strauss gives the following response. No doubt, in terms of formalization, one could describe things in exactly the same way by taking an axis of reference, a system of symmetrical co-ordinates founded upon women, but then a great many things are inexplicable, one, in particular. In every case, even in matriarchal societies, the political power is androcentric. It is represented by men and by male lines. The very bizarre anomalies in the exchanges, the modifications, exceptions, paradoxes, which appear in the laws of exchange at the level of elementary structures of kinship, are explicable only in relation to a reference which is outside the play of kinship, and which belongs to the political context, that is to say, to the order of power, and precisely to the order of the signifier, in which scepter and phallus are confounded.

It is for reasons inscribed in the symbolic order, transcending individual development, that the fact of having or not having the imaginary and symbolized phallus takes on the economic importance that
it has in the Oedipus complex. That is what motivates both the importance of the castration complex and the pre-eminence of the famous fantasies of the phallic mother, which has caused a problem, as you know, ever since it arose on the analytic horizon.

Before leading you to the way in which the dialectic of the phallus is articulated, achieved, and resolved in the Oedipus complex, I want to show you that I too can spend some time on the pre-Oedipal stages, on the sole condition of being guided by the thread of the fundamental role of the symbolic relation.

What is the role of the phallus at the level of its imaginary function, the level of the alleged demand of the phallic mother? I want to show you here once again how essential the notion of the lack of the object is, when one simply reads the good analytic authors, among whom I count Mr. Abraham.

In an admirable article published in 1920, on the castration complex in women, he gives on page 341 the example of a little girl of two who goes into the cigar cupboard after lunch. She gives the first to Papa, the second to Mama who does not smoke, and she puts the third between her legs. Mama collects the whole panoply, and returns it to the cigar box. It is not at all chance if the little girl goes back and begins again, because that happens just as it should. I regret that this was not discussed in a more detailed way. Mr. Abraham implicitly admits that the third gesture of the little girl indicates that she lacks this symbolic object. She shows the lack in this way. But it is no doubt also for that reason that she first gave it to the one who is not lacking, to indicate in what way she can desire it, that is, as experience proves, in order to satisfy the one in whom it is lacking. If you read Freud’s article on female sexuality, you will learn that it is not simply a question of the lack of the phallus in the little girl, but really a matter of giving it to her mother, or giving an equivalent of it, just as if she were a little boy.

This history is recalled here in order to introduce you to what you must know how to represent for yourselves -- that nothing of the phenomenology of the perversions is conceivable, in a direct way, unless
one starts with the idea that the phallus is implicated. This is an idea that is much simpler than what you are usually given, an obscurity of identifications, of re-identifications, of projections, a knit of every stitch, which produces a labyrinth in which one is lost. It is a matter of the phallus, and of knowing how the child more or less consciously realizes that his omnipotent mother fundamentally lacks something, and it is always a question of knowing how he will give her this object which she lacks, and which he still lacks himself.

Let us not forget that, in fact, the phallus of the little boy is not worth much more than that of the little girl. That has naturally been observed by some good authors, and Mr. Jones understood all the same that Mrs. Karen Horney was rather favorable to the one with whom he was in conflict, Freud, as it happens. She has known very well how to give a value to the fundamentally deficient character of the phallus of the little boy, indeed, the shame that he may experience because of it, and the profound insufficiency that he may sense, not in an attempt to close the difference between the little boy and the little girl, but to clarify one by the other. One must remember the importance of this discovery that the little boy makes about himself, in order to understand the exact value of his attempts to seduce the mother, of which one always speaks. They are profoundly marked by narcissistic conflict. This is always the occasion of the first narcissistic lesions, which are only the preludes, indeed even the presuppositions, of certain later effects of castration. In the end, much more than a simple drive or sexual aggression, it is a matter of the fact that the little boy wants to be taken for a true male or a bearer of the phallus, whereas he is one only by half.

In other terms, during the whole pre-Oedipal period in which the perversions have their origin, it is a question of a game that is being pursued, a game of who's got the slipper or a three card game, or indeed our game of odds or evens, in which the phallus is fundamental as a signifier, fundamental in that imaginary of the mother which one must rejoin, since the ego of the child rests upon the omnipotence of the mother. It is a matter of seeing where it is and where it is not. It is never
really there where it is, it is never completely absent where it is not. The whole classification of the perversions must be founded on that. Whatever the value of the findings on the identification with the mother, and the identification with the object, etc., the essential is the relation to the phallus.

Let us take transvestism, for example. In transvestism, the subject calls his phallus into question. One forgets that transvestism is not simply a matter of homosexuality more or less transposed, that this is not simply a matter of a particularized fetishism. The fetish must be worn by the subject. Fenichel, in his article *Psychoanalysis of Transvestism*, published in the *JIP*, n° 2, 1930, very clearly accentuates the fact that what is beneath these women's clothing is a woman. The subject identifies himself as a woman, but a woman who has a phallus, simply she has one in so far as it is hidden. The phallus must always participate in what veils it. We see there the essential importance of what I have called the veil. It is through the existence of clothing that the object is materialized. Even when the real object is there, one must be able to think that it might not be there, and it must always be possible to think that it is there precisely where it is not.

In the same way, in male homosexuality, to limit ourselves to that for today, there is again for the subject a question concerning his phallus, but curiously, it is about his in so far as he goes looking for it in another.

All of the perversions always play, in some fashion, with this signifying object in so far as it is, by nature and in itself, a true signifier, that is to say, something which can in no case be taken at its face value. When one lays a hand on it, when one finds it and fixes on it definitively, as is the case in the perversion of perversions which is called fetishism -- this is really the one which shows not only where it is truly, but what it is --, the object is exactly nothing. It is an old used garment, a castoff. That is what one sees in transvestism -- a little worn slipper. When it appears, when it is really unveiled, that is the fetish.

The crucial stage comes just before the Oedipus complex, between the primary relation with which I began today, and which I founded for you, the relation of primitive frustration, and the Oedipus complex. It is
the stage in which the child is engaged in the intersubjective dialectic of the bait [leurre]. To satisfy what cannot be satisfied, namely, this desire in the mother which, in its fundament, is insatiable, the child, by whatever path he takes, is engaged in the path of making himself a deceptive object. This desire that cannot be satiated must be deceived. It is precisely in so far as he shows his mother what he is not, that there is constructed the whole path around which the ego takes on its stability.

The most characteristic stages are always marked by a basic ambiguity of subject and object, as Freud showed in his last article on splitting. In that he makes of himself an object meant to deceive, the child finds himself engaged with the other in a position in which the intersubjective relation is completely constituted. It is not simply an immediate lure, like one produced in the animal kingdom, where he who is adorned with the colors of parade must mount the entire situation by producing himself. On the contrary, the subject supposes desire in the other. It is desire at one remove that is to be satisfied, and as it is a desire that cannot be satisfied, one can only deceive it.

One always forgets that human exhibitionism is not an exhibitionism like others, like that of the cock robin. It is opening a pair of trousers at a given moment, and closing them. It there were no pair of trousers, a dimension of exhibitionism would be missing.

We find again here the possibility of regression. This insatiable, unsatisfied mother, around whom the child's whole ascent in the path of narcissism is constructed, is someone real, she is there, and like all unsatiated beings, she is seeking what she can devour, *querens quem devoret*. What the child had himself earlier found to crush his symbolic insatiability is what he may possibly find anew before him like a gaping maw. The projected image of the oral situation is found again on the plane of imaginary sexual satisfaction. The gaping hole of the Medusa's head is a devouring figure which the child encounters as a possible issue in his search for the satisfaction of the mother.
That is the great danger his fantasies reveal, being devoured. We find it at the origin, and we find it again at this detour, where it gives us the essential form in which phobia is presented.

We encounter this in the fears of Little Hans. The case appears now under conditions which are perhaps a bit more clear. With the support of what I have just brought you today, you will see the relation between phobia and perversion more clearly. You will also see more clearly what I indicated the last time, which is how the function of the ideal of the ego is profiled against this background. I shall go so far as to say that you will interpret the case of Little Hans better than Freud could do, for there is a wavering in his observation on how to identify what the child calls the big giraffe and the little giraffe.

As M. Prévert has said, big giraffes are mute, little giraffes are rare.

If it is very badly interpreted in the observation, one still comes near to what is at stake. By the sole fact that Little Hans -- despite the cries of the big giraffe who is incontestably the mother --, crumples the little giraffe with his hands and sits on it, -- is it not clear enough?

27 February 1957

---

3 Sigmund Freud, *Analysis of a Phobia in a Five Year Old Boy.*
THE STRUCTURE OF MYTHS
IN THE OBSERVATION OF THE PHOBIA
OF LITTLE HANS

XII

ON THE OEDIPUS COMPLEX

The equation Penis=Child.
The monogamous ideal in woman.
The Other, between the mother and the phallus.
The symbolic father is unthinkable.
Masculine bigamy.

[Format chart, p. 199]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENT</th>
<th>LACK</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castration</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic mother</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privation</td>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We tried the last time to re-articulate the notion of castration, or at least the use of this concept in our practice.

In the second part of that lesson, I situated for you the place at which an interference of the imaginary occurs in that relation of frustration, infinitely more complex than the use that is habitually made of it, which unites the child to the mother. I told you that it was only in a way that was purely apparent, and in keeping with the demands of the exposition, that we found ourselves progressing from later to earlier, sketching the types of
stages that might succeed each other in a line of development. Much to the contrary, it is always a matter of grasping what, intervening at each stage from the outside, retroactively reworks what had been begun at the preceding stage. That, for the simple reason that the child is not alone. Not only is he not alone because of the biological entourage, but there is a still much more important entourage, namely, the legal milieu, the symbolic order. It is the particularities of the symbolic order, as I have underlined in passing, that give its prevalence, for example, to that element of the imaginary which is called the phallus.

That is where we had arrived, and to begin the third part of my exposition, I put you on the track of Little Hans's anxiety. From the outset, in fact, we have signaled out two objects as exemplary, the fetish object and the phobic object.

We shall try to develop our proposals today by speaking of Little Hans.

We shall not be tempted to re-articulate the notion of castration, because God knows that it is powerfully articulated in Freud, in a way that is both insistent and repeated. We shall simply try to speak of it again, since, during the time that one has avoided speaking of it, the use of the castration complex, the reference that one can take from it, have become more and more rare in observations.

What is at issue at the end of the pre-Oedipal stage, and at the border of the Oedipus?

It is a matter of the child's assuming the phallus in so far as it is a signifier, and in a way which makes it the instrument of the symbolic order of exchanges, in so far as it presides over the constitution of lineages. In sum, it is a matter of his being confronted with that order which will make the function of the father the pivot of the drama.

That is not so simple. At least I have said enough up until now on this subject, so that when I say that is not so simple, something in you replies, -- indeed, the father, that is not so simple. The father, his existence on the
symbolic plane in the signifier father, with all that the term carries of the profoundly problematic —, how has this function come to the center of the symbolic organization?

That leaves us to think that we shall have some questions to ask ourselves as to the three aspects of the paternal function. We have learned in fact, from the first year of our seminars, to distinguish the paternal presence in the conflict under the triple heading of the symbolic father, the imaginary father, and the real father. In particular, we have seen that without this essential distinction, it was impossible to find our bearings in the case of the Wolfman, which we examined during the second part of that year.

Let us try, from the point that we have reached, to approach the introduction of the child into the Oedipus, which is proposed to us by the chronological order.

We left the child in the position of lure in which he tests himself with regard to his mother. It is not, I have told you, a simple lure, in which he is completely implicated in the ethological sense. In the play of sexual parade, we who are outside can perceive imaginary elements, appearances, which captivate the partner. We do not know to what extent subjects use them as a lure, though we know that we ourselves could do so if the occasion arose, for example by presenting the desire of an adversary with a mere coat of arms. The lure in question here is very manifest in the actions and even the activities which we observe in the little boy, for instance, in his seductive activities with regard to his mother. When he exhibits himself, it is not pure and simple monstration, it is monstration of himself by himself to his mother, who exists as a third. To which is added what rises up behind the mother, good faith, in which the mother may be taken captive, if one may say so. There is already a whole trinity, indeed an intersubjective quaternity, roughly sketched there.

What, in the end, is at stake in the Oedipus? It is a matter of the subject's himself being caught in this lure in such a way that he finds himself engaged in the existing order, which is a different dimension from that of the psychological lure by which he entered and where we left him.
If analytic theory assigns the Oedipus a normalizing function, let us recall that our experience teaches us that it is not enough that it lead the subject to an object choice, but that this choice of object must further be heterosexual. Our experience also teaches us that to be heterosexual, it is not enough just to follow the rules, and that there are all sorts of forms of apparent heterosexuality. The frankly heterosexual relation can on occasion cover an atypical position, which analytic investigation will show to be derived, for example, from a frankly homosexualized position. It is thus not enough for the subject to arrive at heterosexuality after the Oedipus. The subject, boy or girl, must arrive at it in such a way as to be correctly situated with regard to the function of the father. That is the center of the whole problematic of the Oedipus.

We have already indicated it by our way of approaching object relations this year, and Freud articulates it expressly in his article of 1931 on feminine sexuality -- from the pre-Oedipal point of view, the problematic of the woman is much simpler. If it appears much more complicated in Freud, that is consistent with the order of the discovery. Freud in fact discovered the Oedipus before discovering what is pre-Oedipal, and how could it have been otherwise? We can speak of the greater simplicity of the feminine position at the phase of development that we call pre-Oedipal only because we know in advance that we must end up at the complex structure of the Oedipus.

We could say that the girl has more or less situated, or approached, the phallus in the imaginary where it is to be found in a beyond of the mother, because of her progressive discovery of the fundamental dissatisfaction which the mother feels in the mother-child relation. Thus for her it is a matter of sliding this phallus from the imaginary into the real. That is really what Freud explains when he talks about that primal nostalgia for the phallus which begins to appear in the little girl on the imaginary plane, in the specular comparison with a peer, another little girl or a little boy, -- and when he tells us that a child is going to be the substitute for this phallus.

230
That is a somewhat abridged form of what happens in the phenomenon that is observed. You see the position as I am outlining it -- here is the imaginary, that is to say, the mother's desire for the phallus, and here the child, our center, who has to make the discovery of this beyond, the lack in the maternal object. That is at least one of the possible issues -- starting from the moment when the child learns to saturate the situation and to get out of it by conceiving that as possible, the situation pivots around him.

[Diagram, p. 202]

Ph

M          C

NOSTALGIA FOR THE PHALLUS

What do we effectively find in the fantasy of the little girl, and also the little boy? In as much as the situation pivots around the child, the little girl will come to find the real penis where it is, beyond, in the one who can give her a child, that is, Freud tells us, in the father. It is in so far as she does not have it as a belonging, it is even in so far as she clearly renounces it on this plane, that she will be able to have it as a gift from the father. That is why it is by the relation to the phallus that the little girl, Freud tells us, enters into the Oedipus, and as you see, in a way that is simple. The phallus has then only to slide from the imaginary to the real by a sort of equivalency -- that is the very term Freud uses in his article of 1925 on the anatomical distinction between the sexes -- *Nun aber gleitet die Libido des Mädchens -- man kann nur sagen: längs der vorgezeichneten symbolischen Gleichung Penis=Kind*. The little girl is already sufficiently introduced to the Oedipus.

I am not saying that much more may not be there, and with it all of the anomalies that can occur in the development of feminine sexuality, but there is already a fixation on the father as bearer of the real penis, as the
one who really can give a child, and this is already sufficiently consistent for her that one can say in the end that the Oedipus, in so far as it is the path of integration into the typical heterosexual position, is much easier for the woman, even if this Oedipus itself brings all sorts of complications, indeed, impasses, in the development of feminine sexuality.

Evidently, we have no cause to be astonished at this greater simplicity, in as much as the Oedipus is essentially androcentric or patrocentric. This dissymmetry calls up all sorts of quasi-historical considerations which may make us see the reason for this prevalence on the sociological, ethnographic plane. The Freudian discovery, which allows the analysis of subjective experience, shows us the woman in a position which is, if one may say so -- since I have spoken of ordonnance, of order or of symbolic ordination --, subordinated. The father is at first for her an object of love -- that is to say, the object of the feeling that is addressed to the element of lack in the object, since it is by this lack that she has been led to this object which is the father. This object of love then becomes the one who gives the object of satisfaction, the object of the natural relation of childbirth. After that, she needs only a bit of patience until there will finally come, as a substitute for the father, one who will fill exactly the same role, the role of the father, by effectively giving her a child.

That implies a feature to which we shall return, and which gives its particular style to the development of the feminine superego. There is a sort of balance between the renunciation of the phallus and the prevalence of the narcissistic relation, whose importance in feminine development one Hanns Sachs has seen very well. In fact, once this renunciation has been made, the phallus is abjured as an appurtenance, and becomes the appurtenance of the one to whom her love is henceforth attached, the father, from whom she really expects a child. This expectation of what is henceforth no more than her due, puts her in a very special dependence, which paradoxically brings about, at a given moment, as other authors have noted, fixations that are properly narcissistic. She is in effect a being
most intolerant of a certain frustration. We shall perhaps return to that later, when we speak about the ideal of monogamy held by women.

The simple reduction of the situation to an identification of the object of love with the object that gives satisfaction also explains quite well the particularly fixed, indeed precociously arrested, side of the woman's development in comparison to a development which one can qualify as normal. At certain turns in his writings, Freud takes a singularly misogynistic tone and complains bitterly of the great difficulty there is, at least with certain feminine subjects, in mobilizing them, in making them budge from a sort of morality, he says, of soup and meatballs, which carries extremely imperious exigencies as to the satisfactions to be drawn, indeed, from analysis itself.

I am only indicating a certain number of approaches here. We shall have to come back to Freud's developments on the subject of feminine sexuality, because today it is the boy whom we want to follow.

In the case of the boy, the function of the Oedipus appears much more clearly intended to allow the identification of the subject with his own sex, which occurs, in sum, in the ideal, imaginary relation to the father. But that is not the true goal of the Oedipus, which is the proper situation of the subject with regard to the function of the father, namely, that he himself accede one day to the highly problematic and paradoxical position of being a father. But, this accession conversely presents a mountain of difficulties.

It is not because they have not seen this mountain that people have shown less and less interest in the Oedipus. It is just because they have seen it that they prefer to turn their backs on it.

The whole Freudian interrogation -- not only in the doctrine, but in the experience of the subject Freud himself, which we find traced throughout the confidences which he makes to us, his dreams, the progress of his thought, all that we now know of his life, his habits, and even of his attitudes within his family, which Mr. Jones reports in a way that is more or less complete, but reliable -- the entire Freudian interrogation is summed up in this -- What is it to be a father?
That for him was the central problem, the fertile point which truly orients all of his research.

Note that if this is a problem for every neurotic, it is also a problem for every non-neurotic in the course of his childhood experience. What is a father? This question is a way of approaching the problem of the signifier of the father, but let us not forget that it is also a question of subjects finally becoming fathers. To ask the question what is a father is still something other than being oneself a father, or acceding to the paternal position. Let us look at it more closely. So true is it for every man that accession to the paternal position is a quest, that it is not unthinkable to say that, in the end, no one has ever been one completely.

In our dialectic we are assuming, and one must start with this assumption, that there is somewhere someone who can fully guarantee the position of the father, someone who can respond -- I am the father. This assumption is essential to the whole progress of the Oedipal dialectic, but that does not at all settle the question of knowing what is the particular, intersubjective position of the one who, for others, and especially for the child, fills this role.

Let us start off again from Little Hans.

It is a world, this observation of Little Hans. If, of the Cinq Psychanalyses¹ it is the one that I have left until the end in the work of commentary that I am pursuing, that is not for nothing.

The first pages of the text are very precisely at the level where I left you the last time, and it is not without cause that Freud presents things in that order. The primary question is that of the Wiwimacher, which has been translated into French by fait-pipi, pee-pee maker. If we follow Freud to the letter, the questions that Little Hans asks concern not simply his pee-pee

---

¹ Freud's major cases are published in the French volume entitled Cinq Psychanalyses (Five Psychoanalytic Cases).
maker but the pee-pee makers of all living beings, and especially of those who are bigger than he is.

You have already seen the pertinent comments that one could make concerning the kinds of questions that a child asks. Taken in order, it is first his mother to whom he puts the question -- Do you have a pee-pee maker too? We shall speak later about what his mother replies. Hans then lets out -- Yes, I only thought..., which is to say that he is precisely in the process of simmering over quite a few things. He then puts the question to his father, then he is overjoyed to have seen the pee-pee maker of a lion, which is not entirely by accident, and after that, that is to say, before the appearance of the phobia, he clearly notes that if his mother had this pee-pee maker as she affirms to him, not without a certain impudence, in his opinion it ought to be visible. One evening, in fact, a little while after this interrogation, he stares at her while she is getting undressed, and remarks to her that if she had one, it ought to be as big as that of a horse. From the imaginary, phallicist, perspective in which we left the subject the last time, it is in fact an effort to establish a standard between a sort of absolute object, the phallus, and its proof in the real. It is not a question of all or nothing. Up until then, the subject had played at a three-card game, a game of hide-and-seek -- the phallus was never there where one was seeking it, never there where it was found. Now it is a matter of knowing where it really is.

Up until then, the child was the one who pretended, or who played at pretending. It is not for nothing that, a little further along in the observation, we shall see, as it was noted by Freud and the parents, that the first dream in which there is an element of deformation, a displacement, shows us a game of forfeits. If you recall the imaginary dialectic as I have approached it from the first lessons, you will be struck to see that it is there all of a whole, playing on the surface, at the pre-phobic stage of Little Hans's development. Everything is there, up to and including the fantasized children. Suddenly, after the birth of his little sister, he adopts a passle of imaginary little girls for whom he does everything that one can do for children. The imaginary game is truly brought to a grand completion, almost without intention. It is a matter of all the distance to
be crossed separating one who pretends from one who knows that he has the power.

What reveals Hans's first approach to the Oedipal relation? What is played out in the act of comparison does not make us leave the imaginary plane. The game is constituted on the model of the lure. The child has only added the maternal model to his own dimensions. The image is larger, but remains essentially homogenous. If this is how the dialectic of the Oedipus is engaged by him, he will only in the end be dealing with a double of himself, a double that is enlarged. The perfectly conceivable introduction of the maternal image under the ideal form of the ego leaves us in the imaginary, specular dialectic of the relation between the subject and the small other. Its sanction does not get us out of that either/or, either he or I, which remains linked to the first symbolic dialectic, that of presence or absence. We do not get out of the game of odds or evens, we do not get out of the field of the lure. What is the result?

We know it from an aspect as theoretical as it is exemplary -- we see only the emergence of the symptom, Freud tells us, the manifestation of anxiety.

He underlines from the beginning of the observation that one would do well to separate anxiety from phobia. If there are two things which succeed one another, that is not without cause -- one comes to the aid of the other, the phobic object comes in to fill its function against the background of anxiety. But on the imaginary plane, nothing allows us to conceive of the leap that makes the child exit from his game of lure before the mother. Someone who is all or nothing, who suffices or who does not suffice -- surely, from the sole fact that the question is raised, we remain on the plane of a fundamental insufficiency.

That is the first, common, schema of the entry into the Oedipus complex -- the quasi-fraternal rivalry with the father. We are led here to add nuances, many more than are commonly articulated. In effect, the aggressivity in question is of the sort that comes into play in the specular relation, in which the either me or the other is always the fundamental spring. On the other hand, the fixation to the mother, who has become a
real object after the earliest frustrations, remains unchanged. It is because of this stage, or more precisely because of this central, lived, experience that is essential to the Oedipus on the imaginary plane, that this complex expands in all its neuroticizing consequences, which we find in a thousand aspects of analytic reality.

That in particular is where we see enter one of the major terms of the Freudian experience, the degradation of the love relation to which Freud has devoted a special study. Because of the subject's permanent attachment to that primitive real object which is the mother in so far as she is frustrating, every feminine object will always be for him only a devalorized object, a substitute, a type that is broken, refracted, always partial, by comparison with the first maternal object. We shall see a little later what we must think about that.

Let us not, however, forget that if the Oedipus complex can have consequences which endure, which have to do with the imaginary spring that it causes to intervene, that is not the whole of it. Normally, and this from the outset of Freudian doctrine, it is in the nature of the Oedipus complex to resolve itself. When Freud speaks of it, he says that surely, the fading into the background of hostility towards the father can be legitimately linked to a repression. But in the same sentence, he takes care to underline that this is one more moment in which it is palpable that the notion of repression always applies to a particular development in the history, and not to a permanent relation. He accepts that, by extension, one can apply the term repression here, but understand very well that the decline of the Oedipus complex, its annulation and its destruction, which occurs normally between the ages of five and five and a half years, is something other than what we have described up until now, something other than the effacing or the imaginary attenuation of a relation which is itself fundamentally durable. There is a crisis, there is a resolution. And this event leaves behind it a result, which is the formation of something particular, and dated in the unconscious, namely, the superego.
In short, we are confronted here with the need to make something original and new arise, which has its proper solution in the Oedipal relation. We need only use our habitual schema in order to see it.

At the point we had reached the last time, the child offers the mother the imaginary object of the phallus, in order to give her complete satisfaction, and this, in the form of a lure. For, the exhibitionism of the little boy before his mother can have its meaning only by bringing in, besides the mother, the great Other, who is in some sense the witness, the one who sees the whole of the situation. This presence is implied by the sole fact of the presentation, indeed the offering which the little boy makes to his mother. For the Oedipus to exist, it is very evidently at the level of this Other that there must be produced the presence of a term which up until then was not in the game, namely, someone who, always and in every circumstance, is in a position to play and to win.

[Diagram, p. 208]

Mother

Phallus

Other

THE PRESENCE OF THE OTHER

One finds a thousand traces of the schema of the game of forfeits in observations, in the child's activity, and one finds it in a thousand forms in the case of Little Hans. One finds it for example in his way of suddenly isolating himself in the dark in a little water-closet, which is the same that becomes his very own, whereas up until that moment, he had been in the one that was for everyone. There is a moment when everything wavers, and when the passage occurs that adds to the game the dimension

\[\text{English in the original, without italics, as the expression has been accepted into French usage.}\]

\[2\]
one had been expecting, the plane of the symbolic relation. What had up until then been only this calling and calling back of which I spoke the last time, which characterizes the symbolic mother, becomes the idea that at the level of the great Other, there is someone who can respond with every right, and who responds that in any case, it is he who has the phallus, the true, the real penis. It is he who has the winning card, and he knows it. He is introduced into the symbolic order as a real element, inverse to the first position of the mother, symbolized in the real by her presence and her absence.

Up until then, the object was both there and not there. It was from this point that the subject set out with regard to every object, namely, that an object was both present and absent, and one could always play at the presence or the absence of an object. After this turning point, the object is no longer the imaginary object which the subject can use as a lure, but the object of which it is always in the power of an Other to show that the subject does not have it, or that he has it insufficiently. If castration plays such an essential role for all the rest of development, it is that it is necessary to the assumption of the maternal phallus as a symbolic object. It is only by the fact that, in the essential Oedipal experience, he is deprived of the object by the one who has it, who knows he has it, who has it in every instance, that the child can conceive that this same symbolic object will one day be given to him.

In other terms, the assumption of the very sign of the virile position, of masculine heterosexuality, implies castration from the outset. That is what the Freudian notion of the Oedipus teaches. Precisely because the male, and this is absolutely the contrary of the feminine position, perfectly possesses a natural appendix, and has the penis as his belonging, it is necessary for him to have it from someone other, in this relation to what is real in the symbolic -- the one who is truly the father. And that is why no one can say finally what it truly is to be a father, if it is not that it is precisely something which is already there in the game. It is the game played with the father, a game of losers win, if I may say that, which alone
allows the child to conquer the path by which there will be laid down in him the first inscription of the law.

What does the subject become in this drama that he is in?

As the Freudian dialectic describes, he becomes a little criminal. It is by the path of an imaginary crime that he enters into the order of the law. But he can enter into the order of the law only if, at least for an instant, he has had a real partner before him, someone who has effectively taken to the level of the Other something which is not simply calling and calling back, the couple of presence and absence, the fundamental annihilation of the symbolic -- someone who responds to him. (ref. to Freud)

Now, if things seem to be expressed thus on the plane of the imaginary drama, it is on the plane of the imaginary game that the trial must be made. It is not without reason that the required dimension of absolute otherness, of the one who simply has the power and answers for it, does not intervene in any particular dialogue. It is incarnated in real personages, but these real personages are themselves always dependent on something which in the end appears like an eternal alibi. The only one who could correspond absolutely to the position of the father in so far as this is the symbolic father, is one who could say, like the God of monotheism -- I am he who am. But this sentence which we come upon in the sacred text can be literally pronounced by no one.

You will tell me then -- You have taught us that the message that we receive is our own in an inverted form, so all that will be resolved by the You are that you are. Do not believe it, for, in order to say that to anyone other that there might be, who am I? In other terms, what I want to indicate here is that it is the symbolic father who is strictly speaking unthinkable.

The symbolic father is nowhere. He intervenes nowhere.

The proof is to be found in Freud's own work. One had to have a mind as tied as was Freud's to the demands of scientific and positivist thought,
to make that construction which Jones confides that he esteemed above
his entire work. He did not put it into the foreground, for his major work,
the only one -- he wrote this, affirmed it, and never went back on it --, is
*The Interpretation of Dreams*. But the one that was dearest to him, a
success which seemed to him like a performance, is *Totem and Taboo*,
which is nothing other than a modern myth, a myth constructed to
explain what remained gaping in his doctrine, which was -- *Where is the
father?*

It is enough to read *Totem and Taboo* simply with one's eyes open to
see that if it is not what I am telling you, that is to say, a myth, it is
absolutely absurd. *Totem and Taboo* is written to tell us that, for fathers
to exist, it is necessary for the true father, the only father, the unique father,
to be, before the entry into history, and he must be the dead father. Even
more -- he must be a father who was killed. And really, how can that even
be thought outside of its mythic value? For, as far as I know, the father in
question was not conceived by Freud, nor by anyone, as an immortal
being. Why must the sons in some way have advanced his death? And all
that to what end? To forbid themselves, in the end, what it was a question
of ravishing from him. They killed him only in order to show that he
cannot be killed.

The essence of the major drama which Freud introduces rests upon a
strictly mythical notion, in that it is the very categorization of a form of the
impossible, indeed, the unthinkable, namely the eternization of one sole
father at the origin, whose characteristic is that he has been killed. And
why, if not in order to preserve him? I would have you note in passing
that in French, and in some other languages, among them
German, *tuer* [to kill] comes from the Latin *tutare* which means to
conserv[e].

This mythical father who shows us the sort of difficulties Freud had to
deal with, also shows us what he was really aiming at in the notion of the
closest father. It is something which does not intervene at any moment of the
dialectic, unless it is by the intermediary of the real father, who enters at
some moment to fill the role and function, bringing the imaginary
relation to life and giving it a new dimension. He comes out of the pure specular game of either me or the other, in order to give an incarnation to that sentence which we have just said was not pronounceable -- you are that you are. If you will allow me a play on words and the ambiguity that I already used when we were studying the paranoiac structure of President Schreber, it is not -- tu es celui que tu es, but tu es celui qui tuais.\(^3\)

The end of the Oedipus complex is correlative with the installation in the unconscious of the law as repressed, but permanent. It is to this extent that there is something which answers in the symbolic. The law is not simply, in fact, something about which we wonder why, after all, the community of men should be introduced into it and implicated in it. It is also based in the real, in the form of that kernel which the Oedipus complex leaves behind it -- which analysis has shown once and for all to be the real form under which is inscribed what philosophers had up until then indicated with more or less ambiguity as the density, the permanent kernel, of moral conscience -- which we know to be incarnated in each subject under the most various forms, the most bizarre, the most grimacing -- which is called the superego.

If it takes that form, it is because its introduction into the Es as an element of the same nature as other libidinal elements, always participates in some accident. One never knows, in effect, at what moment of the imaginary game the passage is made, nor who was there to respond.

The tyrannical superego, fundamentally paradoxical and contingent, represents in itself alone, even in non-neurotics, the signifier which marks, imprints, leaves on man the seal of his relation to the signifier. There is in man a signifier which marks his relation to the signifier, and which is called the superego. There are even many more than one, and they are called symptoms.

It is with this key, and with it alone, that you can understand what is at stake when Little Hans develops his phobia. What is characteristic in this observation, and I think I have been able to demonstrate it, is that despite

\(^3\) The play on words depends upon the homophony between \textit{tu es} and \textit{tuais}, which allows "You are he that you are" to be heard as "You are he who
all the father's love, all his gentleness, all his intelligence, thanks to which we have the observation, there is no real father.

All the rest of the game is pursued in the lure -- in the end insupportable, anguishng, intolerable -- of Little Hans's relation to his mother, from which there is no exit. It is he or she, one or the other, without one's ever knowing which, le phallopore or la phallopore, the big or the little giraffe. Despite the ambiguities of understanding on the part of the various actors who take the observation, it is clear that the little giraffe is to be situated as a maternal belonging, around which plays the question of who has it, and who will have it. It is a sort of waking dream that Little Hans has, and despite the great cries let out by the mother, this dream makes him possessor of the stakes, and it is there to underline the mechanism in the most clearly imaged way.

I would add here several considerations which will allow you to get used to the strict use of the category of castration as I am trying to articulate it here.

The perspective that I am bringing allows you to situate, each in its own field and in their reciprocal relations, the imaginary play of the ideal of the ego in relation to the sanctioning intervention of castration, thanks to which the imaginary elements take on their stability in the symbolic, where their constellation is fixed. From this perspective who would dare have recourse to the notion of object relations conceived in advance as harmonious and uniform? -- as if, by some concurrence of nature and the law, ideally, and constantly, each man would find his woman, to the greatest satisfaction of the couple, without one's even stopping an instant to ask what the whole community might have to think of it.

If, on the contrary, we know how to distinguish the order of the law from imaginary harmonies, indeed from the very position of the love relation, and if it is true that castration is the essential crisis by which every subject is introduced, authorized to be, one might say, oedipized with full rights, we shall conclude that it is perfectly natural -- even where there are complex, indeed, completely free, structures of kinship, like those we live

kills.
with, and not simply elementary structures -- to propose, at least at the
limit, that every woman who is not permitted by the law is prohibited.
This formula is a repercussion of the very clear echo that every marriage,
and not simply that of neurotics, bears castration in it. If the civilization in
which we live has seen the flowering of the ideal, the ideal confusion, of
love and of _conjugo_, it is in as much as it has put marriage in the
foreground as the symbolic fruit of mutual consent, that is to say, has
pushed the liberty of unions so far that it is always bordering on incest.

It is enough, besides, to lean a little on the very function of primitive
laws of alliance and kinship in order to see that any conjunction, whatever
it may be, even momentary, of individual choice within the law, every
conjunction of love and the law, even if it is a point of crossing necessary
in the union between beings, participates in incest. It follows that in the
final count, if Freudian doctrine attributes the checks, indeed the
destitution of the love relation to the enduring fixation on the mother,
and sees in its permanence I do not know what which strikes with an
original tare the ideal of a monogamous union that might be wished, one
must still not suppose for all that that there is a new form of _either/or_
showing that if incest does not occur where we might wish, that is, in
actuality, or in perfect households as they say, it is precisely because it
occurs elsewhere. In both cases, it is really a matter of incest. In other
terms, there is something which bears its limit within itself, a
fundamental duplicity, an ambiguity always ready to be reborn.

That is what allows us to affirm, in keeping with experience, that if the
ideal of the conjugal conjunction is monogamous for woman, for reasons
which we stated at the beginning, namely, that she wants the phallus for
herself alone -- it is nothing to be astonished at -- that is our sole advantage
-- then the initial schema of the relation of the child to the mother always
tends to be reproduced on the side of the man. And in so far as the typical,
normative, legal union is always marked by castration, it tends to
reproduce a division in him, a split,\(^4\) which makes him fundamentally bigamous. I do not say polygamous, although, of course, from the moment that the two is introduced, there is no longer any reason to limit the game in this palace of illusions. But it is beyond what the real father authorizes as fixing the choice for one who has entered into the Oedipal dialectic, it is beyond this choice that there is what is always aimed at in love, which is, not the legal object, nor the object of satisfaction, but being, -- the object grasped in what it lacks.

That is why, in a way that is institutionalized or in a way that is anarchic, we never see love and the consecrated union confounded. Mto any developed civilizations have not hesitated to make doctrine on it and put it into practice. In a civilization like ours, one can say nothing if it is not that everything occurs in some way by accident, that is to say because one has an ego that is more or less weak, or an ego that is more or less strong, and one is more or less tied to one or another archaic, indeed ancestral, fixation.

It is already in the primitive imaginary relation by which the child is already introduced to the beyond of the mother, that the subject sees, feels, experiences, that the human being is a being deprived and forlorn. The very structure which imposes upon us the distinction between the imaginary experience and the symbolic experience which normalizes it, but only, by the intermediary of the law, implies that many things are preserved, which does not allow us in any way to speak of the love relation as belonging simply to the register of object relations, were that the most ideal, the most motivated by the most profound affinities. This structure leaves a problematic fundamentally open in the love relation in every life.

Freud, his experience, our daily experience, are there to make us sense it, and also, to make us affirm it.

6 March 1957

\(^4\) English in the original.
XIII

ON THE CASTRATION COMPLEX

A critique of aphanasis.

The imaginary father and the real father.
"Being loved."

Anxiety. On the lure of the moving penis.
The animals in phobia.

[Format chart, p. 215]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENT</th>
<th>LACK OF OBJECT</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real father</td>
<td>Castration</td>
<td>imaginary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic mother</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginary father</td>
<td>Privation</td>
<td>symbolic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Today we are going to try to talk about castration.
Castration is everywhere in Freud's work, as is the Oedipus complex. However, things are not the same for one as for the other.

It is only quite late, in the article of 1924 which he consecrates to an entirely new subject, *Der Untergang des Ödipuskomplexes*, that Freud tries to articulate the formula for the Oedipus complex fully, although it has been present in his thought from the beginning. One might even suppose that this is the great personal problem with which he begins--**What is a father?** In fact, about that, there is no doubt. His biography, his letters to Fliess, confirm his preoccupations and the presence of the Oedipus complex from the beginning. It is only quite late that he explains himself on this subject.

For castration, there is nothing similar anywhere. Freud never fully articulated its precise meaning, the precise psychical incidence of this fear, or this menace, or this agency, or this dramatic moment--all of these words can be invoked equally, with a question mark, concerning castration.

When I began the last time to approach the problem, by bringing castration in under frustration and the imaginary phallic game with the
mother, many of you, while you grasped the picture that I was giving of the father's intervention, of his purely symbolic character in the dreams, still had some questions on the subject of castration. What is this castration? For the subject to arrive at a mature genitality, he must in sum have been castrated. What does that mean?

Those are the questions whose echo I heard. We shall see how to reply to them.

To take things at a simple reading, one can say that castration is the sign of the Oedipal drama, as it is its implicit pivot.

While it is not spelled out like that anywhere, that is literally implicit everywhere in Freud's work.

One may want to avoid this formulation, and to take it as a sort of as if. The current of analytic discourse these days goes that far. But would it not be worthwhile to pause here a bit as I am urging you to? That the abruptness of this affirmation might seem problematic, I willingly grant you -- in effect, it is. But paradoxical as it is, you can nevertheless take it as a point of departure.

What, then, can such a formulation mean? What does it imply? What does it suppose? In fact, there are some authors whom the singularity of such a consequence has not failed to attract, and foremost among them, Ernest Jones.

You will realize it if you read his work -- Mr. Jones has never succeeded in surmounting the difficulties of managing the castration complex as such. Thus he has advanced a term which is peculiarly his own, but which, like everything that he has introduced into the analytic community, has made its way and has had its echoes, principally among English authors. It is *aphanisis*, which in Greek means *disappearance*.

The solution that Jones tried to give to that mode of insistence which the psychical drama of the castration complex has in the history of the subject, is the following. From his perspective, the fear of castration
cannot be dependent upon accident, or the contingency of threats, however singularly these are always reproduced in the history of subjects - threats expressed in the well-known parental statement -- \textit{We shall have someone come who will cut that off for you}. It is not only the paradoxical motivation of this threat, not rooted in any necessary constant of the inter-individual relation, which has caused authors to pause. It is the difficulty that one has in integrating in its positive form the very management of castration, which Freud, however, clearly articulates as a threat bearing upon the penis, the phallus. That is what pushed Jones -- at the moment when he tackled the problem of the constitution of the \textit{Super-ego},\footnote{English in the original.} and tried to establish its mechanism -- to put the notion of \textit{aphanisis} into the foreground, and I think that it will suffice for me to articulate it myself for you to grasp the extent to which it too cannot but present great difficulties.

In effect, \textit{aphanisis} is disappearance, but the disappearance of what? In Jones, it is the disappearance of desire. \textit{Aphanasis}, substituted for castration, is the subject's fear of seeing his desire extinguished.

I think that you cannot help but see the highly subjectivized relation that such a notion in itself represents. Is it conceivable that this could be the source of a primordial anxiety? Perhaps, but surely it is an anxiety that is singularly reflective. One must truly make a leap in understanding here and suppose that the subject is not only in a position to take, in his first relations with objects, the distance which gives him a frustration articulated as such, but also can add to this frustration the awareness of an exhaustion of desire. Really, that is to suppose that an immense \textit{gap}\footnote{English in the original.} has been crossed.

In fact, it is around the notion of privation, in so far as it makes the fear of \textit{aphanisis} arise, that Jones has tried to articulate his whole genesis of the \textit{Super-ego}, which he sees as the formation in which the Oedipus complex normally ends. Thus he immediately encounters distinctions to which we give a form that is a bit more manageable. Also,
speaking of privation, can he not -- even for a single instant -- not
distinguish pure privation, which has it that the subject is not satisfied in
some one of his needs, from the privation that he calls deliberate, one
which supposes facing the subject another subject who refuses him the
satisfaction that he is seeking. As it is not easy to start from givens that are
so scantily sorted out, to articulate a passage from one to the other, above
all when one preserves them as synonyms, it naturally follows that one
will indicate that most frequently, privation is taken as a frustration, and is
for the subject the equivalent of frustration, which of course facilitates the
articulation of the process. But if things are facilitated for the speaker, that
does not mean that they are equally so for an auditor who is a bit exigent.

In fact, in my chart I do not at all give the same meaning as Jones to
the term privation. The privation in question here is a term in relation to
which the notion of castration is situated. As for the term of frustration, I
am trying to re-endow it with its complexity as a veritable relation, and I
did this in a way that was very detailed in the meeting before the February
break. Enough of that remains with you, no doubt, for you to see that I do
not employ the term in the summary form in which it is usually
employed.

It is not possible to articulate anything whatsoever concerning the
incidence of castration without isolating the notion of privation, in so far
as it is what I have called a real hole. Rather than drowning the fish, let us
on the contrary try to isolate it. Privation is privation of the fish. It is
especially the fact that the woman does not have a penis, that she is
deprived of it. This fact, the assumption of this fact, has a constant
incidence in the evolution of almost all of the cases Freud narrates, and it
is for the boy, if I may say so, the most salient event, encountered
everywhere in Freud’s cases. The castration that we are trying to define
takes as base the apprehension in the real of the absence of the penis in the
woman. This, in the majority of cases, is the crucial point. It is, in the
experience of the male subject, the foundation on which the notion of
privation rests, in a way that is especially effective and anxiety-provoking.
There is in effect a whole part of those beings in humanity who are, as they

250
say in the texts, castrated. Of course, this term is completely ambiguous. They are castrated for the subjectivity of the subject. In the real, in reality, in what is invoked as real experience, they are deprived.

In the teaching of Freud's texts, the experience of castration turns around the reference to the real. Let us try to develop our ideas correctly with regard to this, and ourselves understand what it is about, without for the moment concerning ourselves with the experience of the patient.

The very notion of privation, so sensible and so visible in an experience such as this, implies the symbolization of the object in the real. For in the real, nothing is deprived of nothing. All that is real is sufficient unto itself. By definition, the real is full. If we introduce the notion of privation into the real, it is in as much as we already symbolize it sufficiently, and even, fully. To indicate that something is not there is to suppose its presence possible, that is to say, it introduces into the real, to cover it and to hollow it, the elementary symbolic order.

The object in question is, as it happens, the penis. At the moment, and when we are speaking about privation, it is an object given to us in the symbolic state. As to castration, in so far as it is efficacious, suffered, present in the genesis of a neurosis, it concerns, as the necessary order of the chart indicates, an imaginary object. No castration among those at stake in the cause of a neurosis, is ever a real castration. It enters into play only in so far as it plays in the subject in the form of an action bearing on an imaginary object.

The problem is just for us to conceive why, by the effect of what necessity, castration is introduced into the typical development of the subject, where it is a matter of his joining that complex order which constitutes the relation of man to woman. Genital realization is in effect submitted in the human species to a certain number of conditions.

We shall thus start off again, as we did the last time, from the original relation of the subject to the mother, at the stage that one qualifies as pre-Oedipal. We hope that we have articulated this stage better, in a way that is more differentiated, than has usually been done. Even when its terms are demonstrated in an author's discourse, they are not well-
handled and reasoned out. We shall set off again from that in order to try in some way to grasp from its very birth the necessity of the phenomenon of castration, in so far as it takes possession of this imaginary object and of its instrument, and symbolizes a symbolic debt or symbolic punishment, inscribed in the symbolic chain.

To serve as a guide, and so that we may refer to earlier terms, I ask you to accept for the moment as acquired the hypothesis on which our articulation will rest and which we posited last time -- it is that, behind the symbolic mother, there is the symbolic father.

The symbolic father is, for his part, a necessity of the symbolic construction that we can situate only in a beyond, I would almost say in a transcendence, in any case, as a term which, as I have indicated along the way, is only reached by a mythical construction. I have often insisted on the fact that this symbolic father is in the end nowhere represented. It is for the remainder of our march to confirm if the thing is valuable, effectively useful, if it will make us rediscover this element of the drama of castration in complex reality.

We find now, on our chart, the real father and the imaginary father. If the symbolic father is the signifier of which one can only speak by rediscovering both its necessity and its character, and which we must thus accept as an irreducible given in the world of the signifier, the imaginary father and the real father are two terms which give us much less difficulty.

We are always having to deal with the imaginary father. It is to him that the entire dialectic most commonly refers, that of aggressivity, of identification, of the idealization by which the subject accesses to an identification with the father. All that happens at the level of the imaginary father. If we call him imaginary, it is also because he is integrated into the imaginary relation which forms the psychological support of relations to one's peers, which are properly speaking species relations, and which are at the basis of all libidinal capture as of every aggressive uprising. The imaginary father also participates in this register, and presents some typical characteristics. He is the terrifying father whom we know in the background of so many neurotic experiences, and who has
no obligatory relation at all with the real father of the child. We frequently
see in the child’s fantasies the emergence of a sometimes grimacing figure
of the father, and also of the mother, which has only an extremely distant
relation with how the child’s real father was, and which is solely linked to
a moment of development.

The real father is something completely other, of whom the child
has never had other than a very difficult grasp, because of the
interposition of fantasies and the necessity of the symbolic relation. It is
the same for each of us. If there is one thing which is at the base of the
whole analytic experience, it is really that we have an enormous amount
of difficulty in discerning the most real things around us, that is, human
beings such as they are. The whole difficulty both of psychic development
as simply of daily life, is to know with whom we are really dealing. It is the
same for this personage of the father, who, under ordinary conditions, can
justly be considered as a constant element of what we these days call the
child’s entourage. I beg you to accept for the moment what may perhaps at
first sight appear paradoxical to you on this chart, namely that contrary to
the normative or typical function that one would like to give him in the
Oedipal drama, it is to the real father that the salient function in the
castration complex is effectively deferred.

These considerations do not render castration, and what can already
appear as its contingency, any more explicable. Why this castration? Why
this bizarre form of intervention in the economy of the subject, which is
called castration? That has something shocking in itself.

It offers us a recourse, which we must refuse. It is not by chance, nor
because of some bizarre event in the earliest encounters of the subject, that
the physician was first caught by those scenes of early seduction that one
has recognized to be more fantasmatic than one had supposed at the
beginning. You know that that is one of the stages of Freud’s thought,
which belongs to the time even before he analyzes and doctrinizes on the
subject. But with castration, there is no question of calling the whole affair
fantasmatic, as has been done with scenes of early seduction. If castration
effectively deserves to be isolated with a name in the history of the subject,
it is always linked to the incidence, to the intervention, of the real father. It can be equally marked, in a way that is profound, and profoundly disequilibrated, by the absence of the real father. This atypicality, when it occurs, then demands a substitution for the real father of something other, which is profoundly neuroticizing.

We shall now start from the supposition of the fundamental character of the link between the real father and castration, in order to try to find our bearings in the complex dramas which Freud elaborates for us. We really often have the sentiment that he allows himself to be guided in advance by a thread that is from time to time so sure -- as in the case of Little Hans -- that in following it, we have ourselves the impression of being guided at every moment, but without grasping anything of the motives that make us choose the right path at each crossroads.

So I ask that you provisionally accept this position, on the basis of which we shall begin to try to understand the signification and the necessity of the castration complex, by now taking up the case of Little Hans.

Little Hans, from the age of four and a half, develops what is called a phobia, that is, a neurosis.

This phobia is taken in charge by his father, who happens to be one of Freud’s disciples. He is a very fine man, the best that they make as real fathers go, and Little Hans truly has the best of sentiments towards him. He loves his father very much, and he is far from fearing from him so abusive a treatment as that of castration.

On the other hand, one cannot say that Little Hans is frustrated of something. As we see him at the beginning of the observation, Little Hans, an only child, is bathed in happiness. He is the object of an attention that the father has certainly not waited for the appearance of the phobia to demonstrate, and he is also the object of his mother’s most tender care, so
tender even that he is handed everything. One must really have the sublime serenity of Freud to sanction the mother's actions, for in our days every anathema would be heaped upon her for each morning admitting Little Hans as a third into the conjugal bed, and this despite the express reserves of the father and spouse. Not only does the latter show a very particular tolerance here, but we can gage that he is entirely powerless in the situation, for, whatever he says, things continue nonetheless in the most decided fashion, without the mother in question for the slightest moment taking account of the observation that is respectfully suggested to her by the personage of the father.

He is frustrated of nothing, this Little Hans, he is truly deprived of nothing. All the same, we see, at the beginning of the observation, that the mother has gone so far as to forbid him to masturbate, and has pronounced the fatal words -- *If you masturbate, we shall have Doctor A. come, and he will cut it off for you.* But we do not have the impression that this has been something decisive. The child continues, of course, which is not an element of comment. The parents are sufficiently informed, which does not prevent them from behaving exactly as though they knew nothing. If this intervention must be noted because of the scrupulousness with which the observation is taken, it is certainly not to this moment that Freud himself thinks of assigning anything whatever that is decisive in the apparition of the phobia. The child hears this menace, I would almost say, as he should. You will see that it turns out later that there is nothing more that one can say to a child, and that this is just what will serve him as material for constructing what he needs, which is the castration complex. But the question is just to know why he needs it. This is the question we have reached, and we are nowhere near immediately giving it an answer.

For the moment, it is not a question of castration, it is a question of phobia, and of the fact that we can in no way link it in a simple and direct fashion to the prohibition on masturbation. As Freud says very well, masturbation in itself does not bring any anxiety in its wake at this moment, and the child continues to masturbate. Of course he will later
integrate it into the conflict, as one calls it, which becomes manifest at the moment of his phobia, but this certainly does not seem to be a traumatizing incident that allows one to understand its outbreak. The conditions that surround this child are optimal, and the outbreak of the phobia remains a problem which we must know how to introduce as such, with the veritably worthy character that it assumes. It is on this condition that we shall be able to find the convergencies which will shed light, and which will favor our theoretical effort.

I shall first remind you of the fundamental situation that prevails regarding the phallus in the pre-Oedipal relation of the child to the mother.

The mother here is the object of love, the object desired for its presence. The reaction, the sensitivity of the child to the presence of his mother is very precociously manifested in his behavior. This presence is very quickly articulated in the pair presence-absence with which we begin. That is a relation as simple as you can imagine, and if difficulties have been raised concerning the early object world of the child, it is because of an inadequate distinction in the term object itself. There is for the child a primordial object that we can in no case consider as ideally constituted, that is to say, in our idea. That the world of the child is made only of a pure state of suspension, with indeterminate limits, from the organ which satisfies him, that is to say the organ of nourishment, I am not the first to contradict. The work of Alice Balint, for example, is there to spell out -- in a way that is certainly different, and I think less tenable -- what I am in the process of telling you, which is that the mother exists, which does not for all that suppose that there are already an I and a not-I.

The mother exists as a symbolic object and as the object of love. Experience confirms it, and it is what I am formulating by the position which I give to the mother on the chart. The mother is at first the symbolic mother, and it is only in the crisis of frustration that she begins to be realized, because of a certain number of shocks and particular events that occur in the relations between the mother and the child. The mother
who is the object of love can at every moment be the real mother in as much as she frustrates this love.

The relation of the child to the mother, which is a relation of love, opens the door to what one habitually calls, because one does not know how to articulate it, the primary undifferentiated relationship. In fact, what fundamentally happens in the first concrete stage of the love relation, which is the background on which the child's satisfaction occurs or does not occur, with the signification that this carries? The child must include himself in the relation as the object of the mother's love. It is a matter of his learning that he brings his mother pleasure. It is one of the fundamental experiences of the child, that he knows if his presence commands, be it ever so little, that of the presence which is necessary to him, if he himself introduces the illumination which brings this presence in to surround him, and if he himself brings her the satisfaction of love. In short, to be loved, geliebt werden, is fundamental for the child. That is the ground on which is played everything that develops between the mother and him.

As I have indicated, the question proposed to us by the facts is to know how the child learns what he is for the mother. Our basic hypothesis, as you know, is that he is not alone. Something is articulated little by little in the experience of the child, which indicates to him that, in his mother's presence for him, he is not alone. It is around this point that the whole dialectic of the mother-child relationship will develop.

One of the most common experiences is that at first, he is not alone because there are other children. But our basic hypothesis is that there is another term at play which in itself is radical, constant, and independent of the contingencies of the history, that is to say, the presence or absence of another child. It is the fact that, to a degree which differs among subjects, the mother still retains a Penis-neid. The child fulfills or does not fulfill it, but the question is raised. The revelation of the phallic mother for the child, that of Penis-neid for the mother, are strictly coextensive with the problem that we are tackling.
They are not on the same plane. If I have chosen to start from a particular point in order to arrive at a particular point, to start from the pre-Oedipal stage in order to arrive at the Oedipus complex and the complex of castration, it is because we must consider *Penis-neid* as one of the fundamental givens of analytic experience, and as a constant reference in the relation of the mother with the child. Experience proves that there is no way to explain the perversions otherwise, in so far as, contrary to what is said, they are not entirely explained by the pre-Oedipal stage, even if they still necessitate its experience. It is in the relation to the mother that the child experiences the phallus as being the center of her desire. And he situates himself there in different positions by which he is led to maintain, that is very precisely, to lure, this desire of the mother.

That is the bearing of what is worked out in the lesson to which I alluded just before. The child presents himself to the mother by offering her the phallus in itself, to different degrees and in different positions. He can identify with the mother, identify with the phallus, identify with the mother as bearer of the phallus, or present himself as the bearer of the phallus. There is here a high degree not of abstraction, but of generalization of the imaginary relation which I call one of lure, through which the child attests to the mother that he can fulfill her, not only as child, but also in her desire, and if all be said, in what she is lacking. This situation is certainly structuring, since it is uniquely around it that the relation of the fetishist to his object is articulated, and that there are ranged all the intermediate scales that can link him to that relation, so complex and so elaborate that only analysis has been able to catch its accent in speaking of transvestism -- homosexuality being reserved here, since it concerns the need of the object, the real penis, in the other.

At what point does something put a term to the relation thus sustained? What puts a term to it in the case of Little Hans?
At the beginning of the observation, by a fortunate encounter, by that fortunate miracle which is produced each time that we make a discovery, we see the child completely engaged in a relation in which the phallus plays the most evident role.

The father's notes on what he has observed of the child's development up to the hour H when the phobia begins testify to that. They teach us that Little Hans is always fantasizing the phallus, asking his mother about the presence of the phallus in the mother, then in the father, then in animals. They talk only of the phallus. If we are to trust in the words that come down to us, the phallus is truly the pivotal object, the central object, of the organization of his world. We are here with Freud's text before us, and we are trying to give it its meaning.

What is it that changes, when nothing critical occurs in the life of Little Hans? What changes is that his own penis begins to become something absolutely real. His penis begins to move, and the child begins to masturbate. The important element is not so much that the mother intervenes at this moment, but that the penis has become real. That is the massive fact in the observation. After that, we must ask ourselves if there is not a relation between this fact and what then appears, that is to say, the anxiety.

I have not yet broached the problem of anxiety in this seminar, for one must take things in order. How to conceive of anxiety, which is, as you know, a permanent question all throughout the work of Freud? I shall not give you a one sentence resume of the road Freud follows, but I shall indicate that as a mechanism, anxiety is always present in the stages of his observation, and the doctrine comes afterwards.

How should we conceive the anxiety that occurs in this instance? As closely as possible to the phenomenon. I ask you for a moment to have recourse to that mode which consists in using a little bit of imagination, and you will perceive that the anxiety, in this so extraordinarily evanescent relation in which it appears to us, surges up each time that the subject, as imperceptibly as may be, becomes unglued from his existence, and when he perceives himself as being on the point of being recaptured
by something that you will call, depending on the circumstances, image of the other, temptation, etc. In short, anxiety is correlative with the moment when the subject is suspended between a time in which he no longer knows where he is, and nears a time in which he is going to be something in which he will no longer ever be able to find himself again. That is anxiety.

Do you not see that this is introduced here at the moment when there appears in Little Hans, in the form of a drive in the most elementary sense of the term, something which moves, the real penis, and when what had for a long time been paradise for him, happiness, begins to seem like a trap? -- namely, the game in which one is what one is not, or in which one is for the mother everything that the mother wants.

I cannot speak of everything at once, and I am contenting myself here with indicating that all this depends, after all, on what the child really is for the mother. We shall introduce a difference in a moment, and we shall try to approach more closely what Hans was for his mother. We remain for the moment at that crucial point which gives us the general schema of things.

Up until here, the child is in the paradise of the lure. Is it satisfying for him? There is no reason why he should not play this game for a very long time in a way that is satisfying. The child tries to flow, to integrate himself into what he is in the mother's love -- and, with a bit of luck, even very little, he succeeds, for a mere index, be it ever so slight, suffices to sanction this so delicate relation. But from the moment when the drive intervenes, his real penis, there occurs this ungluing, of which I spoke just before. He is caught by his own snare, dupe of his own game, prey to every discord, confronted by the immense gap that there is between satisfying an
image, and having something real to present -- to present in cash, if I may say so. What does not fail to occur is not simply that the child fails in his attempts at seduction, for one or another reason, or that he is, for example, refused by his mother. What then plays the decisive role is that what he has to present in the end appears to him -- we have a thousand examples of this in analytic reality -- as something miserable. The child is thus placed before the way open to becoming the captive, the victim, the passive element of a game in which he becomes the prey of the significations of the Other. That is the dilemma.

I indicated last year -- it is very precisely at this point that the origin of paranoia branches out. From the moment that the game becomes serious, and at the same time is still only a game of luring, the child is entirely suspended from what the partner indicates to him. All the manifestations of the partner become for him sanctions of his sufficiency or of his insufficiency. To the extent that the situation continues, that is to say, that there does not intervene, because of a Verwerfung which leaves him outside, the term of the symbolic father -- and we shall see concretely how necessary he is --, the child finds himself in the very particular situation of being entirely delivered up to the eye and to the gaze of the Other. But let us leave the future paranoid aside. For one who is not, the situation is literally without issue by itself, except for the issue that is called the castration complex. I am here to show you why.

The castration complex takes up on the purely imaginary plane everything that is at stake concerning the phallus. It is precisely for this reason that it is convenient for the real phallus to be outside the field. The intervention of the father introduces the symbolic order, with its prohibitions and the reign of the law, namely, the affair both passes out of the child's hands and is settled elsewhere. The father is he with whom there is no chance of winning other than by accepting the distribution of parts as they are. The symbolic order intervenes precisely on the imaginary plane. It is not for nothing that castration bears upon the imaginary phallus, but in a way that is outside the real couple. An order is thus re-

---

3 English in the original.
established within which the child will be able to wait out the evolution of events.

That may seem to you a rather simple solution. It is not the solution, it is a rapid indication, a bridge thrown across. If it were so easy, if there were only one bridge to throw across, there would be no need to throw it across. What is interesting is the point that we have reached, namely, that Little Hans has reached at the moment when precisely nothing of the sort is produced for him.

With what is Little Hans confronted? He is at the point of encounter with the real drive and the imaginary game of phallic lure, and this, with regard to his mother. What, since there is a neurosis, is then produced? You will not be astonished to learn that a regression is produced.

I would prefer that you be astonished, for I am giving this term the strict weight that I gave it in the last session before the break, when we spoke about frustration. I said then that in the presence of the mother's default, the child collapses into the satisfaction of nursing. It is the same here, where it is the child who is the center. Regression occurs when it is no longer enough to give what there is to give, and he finds himself in the disarray of no longer sufficing. The same short-circuit occurs as that with which primitive frustration is satisfied, which leads the child to take possession of the breast to end all his problems, that is to say, the gulf that opens before him, of being devoured by the mother.

This is also the first garb that the phobia takes, as you see in the case of our little gentleman. Whatever horse may be the object of the phobia, it is really a question of a horse that bites. The theme of devoration is always somewhere to be found in the structure of phobia.

Is this the whole of it? Certainly not, for it is not just anything that bites or that devours. We cannot resolve everything at once. As is the case each time that we have to do with a certain number of fundamental relations, it is really necessary to leave some aside if we are to articulate something clear. What is certain is that the objects of phobia, which are animals in particular, are immediately marked even to the eye of the most superficial observer by the characteristic of being objects which essentially
belong to the symbolic order. The lion, for example, and above all when the child does not live in countries where this animal presents the least sign, not only of danger, but simply of presence, the wolf, the giraffe, are precisely foreign objects. The horse is situated at an extremely precise boundary, which well shows that these objects are borrowed from a category of signifiers of the same nature, of the same family as those which one finds in coats of arms. It is nothing else that motivates the analogy between the father and the totem in the construction of Totem and Taboo. These objects have in fact a very special function, which is that of a stand in for the signifier of the symbolic father.

We do not see what the final term of this signifier is, and one can wonder why it dons one form or another. There really must be, in what we encounter, something that belongs to the order of fact or of positive experience, and to the irreducible. I am not presenting you a deduction, but an apparatus made necessary by what we find in experience. Besides, we are not here to resolve the problem of why phobia takes the form of some particular animal. That is not the question.

Here I ask you to take up the text of the observation of Little Hans between now and next time. You will see that without a doubt this is a phobia, but, if I may say so, a phobia on the march. The parents have taken to the ranks from the moment it appeared, and the father does not quit until the moment that it ends.

I would like you to read this text. You will have all the fluttering impressions that this reading can evoke, you will even have the feeling, many times, of being completely lost. I would still like those of you who are willing to submit to this proof, to tell me the next time if, in what they have read, they are not struck by a contrast.

At the outset, you see Little Hans developing full steam all sorts of extraordinarily novelesque imaginings concerning his relations with all those whom he adopts as his children. It is an imaginary theme in which
he shows himself at great ease. It is that he prolongs the game of lure with his mother there. And if he feels totally at ease here, it is because he himself is inscribed in a position which blends in an identification with the mother, since it concerns adopting children, and all the forms of the love relation, which he pursues with very great ease on the plane of fiction. He in effect maintains a whole range of relations, which go from the little girl whom he squeezes and courts at close range, who is the daughter of the proprietors of the place where the family goes for vacations, up to the little girl whom he loves from a distance.

This episode is in contrast with what happens after the father’s interventions. Under pressure of the analytic interrogation, more or less directed, made by the father at his side, he gives himself up to a sort of fantastic novel in which he reconstructs the presence of his little sister, in a chest, in the carriage, on horses, a good many years before her birth. In short, a coherence is massively marked between what I shall call the imaginary orgy during the course of the analysis, and the intervention of the real father.

If the phobia ends in the most satisfactory of cures -- we shall see what satisfactory cure means in regard to his phobia --, it is in so far as the real father has intervened, who had intervened so little up until then, and who, moreover, has been able to do so only because he has had behind him the symbolic father, who is Freud. But to the whole extent that he intervenes, everything that was tending to be crystallized on the plane of a sort of premature real, takes off again into a radical imaginary, so radical that one no longer even knows very well where one is. One wonders at every instant if Little Hans is not there to mock at the world. He incontestably proves to have a refined sense of humor, since it is a matter of an imaginary which plays in order to reorganize the symbolic world.

One thing is certain, and it is that the cure occurs at the moment when castration as such is expressed in the clearest way, in the form of an articulated story. It is when the installation man, named as such, comes, unscrews it for him, and gives him another. It is just there that the observation stops. One can conclude that the solution of the phobia is
allied to the constellation of this triad -- imaginary orgy, intervention of the real father, symbolic castration.

The real father, to whom we shall return the next time, all supported and bucked up as he is by the symbolic father, comes in as a sorry type. Freud is forced to say continually -- *It is better than nothing, you must let him talk. But above all, you will find this at the bottom of a page -- do not understand too quickly.* With all the questions that he clearly presses upon his son, the father takes a false path. It does not matter. The result scans around his intervention on two points -- Hans’s imaginary orgy, and the advent of castration, fully articulated, under the form of the replacement of what is real by something bigger and better. The bringing to light of castration brings the phobia to an end, and also very well shows, I would not say its finality, but what it was there to replace.

This is only, as you will have sensed, an intermediate point in my discourse, and I wanted simply to give you enough to let you see where the fan of questions rays out. The next time we shall take up the dialectic of the child’s relation to the mother, and we shall try to disengage the value, the true signification, of the castration complex.

13 March 1957
The network of The Purloined Letter. ¹

All alone with Mariedl.

The child as metonymy.

Something black in front of the mouth.

Phobia structures the world.

I shall begin with a precision concerning the article that appeared in La Psychanalyse, No 2, under the title Seminar on "The Purloined Letter," ² and I shall deal especially with its introduction.

A certain number of you have had the time to read it, and to look at it rather closely. I appreciate the attention of those who have devoted themselves to this examination. Still, I must believe that the recollection of the context in which we dealt here with what is taken up again in that introduction is not easy for everyone to recover, since they fall into an error reactualizing that in which some could let themselves be caught at the moment when I presented these terms. They imagined, for example, that I was denying chance. I allude to it in my own text, and I shall not come back to it.

I shall now clarify what is in question.

¹ Edgar Allen Poe, The Purloined Letter.
It will not be unfruitful for me to remind you of the givens with which we begin.

We take by threes the signs + and -, taken in a chance order of temporal succession. We ordain these groups as 1, 2, and 3, according to whether they represent a succession of identical signs, +++-- -, or an alternation, +--+, -, or on the contrary a suite which can be either ++-, but also equally well --+, groupings which, at first sight, are different from the others in not having symmetry. That is what I call, using a term that cannot be translated into French, odd³ -- it is what immediately springs into view as being uneven, limping. It is a simple question of definition -- it is enough to posit it thus, by convention, for the existence of the symbol to be instituted. Though perhaps that was written in my text in a way that was sufficiently condensed to have caused difficulty for some, the context rules out any ambiguity, or that one could for a single instant take this definition as anything other than the convention of a starting point.

We shall now call α, β, γ, δ, another series of symbols which are constructed on the basis of the preceding series. This operation is founded on the observation that when one knows the two extreme terms of this second series, the middle term is univocal. The convention is thus to write a sign there which, by its amplitude, takes in a series of five signs from the first line. To go from even to even, that is from symmetrical to symmetrical, whether it is from 1 to 1, from 3 to 3, or from 3 to 1, is α.

From odd to odd, is γ. To begin with even and end with odd, is β. To come back from odd to even, is δ. Those are the conventions.

Beginning with that, one can construct a network like a parallelepiped formed with vectors. One of those who examined the thing in the most precise, and most competent way, in fact, discovered it.

³ English in the original.
THE NETWORK

The network must be oriented, and this is precisely how it is. The α can be reproduced indefinitely, which is not the case for the other points, unless that is expressly indicated by the loop thus defined. In short, this network gives an exhaustive resume of the possible successions, and the only successions possible. A series which cannot be laid down on this network is a series which is impossible.

Why did I not put that in my text? First, because I had not shown it to you here. It is a simple apparatus for the control of calculations, which allows one to buckle the problem definitively, and to be sure that one has not omitted any of the possible solutions. It has the interest of allowing you always refer to it as to a trustworthy instrument, which will indicate, whatever the problem that you pose with regard to this series, that you have forgotten a possible solution, or that you are completely mistaken.

I arrive at a disputable point. You see that on this network, there are in some way two species of β, and two species of δ. If you look at the angles thus marked, you see that there is always a dichotomous division proposed starting from each of them. From δ, there are two possible issues -- from the lower δ, there can be another δ, or a γ, while from the other δ, there can be a β or an α. Another example -- after γ, there can be α or β on one hand, or on the other, γ or δ.

The objection that certain people made with regard to the presentation of the evidence for this functional diversity is as follows. One could, according to them, name the angles by eight different letters instead of naming them by four different letters, or one could write α, and α index 2.
It was said to me that there was no clear and distinct definition of a symbol here, and that in consequence, all that I had represented and said was only a sort of opacification of the mechanism. Thus the play of symbols which would make that internal law always implied by the creation of the symbol arise from itself, would go beyond what is given at the outset, which is pure chance, and that is where the trouble that occurs in some minds begins. I think I must explain myself.

That is, in a certain way, completely exact. One can in effect say that the choice of symbols introduces a certain ambiguity at the outset, which stems from the simple indication of oddity.⁴ that is to say, from the dissymmetry, whereas, since there is a temporal succession, things are oriented, and it is evidently not the same if there is first 2 then 1, or 1 then 2. To confound them would introduce an ambiguity into the symbol itself, when one can express it more clearly by distinguishing them.

It is a matter of knowing what the clarity in question means. What you call an ambiguity is precisely what one must make palpable. In so far as the symbol is plus, it supposes the minus. In so far as the symbol is minus, it supposes the plus. The ambiguity is always there, the further we go in the construction, and I took the minimal step that one could take in grouping the symbols in threes. If I did not demonstrate that in the article, it is because I had no other aim than to remind you of the context into which the stolen, purloined,⁵ letter had been introduced. Admit for a moment that this is the minimal step, for it is to the extent that the symbol conceals this ambiguity, that there appears what I call the law.

What in fact would happen if one refused this step and if one replaced four of these angles by the series ε, ζ, η, θ? One would have different, extremely complicated sequences, since one would have to deal with eight terms, and each would be coupled with two others, according to an order which would be far from being immediately evident. That is what lets one see the interest of choosing ambiguous symbols which join the angle α.

---

⁴ English in the original.
⁵ English in the original.
with another angle that we have also called $\alpha$, although in fact it has different functions. In grouping them this way, you see the emergence of the extremely simple law that I expressed for you by one of the schemas in the text.

\[ \alpha, \delta \quad \alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta, \quad \alpha, \beta \]
\[ \gamma, \beta \quad \gamma, \delta \]
\[ \text{Time 1} \quad \text{Time 2} \quad \text{Time 3} \]

THE MECHANISM OF DISTRIBUTION

This schema allows us to say that, if at Time 1 and Time 2 you may have any of these symbols, Time 3 is ruled by a dichotomy which excludes the possibility that from $\alpha$ or $\delta$ in Time 1, you can obtain $\gamma$ or $\delta$ in Time 3, and that with $\gamma$ or $\beta$ in the first, you can obtain $\alpha$ or $\beta$ in the third.

I indicated in my text certain consequences which have the interest of revealing other phrases having the same form, with properties and laws of syntax which can be deduced from this extremely simple formula. I tried to choose them so that they would be metaphorical, so that you could glimpse how the signifier is truly the organizer of something inherent in human memory. The latter, in fact, in as much as it always implies in its weave some elements of the signifier, is fundamentally structured in a different way from vital memory, whose every conception rests upon the persistence or the effacing of an impression. From the moment that we introduce the signifier into the real, and it is introduced there from the moment that one simply begins to speak, or even less, from the moment that one simply counts --, what is captured in the order of memory is structured in a way that is fundamentally different from everything that can occur to make one conceive a theory of memory founded on the theme of the vital property pure and simple.
That is what I am trying to illustrate metaphorically, when I speak to you of the future perfect, and when, after Time 3, I bring in a fourth. Take Time 4 as a point of arrival. Any one of the four symbols is possible at this place, since Time 4 has the same function as a Time 2. If at this point you choose one of the four symbols, certain eliminations will result at the second and third stages, which can serve to give an image of what precisely will occur in an immediate future, from the moment when it becomes the future perfect with regard to an aim, a project that has been determined upon. That certain signifying elements should be rendered impossible by that fact alone, I shall illustrate metaphorically, in the function that we could give to what I shall on this occasion call the impossible signifier, the caput mortuum of the signifier.

You know quite well that I have not fabricated all that as a sort of mathematical excursion, with the universal incompetence that characterizes me. You would be wrong to think it. First, these are not things on which I have been reflecting since yesterday. Then, I had it checked by a mathematician. Do not believe that because these details have been added, the slightest element of incertitude or of fragility has been introduced.

I interrupted my development there. But as some may still want to argue in the name of some sort of false evidence which might emerge from the fact that every sort of mystery does not disappear just because laws can be discerned, and laws so easy to consider in a differentiated way as the terms of the different angles in the parallelepiped construction that I have given you, I want to point out that the question does not lie there. And that is why I would like you to keep in mind for a moment the notion that this quite simply means that from the moment that there is writing [graphie], there is spelling [orthographe].

I shall illustrate that for you now in another way, which will perhaps seem more probing to you, but which takes nothing away from my earlier demonstration.

I shall start with the same hypothesis, in the sense -- distinct from current usage -- that it is a matter of simple definitions and of the premises.
which follow. If I start again with the *odd* suite without distinguishing from the beginning, as I could just as well have done since someone said to me, the *odd* with two light feet at the beginning and the *odd* with two light feet at the end, the anapest and the dactyl, it is that the whole interest of the question consists in starting with definitions that in fact are rudimentary, and from which certain intuitive elements are eliminated, especially that particularly striking intuitive element which is founded on scansion, which already implies a sort of corporal engagement. Poetry begins there. Here, we are not even entering into poetry, we are simply bringing in the idea of symmetry or asymmetry. I shall tell you why it seems to me interesting to limit the creation of the first signifier to this strict element.

I shall go back to my chart, and I invite you to consider what happens at Time 6.

At this stage, $\alpha$, $\beta$, $\gamma$, $\delta$ can be written. You see the excess of possibilities that we have. We have in fact all the possible symbols, and we have them at two levels. Only, the slightest examination of the situation shows you that if you choose as point of arrival in the fifth stage any letter whatever, the letter $\beta$ for example, if you take as point of departure another letter, for example $\alpha$, and if you say -- *I want to have a series which has $\alpha$ at the first time and $\beta$ at the fifth* --, you soon see that, in the third stage, there can in no case be $\gamma$, nor anything else from that line, since because you started with $\alpha$, you can at Time 3 have only what occurs above the line of dichotomy, that is $\alpha$ or $\beta$. At the fourth time, you can have $\alpha$, $\beta$, $\gamma$, $\delta$. But what must you have at Time 3 in order to have $\beta$ in Time 5? At Time 3 you must have $\alpha$.

It results that when you intend to make a series in which there are two determined letters distributed across five times, the median letter, the one which occurs at Time 3, is determined in a way that is univocal.

I could show you other characteristics that are equally striking, but I shall stay with this one, in that hope that it will succeed in arousing in your
minds the dimension that I am trying to evoke. It in fact results from this property that if you take any term whatever in the chain, you can immediately verify, in a simple way that causes no trouble to the eye, whether there is a fault -- this is a verification that a typographer can make --, and this by referring to the term which occurs two places earlier, and the term which occurs two places later. At the center, only one letter is possible. In other terms, the least occurrence of writing makes spelling arise at the same time, that is to say, the possibility of checking for errors.

That is why this example was constructed. It shows you that, from the most elementary appearance of the signifier, the law arises, independently of every real element. That does not at all mean that chance is commanded, but that the law emerges with the signifier, in a way that is internal, independent of all experience. That is what this speculation on \( \alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta \) is intended to demonstrate.

These things seem to entail great resistance for some minds. Still, it seemed to me that in order to make you sense a certain dimension, this was an easier path than counseling you, for example, to read Mr. Frege, a mathematician of this century who was devoted to the foundations of that science, in appearance the simplest of all, that is arithmetic. The latter believed he had to make detours which are considerable -- the closer a thing is to simplicity, the more difficult it is to grasp -- but which are still convincing, in order to demonstrate that there is no possible deduction of the number three starting from experience alone. That entails a series of philosophical and mathematical speculations to whose proof I did not deem it necessary to submit you by commenting on this work.

It nonetheless remains that that is very important for us, for if, contrary to what Mr. Jung might believe, no deduction from experience can make us accede to the number three, it is then certain that the symbolic order, in so far as it is distinct from the real, enters into the real like a ploughshare, and introduces an original dimension into it. We other analysts, in so far as we operate in the register of language, must take account of its originality. That is what is at cause in this instance.
I am afraid of tiring you, and I shall turn to something else. I shall tell you an idea that came to me quite intuitively, but which was rather less certain as an affirmation.

This observation came to me one day when I found myself in a remarkable zoo situated sixty kilometers north of London. The animals there seemed to be at complete liberty, the bars having been lodged in the ground in ditches that were invisible. I contemplated a lion surrounded by three magnificent lionesses, all having the air of a good entente and the most pacific humor. And I asked myself why this good entente among these animals when, from what we know, I should normally have seen an outbreak among them of the most manifest signs of rivalry or conflict. It does not seem to me that I made too great a leap in my mind when I said to myself -- Oh well, it is simply that the lion does not know how to count to three.

Understand that it is because the lion cannot count to three that the lionesses do not feel the slightest sentiment of jealousy, at least, which is apparent. I deliver that for your meditation. In other terms, we must never neglect the introduction of the signifier in understanding the upheaval at stake each time that we are before what is our principal object in analysis, namely, the reality of interhuman conflict.

One could even go further, and say that in the end, it is because men do not know how to count much better than the lion, since the number three is never completely integrated for them, but is only articulated, that conflict exists. The fundamentally dual animal relation continues no less to prevail in a certain zone, that of the imaginary, and it is just to the degree that man does all the same know how to count, that in the last analysis what we call conflict is produced. If it were not so difficult to succeed in articulating the number three, there would not be this gap between the Oedipal and the pre-Oedipal that we are trying to cross these days as well as we can, with the help of little rope ladders and other gadgets. It is precisely a matter of perceiving that from the moment that

---

6 English in the original.
one tries to cross it, one is always obliged to use gadgets. There is no sort of truly experiential crossing of the gap between the two and the three.

It is very precisely this point that we have reached with little Hans.
We left Little Hans at the moment when he was about to tackle the pass that we call the castration complex.

At the outset, it is very evident that he is not yet there, for he plays with the *Wittwimacher* which is here, which is not there, which is that of the mother, or of the big horse or the little horse, or Papa's, which is also his, and for which one cannot see that it is anything for him other than a very pretty object in a game of hide-and-seek, in which he is even capable of taking the greatest pleasure.

A certain number of you, I believe, have gone to the text and have been able see that this is really where one begins, that this is uniquely what it is about. This child, no doubt for his parents' benefit, presents from the outset a problematic of the imaginary phallus, which is everywhere and which is nowhere. This phallus is the essential element in the relation of the child to what is for him what Freud at this moment calls the other person, namely, the mother.

That is where Hans has arrived, and everything seems to go perfectly well, Freud underlines, thanks to this liberalism, indeed this educative laxity which appears rather characteristic of the pedagogy which seems to be discernible in the early days of psychoanalysis. The child develops in most open, clear, and fortunate way. But, after these very pretty antecedents, there arrives to the general surprise what we can call without dramatizing it too much, a little difficulty -- the phobia. At a particular moment, the child shows great fright before a privileged object which happens to be the horse, whose presence was already announced in the text metaphorically when the child said to his mother -- *If you have a pee-pee maker, you must have a very big pee-pee maker, like a horse.* The fact that the image of the horse appears on the horizon already indicates that the child is preparing to enter the phobia.

To follow the trajectory that we are metaphorically making through the observation of Little Hans, we must understand how, from so simple a
relation, and in the end so fortunate, so clearly worked out, the child passes into a phobia.

Where is the unconscious? Where is the repression? There does not seem to be any. It is with the greatest liberty that he interrogates his father and mother about the presence or the absence of the pee-pee maker, that he tells them that he has been to the zoo and seen a lion equipped with a big pee-pee maker. The pee-pee maker plays a role which tends to be present for all sorts of reasons, which are not entirely noted at the beginning of the observation, but which we see appear in the aftermath. That the child takes great pleasure from exhibiting himself, some of his games show very well. The essentially symbolic character of the pee-pee maker is apparent when he goes to exhibit it in the dark -- he shows it, but as a hidden object. He also uses it as an intermediary element in his relations with the objects of his interest, that is, the little girls whose help he asks, and whom he allows to look at it. The help that his mother or father give him in taking it out is underlined, and plays the greatest role in the institution of his organs as an element of interest, with which he finds the joy of captivating the attention, and indeed the caresses, of a certain number of people in his entourage.

In order to have an idea of the harmony that prevailed before the phobia, note that Little Hans manifests on the imaginary plane the most strictly typical attitudes that one could expect of what we call in our rude language virile aggression. In his relations with little girls, there is a courtship at play, more or less present, which is even differentiated into two modes -- there are the little girls whom he squeezes, hugs, aggresses, and there are others with whom he treats from a distance, Liebe per Distanz. These are two very differentiated modes of relation, already very fine, I would say almost very civilized, well ordained, very cultivated. This last term is used by Freud himself to qualify the differentiation that Little Hans makes among his objects -- he does not act in the same way with the little girls whom he considers as cultivated ladies, the ladies of his world, and with the little daughters of his landlord. In short, there is all the appearance of a particularly happy beginning of transference, or
reinvestment, towards other feminine objects, of the feelings entertained for the feminine object under the form of the mother -- a development rendered easy, they tell us, by the open relation of dialogue, which forbids no mode of expression between the mother and child.

And then what happens? Let us take up the problem again, not skimming the text as I have done until now, but following the observation step by step in order to make a critique of it.

I think I am not forcing the text in underlining a detail for you which has never been commented upon, and which is already the sign of the underlying structure that I have given you as that of the relation of the child to the mother, through which we can conceive the onset of the crisis because of the coming into play of the real penis. The child dreams that he is with Mariedl, one of the little friends whom he sees during the summer at a vacation spot in Austria, at Gmund, and he tells his dream. Then, as he father retells the dream to his mother in his presence, and says that he dreamt that he was with the little girl, Hans makes a very pretty correction -- Not only with Mariedl, all alone with Mariedl, ganz allein mit der Mariedl. Like so many other elements that teem in observations, one gets rid of that by saying that those are only a child's stories, but this retort has its importance. Freud says clearly, everything has a signification. This reply is only conceivable in the imaginary dialectic which I have shown as being the starting ground of mother-child relations. This occurs in fact when Hans is three years and nine months old, his little sister having been born three months earlier. Not only all alone, but all alone with -- which is to say that with her one can be absolutely all alone, and not have, as with the mother, this intruder. There is no doubt that the child Hans takes six months to get used to the presence of the little sister.

This evident remark, which is of the most classic sort, can only satisfy you. Nevertheless, I shall not stop there, as you know. If the real intrusion of the other child in the child's relation with the mother is certainly well made to precipitate such a critical moment, such a decisive anxiety, it remains nonetheless that if I do not hesitate to accentuate this all alone with, it is because I have begun with the fact that, whatever the real
situation, the child is never alone with the mother. The whole progress that the apparently dual relation of the child and the mother can have is in effect marked by this essential element, of which the experience of analysis with feminine subjects assures us, and which is the point of reference, the axis, which Freud firmly maintained until the end concerning feminine sexuality -- the child enters only as a substitute, a compensation, in short, in a reference, whatever it may be, to what is essentially lacking for the woman. This is what leaves one never all alone, ganz allein, with the mother. The mother is situated, and is little by little understood by the child to be marked by this fundamental lack, which she herself tries to fill, and with regard to which the child gives her only a satisfaction that we can call a provisional substitute.

It is against this base that every sort of new gap is conceived, every reopening of the question, and especially that which comes with real genital maturation, that is to say, in the boy, with the introduction of masturbation and the entry into play of his real jouissance with his own real penis. Nothing can be understood except on the basis of this constellation at the beginning, by which are introduced the critical elements whose various issues constitute an Oedipal complex with a normal outcome. The Oedipus complex is not at all as such the principle of a neurosis or a perversion, as you are usually taught, in an approach to it that is more or less negativized.

Let us take things up where we are, then, and make a bit of a remark.

The situation between the mother and the child implies that the latter must discover this dimension, that something is desired by the mother beyond himself, that is to say, beyond the object of pleasure that he senses himself at first to be for his mother, and that he aspires to be. This situation, like every analytic situation, is to be conceived, as I am teaching you, within an intersubjective reference. The original dimension of each subject is always correlative with the reality of the intersubjective perspective, as it is anchored in each subject. But, in every intersubjective situation established between the mother and child, we have a preliminary question to ask, which will probably be settled only at the end.
This question, even if it concerns a point that is veiled at the beginning, and that we shall only succeed in unveiling at the end, is one that you already know enough from the observation to be able at least to ask. It refers to those two terms that I used in the past, with more or less discernment, which articulate a major division in the signifying approach to any reality whatsoever by the subject, namely -- metaphor and metonymy. One really must apply this distinction, even if it is only by placing some question marks there.

In effect, the vivid impression that the function of substitution can make on the mind means nothing. Substitution -- it is easy to say, but try substituting a pebble for a piece of bread when you put it in the trunk of an elephant. He will not take it in the even manner that you might imagine. It is not a question of a real substitution, it is a question of a substitution that signifies, and of knowing what it signifies. In sum, it is a matter of knowing what the function of the child is for the mother, with regard to this phallus that is the object of her desire. The first question is -- metaphor or metonymy? It is not at all the same thing if the child is for example the metaphor of her love for the father, or if he is the metonymy of her desire for the phallus, which she does not have, and will never have.

What is the situation in this case? Everything in the mother's behavior with Little Hans whom she trails about with her everywhere from the w.c. to her bed indicates that the child is an indispensable appendix for her. Hans's mother, whom Freud adores, this mother who is so good, who is so solicitous about the child, sehr besorgt, and who is pretty, which is more, finds a way to change her culottes in front of her child. That is in any case a dimension that is very special. If there is one thing that is well designed to illustrate what I tell you of the essential dimension of what is behind the veil, it is really the observation of Little Hans -- and many another as well. Does one not already see here that the child for her is the metonymy of the phallus?

Yet that does not mean that she has much consideration for the phallus of the child. She shows it very well, this person who is so liberal in matters
of education -- when it is a matter of getting down to facts and putting a
ger finger on the little tip of the object which the child takes out and asks her
to touch, she is seized with a livid fear -- *Das ein Schweinerei ist*. That is
what she throws at him, with a lively tonus. One must try to polish the
observation of Little Hans so that it gleams.

Thus, as you see, to say that the child is taken as a metonymy of the
mother's desire for the phallus does not mean that it is as a phallopore
that he is metonymic, but on the contrary, it implies that he is metonymic
as a totality. And that is where the drama is established. All would go very
well for him if it were a matter of his *Wiximacher*, but it is not a question
of that, it is himself as a whole who is at stake, and that is why the
difference begins very seriously to appear at the moment when the real
*Wiximacher* comes into play, and becomes an object of satisfaction for
Hans. At that moment, what one calls anxiety begins to occur, which arises
from the fact that he can measure the whole difference that there is
between what he is loved for and what he can give.

The original position of the child with regard to the mother being
given, what can he do? He *is there to be an object of pleasure*. He *is thus in*
a position in which he is fundamentally imagined, and in a purely passive
state. If we do not see that it is here that a primordial passivization enters,
we can understand nothing of the observation of the Wolfman. The best
that the child can do in this situation, where he is trapped in an imaginary
capture, in this snare into which he is introduced in order to become the
object of his mother, is to go beyond, and to take account little by little, one
might say, of what he truly is. He is imagined, thus the best that he can do
is to imagine himself as he is imagined, that is, if one may express it thus,
to pass to the middle track. But from the *moment* that he also exists as
real, he has not much choice. It is then that he will imagine himself as
fundamentally other than what is desired, and as such rejected outside of
the imaginary field where, because of the place that he occupied in it, the
mother could find something to satisfy her.

*Freud underlines that first an anxiety arises, but an anxiety over what?*
We have traces of it in a dream from which he awakens sobbing because

281
his mother is going to go away. At another moment, he says to his father -- *If you went away* --. In every case, it is a question of separation. We can complete this term with a thousand other details. It is when he is separated from his mother, and when he is with someone else, that his anxieties appear. Freud underlines that the anxieties appear first, and that the feeling of anxiety is to be distinguished from the phobia. But what is a phobia? That is not so easy to grasp.

We shall try to close in on it.

One can, of course, make a joyous leap and say that phobia is the element of representation here. I would be glad to, but how would that take us any further? Why so singular a representation? And what role does it play?

Another trap consists in saying that there is a finality, that the phobia must serve for something. Why must it serve for something? Are there not also things which serve for nothing? Why decide in advance by saying that the phobia serves for something? Perhaps it serves exactly for nothing? All would have gone very well if it had not been there. Why have preconceived ideas of finality in this instance?

We are going to try to understand in what the function of the phobia consists. What is the phobia in this instance? What is the particular structure of Little Hans's phobia? That is what will perhaps give us some notions about the general structure of a phobia.

Whatever it may be, I would like you from here on to note that the difference between anxiety and phobia is absolutely palpable.

I do not know if the phobia is so representative as all that, for it is very difficult to know if the child is afraid. Little Hans articulates it in a thousand ways, but there remains a residue which is absolutely singular. If you have read the observation, you know that the horse which is brown, white, black, green -- these colors are not without a certain interest --
presents an enigma which remains unresolved until the end of the observation, and which is I do not know what sort of black spot that he has in front of him, in front of his forehead, which makes of him an animal from prehistoric times. And the father asks the child -- Is it the bit that he has in his mouth? -- Not at all, says the child. Is it the harness? -- No. --And does the horse that you see there have the spot? -- No, no, says the child. And then, one fine day, tired out, he says, -- Yes, that one there has it; let's not talk about it any more. What is certain, is that one does not know what this black thing is which is in front of the horse's mouth.

Thus a phobia is not so simple, since it comprises elements which are almost irreducible, and not particularly representative. If there is one thing that gives the sentiment of that negative hallucinatory element about which someone spoke recently during the course of one of those theoretical forays which occur regularly in analysis, it is really this element that is out of focus, which is in the end what appears to us as most clear in the phenomenon of the horse's head, whose mystery cannot but call to mind the horse beyond Venus and Vulcan in Titian's painting.\(^7\)

One thing is certain, and that is the radical difference between the two feelings, the feeling of fear and the feeling of anxiety, which appears when the child senses himself suddenly as something that can be put completely out of the game. Certainly, the little sister prepares the question to the maximum, but I repeat, it is against a background which is much more profound that the crisis opens, that the ground disappears beneath his feet. The child then realizes that he can no longer in any way fulfill his function, can no longer be anything, is nothing more than that something which appears to be something, but which is at the same time nothing, and which is called a metonymy.

I am speaking here of a term which we have studied. Metonymy is a procedure in the realist novel. If a realist novel, which is always in the end only an accumulation of clichés, can interest us, it is not because of the titillatingly real menu that it delivers. If its clichés interest us, it is because

\(^7\) For a possible identification of this painting, see the Acknowledgments, infra.
beyond that, they also aim at something other. They aim precisely at what seems to be most contrary, that is to say, everything that is lacking. That is why, far beyond all the details, all the shimmering of stones, there is something that draws us. The more it is metonymic, the more the novel aims beyond.

Our dear Little Hans thus sees himself all of a sudden precipitated, or at least, precipitable, from his metonymical function. To say it in a way that is more alive than theoretical, he imagines himself as nothingness [néant].

What happens from the moment that the phobia comes into play in his existence? One thing is certain, and it is that before the horses of anxiety, Angstpferde, and despite the tone that the word introduces, it is not anxiety that he feels, but fear. The child is afraid that something real will happen, two things, he tells us -- that the horses will bite, that the horses will fall. Phobia is not at all anxiety. Anxiety -- here I am only repeating Freud, who spelled it out perfectly -- is something that is without an object. The horses come from anxiety, but what they carry is fear. Fear always concerns something that can be articulated, named, something real -- these horses can bite, they can fall, they have still many other properties as well.

It could even be that they retain in themselves a trace of anxiety. The element that is out of focus, the black spot, is perhaps not unrelated to that, as if the horses covered over something that appeared from underneath and gave light from behind, namely, this black which begins to float. But in the lived experience, what there is in Little Hans is fear. Fear of what? Not fear of the horse, but the fear of horses, so that from the beginning of the phobia's emergence, the world seems to him punctuated by a whole series of dangerous points, points of alarm, which restructure it.

In keeping with the indication of Freud, who, when questions about the function of the phobia arise, counsels a contrast and a reference to other cases, let us, before seeing if phobia is a morbid entity or a syndrome, refer to one of its most typical, widespread, forms, namely agoraphobia, which surely in itself has a value, and which presents us a world punctuated with signs of alarm which define a field, a domain, an air. If we must absolutely try to indicate in what direction -- I do not say the function of the phobia,
because one must not rush, but its sense, -- is decisive, it introduces a structure into the child's world, it places precisely in the foreground the function of an interior and an exterior. Up until then, the child was in sum in the interior of the mother, he has just been rejected, or imagines himself rejected, he is caught in anxiety, and there, with the aid of the phobia, he inaugurates a new order of interior and exterior, a series of thresholds which begin to structure the world.

There would be much to be learned here from a study of certain elements which are contributed by ethnography, concerning the way in which spaces are constructed in a village. In primitive civilizations, one does not construct villages in just any way, there are cultivated fields, and others that are virgin, and within that, there are limits which signify fundamental things concerning the landmarks used by these people who are still more or less close to the moment of disengaging from nature. There would be much to learn here, and perhaps later I shall say a few words on the subject.

Here too, there is a threshold, and there is also what can present itself as an image of what guards the threshold -- Schutzbau, Vorbau, an edifice which is in front, a guardhouse. It is the term expressly used by Freud -- phobia is constructed before the point of anxiety.

Something already begins to appear, which is articulated and shows us its function. I simply want not to go too quickly, and I ask you not to stop there. One contents oneself with little, usually. No doubt that is very fine, we have transformed anxiety into fear, and fear is apparently more reassuring than anxiety. But that is not certain either.

We wanted simply to underline today the fact that we can absolutely not make of fear a primitive element in the construction of the ego, contrary to what is articulated in the strictest fashion by someone whom I shall not name, who makes it the basis of his whole doctrine, someone.
who happens to occupy a position of leadership in a certain school called
with more or less just title, the Parisian. Fear cannot in any case be
considered as a primitive element, a final element, in the structure of
neurosis. In neurotic conflict, fear intervenes as an element which protects
in advance, and against something completely other, which is by nature
without object, namely, anxiety. That is what phobia allows us to spell out.

I shall stop today at this Vorbau of my discourse, having led you to the
precise point where the question of phobia arises, with regard to which it

8 English in the original.
must reply -- I ask you to take the word in its most profound sense. We shall try the next time to see where the continuation of these things can lead.

20 March 1957
THE USES OF MYTH

The functions and structure of myths.
The Krawall and the child's orgasm.
The fantasy of the two giraffes.
Rooted, perforated, removable.
The transposition of the imaginary into the symbolic.

Let us return to our stroll through the observation of Little Hans.
To stroll is not a bad way of taking one's bearings in a particular space.
But for me it is a question of teaching you to imagine the topography of a field beyond the itineraries already traced. It can happen, for example, that you come back to your point of departure and that you do not notice it. Or again, when you are in a place as familiar and as completely autonomous as your bathroom, it does not often cross your mind that if you were to pierce through the wall, you would find yourself on the first floor of the neighboring bookstore, that every day while you are taking your bath, work continues in the neighboring bookstore, that it is there, within reach of your hand. So they say, What a metaphysician, that confounded [sacré] Lacan.

It is a question of allowing you to locate certain connections, and of making you equally perceive elements of the plan of the whole in such a way that you will not be reduced to what I shall call, with intention, the ceremonial of familiar itineraries.
We have thus come with Little Hans to the point at which, when everything was going along not too badly, anxiety and the phobia arise.

It is a question of topography, and not a random stroll, though it is by an inhabital stroll that I hope to be able to represent this topography for you. Inhabital though it may be, this path has nonetheless already been traced -- it is traced in the observation of Little Hans.

I want simply to show you there things which the first imbecile coming by could find -- except for a psychoanalyst, because that is not the first imbecile coming by. We shall take as reference the chart that I already gave you during our next to last meeting.

The imaginary object of castration is, of course, the phallus. The symbolic mother becomes real in so far as she shows herself in her refusal of love. The object of satisfaction, the breast for instance, itself becomes symbolic of frustration, refusal of the object of love. The real hole of privation is precisely a thing that does not exist. The real being full by its nature, to make a real hole, one must introduce a symbolic object into it.

What is this about? We have reached the following point in what is called the pre-Oedipal process. In order to make himself the object of love for this mother who is most important for him, who is even what is essentially important, the child is progressively led to perceive that he must slip in as a third party, must wedge himself in somewhere between the desire of his mother, which he is learning to know by experience, and the imaginary object which is the phallus.

We must postulate this representation, because it is the simplest that allows us to synthesize the whole series of accidents, inconceivable other than as the fruit of the structure of the symbolic and imaginary relations of the pre-Oedipal period. That is strictly spelled out in the chapter of the Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality entitled Die infantile Sexualforschung, that is, The Child's Research, or Infantile Theories, on Sexuality, where you will see it formulated, as I am telling you, that the perversions, or what one calls perversions, are to be conceived and...
explained as a whole in relation to the infantile theory of the phallic mother, and the necessity of the passage by the castration complex.

There are still people to uphold the theory that perversion is something fundamentally related to the drive, something instinctual, and that it is a direct short-circuit in the path of satisfaction that really gives it its density and its equilibrium. They believe that they can thus interpret the Freudian notion that perversion is the negative of neurosis, as if perversion were in itself the satisfaction that is repressed in neurosis, as if it were its positive. What Freud says is exactly the contrary. The negative of a negation is not at all necessarily its positive, as is demonstrated by the fact that Freud affirms in the clearest way that perversion is structured in relation to everything that is organized around the absence and the presence of the phallus. Perversion always has some relation, be it only on the horizon, with the castration complex. In consequence, from the genetic point of view, it is at the same level as neurosis. It may be structured in such a way as to be its negative, or more precisely its inverse, but it is structured just as much, and by the same dialectic -- to use the vocabulary that I am using here.

The importance very quickly given by Freud to the notion of the infantile theory, and to its role in the economy of the development of the child, incontestably merits our pausing here. The full flowering of the concept, namely the chapter that I have designated, was only added to the Three Essays well after the first edition -- in 1915, I believe, for the German edition has the defect of not noting for each chapter the date at which it came to be added to the composition of the book.

The importance of infantile theories of sexuality in libidinal development should in itself alone teach a psychoanalyst a sense of proportion concerning that massive, slightly pejorative notion that he wields from one end of the field to the other under the term of intellectualization. Something that at first appears as situated in the intellectual domain can very evidently have an importance for which the simple massive opposition of intellectual and affective cannot in any way account. What one calls infantile theories, that is, the activity of research.
carried out by the child concerning sexual reality, corresponds to a completely different necessity than what we name, unduly, and with a notion that is diffuse, intellectual activity, whose superstructural character is more or less implicitly admitted in the font of belief to which common consciousness ordains it.

There is really something else at stake in this activity. It is far more profound, if one can use that term. It concerns the whole of the body. It envelops the whole of the subject's activity, and motivates what one might call his affective themes, which means that it directs the affects or affections of the subject according to the lines of master images. It is, in sum, correlative with a whole series of accomplishments, in the largest sense, manifested in actions which are entirely irreducible to utilitarian ends. Let us classify this group of actions or activities under a term which is perhaps not the best, nor the most global, but which I shall take for its expressive value, that of activities which are not merely ceremonial, but which are ceremony.¹

You know all that can be ranged under this heading in individual life as well as in the life of the collective. There is no example of human activity that excludes it. Even civilizations with a very strong tendency towards the utilitarian and functional singularly see ceremony reproduced in the most unexpected nooks. There must be some reason for that. In short, in order to center the exact value of what one calls infantile theories of sexuality, and the whole order of activities which, in the child, are structured around them, we must refer to the notion of myth.

There is no need to be a great scholar in order to understand it, I mean, to have delved deeply into the notion of myth, which it is, however, very much my intention to do here. I shall try to do it gently, by stages, since it really seems to me necessary further to stress the continuity between our field and the points of reference to which I believe it must be linked. Not that I pretend, as they sometimes tell me, to give you a general

¹...d'activités non pas seulement cérémonielles, mais cérémoniales. The first carries the notion of empty ceremony, the second that of ceremony which consecrates.
metaphysics here, or to cover the whole field of reality. I simply want to speak to you of ours, and those that neighbor it closely, those most immediately connected. It would be perfectly undue to fall into a system of the world, as is very frequently done in projecting our domain, in a way that is inadequate and truly impoverished, over a whole series of orders and staged fields of reality, on the pretext that they might have some general analogy with what we are doing, because the macrocosm is always to be found in the microcosm. Such a projection could surely not in any way exhaust reality, nor even the sum of human problems. On the other hand, it would be aberrant to isolate our field completely, and to refuse to see what, in it, is not analogous, but in direct connection, engaged, in gear, with a reality that is accessible to us through other disciplines, other human sciences. To establish these connections seems to me indispensable if we are to situate our domain well, or even simply find out where we are.

If it is useful to introduce the notion of myth now, it is because we are now emerging quite naturally into the notion of infantile theories. During the time that I have been speaking of Hans, you have been able to perceive that, if this observation is a labyrinth, indeed, on first encounter, a tangle, it is because of the place occupied by the whole series of Little Hans's elucidations, some of them very rich, which give the impression of proliferation and luxuriance. It cannot fail to appear to you that they enter precisely into the class of those theoretical elaborations which play so great a role.

We shall simply try to approach myth as a sort of primary evidence. What one calls myth, whether religious or folkloric, at whatever stage of its heritage it may be taken, occurs as a narration. One can say a lot of things about this narration, and consider it from different structural aspects. One could say, for example, that it has something of the a-temporal. One could try to define its structure with regard to sites that it defines. One can take it in its literary form, where it is striking that the latter has a certain affinity with poetic creation even though myth,
remains quite distinct from it, in the sense that it demonstrates certain constancies which are absolutely not submitted to subjective invention.

I shall also indicate the problem posed by the fact that myth on the whole has the character of fiction. But this fiction presents a stability that renders it in no way malleable to the modifications that may be made in it, or more exactly, which implies that any modification of it, by precisely that fact, implies another, invariably suggesting the notion of a structure. On the other hand, this fiction entertains a singular relation with something that is always implied behind it, and whose message it even carries formally indicated, namely, the truth. That is something that cannot be detached from myth.

Somewhere in the Seminar on "The Purloined Letter," in speaking of the fact that I was analyzing fiction, I wrote that this operation was, at least in a certain sense, entirely legitimate, because one could also, in every correctly structured fiction, touch upon that structure which, in truth itself, can be designated as being the same as that of fiction. The structural necessity that is carried by every expression of the truth is precisely a structure which is the same as that of fiction. Truth has the structure, one might say, of fiction.

Myth also appears in its intent to have the character of the inexhaustible. To use a term that is old, let us say that it participates in the character of a schema in the Kantian sense. It is much closer to structure than to any content, and is found and reapplied, in the most material sense of the word, in all sorts of givens, with the ambiguous efficacy which characterizes it. The most adequate, that is to say, the sort of mold that the category of myth provides, is a certain type of truth, in which, to limit ourselves to what is our world and our experience, we cannot but see that it concerns a relation of man -- but to what?

We shall not reply too quickly to this to what, nor at random, nor too easily. To reply to nature will leave us unsatisfied after the remarks that I have made about the fact that nature, as it is presented to man, as being

---

coapt with him, is always profoundly denatured. To reply to being is certainly not inexact, but would perhaps be going a bit too far, opening into philosophy, indeed into the most recent philosophy of our friend Heidegger -- though the reference would be most pertinent. Surely we have references which are closer and terms more articulate, which are the very ones that we immediately come upon in our experience.

It is simply a matter of our perceiving that it is a question of the themes of life and death, of existence and non-existence, of birth, especially, of the appearance of what does not yet exist. It is thus a question of themes linked, on one hand, to the existence of the subject himself, to the horizons that his experience delivers to him, and on the other hand, to the fact that he is the subject of a sex, of his natural sex. That is where experience shows us that mythic activity is employed by the child. It thus appears, in its content and in its aim, completely in accord, though not entirely contiguous, with what is inscribed under the proper term of myth in ethnographic exploration.

Myths, as they present themselves in their fictions, always aim more or less, not at the individual origin of man, but at his origin as a species, at the creation of man, the genesis of his fundamental nurturing relations, the invention of the great human resources, fire, agriculture, the domestication of animals. We also find, constantly in question, the relation of man with a secret power, maleficent or beneficent, but essentially characterized by what it has of the sacred.

This sacred power, variously designated in the mythic narratives which explain how man came into relation with it, allows itself to be situated in a manifest identity with the power of signification, and very especially with its signifying instrument. It is the power which makes man capable of introducing into nature that which joins the near and the far as man and universe, capable also of introducing into the natural order, not only his own needs and the factors of transformation submitted to them, but the notion, which goes further, of a profound identity, be it ever so slightly grasped, between, on one hand, the power that he has to wield the signifier or to be wielded by it, to be included in a signifier, and on the other hand,
the power that he has to incarnate the agency of this signifier in a series of interventions which do not appear at the origin as gratuitous activities, I mean, the power that he has to accomplish the pure and simple introduction of the signifying instrument into the chain of natural things.

The relation of contiguity between myths and infantile mythic creation is sufficiently indicated by the comparisons that I have just made. Whence the interest that we can take in the investigation of myths, in scientific or comparative mythology, which for a certain time, and more and more, has been elaborated according to a method whose character of formalization already indicates that a certain step has been taken. The fecundity of this formalization thus allows us to think that it is in this direction that there is room to pursue, more than by a method of analogies, the culturalist and naturalist references employed until now in the analysis of myths.

A reduction to formal structures disengages in myth elements or units whose structural function is, at their level, comparable, yet without being identical, to what the study of linguistics disengages, the elaboration of different modern taxematic elements. It has been possible to isolate such elements, and to put their efficacy into practice. These are the units of mythic construction which we define under the name of mythemes.

In pursuing the experiment with a series of myths that one puts to the test of this decomposition in order to see how their recomposition functions, one perceives a surprising unity between the most apparently distant myths, on the condition that one has put aside all surface analogy. To say for example that an incest and a murder are equivalent does not normally occur to us, but the comparison of two myths, or two stages of a myth, can make that apparent. On the different points of a constellation which resembles those little cubes that I drew for you the last time on the board, you place, for example, the terms father and mother, the mother being unknown to the subject. In the first generation, there is incest. When you pass to the next generation, point by point inventories, made according to laws that have no other interest than that of giving a formulation that is without ambiguities, show you that the notion of twin brothers is the transformation of the mother-father couple from the first
generation, and that a murder, that of Polynices, is to be situated at the same place as the incest. Everything rests upon the operation of transformation, already ruled by a certain number of structural hypotheses concerning the way to deal with myth.

That gives us an idea of the weight, the presence, the insistence of the signifier as such, of its very impact. What comes into relief here is always in some way what is most hidden, since it is a matter of something that, in itself, signifies nothing, but which clearly supports the whole order of significations. If something of this nature exists, it is nowhere more palpable than in myth.

This preamble indicates the spirit in which we shall approach and test the profusion of themes, at first approach frankly imaginative, which we encounter in observation of Little Hans.

What is the authenticity of Little Hans's imaginative themes? Freud himself evokes the possibility that they may well have been suggested to him.

But must the term suggestion be taken here in its most simple sense? -- namely, that what is articulated by one subject passes to another in the state of received truth, at least in an accepted form, to which a certain character of belief is attached, and which in some way constitutes a garb given to reality. The very term suggestion implies some doubt concerning the authenticity of the construction in question, in so far as it is received by the subject, and introduces a ready criticism which is without doubt legitimate, why not? But is there not something here which has much greater merit to be taken into consideration? For whom more than for us should it be to say it, when the symbolic organization of the world, with the cultural elements that sustain it, belongs, by nature, to no one, and must be received by each subject? Is this not something that gives an incontestable foundation to the notion of suggestion?
Not only does suggestion exist in the case of Little Hans, but we see it
displayed to the open sky. The father's mode of interrogation seems at
every moment like a veritable inquisition, sometimes very pressing,
which even has the quality of direction given to the child's answers. As
Freud underlines in many places, the father intervenes in a way that is
approximate, lacking in finesse, indeed frankly maladroit. All sorts of
misunderstandings are visible in the way that he records the child's
answers, which he hurries too much to understand, and too quickly,
which Freud equally underlines. That is completely clear in a reading of
the observation -- Hans's constructions are far from being independent of
the paternal intervention with its constant faults, which Freud points out.
They respond to it in the most palpable way, like his behavior itself. One
even sees everything, starting from a particular moment, accelerate and
take off, and the phobia takes on a character of hyper-productivity which is
entirely remarkable.

It nonetheless remains extremely interesting to note to what the
different moments in the mythical production of Little Hans correspond,
and this even though it has an imaginative character, with all that the
term implicitly carries in common usage of gratuitous invention.
Recently, in connection with one of my case presentations, someone noted
the imaginative character of certain of the constructions of the patient
whom I was questioning, which seemed to him to indicate I do not know
what hysterical note of suggestion, or effect of suggestion, although it was
easy to perceive that it was not that at all. Even though provoked or
stimulated by a question, the pre-delirious productivity of the patient
appeared strictly in accordance with its own structures, with its own stamp
and force of proliferation.

In Hans's case, at no moment has one the impression of a delirious
production. Even more, one has the clear impression of the production of
a game. It is even so very ludic that Hans himself sometimes has some
trouble in coming full circle, and in holding to the course in which he is
engaged, as for example in that magnificent and grandiose story, bordering
on farce, concerning the stork's intervention in the birth of his little sister
Anna. He is very capable of saying—But then, after all, you mustn’t believe
what I’ve just told you. It remains that in the game itself, constant terms
appear rather less than a certain configuration. This is sometimes fleeting,
sometimes strikingly apprehensible.

That is what I wanted to introduce, namely the structural necessity which presides, not only in the construction of each of what one might
call, with precaution in the usage, the little myths of Hans, and also in
their progress and their transformations. I would particularly like to make
you attentive to the fact that it is not always necessarily their content
which matters, I mean, the more or less orderly revival of earlier states of
soul, like, for example, what one calls the anal complex.

The anal complex plays its role in the observation, but does not go
further than what Hans permits himself to show us concerning the lownig.
Its apparition is completely unexpected by the father, whom Freud says he
has deliberately left in ignorance of two themes that he was very likely to
encounter, which he, Freud, foresaw, and which effectively came up
during the course of the exploration of the child by his father—namely,
the anal complex, and no more and no less than the castration complex.

Do not forget that if, in this epoch in which we find ourselves, 1906-
1908, the castration complex is already a major key for Freud, it has still not
yet been brought into full light and revealed to all as the central key, far
from it. It is a little key, there among others, with a little air of being
nothing at all. In the end, Freud means that the father was not at all aware
that the castration complex is the principal juncture through which the
institution and resolution of the subjective constellation must pass, the
ascendant phase and the descendant phase of the Oedipus.

Thus, all through the course of the observation, we see Little Hans
reacting to the intervention of the real father. His hothouse confinement
under the crossfire of the paternal interrogation shows itself favorable to a
veritable culture of the phobia in him. Nothing allows us to suppose that
the phobia would have had such extensions and such echoes without the
paternal intervention, or even that it would have had, at its center, this
development, or this richness, or even perhaps this insistence, which is so
pressing for a certain time. Freud himself admits, and takes on himself, 
that there may have momentarily been a blazing up, a precipitation, an 
intensification of the phobia in response to the father’s action.

These are not the foremost truths, yet it is necessary to say them. Let us 
take things up at the point where we were. So as not to leave you with 
chaos, I shall indicate the general schema around which we can make a 
satisfying organization of what we shall try to understand of the 
phenomenon of the analysis of Little Hans, its beginning and its results.

Hans is in a certain relation with his mother, in which the direct need 
that he has for her love mingles with what we have called the game of 
intersubjective lure. This game is manifest in the clearest fashion, and on 
all sides, in the child’s statements from the beginning of the observation. 
He needs his mother to have a phallus, which does not mean, for all that, 
that this phallus is something real for him. On the contrary, at every 
moment of his statements, an ambiguity breaks out which makes this 
relation appear in the perspective of play. In the end, the child knows 
something very well, at least he indicates that when he says -- *I had just 
thought* -- and he interrupts himself. What he was thinking was -- *Does 
she have it or doesn’t she?* And he asks her, and gets her to say that she 
has a *Wiwimacher*, and who knows if the answer satisfies him, and up to 
what point? *Macher* is not completely translated, for the idea of a worker, 
an agent, is indicated, as in *Uhrmacher* -- it is a *maker* of pee-pee. A 
masculine is implied in it, which also occurs in other words preceded by 
the prefix *wiwi*.

When the child’s relations with his mother are completely 
impregnated with this intimacy that we have observed, and he is with her 
in the connivance of the imaginary game, a certain decompensation 
suddenly occurs, which is manifested by an anxiety touching very precisely 
upon his relations with his mother.

We tried the last time to see to what this anxiety replied. It is tied, 
we said, to various elements of the real that come to complicate the 
situation. These elements of the real are not univocal. There is something 
new among the mother’s objects, namely the birth of a little sister, with all
the reactions that this entails for Hans, but these do not immediately appear, since it is only fifteen months later that the phobia breaks out. There is the intervention of the real penis, with what that introduces by way of complications, but this has been in play at least for a year, his masturbation having been avowed by the child on the plane of speech, thanks to the good relations that exist between him and his parents.

Whatever the case, by what means do these elements of decompensation come into play? We pointed it out the last time.

On one side, Hans is excluded, drops out of the situation, is ejected by his little sister. On the other, the phallus intervenes under another form -- I am speaking of masturbation. It is still the same object, but it presents itself under a completely different form because of the integration of sensations linked, at the least, to turgescence, and very possibly to something that we can go so far as to qualify as orgasm, without ejaculation, obviously. There is a problem, the difficult problem of orgasm in infantile masturbation. Freud does not yet settle this, for he does not at this point have enough observations to deal with it, and I shall not deal with it directly either. I only point out that it is on the horizon of our questionings.

It is singular that Freud does not pose the question as to whether the brouhaha, the tumult, *Krawall*, which is one of the fears that the child feels before the horse, is not related to the orgasm, indeed to an orgasm which is not his own. As for knowing if he might not have perceived a scene between his parents, Freud very readily accepts the statement which they have given him that nothing could have been glimpsed by the child. It is a little enigma whose certain resolution we shall have.

All of our experience indicates that there is manifestly, in the past of children, in their lived experience and their development, an element which is very difficult to integrate. I have insisted for a long time -- in my thesis³ or in a nearly contemporaneous text -- on the ravaging character,

³ *De la Psychose paranoïque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité.*
particularly in the paranoiac, of the first complete orgasmic sensation. Why in the paranoiac? We shall try to reply along the way. But we constantly find, in certain subjects, evidence of the character of an invasion ripping them apart, an irruption that overwhelms them, which the experience had for them. This is enough to indicate to us, at this detour, that the novelty of the real penis must play its role as an element that is difficult to integrate.

Nevertheless, given that all this has already gone on for a certain time, it is not what appears in the foreground at the moment that the anxiety breaks out. Why does the anxiety occur at this moment, and only at this moment? The question very evidently remains.

3

Here is our Little Hans, arrived at the moment of the phobia's apparition.

It is not Freud, but without a doubt, as what follows in the observation well shows, the father communicating with him, who immediately has the idea that there is something here linked to a tension with the mother. As for knowing what precisely unleashes the phobia, what precisely is the excitant of the trouble, the father does not hide from the first lines of his letter to Freud, with that clarity that gives all its weight to the first narration of the observation, that -- I hardly know how to give you, he says, and enters into a description of the phobia.

What is it about? Let us leave what follows aside, and reflect.

We have given her full importance to the mother, and to the imaginary symbolic relation of the child with her. We say that the mother is present for the child with the exigency of what she is lacking, namely, the phallus which she does not have. We have said -- this phallus is imaginary. It is imaginary for whom? It is imaginary for the child. Why do we speak about it in this way? Because Freud tells us that it plays its role for the mother. Why? You will tell me, it is because he has discovered it. But if he has discovered it, it is because it is true. And if it is true, why is it true?
It is a matter of knowing in what sense it is true. Analysts, especially analysts of the feminine sex, regularly make the objection that one cannot see why women should be more vowed than others to desire precisely what they do not have, or to believe that they are possessed of it. Well, it is for reasons — let us limit ourselves to that — which are of the order of the existence of the signifier and of its very agency. It is because the phallus has a symbolic value in the signifying system, and is thus retransmitted through all the texts of interhuman discourse, that it imposes itself, in a way that prevails over other images, upon woman’s desire.

Is the problem not that, just at this detour, at this moment of decompensation, the child must cope with a step that he literally cannot take by himself all alone? What is this step? Up until then, he had played with the phallus desired by the mother, with the phallus become for him an element of the mother’s desire, and thus something by which he had to pass in order to captivate the mother. This phallus is an imaginary element. Now it is a matter of the child’s perceiving that this imaginary element has a symbolic value. And that is what is insurmountable for him.

In other terms, into the system of the signifier or of language, to define it synchronically — the system of discourse, to define it diachronically, — the child enters straightaway, but he does not enter into the full span of the system, he enters step by step with regard to his relations to the mother who is there or who is not there. But this first symbolic experience is entirely inadequate. One cannot construct the system of the relations of the signifier in all its amplitude around the fact that something that one loves is there or is not there. We cannot content ourselves with two terms, others are needed.

A minimum of terms is necessary for the functioning of the symbolic system. It is a question of knowing if it is three, if it is four. It is certainly not only three. The Oedipus clearly gives us three, but certainly implies a fourth in so far as a fourth is necessary for the child to cross the Oedipus. Thus someone must intervene in the affair, and it is the father.
The father -- we have been told how the father intervenes, we have been told the little story of rivalry with the father and inhibited desire for the mother. In this regard, when we go step by step, we note very well that we find ourselves here in a particular situation. We have already said it. Hans's father has a curious mode of presence. Is it simply the degree of paternal deficiency that plays a role in this affair? Should we rely on these so-called real and concrete characteristics, about which it is so difficult to have the final word? Because what does it mean, exactly, that the real father is more or less deficient?

On that point, everyone is content with approximation, and we are finally told, without any hesitation, in the name of I do not know what logic supposed to be our own, that here things are more contradictory. Well, we shall see to the contrary that everything falls into place as a function of the fact that for the child, certain images have a symbolic function.

What does that mean? The images that reality presents Hans for the moment, perhaps too abundant, present, teeming, are surely in a state of manifest incorporation. What is at stake for him is to find an accord between the world of the maternal relation -- which, on the whole, had functioned harmoniously for him up until the present -- and that element of imaginary opening, or of lack, which had made him so amusing for the mother, even so exciting. It is said somewhere that she is lightly irritated when the father tells her to make the child leave their bed, and she protests, she plays, she plays the coquette. This wohl gereizt that is translated by assez irritée, rather irritated, means all excited. Of course, it is not for nothing that he is there in his mother's bed. We shall learn exactly why he is there. It is one of the axes of the observation.

I shall illustrate what I am going to say when I tell you that the images at first are those which come from the relation with the mother, but that there are also others, new ones, which the child braves not at all badly. Now that he has a little sister, and that in this world with his mother, things no longer hang together so simply, notions arise, like those of big and little, compared according to different antinomies, or the notion
of what is there and what is not there, but which appears, etc. For, he
knows very well how to confront these notions on the plane of reality. We
see him manage all that extremely well. When he speaks of his little sister
he says, -- She doesn't have teeth yet, which implies that he has a very
exact notion of this emergence.

Freud, who is ironic, speaks his ironies in asides. There is no need
to think that this child is a metaphysician. What he says is entirely healthy
and normal, he very quickly confronts notions which are not so very self-
evident, and which are three. Firstly, the emergence, the apparition of
something new. Secondly, growth -- she will grow, or she will not grow,
there is nothing to be ironic about in that. Finally, proportion or size, the
simplest term, it seems, but not the one that is most directly given.

They talk about all of that with the child, and it seems that it is still
too early for him to accept the explanations that are given. There are some
who do not have one, the feminine sex do not have a phallus, that is what
his father tells him. But this child, who is very capable of managing these
notions in a way that is pertinent and adroit, as he has earlier shown, far
from being content here, passes by detours which at first sight appear
stupefying, frightening, morbid. At the end, there is a solution to the
problem, but it is clear that, in order to arrive there, he must follow paths
that are incredibly detoured by comparison with the understanding that he
has of forms capable of subjectivizing the real in a way that is satisfying.
We shall at every instant find a crossing, a raising of the imaginary to the
symbolic, and you will see that this cannot occur without a structuration
in circles that are at least ternary, for which, the next time, I shall show you
a certain number of consequences.

Today, I shall take an example for you straightaway.

On Freud's instructions -- you will see next time what these
instructions of Freud mean --, his father hammers it home to Hans that
women have no phallus, and that it is useless for him to seek it. That it is
Freud who should have told the father to intervene this way is already
something immense, but let us leave that aside.
How does the child react to this intervention by his father? He reacts with the fantasy of the two giraffes.

The child gets up in the middle of the night, he is afraid, he takes refuge in his parents' bedroom, he does not want to tell them yet what he was thinking, he falls asleep again in their bed. They carry him back to his bedroom, and the next day, they ask him again what it was about. It was about a fantasy. There, a big giraffe, here, a little giraffe, zerwutzelt, which has been translated as chiffonée, crumpled, whereas it is actually rolled into a ball. They ask the child what it is about, and he shows them by taking a bit of paper and making it into a ball.

How is that interpreted? That does not immediately create any doubts for the father. Of these two giraffes, the big one is the symbol of the father. The little one, which the child masters by sitting on it, to the great outcry of the big one, is a reaction to the maternal phallus, and refers to the mother's nostalgia and her lack. That is immediately named, perceived, recognized, picked up by the father as the signification of the little giraffe, which however does not prevent, without its seeming contradictory to him, his also making the couple of giraffes into the father-mother couple. All of that poses the most interesting problems. One could argue until the end of the world over the question of whether the big giraffe is the father, the little giraffe the mother. In effect, it is a matter of the child's recapturing possession of the mother, to the greatest irritation, indeed, anger, of the father. But, this anger is never produced in the real, never does the father allow himself to get angry, and Little Hans must underline it for him, spelling it out with his finger — You must be angry, you have to be jealous. He in sum explains the Oedipus to him. Unfortunately, the father is never there to play the god Thunder.

Let us stop a bit over what is so evident here. A big giraffe and a little giraffe. They are the same, one is the double of the other. There is the aspect big and little, but there is also the aspect still a giraffe. In other words, we find again there something completely analogous with what I told you the last time about the child caught as a metonomy in the phallic desire of the mother. The child, in his totality, is the phallus. So, at a
moment when it is a matter of restituting her phallus to the mother, the child phallicizes the mother as a whole, in the form of a double. He fabricates a metonymy of the mother. What up until there was only the phallus, enigmatic and desired, believed in and not believed, plunged into ambiguity, credibility, the luring game with the mother which is our term of reference, well, that begins to be articulated as a metonymy. And as if that were not enough, to show us the introduction of the image into a game which is properly symbolic, to explain clearly that here we have crossed the pass from the image to the symbol, there is this little giraffe, about which nobody understands anything, even though it is so visible. Hans tells us, this little giraffe is so very much a symbol that it is nothing more than a drawing on a piece of paper that one can roll up into a ball.

The passage from the imaginary to the symbolic cannot be better translated than by these details, which are in appearance so contradictory and unthinkable. You always make of what children say something that participates in the domain of three dimensions, whereas there is also something in the play of symbols which is in two dimensions. I have signaled out in The Purloined Letter the moment where nothing more remains of the letter than something that the queen has in her hands, and there is nothing left but to roll it into a ball. It is the same gesture as that of Hans, with which he tries to make clear what the little giraffe is about. The rolled up little giraffe signifies something of the same order as the drawing of a giraffe which the father had once made for Hans, and which I give you here, with the pee-pee maker added by the child. This drawing was already on the way towards the symbol, for while the rest is entirely fluent, with all of the members well in their place, the pee-pee maker added to the giraffe is truly graphic, it is a trait, and added into the bargain, so that we shall be ignorant of nothing, it is separated from the body of the giraffe.

[Drawing, p. 264]
We now enter into the great game of the signifier, the same as that on which I based the Seminar on "The Purloined Letter." The little giraffe is a double of the mother, reduced to the support always needed for the vehiculing of the signifier, namely something which one can hold, which one can roll up, and on which one can sit. It is evidence. The amorous little fellow all the same has something in hand which is a sort of draft, a letter of exchange [traite].

Observe that this is not the only point where we can grasp the passage from the imaginary to the symbolic. There are all sorts of others. We see a parallel established little by little between the observation of the Wolfman and that of Little Hans, and we can compare the paths by which, in one and the other case, the phobic image is approached. We have not yet discerned its meaning, but in order to do so, one must really first have had recourse to the experience as the child encounters it. For the Wolfman, it is frankly an image, without doubt, but an image that is in a book of pictures, and the phobic object is this wolf which has come out of the book. That is not absent from the case of Hans either. In his book of pictures, on the same page with the image that he shows us of the red chest in which the stork brings children, that is to say the nest of storks on top of the chimney, there figures as though by chance a horse which is being shod.

What are we going to find all throughout this observation? We are going to find, since we are looking, structures, playing in a sort of round game of logical instruments which complete one another, and which form a sort of circle through which Little Hans seeks the solution. The solution to what? It is that, in this series formed of those three elements or instruments which are called the mother, the child, and the phallus, the phallus is not only something with which one plays, but it has become restive, it has its fantasies, its needs, its protests, and it wreaks great
disorder everywhere. It is a matter of knowing how that will work out, that is to say, how things will find a fixed place in this original trio.

Here we see a triad appear.

*It is rooted, my penis is, angezuckert.* That is a form of guarantee. Unfortunately, once they have told the professor that it is rooted, there is immediately afterwards a flare-up of the phobia. One has to believe that there is also a danger in its being rooted.

We then see another term appear, the perforated. If we know how to look for this term in a way that is consonant with the analysis of mythic terms, we see it appear in a thousand ways. At first he, in a dream, is perforated, then a doll is perforated, and there are things perforated from the outside in, from the inside out.

The third term that he finds is particularly expressive because it cannot be deduced from natural forms. It is a logical instrument, which he introduces into his mythic passage, and which constitutes the third angle in a triangle with the rooted and the gaping hole of the perforated which leaves a void. If the penis is not rooted, then nothing is left, and that is why a mediation is necessary which allows him to put it on, take it off and put it back on. In short, it has to be removable. What does the child use for that? He introduces the screw. The installation man or the locksmith comes and does some unscrewing, after which the安装 man or the plumber comes, and unscrews his penis in order to replace it with a bigger one.

The introduction of this logical instrument, of this theme borrowed from the child's slender experience, of this excellent myth, is going to lead to the veritable solution of the problem, through the notion that the phallus is also something which is caught up in the symbolic game, which can be combined, which is fixed when one fixes it, but which can be mobilized, which circulates, which is an element of mediation. From this moment the child is on the way to finding a first respite in his frenetic search for conciliating myths which are never satisfying, and which will lead to the last solution that he will discover, which is, you will see, a solution that approximates the Oedipus complex.
That indicates to you a way in which to analyze the terms and their use by this child. Another problem is outlined here, which is not lesser, that of the signifying elements that he borrows from symbolized elements, and which he makes intervene in their organization. For example, the horse that they shoe is one of the hidden forms of solution to the problem of the fixation of the missing element. As such, this could be represented by anything at all, and more easily than by anything at all, by every object which presents a sufficient hardness. In the end, the object which in this mythical construction symbolizes the phallus in the simplest way is the stone. We find it everywhere, in the major scene of the dialogue with the father, which is, as we shall see, the dialogue that truly resolves things. This stone is also the iron that one hammers onto the foot of the horse, and which plays its role in the auditory panic of the child. He is especially frightened when the horse strikes the ground with that hoof to which there is fixed something that should not be completely fixed, a problem to which the child will finally give the solution of the screw.

In short, this progress from the imaginary to the symbolic constitutes an organization of the imaginary as myth, or at least, it is on the way to a veritable mythic construction, that is to say, one that is collective. It recalls myth on every side, to the point even of reminding us of the systems of kinship. It never reaches that, properly speaking, for this is an individual construction, but it is on this path that the progress is accomplished. For a solution to be found, it was necessary that a certain number of detours be accomplished. You can find the model of this efficiency in the skeleton, or the metonymy, if you prefer, that my stories of α, β, γ, δ give of it. It is something of this order that the child had to pursue up to a certain point in order to cross the difficult passage of a certain defect or gap, and to find his peace and harmony. Perhaps it is not every Oedipus complex that must pass by such a mythic construction, but it is certain that they all must realize the same plenitude of symbolic transposition. This can be under another, more efficacious form, it can be in action. The presence of the father can in effect have symbolized the situation, through his being, or his non-being.
It is surely something of this order whose crossing is implied in the analysis of Little Hans, and I hope to show it to you in greater detail the next time.

27 March 1957
certain type of relation to his mother, a relation whose fundamental terms are defined by the manifest presence of the phallic object between the two of them.

That was nothing astonishing. We have already seen in other observations since the beginning of the year how much the phallus as an imaginary object of maternal desire constitutes a truly crucial point in the mother-child relation. In a first stage, one can define the child's access to his own situation in the presence of the mother by saying that it requires on his part a recognition, indeed, the assumption of the essential role of this imaginary object, the phallic object, which enters as an absolutely primary element of composition in the early structure of the mother-child relation.

No observation can better serve us in this regard than the observation of Little Hans. Everything begins in effect with the play between him and his mother -- to see, not to see, to spy upon the phallus, to spy out where it is. Let us underline that we remain at this point in complete ambiguity upon the subject of what one could call Little Hans's beliefs. We have very much the impression that at the moment when the observation begins, from the real point of view, he has already had his own notions for a long time. I thought all that, ich hab' gedacht, he says, when they give him one of those answers that are both rapid, yet which serve to confuse the subject, which the parents feel constrained to give to any slightly abrupt question posed by the child.

While the imaginary relation can pass as being par excellence that of seeing and being seen, I should like to insist still once more how far it is already a matter of maintaining the intersubjective articulation at this level, which is far from being dual, as you will see. If the relation known as scoptophilic, with its two opposed terms, to show and to be shown, is worth our attention for a moment, it is that it is already distinct from the primitive imaginary relation, which is a mode of capture in the field of what we could call a reciprocal visual confrontation.

I insisted on this at length, at the time when I used to refer to the animal realm and to the singular visual duels of animal couples, in which one
sees an animal, a lizard perhaps, or a fish, caught in certain typical reactions known as parade. Between the two adversaries or partners, everything is set up in a certain ensemble of flares or signals, an apparatus of visual capture in one and the other -- and then, on the sole plane of this visual confrontation, something in one partner cedes, he effaces himself, there is a motor withdrawal and a dimming of colors, and he turns away from the vision of the other who has taken the dominant position. Experience shows us that this is not always strictly to the benefit of the male against the female, but that it is sometimes between two males that a manifestation of this sort is produced. What is produced on the plane of visual communication prepares and is prolonged directly in the act of seizure, indeed of oppression, mastery, which bows one of the subjects before the other, which permits one to get the better of the other.

If there is a biological or ethnological point of reference here which allows us to give all its weight to the imaginary relation in its articulation with the whole of the process not of parading, but of pairing, it is so that it will be clear from the beginning that things are different in what I have called the child's divination of the imaginary maternal world. There it is a question not so much of seeing and of submitting to a capture by what is seen, but of trying to see, of spying out what is at once there and not there. What is sought in this relation is something which is there in so far as it remains veiled, and also to sustain the ruse of maintaining something which is there and is not there. The imaginary drama tends towards a fundamental situation whose crucial character we cannot mistake, in which it is inserted and takes on a meaning that is still more elaborated -- the situation of surprise.

Do not neglect the ambiguous character of this term in French. Surprise is related to the act of surprising, in the sense that one says -- I saw her by surprise, where there is surprise in the Aenean sense, or again the surprise of Diana, which culminates in a myth that you know I recall deliberately here, since the Acteon relation, to which I allude at the end of The
Freudian Thing, is founded upon this essential moment. But there is also another side to this word. If Diana is surprised, she does not for all that experience astonishment. On the contrary, to be surprised corresponds equally well to an unexpected discovery. Those who attend my case presentations have seen this in one of our trans-sexual patients, who painted for us the truly shattering character of the painful surprise he had the day when, for the first time, as he said, he saw his sister nude.

It is thus that, at a degree superior to seeing and being seen, the imaginary dialectic ends in giving-to-be-seen and being surprised by an unveiling. This dialectic is the only one that allows us to understand the fundamental meaning of the act of seeing. It is essential to the very genesis of perversion. It is only too evident in exhibitionism. The technique of the act of exhibiting consists for the subject in showing what he has precisely in so far as the other does not have it. As it emerges from his declarations, the exhibitionist seeks, by this unveiling, to capture the other in what is far from being a simple capture in visual fascination, and which provides the pleasure of revealing to the other what the other is supposed not to have, in order at the same time to plunge him into shame for what he lacks.

It is on this ground that all Hans' relations with his mother are played out. The mother participates in this fully, and with the greatest complaisance has the child participate in the functioning of her body. But she does not lose her own mastery, and shows severity, rebuffs, indeed condemnations, in reply to the exhibitionistic participation that Little Hans asks of her. If the imaginary object plays a fundamental role here, it is in so far as it already participates in the dialectic of veiling and unveiling.

It is at this turn that we find Little Hans, and we wonder why he has his phobia after an interval, one year after major events have occurred in his life, namely the birth of his little sister, and the discovery that she too is an essential term in the relation to the mother.

1 In Écrits: A Selection, pp. 114-145.
We have already indicated that this phobia must be located in a process in which the child must profoundly change his whole mode of relation to the world, in order to admit what will be admitted at the end, and what subjects sometimes take a whole life to accept, namely, that in the privileged field of the world of beings similar to themselves, there are subjects who really are deprived of that famous imaginary phallus.

You would be wrong to believe that having a clear and articulable scientific notion of that is enough for it to be accepted into a subject's beliefs. The profound complexity of the relation of man to woman comes precisely from what we could call, in our rude language, the resistance of masculine subjects against effectively accepting that feminine subjects are truly deprived of something, and for the very strong reason that they are provided with something else.

That is what must be stated most strongly on the facts and basis of our analytic experience. It is at this level that méconnaissance is rooted and often maintained with a tenacity that influences the subject's whole conception of the world, and especially his conception of social relations. It is maintained beyond every pale by subjects who do not fail to consider themselves, with a smile, to have perfectly accepted the reality. The obliteraton of this fact in our experience shows to what point we are still incapable of using the most elementary terms of Freud's teaching. Why is that so difficult to accept? We shall perhaps end by answering that at the end of our progress this year.

For the moment, let us start with the observation of Little Hans, and spell out how the problem of such a recognition is posed for this child. Why does it suddenly become necessary? -- when what had up until then been most important was to play precisely that this not be true. We shall clarify retroactively why it was so important to play that this be not true.

We shall also see how it happens that the assumption of a real privation can only operate -- and give results that are subjectively livable for the subject, that is, which allow his integration into the sexual dialectic which permits the human being not simply to support it, but to live it--, by the integration of a fact that is already given, namely the fact that the
mother is already an adult and that she exists in the system of symbolic relations within which sexual relations between human beings are situated. The child himself must take the path and make a trial of the Oedipal crisis, whose essential moment is castration. That is what the example of Little Hans illustrates — but perhaps not completely, nor perfectly. And it is perhaps in this incompleteness that we shall see the essential movement of the observation come clearly into evidence.

If this analysis is privileged, it is because we see produced in broad daylight a transition which makes the child pass from the imaginary dialectic of the intersubjective play with the mother around the phallus, to the play of castration in the relation with the father. The passage is made by a series of transitions which are precisely what I call the myths forged by Little Hans.

Why do we see this is a way that is so pure? I have begun to develop that, and shall now take it up at the point where we left off.

I left you the last time with this striking phenomenon — Hans's relation to the fantasy of the two giraffes, in which we see almost an illustration given to the seminar of the passage from the imaginary to the symbolic.

Literally, Little Hans shows us, like a magician, the doubled image of the mother, her metonymy as nothing but a piece of paper, a crumpled up giraffe on which he sits.

It is there like the sketch of a general schema, and an indication that we are on the right path. If I had wanted to invent a metaphor for the passage from the imaginary to the symbolic, I could never have invented the story of the two giraffes, as Little Hans has fantasized it, and as he gives it in all its details. It is a matter of the transformation of a drawn image into a ball of paper, which is entirely a symbol, an element that can be mobilized as such. And he sits on his mother finally reduced to a symbol, this crumpled paper, that everyone seizes upon, exclaiming, Ah, Little Hans has the right ticket. Of course, that is not enough, otherwise he would be cured, but he shows us by this act what he is mulling over.

How can one not recognize that the spontaneous acts of a child are something much more direct and more alive than the mental concepts of
an adult after the long years of the amplificatory cretinization that constitute the common lot of what is called education.

Let us see what happens if we use our table as if it were already confirmed. What does it mean that it must be an imaginary father who definitively sets the order of the world, which is that not everyone has a phallus? It is easy to recognize -- the imaginary father is the all-powerful father, the foundation of the order of the world in the common conception of God, the guarantee of the universal order in its most brute and massive real elements -- it is he who has made all that.

I am not simply inventing my table here -- you have only to turn now to the observation of Little Hans. When Little Hans talks about the Good Lord, as he does on two occasions, he speaks in a very pretty way. His father has begun to give him some clarifications, an improvement results, though it is fleeting. On March 15th, when he goes out and sees that there are fewer carriages and horses than usual, he says -- *How nice and clever it was of God to have put fewer horses there today.*

What does that mean? We do not know. Does it mean that fewer horses were needed today? It is not impossible, but *gescheit* does not mean *nice* but *truly clever*. One tends to believe that the Good Lord spared him difficulties, but as the horse is not only a difficulty, but also an essential element, it means that he, Hans, has less need of horses today. Whatever the case, the Good Lord is there as an essential point of reference.

It is extremely striking to see that after the meeting with Freud -- which takes place on March 30th, just after he has made a ball of paper of his mother, without entirely being satisfied, but it is on the right path --, there is another allusion to the Good Lord. The Professor must have conversations with God to be able to say all that he has just said. Freud is tickled by that, amused and happy. He himself expresses the reserve that it is no doubt because of his own *boasting*, because he took the opportunity to take a highly superior position, which consisted in saying -- *Long before you were born, I knew that one day a little boy would love his mother too much, and because of that would enter into difficulties with his father.*

319
It is striking to see Freud take that position. We would not dream of reproaching him for it. I have long ago pointed out to you the exceptional, dimension that Freud takes in all his analyses, in that the interpretive word that he gives to the subject is not a statement which he transmits, but something which he himself has truly found, and which passes directly from his mouth in the authenticity of speech, a reference that I teach to be essential. One cannot help but perceive how far an interpretation by Freud differs from all those that we can give, following him. How very often have we been able to see that Freud imposes no sort of rule, he truly takes what I would call the divine position -- it is from Sinaï that he speaks to young Hans, and the latter does not fail to feel its force.

Understand that the position of the symbolic father, as I have located it for you in symbolic articulation, remains veiled. To position oneself, as Freud does, as the absolute master, is related not to the symbolic father, but to the imaginary father, and that is how Freud approaches the situation.

It is very important to understand the peculiarities of Hans's relation to his analyst. If we want to understand this observation we must see that in relation to other child analyses it has something that is absolutely exceptional. The situation is developed in a way such that the element of the symbolic father is very distinct from the real father, and as you see, from the imaginary father. That no doubt -- we shall confirm it later -- accounts for the remarkable absence of transference phenomena, and also repetition phenomena, and that is why we have the account of the functioning of fantasies in a pure state.

The observation is of interest in showing that the *Durcharbeitung* is not, contrary to commonly received opinion, a simple going over the same things at the end of which what had been assimilated only intellectually finally ends by getting under the skin of the subject like a bit *[un mors]* or an impregnation. If the *Durcharbeitung* is something necessary, it is no doubt because a certain number of circuits, in several senses of the word, must be run through in order for the symbolization of the imaginary to be effectively satisfied. That is why we see Little Hans
follow a labyrinthine route -- in so far as one can reconstitute it, because it is at every moment broken, chopped up by the father's interventions, which are certainly not the best directed, nor the most respectful of the subject, as Freud notes. Nevertheless, we see a series of mythical constructions produced and reproduced, whose true composite elements we must discern. Rather than satisfying ourselves with covering the fact over with terms for every occasion -- complex of this, complex of that, anal relation, attachment to the mother--., it would be better to try to see the functions, the representational, figurative elements that they carry, like the very detailed narratives of ancient myths.

We are used to giving massive equivalents to the terms in question by saying -- this represents the father, that represents the mother, this represents the penis. But, each of these elements, the horse for example, is only conceivable in its relation to a certain number of other elements which are also signifiers. It is impossible to make the horse correspond, any more than any of the other elements of the Freudian myths, to a univocal signification. The horse is at first the mother, the horse at the end is the father, between the two it has also been Little Hans, who, in effect, from time to time plays at being a horse, or again it is the penis, for which the horse is the manifest representation at several points in the story.

What is true in the clearest way concerning the horse is no less true for every other signifying element that is encountered in the different modes of the extremely abundant mythic creation to which Little Hans abandons himself. The bathtub is at one moment the mother, but at the end it is the behind of Little Hans -- and that is what Freud understands as well as the father, and Little Hans himself. You can carry out the same operation with regard to each of the elements in question, the bite, for example, or again, nudity.

To see these things, you must make an effort at each stage, at each moment of the observation, not to understand right away. It is a point of method. You must put yourselves, as Freud expressly recommends at two points in the observation, in the position of not understanding right away.
The best way not to understand is to make little lists, and to note day by day, on a piece of paper, the elements that Hans encounters and that one must take as such, as signifiers. I have insisted, for example, on the all alone with Marie. Even if you understand nothing, you retain this signifying element, and as intelligence will come to you while you are eating, you will perceive that this coincides strictly with something else that you can write on the same page. Not only being with someone, but being all alone with someone, supposes what? That supposes that there could have been another.

This method of analyzing myths was given to us by M. Claude Lévi-Strauss in an article in the Journal of American Folklore, October-December 1955, entitled The Structure of Myths. By using it, one can manage to organize all the elements of a myth. One aligns them in such a way that, read in a certain direction, they give the sequence of the myth. But the return of the same elements, not the simple return but the transformed return, requires that they be organized not simply on a single line, but on a superposition of lines which are arranged as in a musical score, and you can then see a legible series of successions established horizontally as well as vertically. Myth is read in one direction, but its meaning, or its understanding, appears with the superposition of analogical elements returning under various forms, each time transformed, no doubt in order for a certain course to be accomplished, as M. de La Palice would say, from the point of departure to the point of arrival, and which allows something that had appeared irreducible at the beginning to be integrated into the system.

Similarly, in the history of Little Hans, we start with the irruption of the real penis within the mother-child game, which is our point of departure, and at the end, the real penis succeeds in lodging itself in a way that is sufficient so that Little Hans can pursue his life without anxiety. I said sufficient and not necessary because perhaps his life could be still more full, and that is exactly what we shall see. Perhaps the Oedipus complex does not reach a completely satisfying solution in Little Hans. It is sufficient to free him from the intervention of the phobic element, it
makes that conjunction of the imaginary with anxiety which is called phobia unnecessary, and it ends in the reduction of the latter.

In effect, to go straightaway to the epilogue, let us not forget that when Freud meets the child Hans at the age of nineteen, Hans no longer remembers anything. They give him his history to read, but everything has been erased. Freud very neatly compares this erasure to what happens when a subject awakens in the night, begins to analyze his dream -- we are familiar with that -- and after spending the rest of the night on it, finds in the morning that everything is forgotten, dream and analysis. This comparison is very seductive, and allows us to believe with Freud that what occurs in the observation of Hans -- we can even put a finger on it -- is in no way comparable to the integration or the re-integration of his history by the subject, which is accomplished by the effective lifting of an amnesia, with the conquered elements retained. What occurs on the contrary is a very special activity, on the border between the imaginary and the symbolic, which is of the same order as that of the dream. Also, in this mythification which occurs throughout the length of the observation, the dreams play an economic role similar in every way to that of fantasies, indeed, to that of Hans's simple games and inventions.

Let us not forget that Freud says in passing that all the same, something in the reading of his history struck Hans and he said -- *In fact, it really could refer to me.* It was something about his little sister, and all the fantasy formations that were lodged in the relation with her. Hans's parents were by then divorced, as the course of the observation could let one foresee, and Hans is not too unhappy about that. There is only one thing that remains a wound for him, it is this little sister who was separated from him from then on. This little sister had been led by the course of life to represent for him that distant term, beyond what is accessible in love, which is the idealized object of love, namely, the *girl = phallus* with which we began in our analysis, and which will remain, without any doubt, although this is just an extrapolation, a mark that will determine the type and style of every amorous relation in the life of Little Hans.
Assuredly, despite the magisterial analysis of which Hans was the object, everything demonstrates that the circle has not been closed, and the object relation in which it ends is not entirely satisfactory.

Let us come back to the beginning, to Freud, to the father of the child, who is a disciple of Freud, and to the instructions that Freud gives him, for you have now seen how he assumes his role here. How does he tell his agent to behave? He makes two recommendations.

The first recommendation has two sides. Once informed about the attitude of Little Hans, and the painful, anxiety-arousing phenomena of which he is the object, Freud tells the father to explain to the child that this phobia is foolishness, it is "eine Dummheit," and that the foolishness in question is tied to his desire to get close to his mother. Moreover, as Hans has been for some time very much occupied with his Wiwimacher, he must be let to know that, as he himself has said, this is not entirely good, that it is unrecht, and that is why the horse is so wicked and wants to bite.

That goes a long way, because we immediately have a direct manipulation on the sense of guilt. This maneuver consists, on one side, in alleviating the sense of guilt by saying to the child that these are entirely simple and natural things which there is simply room to order and dominate a little, but on the other hand, there is at least a relative accent on the element of prohibition concerning masturbatory satisfaction. We shall see what the result will be for the child.

Freud's second recommendation is still more characteristic of the language that he uses. Since Little Hans's satisfaction is manifestly to go discover -- that is why I brought up the dialectic of discovering and surprising just before -- the hidden object which is the mother's penis or phallus, one must withdraw this desire by withdrawing the object of satisfaction -- You must tell him that this phallus that he desires does not exist. That is spelled out as text by Freud at the beginning of the observation, on pages 263-264 of the volume in the Gesammelte Werke.
As an intervention by the imaginary father, one could hardly find better. He who ordained the world says that here, there is naught to be found.

One sees also to what point the real father is incapable of assuming such a function. When he tries to do it, Hans reacts in a completely different way from what has been suggested, as at another moment he had reacted with the story of the two giraffes. Immediately after the clear statement is made to him concerning the absence of the phallus, he fantasizes the following story, which is absolutely beautiful -- he says that he went and saw his mother in her chemise and completely nude, to show her his Wiwimacher, that he himself did all that, and that he had the excellent and famous Grete as a witness for what his Mama did.

A superb response, and perfectly in accord with what I was trying to say just before. What is at stake is precisely to see what is veiled in so far as it is veiled. The mother is at once nude and in her chemise, exactly as in the story of Alphonse Allais, who cried, arms raised to heaven -- *Look at that woman, under her clothes she is nude*. It is a remark whose weight and bearing in the underlying metaphysics of your social behavior you have perhaps never sufficiently measured, but it is fundamental to the interhuman relation.

To that, Little Hans's father, who does not distinguish himself by an excessively astute apprehension of things, says -- *But she has to be either one or the other, either nude or in her chemise*. But, that is the whole problem -- for Hans she is both nude and in her chemise at the same time, exactly like all of you who are here. Whence the impossibility of assuring the order of the world by an authoritative intervention. Evidently, the imaginary father has existed for a long time, has always existed, and is a certain form of god, but that is not what will resolve our difficulties, as we know in a way that is no less tried and permanent.

Before this attempt, the father had made a first approach by trying, as Freud had told him, to reduce Little Hans's sense of guilt. He gave him a first enlightenment concerning the relation that there was between the horse and something forbidden, which was to touch his sex. We analysts know, after some twenty or thirty years of experience, that this
ntervention, which was aimed in sum to appease the anxiety of guilt, is always doomed to fail, and that there is no question of ever confronting guilt head on, except to transform it into its various metabolic forms. That is what does not fail to happen in Little Hans. At the very moment that his father says that the horse is only a frightening substitute for something else that he has no cause to exaggerate, the child, who up until then had been afraid of horses, is obliged, he says, to look at them.

Let us pause a moment at this mechanism, which deserves to be noted. What, in sum, does what they have told him mean? It comes down to saying that he is allowed to look at the horses. Just as in totalitarian systems which are defined by the fact that all that is allowed is obligatory, he now feels himself commanded to look. They have told Little Hans that it is allowed to go towards the horses, but as the problem lies elsewhere, the result is that he feels obligated to look at them.

What does this mechanism mean, which I summed up under the form -- what is allowed becomes obligatory? At first we have a transition, which is the elimination of what before was prohibited, and what thus becomes allowed is then garbed in terms of obligation. That must be a mechanism made to maintain under another form the right to what had been prohibited. In other terms, what one must now look at is precisely what one might not look at before.

As to the horse, we already know that it protects something, in that phobia is an outpost, a protection against anxiety. The horse marks a threshold, that is its essential function. On the other hand, it is related to the new element which casts trouble into the whole of the subject's game, namely, the real penis. Is that to say that the horse is the real penis? Certainly not. As a thousand examples will show later on, the horse is very far from being the real penis, since over the course of the transformations of Hans's myth, the horse is also the mother, the father, and occasionally Little Hans. Let us bring in here an essential symbolizing notion that I developed all through the year before last, in the play on words of Angelus Silesius, Ort-Wort, and let us say that in this instance it
is the place where, not without provoking fear and anxiety, the real penis must come to lodge.

With this first contribution by the father, still scarcely encouraging, we yet see that the child's signifying structure has been engaged. It resists the father's imperative interventions, but nevertheless it reacts to these interventions, even those that are maladroit and confused, and produces the series of mythic creations which, through a series of transformations, will little by little integrate into Hans's system a new element which requires that he go beyond the intersubjectivity of the lure, however fundamental, with whose aid he had played at surprising, at getting himself surprised, at presenting as absent, but at the same time, because of the game, always present -- that first element of his relation with his mother, that third, the phallic object which must itself be integrated at the end. This new and inconvenient element, which has been there for some time, is, as you know, his own penis, his real penis, with its own reactions that risk making everything blow up in the air. This for him is clearly the troubling and perturbing element in the series of his imaginary creations.

Since today is April 3rd, let us go straightaway to what happens on April 3, 1908, when the father and the child speculate, from behind their windows, on what is going on in the courtyard opposite. In the courtyard, there are already signifying elements which will give Hans a first support for his problem, and with which he will make his first mythic construction, under the sign, Freud says, of means of transport.

You know what continually passes under his eyes, the horses, the carts that move, people unloading things, young boys climbing on the packages, etc. For what will all that be used? Do you believe that there might be a pre-adaptation, foreseen through all eternity by the Eternal Father, between the means of transport in use under the reign of Franz-Josef in Vienna before 1914, and the drives, the natural tendencies arising according to the right order of instinctual development? It is entirely the contrary. These elements also have their order of reality but the child will use them as elements necessary to his game of permutation.
I always return to this -- the use of the signifier is conceivable only if you begin with the fact that the fundamental play of the signifier is permutation. As civilized and even learned as you may be, you are, in the current use of life, as maladroit as possible in the exhaustion of all the possible permutations. I will prove it to you taking myself as example. You should know that I have a tie which is a bit lighter on one side, a bit darker on the other, and that to put the light side beneath and the dark in front I must mentally make a permutation. I make a mistake every time.

The order of permutation is at play in what Little Hans will construct. Do not try to understand immediately what the horse means, or the cart, and little Hans who is on it, and the unloading. Little Hans wants to climb onto the cart, but he is afraid. He is afraid of what? That the cart will start before he gets over to the unloading ramp. It is useless to rush and say -- We know that, he is afraid of being separated from his mother. Little Hans reassures you right away -- he says, If I am carried off, I will take a four-wheel cab and I will come back. He is firmly rooted in reality. Thus it is a question of something else. What matters is the fact of being on a cart looking at something from which the cart can separate, in relation to which it can move.

When you have isolated this element, you will rediscover it in a thousand details in the observation of Little Hans, for example in the fantasy which arises much later, that of the train in which he has also set off when they go to Gmunden, and they do not have time to put

on their clothes before getting down from the train on time. There are still many others, since one of the last of Little Hans's fantasies, April 22nd, will be of getting himself triumphantly arrested completely nude by a conductor on a flat-bed wagon where there is no horse, of passing the night there, and of being able to continue his voyage the next day on the same wagon, having simply given fifty thousand florins to the conductor. You cannot not see the evident kinship that there is between these different moments of Little Hans's fantasmation.

You will also see during the course of the latter, all the fantasy-making around the excellent and splendid little Anna. She is at one moment with
Little Hans in another carriage which very much resembles earlier carriages, since she has the same horses of anxiety. She will ride one of the horses, in this first myth, which one could call the myth of the carriage.

You will try to see how the harnessing -- it really is a question of that, they speak continually of the horse, but it can be with or without a carriage --, how the different signifying elements composing the harnessing, and the drivers, and the relation of the carriage to a certain fixed map, will be found to have different significations as the story progresses. You will try to see what is most important and what determines the progress of Little Hans. Is it due to the role of the signifier, as I have explained in my Seminar on "The Purloined Letter," 2 or to something else? Is it due to the displacement of the signifying element onto the different persons who come to be caught under its shadow and inscribed in its possession? Does the progress consist in the revolving of the signifier around the different people in whom the subject is interested, and who are captured in the permutative mechanism? Or in its contrary? As it happens, one does not see clearly what sort of progress there could be, if it is not a progress in the order of the signifier.

One could say that not one of the elements of reality that surround him is really beyond Little Hans’s means, there is no trace in this observation of what one would call regression, and if you think that there is regression because at one point, Little Hans creates an immense phantasmagoria around the lounf, you are soundly mistaken-- it is a formidable mythic game, which carries no sort of regression. Little Hans maintains, if one may express it thus, his right to masturbation from one end of the observation to the other, without letting himself be shaken. If there is something which characterizes the general style of Little Hans’s progress, it is precisely its irreducible side, and Freud himself underlines it. It is precisely because the genital element is, in such a subject, entirely solid, present, installed, resistant, and strong, that he does not develop hysteria, but a phobia. That is spelled out very clearly in the observation.

---

That is what we shall try to see the next time. We shall see that Little Hans does not use just a single myth, a single alphabetic element to resolve his problem, which is the passage from a phallic apprehension of the relation to the mother, to a castrated apprehension of the relations in the parental couple as a whole. There is the famous story of the bathtub and the drill -- which turns entirely around what I shall call the logical function of fabricated instruments. One cannot but be struck by the way that this child uses, as though they were logical instruments, elements grouped around modes of coaptation that are highly elaborated instances of human adaptation. The elements that are in opposition are, for example, what is rooted, or even just naturally adherent, -- the perforated, a menacing pole before which the child stops seized by fear -- what is screwed in, or again pulled out, that is to say what is held by pincers and which plays an essential role in the other myth, that of the bathtub and the spigot.

The whole progress operated by Little Hans during the course of the observation is contained in the details of this mythic structuration, that is to say in the utilization of imaginary elements for the exhaustion of a certain exercise of symbolic exchange. That is what will end by rendering
useless that element of threshold, that is to say of the first symbolic structuration of reality, which was his phobia.

3 April 1957
The function of myth -- that is what our progress in the observation of Little Hans has led us to put into the foreground of the psychological crisis traversed by the child, which is inseparable from the paternal intervention guided by the counsel of Freud.

We are not invoking the global notion of what is called myth as a metaphor here. We are giving it a technical value, which we believe can be appreciated in its just bearing. In effect, if the imaginative creation of Hans always goes on developing in pace with his father's interventions, which, whether they are more or less adroit or maladroit, are still well enough oriented so that they do not hinder, but on the contrary, stimulate the series of his productions up until the end, it still remains that this creation appears difficult to separate from his symptom, namely his phobia, though it can be ordained with respect to it.
We had arrived the last time at the birthday of April 3rd, when Hans's statements concerning the content of his phobia were brought out.

On the evening of that same day, the father says in sum that if his son's behavior has gained in courage under the effects of Freud's intervention on March 30th -- the phobia also has taken on amplitude, and seems to grow richer, with an ambiguity of details that are certainly difficult to discern, whose occurrence grows finer and more complicated, to the extent that Hans now knows better how to confide the way in which the phobia oppresses and suborns him.

I am doing my utmost here to reverse, or more exactly to re-establish the veritable function of the symptom and its variously qualified productions, which have been grouped under the name of transitory symptoms in analysis. In order to let you sense the bearing of our approach, I shall try to set down a certain number of terms and definitions, together with some rules.

I said the last time that if we want to do work that is truly analytic, truly Freudian, truly in line with the major examples that Freud developed, we need to understand a fact that is only confirmed by the distinction between signifier and signified -- not one of the signifying elements in the phobia has a univocal meaning, not one is the equivalent of a unique signified.

There are many over which one could pause. The first, of course, is the horse. It is impossible in any way to consider this horse as a pure and simple equivalent, for example, of the function of the father. That is the easy path, to say, in keeping with the classic formula of Totem and Taboo, that the horse responds to the father's flaws, and comes in as a sort of neo-production, an equivalent of the father, representing or incarnating him in some way. To say that the horse plays a role determined by what really seems to be the difficulty at this moment, which is the passage from the pre-Oedipal state to the moment -- in the physical sense of the word -- that is Oedipal, would no doubt conform with what I am teaching you, but it
would remain entirely insufficient. The horse as such is not what in effect it can perhaps be at the end, namely, a horse with an air of being proud, which Hans sees passing in the street, and which he associates with something having to do with the virile pride of the father.

At one moment near the end of the treatment, at its height, he has that famous conversation with his father, in which he tells him something like -- *You have to get angry with me, you must want me to have that place, to capture my mother's attention, and to take your place in her bed.* And this despite the denials of his father, who tells him that he has never been naughty. *Das muss wahr sein*, says Hans again. *That has to be true.* Thus the child, who has no doubt been duly indoctrinated for some time, makes the Oedipal myth surge up with a very special imperiousness, which has not failed to strike certain authors, notably Robert Fliess, who has written an article on it in the number of the *IJP* consecrated to the centenary of Freud in January-February, 1956.

The horse, before filling the function of metaphor in a way that is final, played many other roles. There is the horse when it is harnessed. On April 3rd, Hans gives us on this subject every possible explanation. Should the horse be harnessed or not harnessed? Should it be harnessed to a carriage with one horse or a carriage with two? In each case, the signification is different. If at this moment the horse is symbolic of something, it is the mother, as what follows will show most clearly. It is equally symbolic of the penis. In any case, it is irreducibly tied to this carriage, which is a loaded carriage, as Hans insists during the session of April 3rd, during which he explains the kind of satisfaction that he takes from all the traffic that occurs outside the house, with carriages coming and going, and which, while they are there, are emptied and refilled. An equivalence little by little appears between the function of the carriage, and of the horse into the bargain, and the pregnancy of the mother, with the problem of situating children in the mother's belly, of their issue, of birth. The horse has thus, at this moment, another function entirely.

Another element becomes for a long while a subject of investigation for the father as for Freud, and this is the famous *Krawall*, which means
noise, tumult or disordered noise, with some Austrian extensions which
mean that it can, it seems, go so far as to be used to designate a brawl, a
scandal. In each case, the disturbing and anxiety-provoking character of the
Krawall, as it is understood by Little Hans, appears. It is produced in
particularly after the omnibus horse has fallen, umfallen, which was,
according to Hans, one of the precipitating events in the phobic value of
the horse. It was then that Hans got his Dummkheit, his foolishness. This
fall, which occurs once, will thenceforth always be in the background of
the fear of the horse. It is what can happen to certain horses, especially to
the big horses attached to big carriages, to loaded carriages. The fall
accompanied by the noise of the horse’s pawing, the Krawall, will later
return under more than one form during the interrogation of Little Hans,
without our ever, that I know, at any moment of the observation being
given an interpretation of it that is certain.

One must also note that through the whole course of the observation,
Freud like the father is led to remain in doubt, with ambiguities, and even
in a state of abstention, as to the interpretation of a certain number of
elements. He confirms that they have really had to press the child to
confess, suggesting all the equivalencies to him, all the possible solutions.
They obtain from him only evasions, allusions, escapes. They have even
sometimes the impression that in certain ways the child is mocking them.

That, in fact, is not to be doubted. The parodic character of some of the
child’s fabulations is manifest. I am thinking principally of everything that
concerns the myth of the stork, that Little Hans makes so rich, so
luxuriant, so charged with humorous elements -- the stork comes in, it
puts down its hat, it takes a key from its pocket, etc. The parodic side is so
caricatural that it has not failed to strike observers.

Must one call the insufficiencies of the observation into question here,
or indeed, its incompleteness? Quite the contrary. From our perspective,
that is picked up again, has its place and carries us to the heart of the
question. These ambiguities constitute a demonstrative phase
characteristic of the observation, the route by which the latter shows us the
way to a mode of understanding that is needed for what is at stake, on one
hand, in phobia -- that symptomatic formation that is at once so simple
and so rich, and on the other hand, in analytic work itself. To the extent
that this observation is Freudian, that is to say, intelligent, there is no
better illustration of the fact that the signifier as such is to be distinguished
from the signified.

The symptomatic signifier is constituted in such a way that it is its
nature to cover, during the course of its development and evolution,
multiple and highly different signifieds. Not only is it its nature to do so,
but it is its function.

The ensemble of signifying elements that we are given in the course of
this slice of the observation, the signifying apparatus of the case, is made in
such a way that if we want this observation to be not purely and simply an
enigma, we must impose on ourselves a certain number of rules for
approaching it. One does not really see why this observation should be
considered as confused, indeed ruined, and not as a particular observation
by a particular author to whom we are-acustomed to refer. Yet we cannot
fail to be struck by the arbitrary, solicited, systematic character of the
analytic interpretations, especially with regard to the child. We have
evidence of it here, precisely because the observation is remarkably rich
and complex, and because what we are given in the list of its productions
is extremely rare in its abundance. Certainly, if we have one feeling on
penetrating here, it is really that of being lost. That is why I would propose,
concerning this subject, some rules which can be formulated more or less
like this.

These rules concern every element in an analysis, whether of a child or
an adult, which can be considered as a signifier in the sense that we are
promoting here, namely that what is at stake may equally concern an
object, a relation, or a symptomatic act, regardless of whether this object,
this relation, or this symptomatic act be primitive and still confused, or
not.

Think of when the horse first surges up, when it appears after a certain
interval in which the child's anxiety is manifested. The horse plays a
function there that we must define, and which already appears singularly
marked by a dialectical character. That is sufficiently palpable in the following fact. At the precise moment when it is a question of his mother's going away, the anxiety breaks forth — he is afraid that the horse will come into his room. But, who comes into his room? It is Little Hans himself. There is thus a double relation here that is very ambiguous, which is linked on one side to the function of the mother through the feeling tonality of anxiety, but also on the other hand to Little Hans through his movement and his act. As soon as it appears, the horse is thus charged with a profound ambiguity. It is already a sign ready to do everything, exactly as a typical signifier is. From the moment that we take three steps in the observation of Little Hans, that overflows on every side.

We thus pose the following rule -- no signifying element, object, relation, symptomatic act, in neurosis, if you will, can be considered as having a single bearing.

That is of some consequence in what touches on the theme of this year. A signifying element is not equivalent to any of the objects, to any of the relations, indeed even to any of the actions said in our register to be imaginary, on which the notion of the object relation, as the term is currently used, is founded, with all that it implies of the normative, of the progressive in the life of the subject, of what is genetically defined, of what is developmental. Of course this notion, which belongs to the imaginary register, is not without value, but it presents untenable contradictions when one begins to articulate it. It was enough for me to read you passages of the two collective volumes that appeared at the beginning of the year for you to have had the sentiment that I was caricaturing something. The contradictions in the play of this notion are flagrant from the moment that it tries to find expression as something on the order of a pre-genital relation which becomes genitalized, with the idea of progress which that implies.

Thus, if we follow what is for us the golden rule, which rests on the notion that we have of the structure of symbolic activity, the signifying elements must first be defined by their articulation with other signifying
elements. That is what justifies the comparison that we are making with the recent theory of myth.

The latter compels recognition in a way that is singularly analogous to the way that the simple awareness of the facts also forces us to articulate things. What is it that guides M. Lévi-Strauss in his article in the Journal of American Folklore? By what is the notion of a structural study of myth introduced in this text? By a remark that he borrows intentionally from one of his colleagues, Hocart, who says that if there is one thing that we must first of all overturn, it is really that position which has been held over the course of ages in the name of I do not know what profound anti-intellectual prejudice, and which has consisted in rejecting psychological interpretations from the domain presumed to be intellectual, in order to relegate them to a terrain qualified as affective. There results, says this author, very precisely, that to the defects inherent in the psychological school ... was thus added the error of believing that clear ideas can be born from confused emotions.

What is here called the psychological school is one which seeks to find the source of myths in a so-called constant of human philosophy, which is in some way generic. One compounds this inconvenience with the error of deriving from it very well defined ideas, which are clearly circumscribed, as the things that concern us always are, as much in myth as in symptomatic productions. One thus attributes to a confused drive something which appears in the patient in a form that is very generally articulated, and it is even the articulated character that presents the paradox of the problem, and makes it appear in our eyes as a parasite. It is sufficient simply not to confound it with something that is a mental game, with I do not know what superfluidity of intellectual deduction. One could only qualify it so in a perspective that has gone completely beyond the rationalization of delirium, indeed, or that of the symptom. Our perspective, on the contrary, gives us the notion that the play of the signifier takes hold of the subject, that it takes him well beyond all that the subject can intellectualize about it, but that it is none the less the play of the signifier with its own laws.
I would like to illustrate that for you by an image. When Little Hans begins to bring forth his fantasies bit by bit, what do we see from our perspective, if we have eyes that are sufficiently unsealed? Usually, when we begin to uncover the history of a neurosis, its development in the subject, the way in which he has been caught or encircled by it, what do we see? The subject does not enter into it face forwards, rather, he enters in some way by going backwards. From the moment that the shadow of the horse looms up above Little Hans, he enters little by little into a decor that is ordered, organized, built around him, but that catches hold of him far more than he is able to develop it. What is striking is the articulated way in which the delirium then develops.

I say the delirium -- it is almost like a slip, because what is in question has nothing to do with a psychosis, but the term is not inappropriate. We can in no way be satisfied with deducing it from vague emotions. On the contrary, we have the impression that the idée edification -- if we can use the expression in the case of Little Hans -- has its own motivation, its own map, its own agency. That corresponds perhaps to a particular need or to a particular function, but surely not to whatever it might be that could be justified by a particular drive, a particular élan, a particular emotional moment that is here transposed, indeed, that is expressed here purely and simply. A whole other mechanism is in question, which necessitates the structural study of myth. The first step is never to consider any one of the signifying elements independently of others which have just come forth, and rather to reveal it -- that is, to develop it, according to a series of oppositions, which are above all of a combinatorial order.

What we see arising in Little Hans are not themes which would more or less have an affective or psychological equivalence, as they say, but rather groups of signifying elements which are transposed progressively from one system into another. One example will illustrate this for you.

The father's first attempts at enlightenment, directed by Freud, reveal in the horse that special penian element that makes Hans react with a compulsion to look at the horse. The child is then relieved by the injunctive help that the father gives him concerning masturbation. We
come closer to a first tentative to analyze Hans’s worry about what is related to his urinary organ, the Wurmacher, as he calls it. On the route to an Aufklärung, a real enlightenment, the father tries to arrive more directly at what he believes is the only real support of the child’s anxiety -- he announces to the child, and Freud incites him to intervene in this direction, that little girls do not have one, and that he, Hans, does. Hans gets the message, and, in a way whose meaning does not escape Freud, underlines the fact that his pee-pee maker is angewachsen, attached or rooted, and that it will grow, and get bigger with him.

Is that not already a beginning which seems to go in the direction of rendering the phobic support useless? That would be the case if it were a matter of the real, and if this were purely and simply the equivalent of an anxiety linked to the apprehension of a real which had not up until then been fully realized by him. It is then that we see the fantasy of the big giraffe and the little giraffe surge up.

I have shown you that this fantasy throws us into the field of a creation whose style, with the symbolic exigency that marks it, is extremely striking. I repeat for those who were not here -- I have given full weight, and that can only be done in our perspective, to the fact that for Hans there is no contradiction at all, or even any ambiguity, in the fact that one of the giraffes, the little one, should be crumpled. And a crumpled giraffe is a giraffe that one can crumple as one does a sheet of paper, Hans shows us. This intervention makes an object that up until then had had an imaginary function pass over into a radical symbolization, formulated as such by the subject himself, and underlined by the gesture that he then makes of seizing this symbolic position, and occupying it, one might say -- he sits on the little giraffe despite the cries and protests of the big one. For Little Hans, that is especially satisfying. It is not a dream, it is a fantasy that he has fabricated himself. He has come into his parents’ bedroom to talk about it, and he develops it.

The perplexity that remains once more as to what is at stake is very marked here. You notice the wavering in the observation itself. The big and little giraffe are at first, in the father’s eyes, the father and mother.
Nevertheless, he says in the clearest way that the big giraffe is the mother, and the little, his member, ihr Gleid, another form or value of the relation between the two signifiers. That is still not enough. The father makes a new intervention by saying to the mother -- Good-bye, big giraffe. The child, who has until then accepted a different interpretive register, responds in the following way, whose point and bearing the French translation does not pass on -- he does not say Isn't that it? as it has been translated, but Not true, nicht wahr. And he adds, the little giraffe, is it Anna?

What do we touch on there? What is this other mode of interpretation doing there? Is it really Anna and her Krawall? -- because much further on in the observation, we see little Anna appear as very bothersome with her cries, which we cannot, provided that we have an ear always open to the signifying element, not identify with the cries of the mother in this fantasy.

In the end, what does the permanent ambiguity with which we remain concerning the interpretation of the two terms of the symbolic relation signify? The gaiety, indeed the point of raillery that already appears in the Not true of Hans in itself alone shows us the inappropriateness of the father's effort to make a one-to-one correspondence between the symbolic terms and the imaginary or real elements that they are there to represent. The father takes a false route here, and at every instant Hans is beside him to show that that is not it, that it never will be that.

Why will it never be that? That has to do with what Hans is dealing with when the phobia arises, with what he has to figure out at the moment that we are discussing. It is his awareness of certain relations which have not up until now been constituted for him, and which have the very value of symbolic relations.

Man, because he is man, is placed before problems that as such are problems of signifiers. The signifier, in effect, is introduced into the real by its very existence as a signifier, because there are words which are spoken, because there are phrases which are articulated and which follow one another, linked by a medium, a copula, such as why or because. It is thus
that the existence of the signifier introduces a new meaning into the world of man. To say it in the terms in which I expressed it recently, at the end of a little introduction to the first number of the review, *La Psychanalyse* -- *It is by crossing the course of things diametrically that the symbol attaches itself, thus giving this course another sense.* These are thus problems of the creation of meaning, with all that they bring of the free and ambiguous, the possibility always being open to reduce everything to nothingness arbitrarily.

A flash of wit always has an aspect that is entirely arbitrary, and Hans is like Humpty-Dumpty in *Alice in Wonderland*. He is capable of saying at every moment -- *Things are like that because I decree it so and I am the master.* That does not prevent his being completely subordinated to the solution of the problem that arises from the necessity to revise what has up until then been his mode of relation to the maternal world, organized by that dialectic of lure between him and his mother, whose importance I have sufficiently underlined. Which of the two has the phallus, or does not have it? *What does the mother desire when she desires something other than me, the child?* That is where the child was in all of this, but he can no longer find his hold there.

The function of myth enters here. As structural analysis, which is the correct analysis, reveals, a myth is always an attempt to articulate the solution to a problem. It is a matter of passing from a particular mode of explanation of the relation-to-the-world of the subject or of the society in question, to another -- the transformation being necessitated by the appearance of different, new, elements, which are in contradiction with the earlier formulation. They in some sort require a passage which as such is impossible, which is an impasse. That is what gives its structure to myth.

It is the same for Hans. He is confronted with elements which necessitate the revision of the first sketch of a symbolic system which had structured his relation with his mother. That is what is at stake with the apparition of the phobia, and even much more, in the development of all that it brings with it of signifying elements. That is what Hans is
confronting. Because of that, all the attempts at partial readings that his father incessantly attempts appear derisory to him.

2

With regard to the style of Hans's replies, I cannot abstain from asking you to refer to that great and admirable work of Freud's, still hardly
exploited in our experience, which is called the Witz.¹

This work has perhaps no equivalent in what one could call the philosophy of psychology. I know no work whose findings are so new and trenchant. All of the works on laughter, whether by Bergson or by others, will always be of a lamentable poverty beside this one.

The Witz of Freud points directly, without flinching or wandering into secondary considerations, to the essential in the nature of the phenomenon. Just as, from the first chapter of the Traumdeutung, he places in the foreground that the dream is a rebus, and nobody notices it -- for this sentence has until now passed unnoticed --, in the same way, we do not seem to have noticed that the analysis of humor begins with the analysis of a phenomenon of condensation, the word famillionaire, a fabrication founded on the signifier, by the superimposition of familiar and millionaire. Everything that Freud develops afterwards consists in showing the effect of annihilation, the veritably destructive, disruptive character of the play of the signifier with regard to what one could call the existence of the real. In playing with the signifier, man puts his world into question at every instant, down to its roots. The value of wit, and what distinguishes it from the comic, is its possibility of playing on the fundamental nonsense of all use of meaning. It is at every moment possible to throw all sense into question, in so far as it is founded on the use of the signifier. In effect, this use is in itself profoundly paradoxical with regard to all possible signification, since it is this very use that creates what it is destined to sustain.

There is the clearest distinction between the domain of wit and that of the comic, which Freud touches upon only secondarily in this book, to clarify it by contrasting it with wit. He first treats intermediate notions, and makes us aware of the highly ambiguous dimension of the naïve, for which I am making this digression.

On one hand, a comic effect can arise from manifestations of the naïve, and one must define it well since it exists. But on the other hand, we see clearly to what extent the naïve is intersubjective. It is we who impute

¹ Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious.
naïveté to the child, not without there always hovering over it some doubt. Why?

Let us take an example. Freud illustrates the naïve with the story of some children who one evening make a great gathering of adults by promising to give them a little theatrical presentation. The comedy begins to get under way. The young authors or actors, says Freud, tell the story of a husband and a wife who are in the most profound misery. They try to get out of this state, the husband leaves for distant lands, he returns having accomplished great exploits and charged with innumerable riches. He displays his prosperity before his wife. She listens to him, opens a curtain which is at the back of the stage, and says to him, -- Look, I've also been working while you were away. And one sees in the back ten dolls ranged in a row.

That is the example that Freud gives to illustrate naïveté. Taking it as one of the forms of the comic, one can say that the release arises from the economy spontaneously realized by the story in question. In a different order, spoken by a mouth less naïve, it would in effect carry a parcel of tension, even going, to a certain degree, so far as to engender annoyance. The fact that the child goes directly to an enormity without taking the least trouble over it releases laughter. That becomes very droll, with all of the strange resonances that the word droll can carry.

We are here in a domain that is at the frontier of the comic. The economy in question exists in relation to the subtle mediations which this construction would have had to suffer in the mouth of an adult. The child realizes directly what brings us to the height of the absurd. In some way he makes a witticism that is naïve. It is a droll story which releases laughter because it is in the mouth of a child, which leaves the adults the whole field to rejoice --These kids are priceless. They are supposed in all innocence to have found at first stroke what an adult would have taken a lot of trouble to find, or that he would have needed to enrich with some supplementary subtlety so that it could pass for being truly droll.

But it is not certain that this ignorance in which the child is supposed to speak truths is total. When children's stories have this disconcerting
character that releases laughter in us, we include them in the perspective of the naïve. But this artlessness is not always, we very well know, to be taken at the letter of the word. There is being naïve and there is pretending to be naïve. If one attributes a feigned naïveté to the play of the child's comedy, one restores to it all of its character of Witz, and that of the most tendacious sort, as Freud remarks. A mere nothing is needed, which is precisely the supposition that the naïveté is not complete, for the children to take the upper hand and to be the masters of the game.

In other terms, Freud makes clear -- I beg you to refer to the text -- that a witticism always implies the idea of a third person. One tells a witticism about someone to someone else. Whether there are really three people or not, this ternariness is always necessary to the release of laughter at wit, whereas the comic is content with a dual relation. The view that one person has of another who falls, for example, or who begins to operate unheard of measures to accomplish an act that for us would be simple, can suffice by itself alone, Freud tells us. By contrast, in the naïve, the perspective of the third person, if it remains virtual, is always more or less implied. Nothing proves that beyond this child whom we take for naïve, there is not an Other -- moreover, he is there -- that is what we must have supposed for it to make us laugh so very much. It could well be, after all, that the child affects naïveté, that is to say that he is feigning.

This dimension of the symbolic is exactly what lets itself be felt at every instant in this game of hide and seek, this perpetual mockery that colors all of Hans's replies to his father, and which gives them their tone.

The father interrogates his son -- *What did you think when you saw the horse fall?* It is in speaking of this fall that Hans tells us he got his foolishness. *You thought*, says the father, with his heavy boots, *that the horse was dead.* As the father notes later, at first Hans replies with a little air that is absolutely serious -- *Yes, yes, that is what I thought.* And then suddenly, he changes his mind, begins to laugh -- that is noted --, and says, *But no, that isn't true, it's only a good joke, a Spass, that I made when I said that.*
The observation of the case is punctuated by little details of this sort. Like this, for example. After letting himself for an instant take in the tragic echo of the horse's fall -- but is it certain that there is occasionally this tragic echo, and many another, in the psychology of Little Hans? -- all of a sudden Freud thinks of another figure of the father, of that mustachioed father, with his pince-nez, whom he sees during the consultation at Little Hans's side. There is the droll little fellow, all spruced up, and at his side the father, heavy, his eyeglasses filled with reflections, exerting himself, full of good will. One instant, Freud wavers. They are there to examine this famous black that there is in front of the mouths of horses, to seek with a lantern what that might mean, when Freud says to himself -- But there it is, the long head, it's that ass there. And when I say ass...

You may well say all the same that this black which is flying there before the horse's mouth is the real gap always hidden behind the veil and the mirror, and which always emerges from the background like a spot. There is, in sum, a sort of short circuit between the divine character of professorial superiority, which Freud accentuates not without humor, and that appreciation which the testimony of contemporaries show was always ready to come out of Freud's mouth, and which is expressed in French by the third letter of the alphabet followed by three little dots. What a fine ... president... this is, thinks Freud, who says to himself that what he has before him coincides with and comes down to an intuition of the abysmal character of what comes out of the bottom.

No doubt under these conditions Little Hans plays the game well enough when he takes himself up short, laughs, and annuls with one stroke the long series that he has just developed for his father. We have the impression that he says to him -- I see you coming. At first he accepts the word death as the equivalent of fallen, but then he says to himself, You are reciting the Professor's lessons to me. It is very precisely in effect what the Professor has just suggested, namely, that he wants a lot for his father, as much as wanting his death.

This episode, then, will contribute to our rules. First, to locate the signifiers in their essentially combinatory value. The group of signifiers
brought into play restructures the real by introducing new combined
relations into it. To take up our reference to the first number of La
Psychanalyse again, it is not for nothing that one finds on the cover the
symbol of the function of the signifier as such. The signifier is a bridge in
a domain of significations. In consequence, situations are not reproduced
by it, but transformed, recreated.

That, then, is what is at stake, and that is why we have must always
center our question on the signifier.

With Little Hans, we have to be attentive to see what turn of the
signifier he operates, where he starts, and in order to end up with what.

Thus at each of the stages that he goes through during the five first
months of the year 1908, we see him successively interested in what is
loaded and unloaded, or in what begins suddenly to move in a way that is
somewhat brusque, and which can tear off prematurely from the departure
ramp. These are linked signifying elements, variously fantasmatic, which
turn around the theme of movement, or more exactly, what in movement
concerns modification, acceleration, and, to say the word, is stirring
(branle). This element is essential in the structuration of the first
fantasies, and makes other elements arise little by little, among which we
cannot but give very special attention to the mother's two pairs of culottes,
one pair yellow, the other black.

Outside of the perspective to which I am trying to introduce you, this
passage is incomprehensible. The father's Latin is not adequate here, that
is clear. As for Freud himself, though he says that the father has inevitably
troubled the terrain, he still indicates a certain number of perspectives for

---

2 Lacan describes this image *infra*, Ch. 24, section 2.
3 Lacan's parenthetical reserve covers the verb in its reflexive form, *se branler*, slang for "to masturbate."
us in a note at the end. Without doubt the father has misconstrued [mêconnu] a fundamental opposition linked to the difference in the auditory perception of a man's urination and a woman's.

Little Hans seems to tell us things that are highly incomprehensible. In so far as culottes are worn, they becomes blacker, he says, and this after numerous developments in which one perceives that when they are yellow they have a certain value for him, when they are black, they do not, when they are separated from the mother they make him want to spit, when his mother is wearing them, they do not make him want to spit. In short, Freud insists, and says that without a doubt, what Little Hans wants to indicate here is that the culottes have a completely different function for him when they are worn by his mother and when they are not.

We have enough indications, then, which show that Freud himself is moving towards the beginning of a total dialectic relativizing of what the couple of the yellow culottes and the black culottes might signify. In the course of the long and complicated conversation during which Little Hans and his father try to sort out the question together, this couple turns out to have the value only of manifesting a series of oppositions that one must seek in details which at first pass unnoticed, or at least that pass radically unnoticed when one tries grossly to identify the yellow culottes with urination, for example, and the black culottes with defecation, which in Hans's language is called the lumf.

In fact, one is wrong to identify the lumf with defecation without situating as such this element which is so essential for Hans. We have in the father's own testimony the idea that lumf is a transformation of the word Strumpf, which first means black stocking, and which at another moment of the observation is associated by Little Hans to a black blouse. It shares that essential function of clothing, which is its function of hiding. It is also the screen on which the major object of Hans's pre-Oedipal questioning is projected -- namely, the missing phallus. That excrement as such should be designated by a term which is allied to the symbolization of the lack of the object, shows well enough that the instinctual relation, the anality concerned in the mechanism of defecation is a small thing.
compared to the symbolic function. It is the latter that, once again, dominates.

The symbolic function is linked for Little Hans to a questioning that is essential for him -- *What is it that gets lost? What can go down the hole?* These are the first elements of what one can call a symbolic instrumentation, and they will be integrated later in the development of Little Hans's mythical construction in the form of the bathtub which, in his first dream, the installation man is coming to unscrew. It is later his behind that will be similarly unscrewed, and his own penis, to the greatest joy of his father, as of Freud, one must admit.

These people are so quick to impose their signification on Little Hans that they do not even wait for him to finish expressing himself about the unscrewing of his little penis, before giving him the only explanation possible, which is that it is naturally a matter of giving him one that is bigger. Little Hans has not at all said that, and we do not know that he would have said it if they had let him speak. Nothing indicates that he would have said it. Little Hans has only spoken of replacing his behind. This is really a case in which one can sense the countertransference. It is the father who gives forth the idea that if they are changing his penis, it is in order to give him a bigger one. That is an example of the mistakes that are made at every instant. We have not stinted on perpetuating the tradition since Freud's time, according to a mode of interpretation in which one is always seeking in I do not know what affective tendency something which would motivate, justify, what is said, which still, however, has its own laws, its own structure and gravitation, and which must be studied as such.

We are going to end by saying that in the mythical development of a symptomatic signifying system, one must always consider both its systematic coherence at each moment, and the particular development that it has diachronically. The development in the neurotic of any mythical system -- what I once called the individual myth of the neurotic -- is presented as the exit, the progressive dislocation of a series of mediations linked by a signifying chain whose character is fundamentally
circular. The end point has a profound relation to the starting point, without however being exactly the same. The impasse, whatever it may be, that is always there at the departure, is found again at the point of arrival under an inverted form, there to be considered as the solution, almost with a change of sign. The impasse from which one sets out is always found again, in some way, at the end of the operative displacement of the signifying system.

I shall illustrate that for you later on, in the development that we shall make after the vacation, starting from the givens that are proposed to Little Hans.

He is caught at the beginning in the relation of lure, in which the game of the phallus at first develops. That is sufficient to maintain a progressive movement between him and his mother, whose aim, perspective, direction, is a perfect identification with the object of maternal love. Then there is a new element.

On that, I am in accord with other authors, with the father, and with Freud. There is a problem whose importance in the development of the child you cannot too much exaggerate, which is founded on the fact that there is nothing pre-established and ordered in advance in the imaginary order, which would allow the subject to assume the fact with which he is confronted sharply at two or three moments of his childhood development, namely, the phenomenon of growth. From the fact that nothing is predetermined on the imaginary plane, a phenomenon which is completely distinct, but which for the child is imaginarily connected to it, will introduce an essential element of disturbance at the moment when the first confrontation with the phenomenon of growth occurs -- it is the phenomenon of turgescence.

That the penis, having been very little, should become bigger at the moment of the earliest masturbation or infantile erections is nothing other than one of the most fundamental themes of the imaginary fantasies of Alice in Wonderland, and that is what gives this work its absolutely elective value in the study of the child's imagination. It is with a problem of this sort that Hans is confronted, namely, that of integrating the
existence of the real penis, the distinct existence of a penis which can itself become larger or smaller, but which is also the penis of those who are little or big.

In sum, the problem of Hans's development is linked to the absence of the penis of the biggest one, namely, the father. And it is to the extent that Hans must face his Oedipus complex in a situation which necessitates a particularly difficult symbolization, that the phobia is produced.

But that the phobia should develop as it does, that the analysis should produce such a mythical proliferation, indicates, in that way in which the pathological reveals the normal, the complexity of the phenomenon at play when the child must integrate the real of his genitality, and underlines the fundamentally symbolic character of this moment of passage.

10 April 1957
CIRCUITS

Why the horse?
From horse to train.
Hans coming and going.

Wegen and Wägen.¹

Were there need for me to remind you of the constitutive character of the symbolic in human desire, it seems to me that in the absence of a just agreement on the most common daily experience, a striking example could be found in the following formula, whose immediacy and presence everywhere can escape no one. It is a formulation of that desire which is perhaps the most profound of all human desires, the most constant in any case, a desire difficult not to recognize [méconnaître] at a certain turning in all our lives, and in any case, in the lives of those to whom we give the most attention, those who are tormented by some subjective malaise. This desire, to name it at last, is called the desire for something else.

¹ Lacan is following Freud who remarks in a footnote that Hans would most frequently have heard the plural of Wagen pronounced as Wägen. This variant is current in southern Germany and in Austria.
The desire for something else, what can that mean in terms of
instinctual coaptation? What can that mean in terms of the object relation,
if one conceives that as a developmental evolution immanent in itself,
arising by successive thrusts which it is only a matter of favoring? If the
object relation refers to an object that is typical and in some way
preformed, whence can arise this desire for something other?

This preliminary remark is intended to put you, as Freud expresses it,
somewhere in his letters, in reference to the Egyptian gods, in the (...).

What I have just told you is not unrelated to my subject, namely, Little
Hans.

What have we been looking for up until now in this mythical
fomentation which is the essential characteristic in the observation of
Little Hans?

What I am calling mythical fomentation refers to the different
signifying elements, whose ambiguity I have sufficiently shown you,
together with how they are made to be able to cover just about any
signified, but not all signifieds at the same time. When one of the
signifiers covers a particular element of the signified, the other signifying
elements in question correspond to others. In other words, the signifying
constellation operates by what we can call a system of transformations, that
is to say, a turning movement, which, looked at more closely, at each
instant covers the signified in a way that is different, while at the same
time, seeming to exercise upon it an action that reworks it profoundly.

Why should this be? How to conceive the dynamic function of this sort
of witching operation, which has the signifier as instrument, and as end,
or result, a reorientation of the signified, its repolarization, or a
reconstitution after a crisis?

If we are asking the question from this angle, it is because we believe
that it must be asked this way. In effect, if we are interested in mythical
fomentation in the child, or to call it by a term which is more current but
less well suited, which says the same thing exactly -- infantile theories of sexuality -- it is very much because they are not a sort of superfluous, an inconsistent dream, but rather because they comport a dynamic element in themselves. That is what is in question in the observation of Hans, without which it would make no sort of sense.

We must approach this function of the signifier without preconceived ideas, and particularly in this observation, because it is more exemplary than others. It is that it is still caught in the miracle of the origins, where, I might say, the spirit of the inventor, and of those who followed him, has not yet had time to be freighted by all sorts of taboo elements, and does without a reference to a real founded on presuppositions which find I do not know what support in earlier references which are precisely those that are thrown into question, shaken, devalorized, by the field which has just been discovered. The observation of Hans, in its freshness, still retains all of its revelatory power, I would even say, almost all its explosive power.

In the course of this complex evolution, the dialogue with the father in which Hans is caught up plays a role which is inseparable from the progress of the said mythical fomentation. At each of the father's interventions, the mythical fomentation, somehow stimulated, rebounds, takes off, and then vegetates again. But as Freud expressly remarks, it has its laws, its own necessities. What Hans gives us is not always, far from it, what we expect. He brings things which surprise, which the father in any case does not expect, even if Freud indicates that he had foreseen them, and also, he brings things beyond what Freud himself could foresee, since the latter does not hide the fact that many elements still remain unexplained, in some instances, uninterpreted.

Do we ourselves need them to be all interpreted? We can sometimes push this interpretation which the father and Freud have cooperatively made a little further. But what we are trying to do here is to reconstitute the very laws of the gravitation, or the coherence, of this signifier apparently centered around the horse.

Freud tells us expressly that we might have been tempted to qualify a phobia by its object, the horse in this instance, had we not noticed that this
horse goes well beyond what the horse is itself. It is really more a matter of a heraldic figure, which is prevalent, which centers the whole field, and which is weighty with all sorts of implications -- with signifying implications, above all.

A certain number of points of reference are necessary in order to mark what will now be the progress of our path.

We are tackling nothing new, since Freud himself articulates it very expressly. This passage occurs after the first dialogue with the father, when Hans begins to draw forth from the phobia what I call its signifying implications. What Hans is able to construct around them is rich with a whole mythical, or even novelesque, aspect, because this fantasmatization is not simply about the past, it also concerns what he would like to do with the horse, or around this horse. No doubt it accompanies and modulates his anxiety, but it also has its own power of construction. After Hans's discussion with his father, to which we shall come now, Freud indicates at another moment that the phobia gathers more courage here, that it develops and shows its various phases. He writes -- Here we have the experience of how diffuse this phobia is in reality. It extends to the horse, but also the carriage and also the fact that horses fall, and the fact that horses bite, and to horses which are of a particular kind, and also carriages which are loaded or not -- and so forth and so on -- that is Freud's tone. Let us say squarely that all of these details touch the quick of it, in that the anxiety, originally, had absolutely nothing to do with horses, but was secondarily transposed onto them, and was then fixed at the place -- not of the horse, but of the horse complex, more precisely -- onto the elements of the horse complex, onto which could then be transposed everything that would show itself appropriate to certain transferences.

So it is formulated in Freud in the most precise way -- we have two poles here. The pole which is primary is that of a signifier which will serve as support for a whole series of transferences, that is to say, for the reworking of the signified according to all the possible permutations of the signifier. In principle -- we can suppose this in the name of a working hypothesis, inasmuch as it is consonant with all that our experience
demands -- the signified will in the end be different from what it was at the beginning. Something will have happened on the side of the signified. Because of the signifier, the field of the signified will be either reorganized, or extended in some way.

Why the horse? On that, one could embroider. The horse is a theme which is quite rich in mythology, in legends, in fairy tales, in what is most constant, indeed, most opaque, in the thematic of the dream. Le cauchemar is called in English nightmare, thus, mare of the night. Mr. Jones's entire book is centered on that. He shows that this is not by chance, that the nightmare is not simply the anxiety-provoking apparition of the witch of the night, that the mare comes in as a substitute for the witch. Of course, according to good form, Jones looks on the side of the signified, which leads him to find everything in everything. There is no god in ancient mythology, or even modern, who escapes being in some way a horse. Minerva and Hippias, Mars, Odin, Hermes, Zeus, all have horses, all are horses, everything is on horseback in this book. After that it is not difficult to show that the root MR, which is both mère, mara, and also la mer, in French, carries by itself alone this signification which is all the easier to find in that it covers just about everything.

Evidently, we shall not proceed by this path. It is certain that the horse, as image, carries all sorts of analogical propensities which make it a receptacle favorable to the symbolization of natural elements coming to the foreground of the infantile preoccupation at the turn where we find Little Hans. But we will not go on to suppose that all the explanations are to be found on this side. The accent that I am trying to place here, which is always and everywhere omitted, is different -- what I am underlining is that at a critical moment in the evolution of Little Hans, a certain signifier is brought forth, which plays a polarizing, recrystallizing role. No doubt it is in a way that is pathological, but it is nonetheless constitutive. The horse from then on begins to punctuate the external world with signals. I remind you that Freud, later, speaking of the phobia of Little Hans, will

---

2 The English "mare" is in addition homophonic with the French mère, "mother," and with mer (the sea), thus giving a translinguistic play on
speak of the function of the horse as signal. These signals restructure the world for Hans, by marking it profoundly with all sorts of limits, whose justness and function we must now understand.

These limits being constituted, there is also constituted a possibility of transgressing the limit, by fantasy or by desire, we shall see -- and with it, the possibility of an obstacle, an inhibition, which arrests the subject on this side of the limit. All of that is done with that element which is a signifier, the horse.

To understand the function of the horse, the path is not to go looking for the equivalent of the horse -- whether it is Little Hans himself, or his mother, or his father. It is successively all of that, and still many other things. It can be all of that, it can be anything whatever in all of that, in so far as Little Hans makes what I shall call successive essays to apply the signifying system corresponding to the horse onto his world in an effort to restructure it, and in that the horse is found, during the course of these essays, to correspond at a given moment to a given one of the major component elements of his world, namely his father, his mother, himself, his little sister Anna, little playfellows, the fantasmatic little girls, and many other things. The function of the horse, when it is introduced as a central point in the phobia, is to be a new term which has precisely at first the property of being an obscure signifier [un signifiant obscur]. You can almost take the play on words that I have just made wholesale -- it is in certain ways insignificant. That is its most profound function -- it plays the role of a hollow, whose function is to recast the real in a new way.

We can understand the necessity for that.

3 The terms of the play on words in French are "un signifiant (obscur)" and "insignifiant." The pronunciation of "un" and "in-" being approximately homophonic, the termun signifiant ("a signifier") can be heard as the term insignifiant ("insignificant"), producing the sense, "an insignificant signifier."
Up until the moment that the horse surged up, everything had been going very well for Little Hans.

The apparition of the horse is secondary. It follows the anxiety. Freud underlines that it is shortly after the apparition of the diffuse signal of anxiety that the horse begins to function. And it is by following the development of this function up to the end, knowing everything that can be done with the horse, that we shall manage to understand it.

Little Hans thus finds himself suddenly in a decompensated situation. And why? Up until a certain moment, which is the 5th or 6th of February 1908, that is, about a trimester before his fifth year, he seems to support everything very well. To say it as directly as possible in the terms of reference given by the observation, the game between him and his mother is played on the basis of the lure of seduction, which up until then has fully sufficed. The relation of love with the mother introduces the child to the imaginary dynamic into which he is initiated little by little. I would almost say, so as to introduce the relation to the breast from another angle, as the bosom, that he insinuates himself into it. We have at every moment from the beginning of the observation seen Hans's play with the hidden object unfold in a sort of perpetual veiling and unveiling. But, in the relations with the mother which are pursued up until here on the basis of this game, in this dialogue around what is symbolically present or absent, something occurs, which is the introduction of certain real elements. And suddenly, for Hans, all the rules are violated.
Two things appear. The first is this. At the moment when Hans is most able to reply *cash* to the game, I mean finally to show his little twig, for real, and in its most glorious state, -- he is rebuffed. His mother tells him literally that not only is this forbidden, but that it is a *Schweinerei*, a bit of piggishness, something repugnant. We cannot help but see an essential element there. Freud, in addition, underlines that the effects of the depreciative intervention do not come right away, but as a sort of backlash reaction. He literally underlines the term of *after effect* [*aprèς coup*] that I am making every effort to promote into the foreground of analytic reflection. He says *nachträglich Gehorsam*, obedience after the fact. *Gehör* is hearing and audition, *Gehorsam*, submission, docility. It is not immediately that such menaces and rebuffs have an effect, they have an effect after a while.

I am far from being partial here -- the signifier is not the only thing at play. There is also a real element of comparison, *Vergleichung*, which Freud clearly underlines, and not only between the lines. Hans has been able, by elements of comparison between big and little, to situate in its proper measure the reduced, weak, ridiculously insufficient character of the organ in question. The real element which is added in surplus comes to freight the rebuff, which for him already shakes the edifice of his relations with his mother to its foundations.

Add to that -- a second element -- the presence of little Anna. She at first was taken from various aspects, multiple angles, through various modes of assimilation. But more and more, she comes as witness that in some way, another element of the game is very present, which can also put the entire edifice at risk, the principles and the bases of the game, going so far as perhaps even to make him himself, on occasion, superfluous. Those who have experience of the child know that these are the facts of common experience, which the analysis of children always puts within our reach.

What concerns us for the moment is the way in which the signifier will operate in the middle of all that. What must it do? One must go to the texts, know how to read, and make a construction. When things are

---

4 English in the original.
reproduced with the same elements but recomposed in a different way, we must know how to register them as they are without searching out distant analogical references, allusions to internal events which we extrapolate and suppose in the subject. It is not, as we say in ordinary language, the symbol of something that he is cogitating, but really something else -- there are laws in which the structuration, not of the real, but of the symbolic, is manifest, and they play amongst themselves. They operate, I might say, quite alone, in a way that is autonomous, or at least it is useful for us to consider them thus for a while, so as to see if this operation of reworking or of restructuring is really what is operating here.

I shall now illustrate it for you.

On March 22nd, as on every Sunday -- an essential point -- the father took his Little Hans to see his grandmother in Lainz. Let us draw the sites.

[Drawing, p. 309]

*Hans's House*

**HANS'S HOUSE**

The heart of the city of Vienna is located on the banks of an arm of the Danube. The house of Little Hans's parents is in this part of the inner city, enclosed by the *Ring*.

[Drawing, p. 310]
+ Hans's House

THE RAILWAY NETWORK
Behind the house is the customs office. A little further, the famous station, about which they often speak in the observation. Facing it, there is a very pretty museum, the Museum für Kunst Industrie. It is to this station that Hans thinks of going when he has made some progress and succeeds in passing a certain field which is in front of the house. Everything allows me to think that the house is situated very much towards the end of the street behind the Customs House, because he once alludes to the fact that the track of the Nordbahn is very near them, though the Nordbahn is on the other side of the Danube canal. There are not a few little railroad systems in Vienna, arriving from the east, from the west, the north, the south, and in addition, a number of small local trains, in particular a track for a belt line at a lower level, probably the one onto which the young homosexual girl threw herself -- I spoke of her at the beginning of the year. Two tracks are of interest in the adventure of Little Hans. A connecting train, the Verbindungsbahn, whose function is to link the Nordbahn to the Südbahnstation, is behind this block of houses, with among them the house of Little Hans's, from which he can see the carts, -- the light wagons, as Freud says -- that he so much longs to climb. In the interval, he has touched upon another station. It is this railway, subterranean at places, that goes towards Lainz.

This Sunday of March 22nd, the father proposes to Little Hans a route that is a bit more complicated than usual.

[Drawing, p. 311]

+ Hans's House
They will go one stop on the Stadtbahn to Schönbrunn, which is the Viennese Versailles. The zoo that Little Hans visits with his father and which plays such an important role in the observation is there. It is a Versailles that is very much less grandiose. The Hapsbourg dynasty was probably much closer to the people than that of the Bourbons, because one sees very well that, at this epoch when the city was far less extensive, the horizon is very near. After the visit to the park at Schönbrunn, they take a steam tram -- at that time the tramline number 60 -- which takes them to Lainz. In order to give you the scale, Lainz is about the same distance from Vienna as Vaucresson from Paris. This tram continues to Mauer and Mödling. When they simply go to the grandmother's, they take a tram which passes much more to the south, and which goes directly to Lainz. There is another line of trams which links this direct line and the Stadtbahn. The connection is made at the station of the famous Sankt-Veit.

That will allow you to understand what Little Hans says the day that he has a fantasy of leaving Lainz in order to come home, when he says that the train left with him and his grandmother, and that his father, who had missed it, saw the second train arriving from Sankt-Veit. Thus this network forms a virtual loop -- the two lines do not communicate, but both simply make it possible to reach Lainz.

Some days later, during the conversation with his father about the giraffe, Little Hans will produce something that is classed among the numerous things that he swears he has thought. Even when they absolutely want to make him say that he dreamed them, he clearly underlines that these are things that he has thought -- Nein, nicht getraumt; ich hab' mir's gedacht.

The essential point to retain is that the Verkehrskomplex enters here. Freud points it out himself -- it is entirely natural, he says, at the point to
which things have come, that what relates to horses and to all that they are
going to do, the Pferdekomplex, should extend further in the transport
system. In other terms, on the horizon drawn by the circuits of the horse,
there are the circuits of the railway.

That is so true and evident that the first explanation that Hans gives to
his father when he gives him the details of the experience of his phobia, is
tied to the fact that, in front of his house, there is a court and a very wide
lane. One understands why it is such a grand affair for Hans to cross them.
In front of the house, the carts harnessed with horses come to load and
unload. They line up along the loading ramp.

Thus, from the first time that Little Hans begins to explain himself a bit
concerning the horse phobia, the tangency of the horse-circuit system with
the railway-circuit system is indicated in the clearest way.
THE LOADING RAMP

What does Little Hans say on April 5th? That one thing he would more than anything like to do would be to climb onto the cart where he has seen little street boys playing on the sacks and packages. He would go quickly, geschwind, and he could go onto the platform, that is, the unloading ramp. What does he fear? That the horses would start moving and prevent him from doing this swift little thing and then, quickly, getting down again.

That has got to have some meaning. To understand this meaning, as in understanding anything at all of the signifier's system of functioning, one must not set off from the idea -- what is the platform really doing in all of that? What does the cart really mean? What does the horse really mean? The horse is certainly something, and we shall be able at the end to say what use it has been able to serve, once we understand it through its functioning. But we can as yet know nothing of that.

Let us stay with this horse. The father stops there, everybody stops there, except the analysts, who reread the observation of Little Hans endlessly, trying to read something else there, the Three Essays, for example. The father is interested in it, and asks Little Hans why he is afraid -- Could it be, for example, because you couldn't come back? -- Oh, not at all, says Little Hans, I know very well where I live, I could always say it, and someone would bring me back. I could even come back myself, perhaps, with a cab. There is no difficulty.
Nobody seems to spend time over that, but it is striking that if Hans is afraid of something, this something is not at all simply what would suit us so well. That could even go in the direction towards which I am guiding the understanding of things -- he is in effect carried along by the situation, and the story of the cart would be a fine metaphor for it. But no, not at all, he knows very well that he will always come back to his point of departure. If we have just a little bit of understanding, we can say that this is perhaps just what is at question, namely, that in effect, whatever one does, one cannot get out of it. A simple indication that I make in passing. To confine ourselves to that would perhaps be proof of too much subtlety and not enough rigor.

One must rather perceive that there are in the observation situations which cannot be brought into relation with that. We need to pause there, because we can see now clearly that this is the very phenomenology of the phobia. We see there the whole ambiguity of what is desired and what is feared. We might think that it is the fact of leaving and of being carried away that causes Little Hans anxiety, but according to his own testimony, the fact of leaving remains outside it, since he knows very well that one always comes back. Thus, what can it mean that he wants in some way to go beyond?

Certainly, this formula, that he wants to go beyond, is one that we can maintain provisionally as a sort of minimum construction. If everything in his system is in a certain disarray because of the fact that one no longer respects the rules of the game, he can feel completely caught purely and simply in an untenable situation -- the most untenable element of the situation being not to know, himself, where he is.

I am now going to bring together other elements that in a certain way reproduce what is indicated by the fantasy of the phobic fear.

First fantasy. Little Hans is going to leave with the horses, the unloading ramp will become more distant, and he will come back and flow into confluence with his mama, which is too much desired, or too feared, who knows?
When we have read and reread this observation, we remember two other stories, at least.

There is first a fantasy which does not arise at just any moment, and which is said to occur when he is with his father. The date is April 11th. This time too, it is on a train track, but they are in a carriage. Hans is with his father, they arrive at the station of Gmunden, where they are going to spend their summer vacation, they collect their things, they put on their clothes. It seems that at that epoch, perhaps less relaxed than our own, the gathering and loading of baggage always represented a concern. Freud himself makes something of it in the case of the young homosexual girl, as a term of comparison for the getting under way of an analysis -- the first stage of an analysis corresponds to assembling the luggage, the second to loading it on the train. Hans and his father have not had the time to put on their clothes when the train starts off again.

There follows a third fantasy which Hans reports to his father on April 21st, and which we call the scene on the platform. It occurs just before what we shall call the great dialogue with the father -- these are conventional labels designed to simplify taking our bearings later on. Hans thought that he left Lainz with his grandmother, whom he goes to see every Sunday with his father. They tell us absolutely nothing about her in the entire observation, which leaves us a lot to think concerning the formidable character of this lady, for it was much easier for contemporaries than it is for me to situate the whole family. The Lainzoise, as Little Hans calls her, is said to have boarded the train with him, before the father managed to come down from the crosswalk, and they took off, but as trains pass often, and one can see the line as far as Sankt-Veit, Hans says that he arrived on the platform in time to take the second train with his father.

How has Little Hans who had already left, come back again? That is really the impasse, and in fact, an impasse that nobody has succeeded in clarifying. The father asks these questions, and the observation consecrates twelve lines to what really could have happened in Little Hans’s mind. As for us, let us be content with our diagrams.
THE IMPOSSIBLE DEPARTURE

In the first schema, he goes off in a pair with the grandmother. In the second, mysteriously, there is the path of the impossible, of a non-solution. In the third, he finishes by setting off again in a pair, this time with the father. In other terms, there is something here which cannot fail to strike us if we already know the two poles of the observation -- at the departure, the maternal drama, evident and unceasingly underlined, and at the end, I am now with my father. One cannot help but see the relation between the leaving and the implacable return towards the mother, and the fact that one fine day at least, one dreams of leaving in one sure step with the father. It is a simple indication, but it is clear one, except that it is impossible, and one absolutely does not see how Little Hans, who has already left at his grandmother's side, can set off again with his father. That is possible only in the imaginary.

What we see appearing here as in filigree is the fundamental schema which I have said is that of every mythical progress -- one sets off from one impossibility, from one impasse, to arrive at another impasse and another impossibility. In the first case, it is impossible to get out of this mother, one comes back to her always, don't tell me that it is because she isn't there that I am anxious. In the other case, one thinks that one has only to make a permutation and leave with the father. Hans himself thought it, to the point of writing it to the Professor, which is the best use that he can make of his thoughts. Only, it appears in the text of the myth that it is
impossible, and that there is always somewhere something yawning wide open.

Things are not limited to that. The elements of the schema themselves give us occasion to relate them to the schema of harnessing.

To what is one harnessed? That is surely one of the primary elements in the apparition of the choice of the signifier horse, and in its use. It is useless to distinguish the direction in which the coupling is made, for the direction in which Hans operates is dictated to him by favorable occasions furnished by the function of the horse. We can even say that this guided the choice of the horse for him. He himself takes care to show us its origin when he tells at what moment he thinks he got this foolishness. He says it April 9th, during a dialogue with his father, at a moment which is no more indifferent than others, and we shall see what it follows.

Hans was playing horse, and then something happened which has a very great importance in giving the first model of the fantasy of the wound, which will show up later in reference to the father, but which at first was extracted from the real, precisely from a horse game in which his friend Fritz was wounded in the foot.

To a question of his father's, Hans answers that the horse can be ohne Wagen, without a carriage, and in this case, the carriage stays at home, or on the contrary, the horse can be harnessed to a carriage. Hans himself spells out that the horse is at first and above all an element that is made to be harnessed, it is removable, attachable. This ambiceptive character which we find again and again in the functioning of the horse, is given in the first experience, whence Hans extracts it. The horse, before being a horse, is an element which links and coordinates, and it is precisely in this function of mediation that we find it again throughout the development of the myth. If there were need to establish something that is confirmed on every side by what I shall next develop concerning the function of the signifier of the horse — we have from the mouth of Hans himself an indication that it is in this direction, of the grammatical coordination of the signifier, that we must go.
It is in effect at the very moment when he articulates this with regard to the horse, that Hans himself says — *that's when I got this foolishness, da hab' ich die Dummheit gekriegt*. The verb *kriegen*, to catch, which is always used concerning the foolishness, is also used to speak of *getting children*, as a woman speaks of getting pregnant. That has not passed unnoticed by some authors, namely the father and Freud. There is a long note by Freud concerning this, and everybody is interested in it, to the point that it has given a bit of difficulty to the translator, which for once, has been very elegantly resolved. Hans always says — *wegen dem Pferd* — that is his refrain. *I got this foolishness because of the horse*. Freud cannot mistake it, and identifies the fact that an association of words can be made between *wegen* and *Wägen,* in the plural, which means *carriages*. That is how the unconscious functions.

In other terms, the horse draws the carriage exactly in the same way as the something that the word *wegen* draws after itself. There is thus no abuse in saying that it is precisely at the moment when Hans is the prey of something which is not even a *why* -- for beyond the point where the rules of the game are respected, there is no longer anything but trouble, lack of being, lack of a *why* -- that he in some way drags in a *because* which responds to nothing, using something which is exactly this pure and simple *x* which is the horse.

In other words, at the birth of the phobia, at the very point when it arises, we find ourselves before the typical process of metonymy, that is to say, before the passage of the weight of meaning, or more exactly the interrogation that the present matter implies, from one point of the textual line to the point which follows. That is the very definition of the structure of metonymy. It is because the weight of this *wegen* is entirely veiled and transferred to the term which comes just after, *dem Pferd*, that this term takes on its articulatory value, and assumes every hope of a solution. The gap in Hans's situation is entirely related to this transfer of grammatical weight.

---

5 *"Wegen"* and *"Wägen"* are homophonic.
In the end, what we are doing here is only finding the concrete associations again, and not those imagined in I do not know what psychological super-space, and there are two sorts -- first, metaphorical association, which responds to one word with another which can be substituted for it -- secondly, metonymic association, which responds to a word by giving the next word that can come in a sentence. You find these two types of response in psychological experience. You call them *associations* because you absolutely want that to take place somewhere in the cerebral neurons. As for myself, I know nothing about that. As least, in so far as I am an analyst, I want to know nothing about it. I find these two types of association that are called metaphor and metonymy where they are, in the text of this bath of language in which Hans is immersed.

It is there that he found the original metonymy provided by the horse, the principal term around which all of his system will be reconstituted.

8 May 1957
PERMUTATIONS

Don't run away from me!
The house that takes off.
Be a real father.
Pliers.

Here, then, we have come to what is played out between the 5th and 6th of April. This moment in temporal space is not necessarily to be confounded with chronological distance.

We have followed the explanation that Little Hans gives his father on April 5th concerning the fantasies he forges, and in which he expresses his desire to take a quick slide on the cart that is usually being unloaded in front of his house.

We have insisted, in this regard, on the ambiguity of the anxiety to which Hans gives form in this fantasy. It might appear that the anxiety arises within the simple perspective of the fear of separation, but we have noted that it is not so much being separated from his mother that Hans fears, since, faced with his father's question, he himself says precisely that he is sure, and almost too sure, of being able to get back.

It is on April 9th in the afternoon that the wegen dem Pferd comes up, while Hans is revealing a moment that seems to him significative of the way that he got his foolishness. It is not for nothing, as you well know,

1 *La baraque qui fout le camp*. A baraque is a temporary shelter, often made of wood. It signifies "hut" or a "hovel," and is the source for the
that in the retrospections of memory, the moment when Hans gets the foolishness is far from being single. He says each time with as much conviction -- *I got this foolishness.* Everything is founded on that, for it is only a matter here of a symbolic retrospection, tied to the signification, indicated at every moment, of the horse's purivalence as a signifier.

There are at least two moments which we have already seen when he says -- *I got this foolishness.*

There is the moment when he brings up that *wegen dem Pferd* in which I found the cadence of my last lesson, but at the price of a certain leap which did not leave me the time to indicate the context in which this metonymy clearly appears. It is correlative to the story of the fall of Fritz when they are playing horses [*dada*] in the country, at Gmunden.

At another moment he says -- *I got this foolishness when I was out with Mama.* The same text indicates the paradox of this explanation, for if he has not been apart from Mama for the whole day, it is that the latter already had her arms full of his intense anxiety. He has thus already begun to be anxious, and I would further say -- the phobia of horses is already declared in the context of his being in her company.

That is where we are, on one hand in Freud's text, and on the other, in the beginning of a deciphering. I gave you this deciphering the last time in a graphic design that I drew for you in three forms.

It concerns the things that Hans has thought, elaborated. It is never a question of a dream. He always says to his father -- *I thought, gedacht,* a given thing. We recognize in that the very material with which we are used to working when we work with children, imaginary material, which is always rich with resonances. But for all the imaginary resonances that we can sound out here, I can show you that they are no substitute for that succession of structures whose series I shall today try to complete.

These structures are all marked by the same exemplary detail. One finds in the fantasy of April 5th, completed by the father's questioning, the idea of a return by Hans to his mother's side, after his departure with the cart.

---

2 Child's language for "to be on horseback." The word has a secondary
In the fantasy of April 21st, another important moment in the evolution, Hans imagines, not without reason, his departure being made with the grandmother -- then, across a gap,\(^3\) a yawning chasm, the father rejoins him, Little Hans, in a movement that can also very well be inscribed in this cycle, on the condition that we note an enigmatic impossibility in the reunion of the two persons separated just a moment ago.

[Drawing, p. 320]

April 5

April 21

We shall engage further in a confirmative exploration of this exhaustion of the possibilities of the signifier, which here is the object at the original level that I am introducing to you. This enigmatic circuit of the horse, manifestly anxiety-provoking in the first example, appears as impossible in the other, and I have already indicated its tangency with the larger circuit constituted by the communications system. The formula for it is precisely expressed in the clearest manner by Freud -- we cannot be astonished that Hans, playing on the communications system, should pass progressively from the circuit of the horse to that of the railway.

Everything takes place, in sum, between two nostalgias -- nostalgia comes from νοστοσ, return --, to come and to come back. The return is affirmed by Freud as fundamental with regard to the object. It is never, he underlines, other than in the form of something refound that the object will be constituted in the development of the subject. The distancing of the object is necessary here. This necessity is strictly speaking correlative with the symbolic dimension. But if the object grows distant, it is so that the subject will find it again.

meaning, "idée fixe," obsession.

\(^3\) English in the original.
That is the truth which is half avoided, indeed, lost, in the insistence in psychoanalysis today upon accentuating frustration, without understanding that the latter is only the first stage of the return to the object, which, to be constituted, must be lost and refound.

1

Let us recall what is at stake in the history of Little Hans.

For Freud, it is not about anything other than the Oedipus complex, whose drama introduces a new dimension, needed for the constitution of a completed human world, and in particular for the constitution of the object. The latter, far from being correlative with an instinctual maturation supposedly genital, depends upon the acquisition of a certain symbolic dimension.

Which? I can designate it directly, given the discourse which I have held here and which I suppose known to you. It is what is at stake each time that we have to do with the apparition of a phobia, and it is manifest here -- it is a question of what, from any angle whatsoever, comes to reveal itself to the child as the fundamental privation by which the image of the mother is marked. This privation is intolerable, since, in the end, upon it hangs the fact that the child appears himself menaced by the supreme privation, namely, not to be able in any way to fulfill the mother. And it is to this privation that the father must bring something. It is as simple as copulation -- let him give her what she does not have -- what she does not
have, let him give it her --*Dear God, let him give it to her.* That is really what is at stake in the drama of Little Hans, and we see it revealed little by little as the dialogue continues.

The environmental picture, as one calls it these days, of Little Hans's family circle is not, they say, sufficiently sketched. What do they need -- when it is enough to read, and not even between the lines, to see the constant and dutiful presence of the father deployed there, while the mother is only signaled out when the father asks if what she has just narrated is exact. In sum, in the observation the mother is never with Little Hans, while the father, so good, so gentle, so Viennese, is there, devoted to protecting his Little Hans, and in addition, to doing the work. And every Sunday, he goes to see his Mama, with Little Hans it is understood. One cannot but be struck by the ease with which Freud, whose prevalent ideas one knows, accepts that Little Hans, who has lived in the parents' bedroom until the age of four, has certainly never seen any sort of scene which might have made him uneasy about the fundamental nature of coitus. The father affirms it in what he writes, and Freud does not argue the question -- he probably has his own ideas about it, since the mother was his patient.

At one moment of this major scene, in the dialogue with his father, Little Hans tells him in some sort -- *You must eifern.* The expression is almost untranslatable into French, as Fliess's son, who concentrated his attention on this scene, remarked, and if he does not get out of it completely to his honor, his observations are extremely just. He is able to call upon the biblical resonance of a jealous God, that God who is identical to the figure of the father in Freudian doctrine. *You have to be a father, you have to want mine, all that has to be true.* Before Hans will be able to say that, water will pass under the bridge. He will need a certain time to arrive at this moment.

So let us ask right away whether, in the course of the crisis Little Hans is in any way satisfied on that point. Why would he be? -- if his father is in that critical position whose appearance in the background must be

---

4 *Bon Dieu, qu'il le lui foute.*
understood as a fundamental element of the opening in which the phobic fantasy arises. It is in no way thinkable that this dialogue could have, if one may put it thus, psychoanalyzed, not Little Hans, but his father, and that at the end of the story which is resolved happily enough in four months, his father should be more virile than at the beginning. In other words, if it is to this real father that Little Hans so imperiously addresses his appeal, there is no reason why it should have made him truly arise.

If Little Hans arrives at a fortunate solution to the crisis which he has entered, it is worth the trouble to wonder if we can consider that at the end of the crisis, we are at an issue from the Oedipus complex that is completely normal. Does the genital position, in quotation marks, at which Little Hans arrives, suffice by itself alone to assure you that his relation with women will in the future be all that one could imagine as most to be wished?

The question remains open. And not only does it remain open, but we can already make a number of remarks concerning it. If Little Hans is promised to heterosexuality, this guarantee is perhaps not enough to make us believe that it will suffice to assure him a plenary standing, if one may say it, of the feminine object.

We are forced, you see, to proceed by concentric touches. We must stretch the canvas, and the painting, between the different poles to which it is attached, in order to assure it a normal fixity, and for it to be that screen upon which we can follow this particular phenomenon, namely, what occurs in the development of the phobia, which is correlative with the treatment itself.

To illustrate the breathless side of the father in this story, a very simple little example comes to mind, which will enliven the investigation. After a long explanation by Little Hans to his father concerning the love that he feels for the latter -- he has spent the morning on that -- they have breakfast together, the father gets up from the table, and Hans says to him - - *Vatti, renn mir nicht davon!*

The translation, irresistibly marked by I do not know what culinary style, gives us this sentence which is still not wrong -- *Papa, stay! Don’t go*
off at a gallop. The father emphasizes that he is struck by the expression "renn." It is rather -- *Don't run like that.* And even, because in German, it is permitted -- *Don't run away from me like that.* We take the question of the analysis of the signifier to the level of a hieroglyphic deciphering of the mythological function, but it still remains that paying attention to the signifier first means *knowing how to read.* That is the preliminary condition for knowing how to translate correctly. There is a regrettable defect here in the just resonance that the work of Freud can have for French readers.

So we are here, then, with the father. We have already almost inscribed on the schema the place that he must occupy, for it is by him, through him, through an identification with him, that Little Hans must find the normal path of that larger circuit onto which it is time for him to pass. This is so true that it is confirmed by what occurs as a doubling of the famous consultation of March 30th.

It is the consultation at Freud's house, to which Little Hans has been brought by his father. For me it is the illustration of the doubling, indeed of that tripling of the paternal function, which I insist is essential in any understanding of the Oedipus complex, as well as in an analytic treatment as such, in that it brings the *name of the father* into play. The father brings Hans before Freud, who represents the super-father, the symbolic father. At the moment when Freud, not without himself underlining it with a trace of humor, prophesies, and immediately tackles the schema of the Oedipus complex, Little Hans listens to him with an amused interest, in the tone of-* How can he know all that? After all, he's not the confidant of God.* The truly humorous relation that, throughout the observation, sustains the rapport of Little Hans with that distant father who is Freud is exemplary, and underscores both the necessity of this transcendent dimension, and how much one is wrong always to incarnate it in the form of terror and of respect. It is no less fruitful in this other register, where its presence allows Little Hans to unfold his problem.

But as I have told you, other things occur in parallel and have much more weight in the progress of Little Hans. Read the observation, and you
will see that on this day of Monday, the 30th of March, when he is brought to Freud, the father’s report signals out two things, whose importance he does not minimize, but whose exact function is a bit obscured by the fact that he reports both of them in the preamble, whereas the second is a remark made by Little Hans on the return from the consultation.

First thing. I remind you that this is Monday, the day after the Sunday when they complicated the visit to the grandmother with a little outing to Schönbrunn. Little Hans tells his father this fantasy -- he made a transgression with him. One cannot say it any other way, it is the very image of transgression. This extremely pure transgression is designated by a cord under which they both pass. It is the cord about which, in the garden of Schönbrunn, Hans had asked his father -- Why is this rope there? -- It is to keep people from going onto the lawn, says the father. What keeps them from going under it? -- Children who are well brought up, the father replies, do not go under the ropes, especially when they are there to indicate that, one must not cross them. Hans does not miss the chance to reply to this with a fantasy. --But let’s make the transgression together. It is this together that is so important. And then, they go to tell the guardian -- Look what we did. And just like that, he ships them both off. The importance of this fantasy leaves no doubt, if one understands it in its context. It is a matter of passing into the regime of the father, and of doing something that gets them shipped off together, zusammengepackt. The question of an embarkation that was missed thus becomes clear, on the condition that one takes the schema in reverse, for it is in the very nature of the signifier to present things in a way that is strictly operative. It is around this embarkation that the whole question revolves -- it is a matter of knowing if he can embark with his father. But there is no question of his embarking with his father, since it is precisely this function that his father is unable to serve, at least in the common sense of the word embark. All of the later elaborations of Little Hans serve to bring him closer to this end that is at once desired and impossible. It is indicative that this should be already at work in the first fantasy which I have just explained to you, which occurs just before the consultation with Freud.
Here then is the second fantasy, which comes in as if to show us that we cannot ignore the reciprocal function of the two circuits, the little one, the maternal circuit, and the big one, the paternal circuit. This fantasy comes still closer to the goal. Coming back from Freud's house in the evening, Little Hans again gives himself up to a transgression -- he admits having thought that morning that he was with his father in a train, and that they both of them broke a window. Again, this is the best that one could have as a signifier of a rupture towards the outside. Here again, they are *mitgenommen*, taken away together by the police agent. Once again, that is the point, the terminus of the fantasy.

On April 2nd, that is to say three days after the observation, a first improvement, about which we must suspect that the father himself has given it a bit of a push, since he corrects himself before Freud -- *This improvement was perhaps not so marked as I told you*. Still, there is a sort of flight -- that day Little Hans begins to show that he can take a few steps more from the main door of the house. Let us not forget that for the family, in the context of the period, this door represents propriety, what is done. Faced with changing apartments the mother says -- *Changing floors is of no importance, but you owe the main door to your son*. The main door is thus not for nothing in the topology of what concerns Little Hans.

As I told you the last time, this main door and the frontier that it marks is point by point doubled by what one sees perhaps less close at hand than I told you the last time, but which is still within sight; namely, the facade of the entry to the station from which the city train leaves, the one that regularly takes them to the grandmother's house.

In effect, the last time, thanks to some information carefully gathered, I gave you a little schema in which the house of Little Hans's parents was situated in the street behind the Customs House, the *Hintere Zollamtstrasse*. That is not entirely exact. I realized it thanks to something that reveals once again how one is blind to what one has under one's eyes, and which is called the signifier, the letter.

---

5 *Porte cochère*. Literally, the coach door.
In the very schema that we have in the observation given by Freud, there is the name of the street, and it is the Untere Viaductgasse.

The UNTERE VIADUCTGASSE

There is a street that is hidden, which allows one to suppose that there is, on one side of the track, a small building. This is indicated on the maps of Vienna, and corresponds to what Freud calls the Lagerhaus. It is the special depot used for the concession of taxes on the import of comestibles into Vienna. That explains all the connections that are there together -- the route of the Nordbahn train, the wagonnet that plays a particular role in Hans's fantasy, the depot of which Freud spoke, which is just in front of the house -- and at the same time, this house which has a good view of the entry to the station.

Thus, we have laid the scene. It is the stage on which the drama will unfold. The poetic, and if you will, tragic, wit [esprit] of Little Hans will allow us to follow its construction.

---

6 English in the original.
How to understand that the passage to a larger circle should have become a necessity for Little Hans?

I have already said it sufficiently -- everything hangs from the point of impasse which has arisen in Hans's relations with his mother. We find it indicated at every moment. It was his mother who had assured his insertion into the world up until that moment. We can grasp the crisis that the child then experiences literally translated into this anxiety which prevents Little Hans from going further than a certain circle, within sight of his house.

Obsessed as we are by a certain number of prevailing significations, it often happens that we do not see what is yet inscribed in the most evident way in the text of a symptom that pertains as much to the level of the signifier as does phobia. It is towards his house that Little Hans turns back anxiously at the moment of embarking. Why insist on not understanding that we have only to translate that in the same way that Hans presents it? What he is afraid of is not simply that one thing or another will not be there when he comes back to the house, all the more so in that the father is not always within the circuit, and it seems that the mother also has a good hand in that. What is in question at the moment that Little Hans has reached is, as the fantasy in which he is on the wagonnet expresses it, that the whole house will go away, that the whole hovel take off. It is the house that is essentially at stake. It is the house that is in question from the moment that he understands that this mother can be missing, and also that he has remained totally solidary with her. What he fears is not so much being separated from her, as being carried off with her God knows where. We find this element flourishing at every moment in the observation -- in so far as he is soldered to the mother, he no longer knows where he is.

I shall refer only to one episode here. It is the second occasion, on April 5th, that I underlined just before, when Hans brings up the outbreak of his foolishness in a way that is perhaps a bit arbitrary. He was with his mother, he says, and he makes it clear that it was just after the purchase of a vest.
Then, they saw an omnibus horse that fell to the ground. It was one of those omnibuses from within which he could see the horses. It was a horse with a big behind, like those I have seen myself. And at the moment when it falls, Hans senses something that signals to him that -- *It will always be like that now. All the omnibus horses will fall.*

To make the Japanese flower in the water of the observation revive, why not ask ourselves simply following the father's curiosity, what this moment of the day when Hans was with his mother means. The father himself asks -- *Then where did you go that day with your Mama?* One
sees the program unfold -- they went to the Skating Ring, then to the Kaffeehaus, then right after, there was the fall, and finally -- this is an episode which breaks with what we have been following up until here -- they went to the confectioner's. The fact that he went beim Zuckerbäcker mit der Mammi, to the confectioner's with Mama, that he stayed with her the whole day, seems to indicate that there is, I would not say a hole, nor a censure made by the child, but surely that something happened. Hans clearly underlines that he was with Mama and not with someone else who was perhaps there hovering about them. This with Mama, mit der Mammi, has the same value in the discourse of Little Hans, the same accent, the same role, as when he emphasized -- Nicht mit der Mariedl, ganz allein mit der Mariedl.

The tone in which the father pushes the interrogation so far, then very quickly abandons it, allows us to perceive a detail that is no less confirmed earlier, when Little Hans finds his father in bed, and indicates that when the father is absent, he fears that the latter will not come home again. Have I ever threatened to leave? asks the father? -- No one has ever told me that you would leave, but Mama told me one day that she would go away. To which the father, to caulk the abyss, says -- She said that because you were naughty.

In effect, at each instant one can see very clearly what is at stake. Without pushing further an investigation that has the air of a detective story, let us say that this is what really puts the solidarity of his parents' household into question for Little Hans, and we find it perfectly unraveled in the catamnesis of the observation. It is at this point that the anxiety of being carried away with the maternal shelter lies, which shows its presence clearly enough from the first fantasy.

If the horse is there with the property of representing the fall with which Little Hans is threatened, there is also the danger that is expressed by the horse's bite.

Is this bite, the fear of which arises at the moment when the crisis begins because of the fact that Little Hans can manifestly no longer satisfy

\[\text{English in the original.}\]
his mother -- is this bite a retort? One might imagine that one sees here something that is used in a confused way in the idea of the return of the sadistic impulse which is so important, as you know, in Kleinian themes. But that is not so much what is at stake in what I have indicated, namely, in what the child uses to crush his disappointment in love. On the other hand, if it is disappointing, how can one not see that he is also on the brink of being engulfed by it? The mother, unsatiated and deprived in a way that is untenable, can also bite him. The danger of that has become more and more menacing because of her very privation, and it is incomprehensible, since he cannot bite back. So the horse always represents both falling and biting. Those are its two characteristics. I indicate that here, inasmuch as, in the first circuit, we only see the element of the bite as in some way avoided.

Let us continue, and punctuate what follows from a precise moment, for which we shall have to give an account, and reveal how it occurred, even to the point of taking up the succession of Hans's fantasies one by one. From this moment on, a certain number of other fantasies are produced, which punctuate what I have called the succession of mythical permutations.

Myth on an individual level is distinguished by all sorts of characteristics that belong to a fully developed mythology. The latter is the base of the whole social position in the world, as is patent where myths are present and functioning. But even where they are apparently absent, as is the case in our scientific civilization, you must not believe that they are not there somewhere. Although an individual myth can in no way be restored to an identity with mythology, one characteristic is still common to both -- the function of being a solution for a situation locked in an impasse, like that of Little Hans between his father and his mother. An individual myth reproduces in miniature the fundamental characteristic of mythic development wherever we can grasp it sufficiently well. It consists in sum in confronting an impossible situation with the successive articulation of all of the forms of impossibility in the solution.
Thus mythic creation is a reply to a question. It courses the complete circle of what appears both as a possible opening and as an opening that is impossible to take. The circuit accomplished, something is realized, which signifies that the subject has risen to the level of the question. That is why Hans is a neurotic and not a pervert.

It is not artificial to distinguish the direction of his evolution from that of another possible direction. This direction is indicated in the observation itself, and I shall show it to you the next time. But I can already say that everything that occurs concerning the maternal culottes indicates in negative the path that Hans could have taken towards the side that ends in fetishism.

The little pair of culottes are not there for anything other than to show us a solution which would have been that Hans became attached to these little culottes behind which there is nothing, but on which he might have desired to paint all that he could wish. Only, it is precisely because Little Hans is not a simple lover of nature that he is a metaphysician. He carries the question to where it is, which is to the point where something is lacking. And there, he asks, where is the cause [raison] -- in the sense that one says mathematical cause -- for this lack in being. And he will, just as well as the collective spirit of any primitive tribe, behave with a rigor that we can recognize, and make a tour of the possible solutions, with a battery of chosen signifiers. Do not ever forget that the signifier is not there to represent a signification, but to fill the gaps in a signification that signifies nothing. It is because the signification is literally lost, because the thread is lost, as in the fairy tale of Tom Thumb, that the pebbles of signification come up to fill the hole and the void.

The last time, I gave you three examples of these fantasies -- the fantasy of the wagon next to the loading ramp, that of missing the descent from the train at Gmunden, and finally that of the departure with the grandmother and the return to the father despite its evident impossibility.

Now we are going to make a series of another suite of fantasies which illustrate what I am telling you, in that, if we know how to read them, they
The first fantasy in the series will immediately show you where the passage is made. It takes place at a rather late moment in the progress of the dialogue between the father and Little Hans, on April 11th. It is the fantasy of the bathtub, over which everyone hovers with a sort of embarrassed tenderness, as if finding there I do not know what familiar visage, while being completely unable to say which.

The fantasy is the following. Hans is in the bathtub. I have told you enough about it for you to sense that this in the bathtub is as close as can be to in the carriage, in other words, to the fundamental in the hut---it is a question of the connection to something that is always ready to vanish, which is the platform of maternal support. And here enters someone, who is in a certain way the third party expected here, the Schlosser, the locksmith, who unscrews the bathtub. Nothing more is said--he unscrews the bathtub, then, with his drill, Bohrer, --Freud introduces, without resolving it, a note on the possibility of an equivocation with being born, geboren--he pierces the belly of Little Hans.

With the usual methods of interpretation that one uses, one can immediately try to force things, and God knows all that one could find to say about this fantasy. The father, for his part, does not miss the chance to relate it to the scene which commonly occurs with regard to the mother's bed, which is that Little Hans chases the father from it, and in some way replaces him, and he is then the object of an aggression by the father, at least if it is not one by the mother. That is not necessarily tainted with error, but to stay strictly with the facts, let us say that if the bathtub corresponds to Wägen, --to that something which is at stake for Little Hans in surmounting his solidarity with it--, it is certain that the fact that they unbolt the bathtub is something that must in any case be kept in mind.
On the other hand, that Little Hans should appear with his belly perforated, is also to be kept in mind. We can in effect conceive that in the system of permutations, it is he who in the end personally assumes the hole in the mother, the abyss, the crucial point, the final point in the question, the thing that cannot be looked at, that floats in the form of something black, never to be grasped, before the face of the horse, and precisely where he bites -- a thing into which one must not gaze. You will see that it is also Little Hans who says this, if you refer to the moment when it is a question of the mother's culottes.

Little Hans, questioned by his father despite all good sense, brings in against all his suggestions two elements, and only two. I shall tell you the second next time, when we return to the analysis of this moment, but the first is as follows -- You must write to the Professor, and tell him that I saw the culottes, that I spat, that I fell on the ground, and that I closed my eyes so as not to look. Well, in the fantasy of the bathtub, Hans does not look either, but he assumes the hole, that is, the maternal position. We are at the inverse of the Oedipus complex here, which the perspective of the signifier shows us to be so necessary, for it is only one phase of the positive Oedipus complex.

What happens next? With one of the fantasies that follow April 22nd, we come back to another position which is called that of the wagonnet. Little Hans, perfectly recognizable in the guise of a street urchin, climbs on the rail wagon, and they let him stay there completely nude one whole night, and it is very ambiguous, both a desire and a fear. It is strictly linked to the moment immediately preceding, when he says to his father, in the dialogue that I have indicated as being of capital importance -- You were there naked, als Nackter.

In an article of which I have spoken, Robert Fliess underlines the decisive character of the child's vocabulary here, as if suddenly the biblical spirit had possessed him, and this disconcerts everyone, to the point that they rush to fill in the hole, by putting it into parentheses -- He means: barefoot. Fliess very justly remarks that the style of the term must be noted, and that is it clearly inscribed in what follows that moment, where,
once again, he pleaded with his father -- Do your job. Finally, one cannot see how the mother could satisfied, at least let her be, you have to do it, that has to be true. Dass muss wahr sein means Be a real father.

It is just after he succeeds in giving birth to this formula, which shows very well what is called for in reality, that Little Hans foments the fantasy that he spends a whole night on the wagonnet in the larger circuit of the railway. He spends a whole night there, whereas, up until then, the rapport with his mother has been essentially sustained by relations furnished geschwind, at top speed. And up until then, that is what he wants. Moreover, he explains it to his father, still during the dialogue of which I am speaking, on April 21st. In effect, he says, continuing the fantasy, You have to go and strike your foot against a stone, hurt yourself, bleed, and disappear. And that will give me just the time to be in your place for an instant, but you will come back. One finds again here the rhythm of what one could call the primitive game of transgression with the mother, which is only supported precisely by this clandestine aspect.

Another fantasy, April 22nd. Little Hans spends the whole night on the wagonnet, and the next morning, they give fifty thousand Gulden -- which, at the time of the observation, was worth its weight -- to the conductor, so that he will allow the boy to continue his voyage on the same train.

Another fantasy, May 2nd, which seems to be the last in the history, the peak, the termination with which Little Hans en. This time, it is not only the locksmith, but the installation man, der Installateur, who comes with his pincers, which emphasizes the detail of unscrewing. It is inexact to translate Zange by tournevis, Schraubenzieher, screwdriver, on the pretext that there had previously been a pointed instrument, the borer, Borrer. Zange are the pincers for removing a screw. And what they unscrew is the behind of Little Hans, in order to give him another.

Another step has been taken here. The superposition of this fantasy upon that of the bathtub which precedes it is made sufficiently clear by the fact that the relation of size between this behind and that bathtub has been detailed in the most precise way by Little Hans himself. He is only
comfortable in the bathtub which they have in the house in Vienna, because there his little behind fills it well, it has its weight. And that is the whole question -- does he or does he not have some heft? There, yes, he fills the tub, he is even forced to stay seated in it. But wherever the bathtub does not offer the same guarantees, the fantasies of engulfment and the anxiety recur, which make him refuse to take a bath elsewhere, at Gmunden, or in any other bathtub that is larger.

Without, be it understood, there being an equivalence in signification, there is a superimposition on the schema of the unscrewed behind and the bathtub that was unscrewed earlier. There is also a correspondence -- though with something changed -- with the fact that the wagon takes off or does not take off, or takes off more or less quickly from the ramp to which it is momentarily coupled.

I will complete the last fantasy. The installation man then says to Little Hans -- *Turn on the other side, and show your pee-pee,* that insufficient reality which has never succeeded in seducing the mother. There, everyone completes the interpretation by saying that the installation man unscrews it in order to give him a better one. Unfortunately, that is not in the text. Nothing indicates that in the end Little Hans has completely accomplished the signifying course, the trajectory, of the castration complex.

If the castration complex is anything, it is this -- somewhere there is no penis, but the father is capable of giving another one. We would say even further -- in so far as the passage to the symbolic order is necessary, it is always necessary, up to a certain point, that the penis have been removed, then returned. Naturally, it can never be returned, because everything that is symbolic is, by definition, quite incapable of returning it. That is where the drama of the castration complex lies -- it is only symbolically that the penis is removed and restored.

But in a case like this one, we see that the penis is symbolically removed and that it is not returned. It is thus a question of knowing to what extent it has been enough for Little Hans to have made this tour.
One can say that within the perspective of the examination, it is equivalent, that Hans has made a supplementary circuit, and that the sole fact that it is a cycle or a circuit is sufficient to assure the rite of passage, and to give it a value equal to what it would be if it had been completely accomplished. At least the question arises.

Yet it remains that it is not outside the strict terrain of an analysis of the signifier that we can make our understanding of symptomatic formations develop. Before leaving you, and because I always try to end on a detail that will amuse you, I want to demonstrate that with a final remark.

What are these pincers? Where do they come from? No one has spoken of them anywhere in the whole history. The mother could say -- We will cut it off. But the father has never said -- We will screw it back on. Yet, by remaining on the plane of the signifier, what the installation man intervenes with when it is a matter of unscrewing his behind leaves no doubt -- it is pincers or tongs.

It happens that in the old days I learned that those great teeth with which a horse can bite Little Hans's finger are, in every language, called "pincers" [pinces]. And in addition, the front part of the hoof, with which the horse makes its littleKrawall, is also called a pincer, in German Zange. This word has the same two meanings as the word pince in French.

I will tell you even more -- in Greek, χιληη has exactly the same meaning. I did not discover that by leafing through the locksmith's manual in Greek, since it does not exist, but by chance, in the prologue to the play The Phoenicians, by Euripides.

Jocasta, before telling the story of Antigone, gives a very curious detail concerning what occurred at the moment of Laïos' murder. With as much care as I have taken in the construction of these little railway systems and avenues in Vienna, she explains how one and the other arrived there. They both went to Delphi, they met at the crossroads, then a quarrel concerning precedence broke out between the one who was in a great chariot, and the other who was on foot. Things go this way and that, they come to grips, and the stronger, Oedipus, passes ahead. At this moment, Jocasta takes care to remark -- a detail which I have not found anywhere
else -- that if the quarrel broke out, it is because one of the horses struck the heel of Oedipus with its hoof, χηλη.

So, for Oedipus to accomplish his destiny, it was not enough that his foot be swollen because of the broach that had been passed through his ankles, he had also to have on his foot, exactly like the father of Little Hans, a wound made precisely by the hoof of a horse -- which hoof is called in Greek, as in German, as in French, a pince, pincer, for χηλη also indicates pincers or tongs.

This observation is intended to show you that I am saying nothing exaggerated when I tell you that, in the succession of Little Hans's fantasmatic constructions, it is always the same material that turns round.

15 May 1957
TRANSFORMATIONS

The phallus dentatus.
Discharge of the signifier.
Anxiety over movement.
Falling and biting.
The pocketknife in the doll.

Of children in swaddling clothes.
O cities of the sea, I see in you your citizens, men and women, their
arms and legs straitly bound with solid bands by those who can in no way
understand your language, and you can only breathe out amongst
yourselves in tearful plaints, in lamentations and in sighs, your sorrows
and regrets for your lost liberty. For those who bind you do not understand
your language, no more than they are understood by you. ¹

This little passage, which I took some months ago from the Notebooks
of Leonardo da Vinci, and which I had completely forgotten, seems to me
just as an introduction to today's lesson.

Naturally, this rather majestic passage is to be taken only for its allusive
value.

¹ Lacan also places this text in epigraph to The Agency of the Letter in the
Unconscious or Reason since Freud, in Écrits: A Selection.
Today we shall again take up our reading of the observation of Little Hans, and we shall try to understand the language in which the latter expresses himself.

The last time, I pointed out a certain number of stages in the development of the signifier. Its enigmatic center is the signifier of the horse which is included in the phobia, and which has the function of a crystal in a supersaturated solution. It is, in effect, around this signifier that there will flourish, like an immense tree form, the mythical development which makes up the history of Little Hans. We must now, if I may say such a thing, plunge this tree into the bath of what has been experienced by Little Hans, in order to see what its role has been in the child's progress. And I want to indicate right away towards what the inventory that we shall make of it is tending.

Since it is a question here of the object relation considered with regard to its progress during the time that Little Hans is living his Oedipal phase, let us say that nothing in the observation indicates that we must consider the results as fully satisfying.

If there is one thing that the observation emphasizes from the beginning, it is that I do not know what which one could call the precocious maturity of Little Hans. We cannot say that he is in advance of his Oedipus, except, certainly, at his exit. In other words, the way that Little Hans experiences his relation with little girls, as the observation underlines, already has all the characteristics of an advanced relation. We shall not say that it is already adult, but one can recognize a rather striking analogy, so much so that Freud himself presents him as a sort of fortunate seducer, indeed a tyrannical seducer in the style of Don Juan. This complex term, which I once let out here to the greatest scandal of some, is entirely characterized in the precocious attitude of Little Hans, which indicates the subject's entry into a sort of happy adaptation to a real context.

On the other hand, what do we see at the end of the observation? At the end, certainly, one finds the same little girls inhabiting the inner world of Little Hans. But if you read the observation, you will not fail to be struck by
seeing not only how much more they are imaginary, but even that they are now truly, radically, imaginary. They are now fantasies with whom Little Hans holds conversations. The relation that he has with them has changed sensibly — they are now more like his children. If it is here that we must see the matrix left by the resolution of the crisis for Little Hans's future relations with women, we can say that, seen from the surface, Little Hans appears to have acquired his heterosexuality sufficiently well. But these little girls will remain marked by the stigmata of their mode of entry into his libidinal structure. We shall even see him deal in detail with how they entered.

The narcissistic style of their position with regard to Little Hans is irrefutable, and we shall study its determinants in greater detail. Certainly Little Hans will love women, but they will remain fundamentally tied for him to a sort of testing of his power. That is also very much why everything indicates that he will never be without fear of them. One might say that they will be his mistresses. They will be the daughters of his spirit, and, as you will see, will be ravished from the mother.

These suggestions are intended to indicate where the interest of such an examination lies. Naturally, to be confirmed, it requires a review of our route up until now. Since we have taken the signifying structure of the myth of Little Hans as our reference, we must situate the different stages of his progress with regard to its phases. And, since we are dealing with the object relation, we must also ask what the objects are that pass one after another into the foreground of Little Hans's interest at the different moments of the signifier’s mythic formation? What progress correlatively takes place in the signified during the course of this particularly active and fecund period, in which the relation of Little Hans to his world knows a sort of renewal or revolution? Will we be able to grasp what it is that scans, in parallel, the successive crystallizations that appear in the form of fantasies?

No doubt it is a question of successive crystallizations of a signifying configuration. The last time, I showed you the community of figures. I at least let you glimpse how, in these successive figures, the same elements
are in permutation with each other, each time renewing the signifying configuration, while leaving it fundamentally the same.

On April 5th, we have the theme that I called the theme of the return. That is not essentially what explains this fantasy, but it is its basis. It is a matter of what we could call a departure anxiety. More exactly, the fantasy develops the theme of an anxiety-provoking solidarity with the cart, \textit{Wagen}, which is at the edge of the departure ramp. This does not appear right away. The father’s questions are needed to make it easier for Hans to confess his fantasies, and in speaking of them, to organize them, to reveal them to himself at the same time that we are enabled to glimpse them.

On April 11th, we see the appearance of the fantasy of the bathtub that they unscrew, with Little Hans inside it, a great hole in his belly, and to which we shall devote an approximate outline.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{drawing.png}
\caption{Hans in the Bathtub}
\end{figure}

April 21st, we find the fantasy which we could call that of the new departure with the father. It is clearly represented as fantasmatic and impossible -- Hans leaves with his grandmother before the father has arrived, but when the father joins him, we do not know by what miracle Little Hans is there. Here is the order in which things appear.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{upper_drawing.png}
\caption{Upper drawing}
\end{figure}
THE DEPARTURE WITH THE FATHER

On April 22nd, there is the wagonet in which Little Hans goes off all alone.

[Hans goes off alone]

HANS GOES OFF ALONE

Then, a final fantasy will probably mark the limit of what we can accomplish today.

Before April 5th, what is going on? Between March 1st and April 5th, it is essentially, uniquely, a question of the phallus. It is with regard to the phallus that the father suggests a motivation for his phobia, by telling him that it is if he touches himself, or masturbates, that the phobia occurs. The father goes further, as far as suggesting the equivalence between what he fears, the phobia, and this phallus. This draws from Little Hans the reply that a phallus, a Wiwimacher -- the term by which the phallus is written in Hans's vocabulary --, that does not bite. We find that on March 1st, at the beginning of the series of misunderstandings which will preside over the whole of the dialogue between Little Hans and his father.

A phallus, that is really at stake in what bites and wounds. This is so true that someone who is not a psychoanalyst, and whom I asked to read the observation of Little Hans, someone who is a mythologist, and someone who, on the subject of myths, has gone rather far in penetration of the problem, said to me that it is striking to see, somehow underlying the whole development of the observation, one cannot say what function -- not of a vagina dentata, but of a phallus dentatus. Only, of course, this observation develops entirely in the register of misunderstandings. I shall add that this is the usual case with every sort of creative interpretation.
between two subjects. So one must wait for it to develop, it is the least abnormal thing in the world, and it is just in the abyss of this misunderstanding that something else will develop which will bear fruit.

Thus, when the father speaks to Hans about the phallus, he will speak in fact of the real penis, which Hans is then touching. The father certainly is not wrong, because the coming into play for this young subject of the possibility of an erection, with all the new emotions that it brings, has incontestably changed the profound equilibrium of all his relations with what until then had constituted the stable point, the fixed pole, the all-powerful center of his world -- namely, his mother.

On the other hand, what is it that plays the prevalent role in the fact that this fundamental anxiety suddenly occurs which makes everything vacillate? -- to the point that anything is preferable to it, even the forging of an anxiety-provoking image that is itself completely closed, that of the horse, which at least marks a limit within the phobia, a landmark. What, in this image, opens the door to attack, to the bite? It is another phallus, the imaginary phallus of the mother.

It is here that the aporia of the imaginable opens for Little Hans. What had up until then been for him a game of showing or not showing the phallus consisted in playing with a phallus that he had long known to be perfectly inexistent, and which was the stake in his game with his mother. This is the plane on which the game of seduction had been built, not only with his mother, but with all the little girls who, he also knew very well, had no phallus -- the play consisted precisely in maintaining all the same that they did. That is what the relation rested upon up until then -- a relation which, fundamentally, is not one of lure in the most immediate sense, but rather of pretending there is a lure.

The first part of the observation, after which the phobia begins, ends with a fantasy -- it is one only by extension, since it is a dream, constructed on the model of a game of forfeits, in which a child hides a pledge in his hand, and the one who declares that it belongs to him is condemned to do something. Hans receives the ruling that a little girl can make him do pee-pee. Freud notes that it is a purely auditory dream, with no visual
element, even though it concerns the game of showing or of seeing which is the basis for the first scotophilic relation with little girls. The game Is it there? Or isn't it? has passed into the symbol, into speech. The spoken element is already prevalent.

In the course of this first period, all of the father's attempts to introduce the reality of the penis with the indication of what it is proper to do with it, that is, not touch it, arouse Hans with automatic rigor to reinstall the themes of the game in the foreground. For example, he immediately produces the fantasy that he was with his mother who was completely nude in her chemise. The father asks -- But was she completely nude or in her chemise? Which does not bother Little Hans at all -- She had a chemise that was so short that one could just see her all nude, which is to say that one could just see and naturally also not see. You can recognize the structure of the border or fringe, which is characteristic of the fetishist's apprehension. The essential is always just at the point where one could see a little, and where one could not see what is going to appear. The element of the hidden that is thus occasioned in the relation with the mother is the non-existent phallus, which one must yet pretend is there. Little Hans's fantasy is there to emphasize the character of what is at stake at this moment, which is a defense against the unsettling element that the father brings in, with his insistence on speaking of the phallus in real terms.

In this fantasy, Little Hans calls on a witness, a little girl whom he names Grete. She is borrowed from the luggage, from her own house, from little girls with whom he pursues relations that are imaginary, but which concern people who are perfectly real. That she is called Grete, and that she intervenes in this fantasy, is worth underlining, as we shall later find. She is called as a witness to what Mama and he are doing, for he introduces the fact that he touches himself a little bit, schnell, very quickly, as though with a secret, stolen gesture.

Hans needs to bring everything new into rapport with the phallic relation to the mother, not only because of the real existence of his penis, but also because it is on that issue that his father is trying to train him. The
compromise formation which follows literally structures the whole period before April 5th.

That does not mean that this is the only issue, because a second one appears around March 30th, the date of the consultation with Freud. What appears here is not entirely artificial, since as I have said, it is announced in the fantasies of Little Hans, where the father figures as collaborating in his transgressions -- in some sense, he calls his father to his aid.

Between March 1st and March 15th, the date of the fantasy of Grete and his mother, it is above all a question of the real penis and the imaginary phallus. Between March 15th and the consultation with Freud, the father tries to make the phallus pass completely into reality, by pointing out to Hans that big animals have a big phallus and small animals have a small one, which leads Hans to tell him -- Mine is very well attached and it will get bigger. The same schema that I pointed out just before is reproduced.

Faced with the father's attempt to realize the phallus, the reaction of Little Hans is once again not at all to register what he in the end will attain, but to forge a fantasy.

This time, March 27th, it is the fantasy of the two giraffes, which shows what is essential, namely, a symbolization of the maternal phallus, clearly represented in the little giraffe. Although Little Hans is caught between his imaginary attachment and the insistence of the real via the intermediary of the father's word, the road that he enters now will give its scansion and even its schema to all that will develop in the myth of the phobia -- it is the imaginary term that will become the symbolic element for him.

In other words, far from seeing in the relation to the objet the existence of a direct passage to the signification of a new real, and the acquisition and management of this real by means of a symbolic instrument pure and simple, we see on the contrary that, at least in the critical phase at question here, which analytic theory signals out as the Oedipus, the real can only be re-ordained in the new symbolic configuration at the price of reactivating all the most imaginary elements. A veritable imaginary regression occurs at its first encounter by the subject.
We have its model and its schema from the first moments of Little Hans's childhood neurosis. When the father comes forward as the representative of reality, with its new order of adaptation to the real, Little Hans responds with an imaginary abundance which is all the more typical in that it is sustained in a mode of profound incredulity, which will be maintained throughout. That is given to us in a form that is almost palpable at the beginning of the observation, and it is really what gives the case its exceptional character, making it the gift from heaven that it is. Little Hans himself sees how all this can be taken -- that is, not only can one play with it, but one can make crumpled paper of it. The first image of the little giraffe is already the beginning of the solution. It is the synthesis of what Little Hans learns to do -- he learns how one can play with images.

It is not that he knows it, but he is simply introduced to it by the mere fact that he already knows how to speak, by the fact that he is a little man, that he is in the bath of language. But he knows very well the precious gift that being able to speak gives him, and underlines it continually. When he says one thing or another, and someone replies that it is good or bad -- *It doesn't matter*, he says, *it's always good because we can send it to the Professor.*

*It is not only a matter of speaking, but of speaking to someone.* We find more than one remark of this sort in the observation, where Little Hans shows his sense of the fecundity opened by the fact that in sum, he finds someone to whom he can speak. It would really be astonishing if we did not perceive in this instance that everything that is precious, and effective, in analysis, is there.

Such is this first analysis done with a child.

During the consultation of March 30th, the way that Freud brings in his myth of Oedipus, bluntly, fully constructed, without the slightest effort at adapting it to anything whatever that is immediate and clear for the child, is the of the most striking points of the observation. Deliberately,
Freud says to him --I am going to tell you a grand story that I invented, that I knew before you came into the world. It is that one day, a Little Hans would arrive who would love his mother too much and who, because of that, would detest his father.

The Oedipus is implicated by its author in an operation which lays bare its fundamentally mythic character, the character of an original myth which it carries in Freud's doctrine. He uses it in the same way that one has always taught the child that God created the sky and the earth or a lot of other things, depending upon the cultural context into which he is inserted. It is a myth of origins given as such, and because one has faith in what it determines as an orientation, a structure, an avenue of speech for the subject who is its depository. It is literally the function of the creation of truth that is involved. Freud does not deliver it to Little Hans in any other way, and Little Hans gives a response marked by the same ambiguity that marks the assent he will give to everything that follows --That is very interesting, is approximately what he says. It's very exciting, it's really wonderful. The Professor must really have been talking to God to have found out something like that.

What is the result? Freud spells it out very clearly, home-grown, as we do here -- it is not to be expected that this communication should bear its fruits right away, it must produce its effects in the unconscious, bring them into the light of day, unbewussten Produktionen vorzubringen, and must allow the phobia to develop. In short, it is an incitement. It is a matter of planting another crystal, if one may put it so, in the incomplete signification that Little Hans, at that moment, represents in all his being. Thus on one hand there is what was spontaneously produced, the phobia, and on the other hand, Freud, who brings in all of a piece what it is destined to end in. Thus Freud does not for a single moment imagine that the religious myth of the Oedipus complex will immediately bear fruit. He waits for it to aid what is on the other side, namely, the phobia, to develop, so that it will all the better fray the way to what I earlier called the development of the signifying crystal. One cannot say it more clearly than in the two sentences that Freud speaks on March 30th.
On the father's side, there is then a slight reaction, which will not last very long. We shall really only locate the father's place in the object relation at the end, but we shall try today to grasp his place in the different stages of its signifying formation. There is nothing to astonish us here. We shall see it come into the foreground, just before the fantasy of the wagonnet, at the moment of the confrontation in the Oedipal dialogue -- Why are you so jealous? More precisely, -- violent, eifern, is the term employed. Protestation by the father -- But I'm not. -- You ought to be. That is the point of the encounter with the father, or rather with what the deviance from the paternal position at that moment represents. We find here only a first apparition of it, a little shock. One sees very well just how the father is already there, he is there in a way that is brilliant, in the sense that one says, to shine [briller] by one's absence.

And that is how Little Hans reacts the next day -- he comes to find his father, and says that he has come to see him because he was afraid -- he would come to see him anyway even if he were not. What he is afraid of is that the father has left. The father right away asks -- But how could such a thing be possible? That will take us a lot further, but let us stay with this absence of the father and learn to scan what is truly in this fear.

In sum, it is a little crystallization of anxiety. Anxiety is not fear of an object. Anxiety is the confrontation of the subject with the absence of an object by which he is seized, in which he is lost, and to which anything is preferable, including the forging of the most strange and least objectal of objects, that of a phobia. The unreal character of the fear in question is precisely manifested, if we know how to see it, by its form -- it is the fear of an absence, I mean of that object which they have just sketched for him. Little Hans fears its absence, to be heard as I have told you that in anorexia one must hear -- not that the child is not eating, but that he eats nothing. Here, Little Hans is afraid of the absence of his father, an absence which is there and which he is beginning to symbolize.

On his side, the father is racking his brains to know by what turns and maneuvers the child could manifest a fear which would not be the inverse of a desire. That is not completely wrong, but it takes the phenomenon
only by its outskirts. In fact, the subject is beginning to realize that the
father is precisely not what Freud had said he was in the myth, and he says
to his father, *Why do you tell me that I love my mother, when it's you
that I love? If it's supposed to be you that I hate, it doesn't work at all.*

From where we stand, we can say that if it is to be regretted that
things are so, still, it is not negligible to have been put on the track of what
is in question, and to be able, through the relation to myth, to locate the
place of an absence. That is something that is immediately registered,
which the observation notes, and which one must hear as a symbolization.
If we call the signifier around which the function of the phobia is
organized capital 'I, we can say that something is symbolized which we can
call little sigma, $\sigma$, which is the absence of the father, $f^0$.

Thus --

$I(\sigma f^0)$.

That is not to say that everything in the signifier of the horse is there,
far from it. The horse will not vanish suddenly because they have told
Little Hans -- *It is your father that you will fear, whom you must fear.* No.
But all the same, the signifier "horse" is immediately discharged of
something, and the observation notes it -- *Nicht alle weissen Pferde
beissen.* Hans is no longer afraid of all white horses, there are some which
no longer frighten him, and the father, despite the fact that he does not
take the path of our theorization, understands that there are some that are
Vatti, Papa, and at that point, one is no longer afraid.

Why is one no longer afraid? Because Vatti is entirely kind. That is what
the father understands without understanding entirely, without even
understanding at all until the end that that is the whole drama, that Vatti
is so very kind. If there had been a Vatti of whom one could be really
afraid, one would have been within the rules of the game, one could have
formed a true Oedipus, an Oedipus which helps one to get out from under
one's mother's skirts. But as there is no Vatti to fear, as Vatti is too kind,
as soon as someone suggests the possible aggressivity of Vatti, the phobic
signifier of the *hippos* is immediately discharged and is registered that very afternoon.

I am forcing nothing in what I tell you, since it is in the text, provided that we imperceptibly indicate the perspective, so that the observation ceases to be a labyrinth in which we are lost, and so that each of its details can on the contrary take on a meaning. If I seem to be going rather slowly, and to be starting again at the beginning, it is that I want you to understand that no detail escapes when things are put into this perspective. From the moment that you see how the relation of the signifier -- which arises spontaneously in a pure and natural state in Little Hans, and is reported absolutely raw by Freud -- is articulated with the signified that is being born, you cannot help but perceive that, by the sole fact that the father is brought in, an effect of discharge, of subtraction, is immediately noted, of subtraction, which resonates in the signifying functions and can be written in a quasi-mathematical fashion as on the plates of a scale.

There are two orders of anxiety, Freud says, which comes back again to what I just said. In effect, he opposes anxiety about the father, *um den Vater*, with anxiety before the father, *vor dem Vater*. We have only to follow the way that Freud himself presents things to find exactly the two elements that I have just described -- anxiety about the place that is empty, hollow, which is represented by the father in Little Hans's configuration, seeks a support in the phobia, in the anxiety before the figure of the horse. To the extent that one has aroused, even as an imperative, or as a postulate, an anxiety before the father, the anxiety about the function of the father is discharged. Then one can finally have an anxiety before something.

Unfortunately that does not go very far, since the father, though he is there, is in no way apt to support the established function which corresponds to the needs of the correct mythic formation, to the Oedipal myth in its universal bearing. And that is precisely what forces Little Hans to fall into difficulty again. As Freud had foreseen, after this the difficulty begins to develop, becomes incarnate, and plunges into the productions
that must unfold in the phobia, *seine Phobie abzuwickeln*. And immediately we begin to see more clearly.

The first fantasy appears, that of April 5th, which I took the last time as a first term, whose transformations we will continue to find until the end. This fantasy, with all that surrounds and announces it, makes clear the weight of a question that Little Hans begins to spell out clearly just the day before -- *What is it that makes me afraid?*

One begins to see it. He is afraid when the horse veers round, *umwendet*. Then the father scores, and really does some analysis -- that is to say that from time to time, he does not very well know where to turn, which allows him to find things. He spells out very clearly -- A, B, C, D -- the four ways that the horse frightens Hans. They are all terms that activate an element which has a special value for a man, who is an animal destined, unlike other animals, to know that he exists. Here, this element shows its most disturbing presence. This is just what is then developed and spelled out by Little Hans in the neo-productions of the phobia. This element is movement.

Understand that it is not a question of uniform movement, such as one has always known, or known at least for some time. It is a movement in which one loses sense of oneself, a movement of saving oneself. That was already known in Aristotle, for the discrimination between linear movement and rotary movement has no other meaning than that. In more modern language, one would say that there is an acceleration. That is what Little Hans says -- the horse, if he is pulling something behind him, is frightening when he starts off, and more frightening when he starts off quickly than when he starts off slowly. There where there is a being caught in movement without being totally implicated in it, a being who can sense the inertia correlative to the acceleration, because he has this minimum detachment from life which consists in what I just before called knowing that he exists, since he is a being conscious of himself -- there there is anxiety.

This anxiety has yet to be analyzed. In effect, it bears not only upon the fact of being borne along by movement, but also its reverse, that is, the
fantasy of being left behind, allowed to fall. The introduction of what
suddenly carries him into movement represents a profound fall for Hans
because this movement, modifying from top to bottom his relation with
the stability of his mother, puts him in the presence of the latter as an
element that is truly subversive of the very bases of her world. Hans says it
in what he says of the horse -- she umfallen und beissen wird, will fall and
bite.

We know what the bite is linked to -- the surging of something that
happens each time that the mother's love is lacking. At the moment when
she is going to fall, there is no other outcome than what for Little Hans
himself is a reaction of forced anxiety, a reaction called catastrophic. First stage -- biting. Second stage -- falling down, rolling on the ground, she Krawall gemacht.

We must hold onto these structures of the formula with which Little Hans tries, in his completely fantasmatic way, to restore the moment when he got the phobia -- from now on, always, jetzt immer, he says, horses harnessed to the omnibus will fall.

That is the formula that incarnates what is at stake for Little Hans, which is the questioning of all that up until then had constituted the foundations of his world.

That takes us to April 9th. This is an elaboration on the theme of anxiety over movement. What can temper it?

The father is absolutely ineffective, because in effect, for a being like man, whose world is structured in the symbolic, nothing can resolve this becoming sentient, as we have called it, in which movement can carry him off.

That is why in his signifying structuration, Little Hans must make that conversion which consists in passing by stages from the schema of movement to the schema of a substitution.

First there will be the introduction of the theme of what is removable, then, with its aid, we shall arrive at substitution. These are the two schematic stages that are expressed in the form of the fantasy of the bathtub.

First stage -- one unscrews it. One does not unscrew it without cost, as I have told you, and so Little Hans must make a hole in himself. It is never without cost that this passage is accomplished, and not only does he suffer castration, but it is formally symbolized by the great drill that enters his belly, a detail that is not given enough value in the observation.

\[2 \text{...angoisse de nécessité...}\]
Second stage -- when one unscrews something, one can rescrew something else in its place. This signifying form gives a scansion to the operation of transformation which translates movement into substitution, the continuity of the real into the discontinuity of the symbolic. The whole of the observation demonstrates that without this, the stages and progress of the case would remain incomprehensible.

What happens in the signified? How to give an account of all that is confusing and pathetic that befalls Little Hans between April 5th, when he produces the schema of the fantasy of the wagon that takes off, with all of the phobia that is attached to it, and the fantasmatic unscrewing of the bathtub on April 11th, when the symbolization of a possible substitution begins? What is there between these two dates? There is a whole area here whose material I am forced to sweep aside, a long passage during which there is only one element, belonging to the earlier situation, capable of introducing removability as a fundamental instrument of the restructuration of his world. What is this element?

It is precisely the element that I said we must introduce into the dialectic of showing and not seeing, of sustaining something which is not as something which is, but is hidden -- this element is the veil itself.

There are two days of anxious questioning by the father who understands nothing, and who gives himself up here, as nowhere else, to a maladroit tapping in the dark which Freud himself underlines, and which he indicates is precisely the ruined part of the analytic observation. It scarcely matters. Enough is left for us to see what Freud took care to underline as essential, which is what happens in front of the veils, that is, the little pair of culottes.

The little culottes are there in all their fine and minute details, the little yellow culottes and the black culottes. Culottes, we are told, were a daring reform, a novelty for the use of women who went bicycling. We know, in fact, that Hans's mother is at the forefront of progress. We will come back to the mother, and some judicious extracts from some very fine comedies by Apollinaire, in particular, Les Mamelles de Tirésias (The Breasts of...
Tiresias], will help us to paint her more accurately. As they say in that admirable play --

\[
\text{Elles sont tout ce que nous sommes} \\
\text{Et cependant ne sont pas hommes.}^3
\]

That really is the whole drama. That is where it all began. It is not simply the fact that Hans's mother is more or less a feminist, it is a matter of a fundamental truth in the verse that I just cited. Freud has never dissembled the decisive value of that, since he recalls the phrase of Napoleon according to which \textit{Anatomy is destiny}. That is really what it is about, and it is what we read when Little Hans says what he has to say. The impassioned questions of the father interrupt him all the time, which makes it difficult to riddle out his responses, but Freud does it, and he tells us the essentials.

What one sees most clearly in this is that there are two stages by which Little Hans recognizes and differentiates the culottes. But that is projected onto their duality in a way that is confused, as if each could at a given moment fill more than one of the functions of the other. The essential is this -- the culottes in themselves are linked for Hans to a reaction of disgust. Even more, Little Hans asks that they write to tell Freud that when he saw the culottes, he spat, he fell down on the ground, then he closed his eyes. It is because of this reaction that the choice is made -- Little Hans will never be a fetishist.

If on the contrary he had recognized these culottes as his object, the mysterious phallus that no one will ever see, he would have been satisfied, and would have become a fetishist. But as destiny willed otherwise, Little Hans is disgusted by culottes.

---

3 "They are everything that we are/ But still-- they are not men." The drollery of the couplet is in the meter as much as in the meaning. \textit{Elles}, \textit{sommes}, and \textit{hommes} are all pronounced bisyllabically, producing a line with nine feet, ending on a feminine rhyme.
Only, he specifies that when his mother is wearing them, it is another matter. Then, they are not repugnant at all. That makes all the difference. When they could be given to him as an object, when the culottes are there by themselves, he pushes them away. They retain their virtue, one might say, only when in function, only where he can continue to sustain the lure of the phallus. That is the live nerve that allows us to understand his experience.

The reality is made clear by that long interrogation during the course of which Little Hans tries to explain himself. If he does it so poorly, it is to the degree that he is pushed in divergent and confusing directions, but the essential thing is the introduction, by the intermediary of this privileged object, of the element of removability that we shall come upon later, and which will make us pass over onto the plane of instrumentation. We shall see a formidable battery of instruments develop, which will from there on dominate the evolution of the signifying myth.

I have already brought in some of these instruments, and I have even shown how, in the ambiguities of the signifier, singular things were already inscribed, for example, that extraordinary homonymy between the pincer [pioce], the hoof, and the tooth of the horse. I could develop that much further by telling you that the middle of the hoof is called the pince [point] and the two sides are called the mamelles.

The last time, in talking of the Schraubenzieher, which means screwdriver, I said that it was precisely not what figures in the fantasy of the installation man, but that it is a question of pincers or tongs. Freud then brings out his Zange, not having seen the gift provided by this instrumentation. Do not suppose that this is alone. In the objects that will now come progressively into play, you will see not only the relation of the mother and the child, but also that basic removability which is expressed for man in the question of birth and death. And behind it, the enigmatic, troubling, burlesque, character of the stork.

Do not forget that the stork also has a another style entirely. You will see this Mister Stork -- der Storch - arrive with his extravagant silhouette, with a little hat and keys that he never puts in his pockets because he does
not have any. He holds them in his beak, and he also uses his beak as forceps, as a balance, and as padlock.

Starting there, we get submerged by the material, and that is what characterizes all the remainder of the observation. But so as not to leave you without something precise, I shall underline the axial moment, the turning point, of all that will come to pass around the mother and the child.

The next time, we shall take all of that step by step, and we shall see the precise signifying forms whose mediation will allow this mother and this child to find themselves always the same, if transformed. The carriage becomes a bathtub, then a box, etc. All of these elements fit together.

After sufficient progress has been made with the mother, and you will see precisely what it is, on April 22nd a very fine fantasy occurs. It is a game with a little rubber doll which Hans calls, as though by chance, Grete. Why? they ask him. -- Because I called her Grete. If one has read the observation carefully, one sees what seems to have escaped the father, which is that this is the same Grete who was witness to the game with the mother.

But here, he has made some progress. He is already rather advanced in the mastery of the mother. This term mastery must be used in its most technical sense, and you will see by what intermediary he has learned to lead her by the reins, and even to tap her a bit on the back.

Little Hans introduces a knife into the little doll, piercing it through, and then introduces something to make the knife come back out. He makes his little perforation again, but this time with a small pocketknife, which is first put in through the little hole that goes squeak.

Little Hans has definitively found the final word, the final term of the farce. His mother had in her head, in reserve, a little knife for cutting it off for him. And Little Hans has found the way to make it come out.

22 May 1957
XXI

THE MOTHER'S CULOTTES
AND THE FATHER'S DEFICIENCY

The lump and clothing.
Unscrewing the bathtub.
Fuck her a little more.
A substitute for the father.
Infertile maternal castration.
The Idea of Anna.

| April 9 | the two pairs of culottes |
| April 11 | the bathtub and the drill |
| April 13 | Anna's fall |
| April 14 | the great box |
| April 15 | ...and the stork |
| April 16 | the horse that is whipped |
| April 21 | the imaginary embarkation with the father |
| " | the great dialogue |
| April 22 | the initiation rite\(^1\) on the wagonnet |
| " | the pocketknife in the doll |
| April 24 | the lamb |
| April 26 | Lodi |

\(^1\) Le sacre.
Today let us again take up our discussion concerning little Hans, who has been for some time the object of our attention.

I shall remind you of the spirit in which this commentary is being pursued. What, in sum, is Little Hans? It is the babbling of a five year old child between January 1st and May 2nd, 1908. That is what Little Hans is for the reader who is not prepared. If he is prepared, and it is not hard to be, he knows that these stories have some interest.

Why are they interesting? They are interesting because it is suggested, at least in principle, that there is a relation between this babbling and something that is completely consistent, namely, a phobia, with all of the troubles that it brings to the life of the young subject, all of the worry that it arouses in his entourage, all of the interest that it provokes in Professor Freud.

I consider that there is every interest in elucidating the relation between this babbling and the phobia. There is no reason to try to create it in a beyond of the babbling, which is not in any way presented to us in the observation. That idea only comes to our minds in the aftermath, with all of the imperious character of a prior judgment. I give you as an example the commentary that I made the last time, on the history of the doll that Little Hans pierces through with a pocketknife.

I have redone the chronology today. I think that you have all not only read, but reread the observation of Little Hans during this time, and that these indications are lively enough in themselves.

I ended the last time with Little Hans's reactions to his mother's two pairs of culottes, with all that the dialogue with the father carried of the problematic, of interrogations, of profound misunderstanding.
I have put, with Freud, the emphasis on what to him appeared to be the essential residue of this dialogue, namely, the affirmation which is in no way induced, or suggested by the interrogation, that the two pairs of culottes have absolutely not got the same meaning when they are there all alone -- in this case, Little Hans spits, rolls on the ground, makes a whole history about it, manifests a disgust whose key he himself does not give, though he also shows his desire that they communicate it to the Professor -- or when they are on his mother, in which case they have another meaning entirely for him.

I have since heard from some of you I do not know what sort of astonishment before the fact that I should here avoid the connection of the said Hosen, the mother's culottes, with the lump.

In the vocabulary of Little Hans, the lump is excrement. It is named in this atypical fashion, and we very often see children give to this function a name just encountered, even by chance, after a first naming linked to a particular moment in its exercise. We shall see what there is in this.

In sum, it is imputed that I avoid by I do not know what spirit of systematization the anal stage, which comes up in our minds at a given point exactly as, by pushing a button, one provokes a particular conditioned reaction in Pavlov's dogs. From the moment that you hear someone speaking of excrement -- Anal stage! Anal Stage! Anal stage! Well, let us talk about the anal stage, because things must occur normally.

I would like you to take a bit of distance from this observation, and to notice that in any case there is one thing that is in no way indicated during the process of this rapid cure. Is it a cure? Certainly, I have not said that it was a cure -- I have said that it was a text which had a fundamental function in our experience of analysis, like each of Freud's great observations. In any case, one finds here nothing that could be inscribed under the heading frustration-regression-aggression.

During the whole time of the so-called cure, not only does Little Hans not suffer any frustration, but he is satisfied. Regression, aggression? Aggression, no doubt, but which is certainly not linked to any frustration,
nor to any moment of regression. If there is regression, it is not in the
instinctual sense, nor in the sense of a resurgence of something earlier.

If there is in fact a phenomenon of regression, it is in a register which is
on the order of the one that I have several times indicated as possible. It is
what happens when, needing to elucidate his problem, the subject pursues
the reduction of a particular element of his being-in-the-world, of his
relations -- for example, the reduction of the symbolic to the imaginary,
indeed sometimes, as is manifest in this observation, the reduction of the
real to the imaginary. In other words, it is a matter of changing the
significative approach to one of the terms which are present. That is really
what you see being done during the course of this observation, when Little
Hans pursues his elaboration with that rigor, indeed, imperiousness;
which is really the characteristic of the signifying process in so far as Freud
has defined as unconscious. Without the subject's being in any way able to
give an account of it, literally without his knowing anything of what he is
doing, it is enough that he simply be incited to the development of the
signifying factor that he himself has introduced as necessary to his
psychological sustenance for him, as he develops it, to draw a certain
solution from it, which is not necessarily a normative solution, nor the
best solution, but which is surely a solution that, in the case of Little Hans,
in the most evident fashion has the effect of resolving the symptom.

Let us come back to the lumpf.

In speaking of the signs of disgust shown before the culottes of the
mother, Freud speaks of a relation with the lumpf, Lumpf-
Zusammenhang. The father asks some questions in the same direction,
Little Hans having surely shown that the question of excrement was not
for him without signification or interest. But this relation with the lumpf
is reversible -- we could inversely say that the lumpf is introduced in
connection with the culottes.

What do we mean by that? It is not only a question of the fact that it is
around the reaction of disgust that he shows before the mother's culottes
that Little Hans is led to talk about excremental functions. In what way do
excrement and the anal intervene in the observation? No doubt Little
Hans has taken an interest in the *lumf* which is perhaps not without connection to his own excremental function. But what is at stake at this moment is Hans's participation, with his mother's full acceptance, in the excremental functions of the latter.

Every time that she pulls up her culottes and lowers them, Little Hans hangs onto her, he importunes her, and the mother excuses herself before the father who in fact is not unaware of much, but who makes his little inquiry again -- *I can't do anything but bring him to the toilet with me*, says she. There is between Little Hans and his mother this game of seeing and not seeing, but also of seeing what cannot be seen because it does not exist, which Little Hans knows very well. To see what cannot be seen, one must see it behind a veil, that is to say that a veil must be placed before the nonexistence of what there is to see. Behind the theme of the veil, of the culottes, of clothing, is hidden the essential fantasy of the relations between the mother and the child -- the fantasy of the phallic mother. It is with respect to this theme that the *lumf* is introduced.

So, if I leave the *lumf* on its ground, that is to say, in the background, it is not from a spirit of systematization -- it is because in the observation, it is brought in only in this connection. It is not enough in an analysis to encounter a familiar air to find oneself instantly enchanted, transported to a familiar land, and to content oneself with a ritornelle, namely, in this case, the anal complex. It is a matter of knowing at a given moment of the analysis what the precise function of this theme might be. If this theme is always important for us, it is not simply because of that purely implicit signification, vague in itself, and uniquely tied to geneticist ideas which can be brought into question in the concrete at each moment of an observation. It is for its connection to the complete system of the signifier in so far as it is in evolution, both during the symptom, in the course of the illness, and in the process of the cure.

If the *lumf* has a supplementary meaning within the system here, it is through its strict homology with the function of the culottes, that is to say, with the function of the veil. The *lumf*, like the culottes, is something that
can fall. The veil falls, and it is to the extent that the veil has fallen that there is a problem for Little Hans.

He lifts, if I may say so, the flap of this veil, since it is because of the experience of April 9th, and the long explanation about the culottes, that we then see the fantasy of the bathtub appear, namely, the introduction of an element which has the strictest relation to the fall. The combination of this fall with the other term whose presence Hans confronts in the phobia, namely, the bite, in effect gives the theme of removability, of unscrewing, which will be an essential element in the reduction of the situation through the succession of fantasies.

The succession of Little Hans's fantasies is really to be conceived as a myth in development, a discourse. It is a question of nothing other, in this observation, than a series of reinventions of this myth with the aid of imaginary elements. It is a matter of understanding the function of this rotating process, of these successive transformations of the myth, and of understanding what, at a profound level, represents the solution of the problem for Hans, that of his own position in existence, in so far as it must be situated with regard to a certain truth, a certain number of landmarks of truth, in which he must take his place.

If there were need for some additional proof of what I am telling you -- I insist, to the extent that someone made me the objection, and since I encounter it, I want to follow it to its final term -- I would add that Little Hans, when they return from the grandmother's house on Sunday evening April 12th, expresses his disgust for the black cushions of the compartment in the railway carriage, because they are lumf. In the explanation with the father that follows, what comes into comparison with the black of lumf? It is a black short-sleeved blouse and black stockings. The strict relation between the theme of lumf and the mother's clothing, namely, the theme of the veil, is acknowledged by Little Hans himself when questioned, it is true, by his father.

In the end, what is the lumf, then, and where does it come from? Why has Little Hans named excrement lumf? We are told in the observation -- it is from a comparison with black stockings.
In short, in the segment of the observation whose examination we are pursuing, *lumf*, that is to say, excrement, always intervenes as a certain function of the signifying articulation in relation to the theme of clothing, the veil, behind which is hidden the denied absence of the mother's penis. That is the essential signification.

As a consequence, we are in no way modifying the direction of the observation by any sort of partial-mindedness when we take this axis in order to understand the progress of these mythic transformations through which the reduction of the phobia is accomplished in the analysis.
We had reached April 11th, and the fantasy of the bathtub.

I have told you that with the bathtub there begins a mobilization of the situation, that is, of the suffocating and singular reality of the mother, to whom Hans, for x reasons, feels tied, with a maximum production of anxiety. From the moment when he feels both delivered up to the mother, and menaced and annulled by her, she represents a situation of danger, a danger, moreover, in itself unnamable, anxiety as such. It is a matter of seeing how the child gets out of this situation.

I shall recall for you the fundamental schema of the situation of the child vis-à-vis the mother, at the point of losing her love.

[Format, p. 358]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Es</th>
<th>Mother S</th>
<th>i S (i)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real penis</td>
<td>Breast</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mother is the symbolic mother, the first element of reality symbolized by the child, in that she can be absent or present. When there is a refusal of love on her part, compensation is found in the real breast, in annihilation in a real satisfaction, which does not mean that an inversion is not then produced. In effect, to the extent that the breast becomes a compensation, it becomes a symbolic gift as well, whereas the mother becomes a real element, that is to say, one who is all powerful, who refuses her love.

The progress of the situation with the mother resides in the fact that the child must discover what, beyond the mother, is loved by her. It is not the child who is the imaginary element, but the i, that is, the mother's desire for the phallus. In the end, what the child must do here -- which does not mean that he does it --, is to arrive at formulating this -- i S (i). That is what we are shown by the game of hide and seek in the enfant [child] who
is still *infans*, when the alternation of his gesture is accompanied by a symbolic counterpart, by an opposition that is vocalized.

For Little Hans, this schema has just been complicated by the introduction of two real elements. On one side, Anna, that is to say a real child, complicates the situation, the relation with the beyond of the mother. And then, there is also something which really does belongs to him, but he literally does not know what to do with it, a real penis, which begins to move by itself, and which has received a miserable welcome from the person on whom he operates. Little Hans came and said to his mother -- *Don't you think it's neat?* His aunt had told him the other day -- *They don't make them any nicer.* But on the contrary, his approach was very badly welcomed by his mother, and from there on, the question becomes very complicated.

To sound out this complication, you have only to take the two poles of the phobia, namely, the two elements which make the horse frightening -- the horse bites and the horse falls.

_The horse bites_ -- that is to say -- *Since I can no longer satisfy my mother in anything she will satisfy herself on me the way I satisfy myself on her when she does not satisfy me at all, that is, she will bite me the way I bite her, since it's my last recourse when I am not sure of her love.*

_The horse falls_ -- He falls just like me, Little Hans. I am dropped because they no longer have anything except to give to Anna.

On the other hand, it is clear that, in a certain way, Little Hans must be eaten and bitten. He must, because that corresponds to a re-valorization of the penis which was held to be nothing, which was rejected by the mother, so that to the extent that he must become something, and it is what Little Hans aspires, he must be bitten. The bite, being taken by the mother, is as much desired as feared.

It is the same for falling. The fall of the horse is not only feared by Little Hans, it can also be desired by him. There is more than one element of the situation that Little Hans would like to see fall. From the moment that we

---

2 Lacan plays on the near-homophony between the French *enfant* and the Latin *infans,* "not having the gift of speech."
introduce the category of the fall into the observation, the first element that appears is little Anna. He wishes that she could fall, if possible, through the bars a bit too widely spaced on the Secessionist balcony -- for we are among people in the avant-garde of progress --, to which, in fact, they have had to add a hideous lattice to prevent Little Hans from pushing young Anna a bit too quickly into space.

The function of the bite, and that of the fall, are given in the most evident structures of the phobia. They are its essential elements. As you see, these are signifying elements which have two faces. That is the true meaning of the term ambivalence. The fall, like the bite, is not simply feared by Little Hans. They are elements which can intervene in totally opposite directions. The bite, on one side, is desired, since it will play an essential role in the solution of the situation. The fall is likewise an element that is desired, and if the daughter must not fall, one thing is certain, which is that all through the observation, the mother will follow a curve of falling, after the apparition of the curious instrumental function of unscrewing, which occurs for the first time, enigmatically, in the fantasy of the bathtub.

As I told you the last time, what is at question is an anxiety which does not concern simply the mother, but the totality, the whole milieu, everything that up until then has constituted the reality for Little Hans, the fixed bearings of his reality, what I last time called the hovel. With the first fantasy, in which the Schlosser who unscrews the bathtub arrives, one begins to take everything apart piece by piece.

This is not at all an abstract connection that I am making, it is perfectly present in the experience. The observation reveals to us that bathtubs have already been unscrewed in the presence of Little Hans's, since when they went to Gmunden for vacation, they brought a bathtub in a trunk. On the other hand, we have the idea of earlier moves whose exact dates we may regret not having, but which must occur during the time covered by the anamnesis of the observation, that is to say, the two years before the illness, on which we have a certain number of parental notes.
Moving house, with the transport of the bathtub to Gmunden, has already given Little Hans the signifying material for what it means, to take the whole hovel apart. He already knows that that can happen, it has already been an experience more or less integrated into his strictly signifying manipulations. The fantasy of the unscrewed bathtub is like a first step in the perception of the phenomenon of the phobia, which at first appears as opaque, signaling inhibition, a halt, a frontier, a limit beyond which one cannot pass. That can only be mobilized in the phobia itself, whose elements may be differently combined.

I explained to you the last time the plural signification of the word pince, which, in German, as in French, and in plenty of other languages, notably, Greek, designates the horse's biting apparatus, his front teeth, and also something which can mean pliers or tongs. Here there appears for the first time the character who comes into play with pliers and tongs, and who introduces an element of evolution, which, I repeat, is purely signifying. You are not going to tell me that there are already instinctual traces in the child to explain to us that his behind should have been unscrewed. It is nowhere other than in the signifier, that is in the human world of the symbol, which also includes the tool and the instrument, that the mythic evolution in which Little Hans is engaged will develop, aided by the obscure and tentative collaboration which is established between him and the two persons who are leaning over his case in order to psychoanalyze it.

I shall stop for a moment at this, for there is not only the bathtub and unscrewing, there is also the Bohrer, the drill. As always, the witnesses who were there in the exploratory phase of analysis have a very lively perception, linked to the freshness of the discovery, and have no doubt about what the drill is -- It is the paternal penis, they say. Here too there appears to be a certain floating in the text -- does this penis aim for Little Hans or does it aim for his mother? This ambiguity is absolutely valuable, and all the more because we understand better what is at stake.

You see there the proof of what I am telling you, that it is not enough to have in one's head a more or less complete list of classic situations in
analysis, namely that there is an inverse Oedipus complex, and that in perceiving the parents' coitus, the child can identify with the feminine partner. That we find an identification of Little Hans with his mother here, is true, why not? -- but on the sole condition that we understand in what way it is true, for to be content with saying it not only is of no interest, but does not hold in any way with anything concerning the ins and outs of the appearance in fantasy of the child's imagining and saying that something has come and made a great hole in his belly. That can only have a meaning in the context, in the signifying evolution of what is in question.
Let us say that here Little Hans explains to his father — *Give it to her for once where it matters.* That is really what is in question in the relation of Little Hans to his father. We all along have the idea both of this deficiency, and of the effort that Little Hans makes to restore, I would not say a normal situation -- there can be no question of that from the moment that the father is playing the role that he plays with Hans, namely, helping him to believe that he, Papa, is not mean -- but a situation that is structured. And in this structured situation, there are strong reasons for Little Hans, at the same time that he tackles the unbolting of the mother, also to provoke, and in a way that is imperious, the father's assumption of his function with regard to the mother.

I repeat, -- there are a thousand ways, a thousand angles from which, in the course of an analysis, fantasies of passivity can intervene in the little boy, identifications with the mother in a fantasized relation with the father.

To go no further than my own analytic experience, not so long ago I heard a man, who was no more homosexual than Little Hans in my opinion could ever become, say at a given moment of his analysis that in his childhood, he undoubtedly fantasized himself in the maternal position. For him it was a matter precisely of offering himself as a victim in the mother's place. He had lived his whole childhood situation, in effect, in response to the importunity of the sexual insistence of the father, a highly immoderate character, exigent in his needs from a mother who pushed them away with all her strength, and of whom the child had the perception that, justified or not, she lived the situation as a victim.

This identification was so well integrated into the development of the symptomatology of this subject, a neurotic subject, that we can in no way halt at the simply feminized, indeed homosexual, position that the issue of this fantasy functionally represents at a given moment of the analysis. Its context gives it a completely different meaning, one that is even opposite to what happens in the observation of Little Hans.

---

3 *Fous-lui ça une bonne fois là où il faut.*

427
Little Hans says to his father -- *Fuck her a little more*, whereas my patient says -- *Fuck her a little less*. That is not the same thing, even though both must use the term *Fuck her* and even *Fuck me instead of her if need be*. Thus it is the signifying connection of the term that allows one to understand what is at stake.

As I have presented it to you, the situation thus created appears to be without issue, since here the father does not intervene. You will say -- *And yet, the father exists, the father is there*. What is the function of the father in the Oedipus complex? It is very evident that, whatever the form in which the impasse of the child's situation with the mother presents itself, it is necessary to introduce another element.

One has to repeat things. If one does not repeat them, one loses them. That is why we shall once again re-articulate the Oedipus complex.

Obviously, I am not going to give you a re-articulation of the Oedipus complex. Given that it concerns a fundamental schema, it must, by definition, be explained in a thousand different ways. Nevertheless, there are structural elements which are the same and which we always find, at least in their disposition and their number.

On a certain plane, the father arrives as a third in the situation between the child and the mother. If we take it on another plane, he arrives as a fourth, since there are already three elements, because of the inexistent phallus. That is the "in-itself" [*en-soi*] of the situation, if you can pardon me this expression, which I do not much like, but which I am forced to use in order to go quickly. I mean that for moment I am considering the father in so far as he must be in this situation along with the others, independently of what occurs regarding the "for-himself" [*pour-soi*] of the subject. I do not like this expression either, because you can suppose that this "for-himself" is given in the consciousness of the subject whereas it is mainly in his unconscious, in so far as the effects of the Oedipus complex
are at stake. Thus it is to indicate a difference that I note that "in-himself" [en-soi] a father must be there. What must be his role?

I cannot review the whole theory of the Oedipus complex here. Let us nevertheless say that the father is he who possesses the mother, who possesses her as father, with his real penis which is a sufficient penis, in contrast to the child who is prey to the problem of an instrument that is both poorly assimilated and insufficient, if not refused and disdained.

What does analytic theory teach us concerning the Oedipus complex? What makes it in some way necessary? I am not speaking of a biological necessity, or of an internal necessity, but of a necessity that is at least empirical, since it is in experience that we have discovered it. If it means anything that the Oedipus complex exists, it is that the natural rise of sexual power in the young boy does not occur all alone, or in one stage, or in two stages. Effectively, it occurs in two stages, if we consider purely and simply the physiological plane, but the consideration of this natural rise alone does not in any way suffice to give an account of what occurs.

That is a fact -- for the situation to develop under normal conditions, I mean in conditions which allow the human subject to preserve a sufficient presence, not only in the real world, but also in the symbolic world, that is to say, so that he can tolerate himself in the real world, but also in the symbolic world, tolerate himself in the real world organized as it is with its weft of the symbolic, it is not enough for him simply to have had a perception of what I called, the last time, movement, with that acceleration which carries the subject away and transports him. There must also be a halt, and a fixation of two terms. On one side, the true penis, the real penis, the valuable penis, the penis of the father must function. On the other side, the penis of the child, which is situated comparatively at first, in a Vergleichung must attain its function, its reality, its dignity. And to do this, there must be a passage via that annihilation which is called the castration complex.

In other words, it is in as much as his own penis is momentarily annihilated that the child is later promised access to a full paternal function, which is to say that he will be someone who senses himself
legitimately in possession of his virility. And it appears that this 
legitimately is essential to the happy functioning of the sexual function in 
the human subject. Everything that we say about the determinism of 
precocious ejaculations and the various troubles of sexual functioning 
makes no sort of sense, except in this register.

That is the resitution of the Oedipus complex. Experience indicates it to us, and it was not, moreover, foreseeable. The schema of the situation that I just gave you before is not in itself foreseeable either. The proof is that analytic experience, which discovered the Oedipus as an integration into the virile function, allows you to push things further with regard to the symbolic father.

The symbolic father is the nom du père, the name of the father. It is the mediating element essential to the symbolic world and its structuration. It is necessary in that weaning, more essential than the first weaning, through which the child exits from his pure and simple coupling with the mother’s omnipotence: The name of the father is essential to any articulation of human language, and that is the reason why the Ecclesiast says -- The fool saith in his heart: there is no God.

Why does he say it in his heart? Because he cannot say it with his mouth. On the other hand, it is, properly speaking, mad, to say in one’s heart that there is no God, simply because it is mad to say a thing that is in contradiction with the very articulation of language. You know very well that this is not a profession of theism that I am making here.

There is the symbolic father. There is the real father. Experience teaches us that in the assumption of the virile sexual function, it is the real father whose presence plays an essential role. For the castration complex to be truly lived by the subject, the real father must truly play the game. He must assume his function of castrating father, the function of the father in its concrete, empirical form, and I was almost going to say, its degenerate form, in recalling the character of the primordial father and the tyrannical and more or less horrifying form in which Freudian myth has presented

---

4 Nom du père. The French nom, "name," is homophonc with the French non, "no," thus allowing the "name of the father" to mean "the father's
him. It is to the extent that the father, as he exists, fulfills his imaginary function with what that has of the empirically intolerable, and even of the revolting, when he makes his weight felt as castrating, and only in this way -- that the castration complex is lived.

The case of Little Hans illustrates it wonderfully. There is a symbolic father, and Little Hans, who is not a fool, believes in him immediately -- Freud is the Good Lord. That is one of the most essential elements in the establishment of a balance for Little Hans. Naturally, he believes in the Good Lord as we all believe -- he believes in him without believing. He believes because there is a reference to a sort of supreme witness who is an essential element in every kind of articulation of the truth. There is someone who knows everything, he has found him, it is Professor Freud. What luck, he has the Good Lord on earth. We do not all have as much.

That renders him good service, but without in any way making up for the deficiency of the imaginary father, the father who is truly a castrator. The whole problem lies here. Little Hans must find a substitute for this father who is obstinately unwilling to castrate him. That is the key to the observation.

It is a matter of knowing how Little Hans will be able to bear his real penis, to the extent precisely that the latter is not menaced. That is the foundation of the anxiety. That is what is intolerable in the situation, this deficiency on the side of the castrator. In fact, throughout the whole observation, you nowhere see the appearance of anything whatever that represents the structuration, the realization, the lived experience, even fantasmatic, of something that is called castration.

A wound is called for imperiously by Little Hans. Everything serves this purpose. Contrary to what Freud says, there is nothing in the experience of Fritz hurting his foot against a stone which could in itself have called forth the connection. The wish that the father suffer this wound like a mythic circumcision appears later, in the great dialogue of April 21st, when he will say to his father -- You have to be naked, als Nackter. Everyone is so stupefied that they wonder what this child can
mean. They even say that the child is beginning to speak the language of the Bible. In the observation itself, there is a parenthesis inserted to explain that it means that he must come barefoot. And yet, it is Little Hans who is right. It is a matter of knowing if the father is going in fact to prove himself, to be a man and face the feared mother, and if he himself, the father, has or has not passed by the essential initiation, by the wound, by the injury against the stone. That is to tell you to what point this theme, in its most fundamental, mythic form, is something to which Little Hans aspires with all his being.

Unfortunately, there is nothing of the sort. It is not enough for Little Hans to have said what he said in the dialogue with his father. He has only shown at that moment that he was burning with an imperious desire to encounter the jealousy of a jealous God -- eifers is the term used in the Bible --, namely a father who wants to get his, and who castrates him. But he does not have one, and the situation will take a very different turn. I shall tell you straightaway how we can understand it.

If, on the father's side there is no castrator, we still have a certain number of characters who enter in place of the castrator -- the Schlosser, who began by unscrewing the bathtub, and who then drills, and someone else, who is not properly speaking implicated in the desired function of the father, who is called by Little Hans himself the installation man -- he figures in the fantasy of May 2nd, which closes the situation. Since God does not fulfill all of his functions very well, one brings forth a deus ex machina, the installation man, whom Little Hans has fill part of the functions of the castrator required by the castration complex.

One must know how to read the text. It could not be more striking that this occurs in the last fantasy, which literally closes the cure and the observation. What the installation man comes to change is the behind of Little Hans, his seat. They have dismounted the whole house, that was not enough, something in Little Hans has to be changed. We find there without a doubt a schema that fundamentally symbolizes the castration complex.
One sees in the observation itself how far Freud allowed himself to be carried away by the schema. Though there is no trace, in the fantasy of Little Hans, of a replacement of what he has in front, the father fantasizes and says -- *Evidently, he also gave you another penis*. With Freud following right in his steps. Unfortunately, there is nothing of the kind. They have unfastened his behind, they have given him another, and said to him, *Turn on the other side*. It ends there. One must take the text as it is. In that lies the specificity of the observation, and also what must let us understand the whole.

In effect, if after having gone so close, it does not go any further, it is that it could not go any further, since if it had gone further, there would not have been a phobia, but an Oedipus complex and a normal castration complex. There would have been no need for all this complication, or for the phobia, or for the symptom, or for the analysis, in order to reach a point which is not necessarily the stipulated point, the typical point.

That is what more or less situates the function of the father in this case. He is incontestably there, active and useful in the analysis. But at the same time, he is there in functions which are predetermined by the situation as a whole and which are manifestly incompatible with the efficacious functioning of the castrating father.

If there is castration, it is to the extent that the Oedipus complex is castration. But it is not for nothing that we have perceived, dimly, that castration has as much to do with the mother as with the father. *Maternal castration* -- we see it in the description of the earliest situation -- implies for the child the possibility of devouration and the bite. *There is an anteriority of maternal castration, and paternal castration is its substitute.*

The latter is no less terrible perhaps, but it is certainly more favorable than the other, because it is susceptible to development, which is not the case with engulfment and devouration by the mother. With the father, a dialectic is possible. A rivalry with the father is possible, the murder of the father is possible, castration of the father is possible. In the Oedipus, the castration complex is fruitful on this side, whereas it is not on the side of
the mother. And, for a simple reason. It is impossible to castrate the mother, because she has nothing that one could castrate.

Let us take things up again at the point where we left Little Hans. He is at a crossroads.

We already see an outline of the mode of substitution that will allow him to go beyond the primitive situation, dominated by the pure menace of total devouring by the mother. Something of it is outlined in the fantasy of the bathtub and the drill. Like all of Little Hans's fantasies, it begins to articulate the situation. There is, one might say, a return of the threat to the sender, that is, to the mother. The mother is undone, and it is the father who is called in to play the role of drill.

There again, I am doing nothing other than to take literally what Freud gives us. He is so taken by the role of the borer that he makes a comment -- without himself resolving the question, and for a good reason, which is that one must delve into philology, ethnography, myths, etc. -- on the relation that there might be between Bohrer, the borer, and geboren, to be born. There is no relation between the two roots. There is a complete difference, in Latin, between ferio, to strike, and fero, to carry. It is not the same root, and they remain perfectly distinct in different languages. In the third place, there is forare, to pierce, which is evidently distinct. But the important thing is that Freud stops there at an encounter with a signifier, at the purely signifying problem that it poses, at the reference to Prometheus, who is one who bores, at the difference between what is bored, gebohrt, and born, geboren, which designates the fundamental bearing, the birth of the child. An incidental parenthesis to indicate the interest that Freud takes in the signifier.

Along what line will the solution, or rather the substitution, that Little Hans brings, develop? If the solution is only a substitution, it is that he is in some way impotent to ripen -- allow me this expression, it is not a matter of instinctual maturation --, or to push the dialectical development of the situation in any direction which would not be an impasse. We have to believe that he succeeds in something, since there is a development. It is
a matter of understanding it, and understanding it as a whole. I shall only be able to sketch it today.

By what turn does all of the development starting from mid-April pass? Anna is introduced as an element whose fall is possible and desired. It is the same for the maternal bite, which is taken as an instrumental element, substitute for the castrating intervention, and deviant in its direction, since it does not bear upon the penis, but upon something else, which leads, in the final fantasy, to a change. One must believe that this change has already in itself a certain degree of effectiveness, in any case of effectiveness for the reduction of the phobia. At the end, Hans is changed. That is what is obtained. Next time we shall see all of its consequences, which are capital for Hans’s development, and which, what is more, are fascinating.

Anna comes into play. That is the other inassimilable term of the situation. The whole process of Hans’s fantasies consists in returning this intolerable element of the real to the imaginary register where it can be reintegrated. This process is marked by stages that we shall try to describe one by one.

Read or reread the observation with this key. You will see how Anna is reintroduced in a form that is completely fantasmatic. Little Hans tells us, for example—Two years ago, Anna came with us to Gmunden. In fact, she was then in the belly of her mother, but Little Hans recounts all the same that they brought her in a little coffer behind the carriage, and that she led a very riotous life. Or again, before, they brought her with them like that every year, since little Anna has been there forever. What is intolerable for Hans, what he cannot envisage, is that there should have been an Anna different from the one he knows from the vacation at Gmunden, and he compensates for the fact by a reminiscence.

I am using this term with its Platonic note very precisely, as opposed to the function of repetition and the refound object. Little Hans makes of Anna an object for which the Idea has always been there. Just as Plato had to have something which explained our access to the higher world, since we could enter into it while not being part of it, so Little Hans reduces
Anna to something remembered from all time. This reminiscence is the first stage of the imaginification of the real, and it has another meaning than some story of instinctual regression.

Second stage. From the moment that Anna is an Idea in the Platonic sense of the term, indeed an ideal, what does he do? He sets her horseback on the horses of anxiety. It is both humorous and brilliant, mythic and epic. One finds again here all the characteristics of those epic texts in which we exert ourselves to describe two states of condensation, two stages of the epic, and to suppose all sorts of interpolators, commentators, mystifiers, to explain what, in epic as in myth, consists in the fact that it is a question of explaining both what happens in the imaginary world and what happens in the real world.

Here, Little Hans cannot eliminate the coachman, but on the other hand, little Anna must also hold the reins. Thus, in the same sentence, he says that the reins were in the hands of one, but also in the hands of the other. You have there in a living state that sort of internal contradiction that makes us often suppose that there is an incoherence in myths, a confusion of two stories, whereas in reality, the author, whether it is a question of Homer or of Little Hans, is prey to a contradiction which is simply that of two registers which are essentially different.

In sum, from the moment that she is an image, this sister becomes his higher self. This key gives you the meaning of all of the judgments brought to bear after a certain moment upon the subject of little Anna, including judgments that are admiring. They are not simply ironic, they have to do with the little other before him, and are essential to his position. He makes her do what will allow him to begin to dominate the situation. When little Anna has ridden the dreaded horse for a long enough time, then Little Hans can fantasize that he too controls the horse, and right afterwards, there will be the horse that is whipped. Little Hans thus begins to experience the truth of the caution given by Nietzsche — *if you go among women, do not forget the whip.*
Do not take this scan of anion as the essential of the lesson that I want to bring you today. It is only a cut necessitated by the late hour to which this discourse has brought us.

5 June 1957
XXII

ESSAY AT A LOGIC IN RUBBER

The father in the frigidaire.
The sheaf and the sickle.
The paternal metaphor.
The mother, doubled.
An imaginary paternity.

The year advances, and Little Hans, let us hope, is drawing towards a conclusion.

It will be useful for me to remind you at the opening of this lesson that we have taken as our goal this year a revision of the concept of the object relation. It seems to me not unprofitable to take a bit of distance for a moment, as a way of showing you, not only the road that has been traveled -- and we are always traveling one --, but a certain effect of demystification to which you know I am much attached in matters of analysis.

There is, it seems to me, an exigible minimum in analytic formulation, which is to perceive the following. Certainly, man has to manage with his instincts -- instincts in which I believe, whatever one may say, including the death instinct. But what analysis has contributed nevertheless allows us to foresee that things cannot be summed up by so simple, so blessed a formula as that to which we still commonly see psychoanalysts rally, which is that in sum, everything will be resolved when the relations of the subject with his peers are, as they say, relations between one person and another, and not relations with an object.
It is not because I am trying to show you the object relation in its real complexity that I find the expression object relations repugnant. Why should one's peer not be valuable as an object? I would even say -- heaven grant that he be an object. In fact, analysis shows us that commonly, at the beginning, he is even less than an object. He is something that comes to fill a place as a signifier within our interrogation, so much is it the case that neurosis is, as I have said and said again, a question.

An object is not something that is so simple. An object is something which certainly must be conquered, and even, as Freud reminds us, which is never conquered without first being lost. An object is always a reconquest. It is only by reconquering a place that he has first abandoned, that man can arrive at what we improperly call his own totality.

It is surely to be hoped that a relation will be established between ourselves and some primordial subjects who in effect represent the plenitude of the person. But this is really the terrain on which it is most difficult to advance, for it favors every deviation and every confusion. A person, we commonly imagine, is a being for whom we recognize, as for ourselves, the right to say I. But we are only too evidently highly embarrassed each time that it is a matter of saying I in the full sense, as analytic experience powerfully shows, so that each time it is a question of thinking of the other as someone who says I, we most commonly slide towards making him say our own I, that is, we induce him into our own mirages.

In short, as I emphasized last year at the end of my seminar on the psychoses, it is not the problem of the I, but that of the you [tu] which is most difficult to realize when it is a question of encountering a person. Everything indicates that this you is a signifier at the outer limit. In sum, we never attain it, we stop mid-way. Still, it is all the same from him that we receive every investiture, and it is not for naught that at the end of my seminar last year, I stopped at -- Thou art the one who will follow me, or who will not follow me, who will do this, or who will not do it.

If analytic experience shows us anything, it is really that every interhuman relation is founded upon an investiture that comes, in effect,
from the Other. This Other is now and forever more in us in the form of the unconscious, but nothing in our own development can be realized, except through a constellation that implies the absolute Other as the place of speech. If the Oedipus complex has a meaning, it is precisely because it gives as the foundation of our installation between the real and the symbolic, and of our progress, the existence of one who has speech, who can speak, the father. To say it plainly, he concretizes it in a function that is in itself problematic. The question what is the father? is posed at the center of analytic experience, eternally unresolved, at least for us analysts.

It is at this point that I want to take up the problem of Little Hans today, and to show where he is situated in relation to what the father is and is not. But we must take up the question at an earlier point.

I shall begin by having you notice that the sole place from which it is possible to respond in a way that is full and valuable to the question concerning the father, is in a certain tradition. It is not the room next door, as I often say with regard to phenomenology, but it is the door next door.

If the father must find his synthesis, his full meaning somewhere, it is in a tradition that is called the religious tradition. It is not for naught that we see the Judeo-Christian tradition formed over the course of history, the only one which tries to establish an accord between the sexes on the principle of an opposition of potential and act which finds its mediation in love. Outside of this, let us note well, every relation to the object implies a third dimension. We see it articulated in Aristotle, but it was later eliminated by, I shall say, the apocryphal Aristotle, the Aristotle of a theology that was attributed to him much later. Everyone knows both that it exists, and that it is apocryphal. The essential Aristotelian term with regard to the whole constitution of the object, and which is added as a third principle to form, ἐνδοσ, and matter, ὄλη, is στερησις, privation.

The object relation as it is established in analytic literature and in Freudian doctrine turns around this notion of privation, with which I
began this year. This notion is central to understanding that the whole progress of the integration of man, as of woman, in a sex, demands the recognition of a privation. Privation to be assumed for one of the sexes -- for the other, privation also to be assumed in order to be able fully to assume his own sex. In short, Penis-neid on one side, castration complex on the other.

All of that belongs to the most immediate experience. It is rather singular to see a renewal, in a more or less camouflaged form, but which up to a certain point is not honest, of the idea that genital maturation brings with it oblativity and full recognition of the other, by means of which a supposed harmony must be established, pre-established between man and woman, of which we see very well, however, that everyday experience is only a perpetual check.

Go tell the wife of today that she is -- as the theologian expresses it, the one who is inscribed under Aristotle's name throughout the medieval and scholastic tradition -- go tell the wife of today that she is the potential and that you, the man, are the act. You will have a prompt response -- Not much I am, she will say, do you take me for a limp rag? And surely, it is clear, woman has fallen into the midst of the same problems as ourselves. Without there being a need to approach the feminist or social side of the question, it is enough the cite the fine quatrain that Apollinaire puts as a profession of faith into the mouth of Thérèse-Tirésias, or more exactly, of her husband, who, fleeing from the gendarme, says to him --

I am an honest dame -- monsieur
My wife there is a man -- madame
She has taken the piano the violin the plate for the butter
She is a soldier minister physician.

Let us keep our two feet on the ground of our experience. If the latter has made some progress in the sexual problem, which is more and more evident in all our experience of the development of life, indeed of neurosis, it is to the extent that it has been able to situate the relations
between the sexes on the different levels of the object relation. What that means, it has been well noted, and it is really only drawing back the veil from an unworthy modesty, a false modesty, to recognize that if we owe any progress to analysis, it is very precisely on the plane of what must really be called by its name -- erotism.

This is the plane on which the relations between the sexes are effectively elucidated, in so far as they are on the way to an answer to the question posed with regard to his own sex by the subject, in that he is both something that has come into the world, and which is never satisfied as to the rest, namely that famous perfect oblativity in which the ideal harmony between man and woman could be found. We shall always only find the latter at a distant boundary, on the horizon, which does not even allow us to designate it as the aim to be realized by analysis.

To have a healthy perspective on the progress of our investigation, one must perceive that the relation of man and woman, from the moment that it is instituted, always remains an open gap. What can remain of it, in the final term, which could be acceptable in the eyes of the philosopher, that is, of one who withdraws his straw from the game? -- if not this, that in the end, the woman, namely the spouse, essentially has for him the function that she had for Socrates, which is to be the trial of his patience -- of his patience in the real.

To enter in a more lively way into what will today punctuate what I am in the course of affirming, and which will bring us back to Little Hans, I shall impart some news that an excellent friend of mine found in the very best journal, and reported to me. This bit of news comes from the depths of America. After the death of her husband, a woman, linked to him by a pact of eternal love, every ten months got herself with child by the latter.

That might seem surprising to you. Do not imagine that it is a question of a parthenogenetic phenomenon. On the contrary, it is a question of artificial insemination. During the final illness which led to the husband’s death, this woman, vowed to an eternal fidelity, had a stock made of a sufficient quantity of that liquid which could allow her to perpetuate the
race of the defunct at her will, in the briefest delays, and at repeated intervals.

This bit of news appears to be nothing -- yet we had to wait for it, whereas we could have imagined it. It is the most striking illustration that we could give of what I call the x of paternity. When I say to you that the symbolic father is the dead father, you see an illustration of it here. But what this introduces that is new, and which is well made to highlight the importance of this remark, is that, in this instance, the real father also is the dead father.

You have not failed to grasp the problems that such a possibility introduces. What happens to the Oedipus complex under such conditions? On the plane that is closest, that of our own experience, it would be easy to make some jokes about what at the limit the term frigid woman might mean. For a frigid woman, the new proverb might say, a husband fridged. I might also mention the slogan invented by one of my friends, who wanted to use it as the advertisement for a brand of frigidaires. If we have some difficulty in conceiving the effect of this slogan, that is because it is really for Anglo-Saxon souls that it has its value. Imagine a fine poster on which one sees women with a pinched air, and the following inscription --
She didn’t care her frigid air until her friend received a Frigidaire.¹ That is really the case here.

In fact, this story illustrates magnificently that the real notion of the father is in no case to be confounded with that of his fecundity. The problem is elsewhere, as one sees in wondering what then becomes of the Oedipus complex. I leave you the trouble of extrapolating -- from the moment that one takes this path, we shall be giving women, within a hundred years, children who are the direct sons of men of genius who are currently living, and who will have been preciously conserved in little jars from now until then. One has cut something away from the father, and in the most radical way -- and also his speech. The question is then to know how, in what way, in what mode, the speech of the ancestor will be inscribed in the psyche of the child, for the mother will be its sole representative and vehicle. How will she make one speak of this bottled ancestor?

That, which is not at all science fiction, has the advantage of laying bare one of the dimensions of the problem. And since I sent you just a while ago to the door next door for the ideal solution to the problem of marriage, it will be interesting to see how the Church will find a way to take a position with regard to the problem of posthumous insemination by a consecrated spouse. If it refers to what it has advanced it similar cases, namely, the fundamental character of natural practices, one can reply that if such a practice is possible, it is precisely to the extent that we have succeeded perfectly in disengaging nature from what it is not. From there on, it would be well, perhaps, to define the term natural precisely, and one will come to accentuate the profoundly artificial character of what has up until now been called nature. In short, we shall perhaps not be completely useless at that moment as a reference. And our good friend Françoise Dolto, indeed, one of her students, will perhaps become a Father of the Church.

The distinction between the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real will perhaps not suffice to provide the terms for this problem, which, from the

¹ Sentence in English in the original.
moment that it can be encountered in reality, does not seem to me near being resolved. But this story makes it easy for us to formulate, as I wish to today, the term in which, not in itself, but for the subject, the sanction of the function of the father can be inscribed.

2

Once we have let in this breeze that strips the columns of their decor, every species of introduction to the paternal function, if one can say that, appears to us to be for the subject on the order of a metaphorical experience. I shall illustrate that for you by recalling the rubric under which I introduced metaphor last year.

Metaphor is that function which proceeds by using the signifying chain, not in its connective dimension, in which all metonymic usage is installed, but in its dimension of substitution. I was obliged last year to go find one in a work that is truly within everyone’s reach, Quillet’s dictionary, where I took the first example given, namely the verse of Hugo -- *His sheaf was not at all miserly or full of hate.*

You will say that chance favored me, since that arrives here today in my demonstration like a ring on a finger. I shall reply that any metaphor could serve in an analogous demonstration.

What is a metaphor?

It is not, as the surrealists said, the passage of a poetic spark between two terms which are imaginarily as disparate as possible. That definition might appear to work here, for it is clear that there is no question that this poor sheaf could be either miserly or full of hate, and it is really an entirely human oddness to create a relation between a subject and an attribute through the intermediary of a negation, that negation being, it is understood, on the ground of a possible affirmation. It is not a question of the sheaf’s being either miserly or full of hate. Avarice and hate are attributes which belong to Booz no less than the sheaf does -- Booz using

---

2 *Sa gerbe n’était point avare ni haineuse.* The line is from *Booz endormi.* It is cited in *Seminar III.*
his property and also his merits as he should, without asking advice or
sending out announcements to anyone.

Between what and what is the metaphoric creation produced? Between
what is expressed in the term his sheaf and the one for whom his sheaf is
substituted, that is, the man who has been described in balanced terms, and
who is named Booz. The sheaf has taken his place, a place that is a bit
summary, at which Booz, having cleared the ground [déblayé] of a certain
number of negative virtues, is already provided with his qualities of being
neither avaricious nor full of hate. It is here that the sheaf takes his place,
and for an instant, literally annuls him. We again find the schema of the
symbol as the death of the thing. Here, it is even better -- the name of the
person is abolished, and it is his sheaf that comes to be substituted for him.

If there is metaphor, if it has a meaning, if this is a moment in pastoral
poetry, it is very precisely because his sheaf, that is to say something
essentially natural, can be substituted for Booz. And Booz, after having
been eclipsed, occulted, abolished, reappears in the shining fecundity of the
sheaf. In effect he knows neither avarice nor hate, he is purely and simply
natural fecundity.

That has its meaning precisely in the bit that follows. What is at stake in
the poem is in effect to announce, or to have it announced to Booz, in the
dream that will follow, that despite his having reached a great age, as he
says himself, eighty years, he will soon be a father, that is to say, from him
and his entrails will emerge that great tree at the base of which there sang a
king, says the text, and on the heights of which would die a God.

All creation of new meaning in human culture is essentially
metaphoric. It is a question of a substitution which at the same time
maintains the thing for which it substitutes. In the tension between what
is abolished, suppressed, and what is substituted for it, passes this new
dimension which the poetic improvisation so visibly introduces. This new
dimension, manifestly incarnate in the myth of Booz, is the function of
paternity.

Certainly, as usual, old Hugo is far from always being on a straight and
narrow path, he wobbles a bit, but what is absolutely clear is that --
Pendant qu’il sommeillait, Ruth, une Moabite,
S’était couchée aux pieds de Booz, le sein nu,
Espérant on ne sait quel rayon inconnu,
Quand viendrait du réveil la lumière subite.

While he slept, Ruth, a Moabite,
Couched at Booz’ feet, with her breast bare
Hoping for what unknown ray
At the awakening of the sudden light.

The style of this bit places it in an ambiguous zone, where realism
mingles with I do not know what gleam that is a bit too crude, indeed
troubling, and which recalls the chiaroscuro of Caravaggio’s paintings.
With all their popular roughness, they are perhaps what, in our days, can
still give the highest sense of the sacred dimension.

A bit further, it is again a question of the same thing --

Immobile, ouvrant l’oeil à moitié sous ses voiles,
Quel dieu, quel moissonneur de l’eternal été,
Avait, en s’en allant, négligemment jeté
Cette faucille d’or dans le champ des étoiles.

Motionless, an eye half opening beneath its veil --
What god, what harvester of eternal summer
Had, in passing, negligently thrown
That golden sickle into the field of stars?

Neither in my teaching last year, nor in what I recently wrote\(^3\) on this
sheaf from the poem of Booz and Ruth, did I push the investigation to the
final point to which the poet develops the metaphor. I left the sickle aside,

\(^3\) See The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason since Freud,
in Écrits: A Selection, pp. 147-178.
because, outside the context of what we are doing here, it might have seemed a bit forced to readers. However, the whole poem points towards an image whose intuitive and comparative quality have caused marvel for a century.

It is about the fine, clear crescent of the moon. But it cannot escape you that if the thing carries weight, if it is something other than a pretty touch of painting, a touch of yellow against a blue sky, it is inasmuch as the sickle in the sky is the eternal sickle of maternity, which has already played its role between Cronos and Ouranos, between Zeus and Cronos. It is the power of which I was speaking just before, which is well represented in the woman's mystical waiting.

With this sickle that trails from her hand, the gleaner will effectively cut the sheaf in question, from which the lineage of the Messiah will spring.

Little Hans, in the creation, the development, and the resolution of his phobia, can find a correct place for himself in the equation only by starting with the terms that we have just made clear.

We have in the Oedipus complex the place $x$, where we find the child, with all of his problems in relation to the mother, $M$. It is to the extent that something will be produced which will constitute the paternal metaphor, that there will be a place for that signifying element, essential in all individual development, which is called the castration complex, and this both for the man and for the woman.

We must thus put the following equation in place --

\[ \text{[Format, p. 379 -- introduce "inverted C" at ...]} \]

\[
(P) \ M \sim \ldots + s \\
x
\]

$P$ is the paternal metaphor.

The $x$ is more or less elided, according the case, that is to say according to the moment in development, and the problems to which the pre-Oedipal period has led the child in his relation to his mother.
We write with this sort of S turned on its side the link between the Oedipal metaphor and the phase which is essential to every concept of the object, constituted by this inverted C which represents the sickle of the castration complex, plus the signification, s, which is to say that in which a being finds himself again, and in which the x finds its solution.

This formula situates the essential moment of the passing of the Oedipus. It gives its place to what we are dealing with in the case of Little Hans, which is, as I have explained, the insoluble problem constituted for him at the point he has reached in his development, by the fact that his mother should be something as complex as this formula with all of the complications that it entails --

\[(M + \phi + A)\]

That, which is to be read as *Mother plus Phallus plus A* placed there for Anna, designates the impasse that Little Hans has reached. He cannot get out because there is no father, there is nothing to metaphorize his relations with his mother. In sum, there is no exit by the sickle, by the capital C of the castration complex, there is no possibility of a mediation, that is to say, of losing, then refunding, his penis.

On the other side of the equation, he finds only the mother's possible bite, which is the same bite with which he greedily flings himself upon her when she is lacking to him. There is no other real relation with the mother than that put into relief by the whole present theory of analysis, namely, the relation of devoration. It is because he has reached this impasse that he knows no other relation to the real than what one calls, rightly or wrongly, oral-sadistic. It is what I write as b,\(^4\) to which is added everything that is real for him, in particular that real which has just come to light and which does not fail to complicate the situation, namely, \(\Pi\), his own penis. That is what the following formula sums up --

\(^4\) The French for "bite" is *morsure*, which allows a symmetry in the French notation between the M for *mère*, "mother," and a small m for *morsure*. 
\[(M + \phi + \alpha) \ M \sim b + \Pi\]

From the moment that the problem presents itself to him in this way, there must be introduced, since there is no other, that element of metaphoric mediation which is the horse, notated 'I, with rough breathing. The establishment of the phobia is thus written with the same formula that I gave you just before --

\[\left(\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\right) M \sim b + \Pi\]

\[M + \phi + \alpha\]

This formula, which is the equivalent of the paternal metaphor, still does not resolve the problem of the bite, in so far as that for Hans is the major danger of his whole reality, and especially of the reality that has just come to light, namely his genital reality.

These formulas may seem artificial to you. Do not believe it. First start using them, and afterwards you will see if they are useful. I can show you a thousand facets where they are immediately applicable. Here is one.

The horse is that element of which it is said that he bites, that he menaces the penis, and also, that he falls, and that is why, according to what Little Hans himself tells us, he has been brought into play. He is first brought in when, at the head of the luggage cart that is to take little Lizzie's luggage, he can turn around and bite. It was then, on March 1st, says Hans, that he got this foolishness. At another moment, April 5th, Hans says that he got the foolishness when, while out with his mother, he saw an omnibus horse fall. More precisely, an element already attached to a signification was retained by him as something going well beyond all
signification, which he sanctions with this aphorism, or definitional statement -- From now on, all horses will always fall.

Now, the function of the fall is precisely the term common to all of what figures in the lower part of the equation. M -- we have underlined the element fall-of-the-mother. φ -- the mother's phallus, which is what is no longer tenable, is no longer in the game, but Hans does everything in order to maintain the existence of this game. Finally, α -- the children, in particular little Anna, who is what he wishes more than anything in the world to see fall, even if it means pushing her a little.

Thus the horse fills, in a way that is effective, imagined, and active, all of the functions of the fall combined. It is for this reason that it begins to be introduced as an essential term of the phobia, in which we can see what objects truly are for the human psyche.

Perhaps it is a question of something that merits the name, but one cannot insist too much on the special chapter for the characteristics of the object which it is always necessary to introduce, from the moment that we concern ourselves with the object of phobia or of the fetish. Certainly, we know how far they exist as objects, since they will constitute, in the subject's psychic system, veritable landmarks -- of desire, in the case of the fetish -- of its displacements, in the case of phobia. The object is thus truly in the real, but it is also at the same time manifestly distinct from it. On the other hand, it is in no way accessible to conceptualization, except though the intermediary of a signifying formalization.

Up until now, let us note, we have not been given any other that was more satisfying. If I seem to be presenting you with the formula of the object in a form that is a bit more complicated than what we have done up until now, I would have you note that Freud does not end by speaking of it any differently at the end of his work. He states plainly that the horse is an object substituted for all the images and all the confused significations around which the anxiety of the subject cannot be decanted. He makes of it an object that is almost arbitrary, and that is why he calls it a signal, thanks to which, in this field of confusions, limits will be defined, which, though they are arbitrary, will nevertheless introduce the element of a boundary
that makes the beginning of order possible, a first crystal in a crystallization organized between the symbolic and the real.

That is very much what is produced during the course of the progress of the analysis of Little Hans, in so far as one can, in the full sense of the term, call what happens in this observation an analysis. Psychoanalysts still seem not to have understood, at least if one reads Mr. Jones, that Freud had certain reserves concerning the case, saying that it was exceptional, having been conducted by the child's own father, guided, no doubt, by himself. As a consequence, he had very little confidence in the possible extension of this method. Analysts seem astonished by this timidity in Freud. They would do well to look at things more closely. In fact, can one not wonder whether, because this analysis was pursued by the father, it does not present specific traits which exclude, at least partially, the properly transferential dimension? In other words, is not the falsehood habitually proffered by Miss Anna Freud, according to which there is no transference possible in the analysis of children, precisely applicable in this case, because it is a question of the father?

It is only too evident that in every child analysis practiced by an analyst, there really is transference, just as there is in an adult, and better than anywhere else. Here it is a matter of something a bit special, whose consequences we shall be able to show in what follows.

Whatever the case, the formula allows one rigorously to measure the entire progress of the father's intervention.

I hope to make you see next time that this formula truly allows us to know why certain interventions by the father are unfruitful, without echoes, and why others on the contrary make the mythic transformation tremble.
The development of the case of Little Hans shows us the transformation of an equation whose potential for progress and implicit metaphorical richness were immediately manifest. I shall content myself today with indicating its last and extreme term, written in the same formalization. I have already said enough about it for you to be able to understand its bearing.

What we see at the end is surely a solution which installs Little Hans in a livable register of object relations. Has it fully succeeded from the point of view of an Oedipal integration? Before coming back to that at a closer angle the next time, we can already see in what ways it has, and in what it has not.

If we read the text in which Little Hans formulates his position at the end, he tells us -- *Now I am the papa, der Vatti.* We do not need to ask how it can be that he should have this idea -- with a father that he must stimulate throughout the observation, begging him -- *But do your job as a father.* The last and very fine fantasy with the father shows the latter catching up to him just on the quay of the train, while Little Hans has already long since galloped off ahead -- with whom? As though by chance, with the grandmother.

The first thing that the father asks him, is -- *Now, what would you do in my place, if you were the father? -- Oh, it's very simple, I'd take you to see grandma every Sunday.* Nothing has changed in the relation between father and son. We can thus assume that there has not been an entirely typical realization of the Oedipus complex.

We see it, in fact, very quickly, if we know how to read the text. All of the ties with the father are very far from being broken, they are even strongly knotted by this whole analytic experience, but, as Little Hans puts it very neatly, *then you would be the grandfather.* He says it, but at what point? Read the text carefully -- at the moment when he begins to say that he himself is the father.

The term "grandfather" comes in quite apart. They have spoken of the mother, and we shall see what sort of mother she will be. Then they talked about the other woman, who is the grandmother. But no link between this
grandmother and that grandfather, in the perspective of Little Hans for-himself [pour-soi].

It is not wrong of Freud to underline, with a satisfaction which is far from giving us complete comfort, that the question of the Oedipus complex has been very elegantly resolved by this fine little gentleman, who henceforth becomes the spouse of his mother, and sends his father back to the grandmother. Let us say that it is an elegant, indeed, humorous, way to avoid the question. But nothing, in all that Freud wrote, indicates to us up until now that one can consider this solution, as evident as it might seem, as a typical solution of the Oedipus complex.

We see very well, on the part of Little Hans, an elaboration which maintains a certain continuity in the order of lineages. If he had not at least succeeded in that, Little Hans would have resolved nothing at all, and the function of the phobia would have been null. In so far as he thinks of himself as the father, Little Hans is a function of something that is written more or less like this --

\[ f (M) \ (M') \]

That indicates the mother and the grandmother. The mother, at the end of the process, is doubled. It is a very important point, which allows the child to find a balance on three paws, which is really the minimum on which the object relation can be established. The third which he does not find in his father, he finds in the grandmother, whose decisive, indeed, crushing, value in object relations he has seen only too well.

It is precisely in so far as beyond the mother, he adds a second one, that Little Hans is himself installed in a paternity. What sort of paternity? An imaginary paternity.

From this moment on, what does Little Hans say? Who is going to have children? He is, he says so very clearly. But when his father, putting his foot in it, asks him -- Is it with mama that you are going to have children? -- Not at all, Little Hans answers, what's all this about? You told me that the father cannot have children all alone, and now you want me to.
This striking moment of vacillation in the dialogue shows the repressed character in him of everything that belongs to the order of paternal creation, while from this moment on, on the contrary, he says that he will have children, -- but they will be imaginary children.

He wants, he says in the most precise way, to have children, but, on the other hand, he does not want his mother to have any. Whence the precautions that he wants to take as to the future. One is ready to do anything so that the mother will have no more children, including pay royally -- we are after all in the presence of a little offspring of capitalists -- pay that great genitor par excellence, who is Mister Stork, with his strange silhouette. We shall see the next time what place and what function to grant him, and what his true visage is like. He would go so far as paying off Father Stork so that there will be no more real children.

The paternal function which the child assumes is imaginary. Hans is substituted for the mother, and he has children as she does. He will take care of these imaginary children in the way that he has succeeded in completely resolving the notion of the child, including that of little Anna.

In what does all of his fantasy about the box, the stork, and little Anna, who already existed long before her birth, consist? It is a matter of imaginarizing his sister, fantasizing her. He will thus have fantasmatic children. He will become someone who is essentially a poet, a creator in the imaginary order.

To the final form of his imaginary creations, he gives the name Lodi. The father is very interested. What does this Lodi mean? Is it chocolodi? -- No, it's saffalodi. In fact, saffaladi means little sausage. The phalloform character of the image indicates very well the imaginary transmutation operated by this phallus which has both not receded, and is eternally imagined by the mother. We see it reproduced at the end in the form of the little Lodi.

Woman for him will always be only the fantasy of the little sister-daughters around whom his entire childhood crisis turned. This will not quite be a fetish, since there will be very precisely, if I may say so, the true fetish. He will not be stopped by what is written on the veil, he will find
the typical heterosexual form of his object, but that will not prevent his relation with women from being thenceforth, and forever, without any doubt, marked by this narcissistic genesis in the course of which he came to place himself in orthoposition with respect to the feminine partner. In sum, the feminine partner has not been engendered by starting with the mother, but by starting with the imaginary children that he can give the mother, themselves heirs to this phallus around which turned the whole primitive game of the love relation, of the capture of love, that was played in relation to the mother.

To take our bearings with regard to our equation, we have thus at the end, on one hand, the affirmation of the relation of Hans as the new father, as Vatti, with a maternal line, on the other hand, little Anna on horseback, taking the dominant position in relation to the whole transport, the whole train, to everything that the mother trains after her.

It is in effect through the intermediary of little Anna that Little Hans succeeds in doing what we said he did the last time, that is, dominating the mother, not simply whipping her, but, as the continuation of the story shows us, seeing what she has in her belly. Once the castrating little pocketknife is extracted, she is much less offensive.

[Format, p. 385]

\[ f \left( M \right) \left( M' \right) \sim \left( \alpha \right) \Pi \]

\[ \phi \]

That is the formula which, opposed to the preceding one, marks the point of arrival in the transformation of Little Hans.

He will surely have every appearance of being a normal heterosexual. Nevertheless, the path which he has run in the Oedipus in order to arrive there is an atypical path, tied to the deficiency of the father. You will perhaps be astonished that it should be so great, but the line of the observation endlessly shows us the deficiencies of the father and his flaws, underlined at every moment by the appeals of Little Hans himself. There
is thus certainly no cause to be astonished if it marks the resolution of the phobia with an atypical ending.

I ask you simply to retain these two extremes, and to admit that it is conceivable to articulate the transformation of one into the other by a series of stages.

No doubt it is better not to be too systematic. This sort of logic is new. If it is pursued, perhaps it must simply be as an introduction to a certain number of questions concerning how to formalize it. Has it the same laws as those that can already be formalized in other domains of logic?

Freud already began in *The Interpretation of Dreams* to tell us something about the logic of the unconscious, in other words, about the signifiers in the unconscious. A whole quarter of *The Interpretation of Dreams* is devoted to showing how a certain number of essential logical articulations, the *either-or*, contradiction, causality, can be transposed into the order of the unconscious. This logic may be distinct from our customary logic. Just as topology is a geometry of rubber, here too, it is a question of a logic in rubber.

*In rubber* does not mean that everything is possible in it. Nothing, until the new order, will allow us to undo two rings linked one through the other, even though they are in rubber. That is to let you know that a logic in rubber is not condemned to total liberty. It demands a certain number of definitions of terms from us, and we must supply them.

In short, during the resolution of Little Hans's phobia, a certain configuration occurs, which is this. Despite the presence and even the insistence of the father's action, Little Hans is inscribed in a sort of matriarchal lineage, or to be simpler and stricter as well, a maternal reduplication, as if it were necessary for there to be a third character, and in default of its being the father, it is the famous grandmother.

On the other hand, what puts him in a relation to the object which will henceforth be the object of his desires? I have already underlined it. We have evidence in the anamnesis of something that attaches him to Gmunden, to his little sister, to little girls, that is, to children in so far as they are the daughters of his mother, but also his own daughters, his
imaginary daughters. The originally narcissistic structure of his relation with woman is indicated at the issue, the outcome, the solution of his phobia. What are the traces of his passage through the phobia which will remain? Something very curious -- it is the little lamb, the one with which he plays very special games, like for example getting himself jostled by it.

On this little lamb, he tried one day to set his sister horseback. It is the same position as when she is on the horse in the fantasy of the large box, the last stage before the resolution of the phobia. His sister had to dominate it before he, Little Hans, could treat the horse as it deserves, that is to say, could strike it. At that moment, the equivalence between the horse and the mother is assured -- to beat the horse is also to beat his mother. His little sister mounted on the little lamb -- that is the configuration that remains at the end.

I cannot refuse myself the pleasure, or refuse you the enigma, of showing you the work that our master, Freud, made the pivot of his analysis of Leonardo da Vinci. It is not *The Madonna of the Rocks*, but the great cartoon of *Saint Anne*, which is in the Louvre, and which is preceded by a drawing that is at Burlington House. Here it is.

The whole analysis that Freud made of Leonardo da Vinci turns around this Saint Anne, with her strangely androgy nous face -- she also resembles *Saint John the Baptist* --, with the Virgin, and the Child. And as is underlined, here, in contradistinction to the London cartoon, the cousin, namely John the Baptist, is precisely a little lamb.

This configuration did not fail to draw Freud's attention, and it is truly the crux of his demonstration in the very singular work that is his study, *A Childhood Memory of Leonardo da Vinci*. I hope that you will take the trouble to read it between now and the end of the year, because perhaps I shall manage to do something with it for you for the close of my seminar.

You cannot fail to perceive the unlikely and enigmatic character of the whole situation in which the term narcissism is introduced for the first time -- and the almost mad audacity of writing such a thing at the time when it was written. Since then, we have succeeded in scotomizing and in
failing to recognize [méconnaître] the existence of things like that in the
work of Freud.

Read, and you will see how difficult it is to know what, when all is
summed up, he has managed to say. But also read it to see how far it holds,
despite all the errors -- for there are some, but that does not matter.

We shall have occasion to come back to this singular configuration,
which is there to present a humanissima trinita, a trinity that is very
human, indeed too human, opposed to the divinissima for which it is a
substitute.

What I wanted to indicate with this, like my cornerstone, is the singular
need for a fourth term, which we find like a residue in the form of this
lamb, an animal term in which we discover the very termination of the
phobia.

19 June 1957
"WILL GIVE ME PROGENY WITHOUT
A WIFE"

From intersubjectivity to discourse.
The object as signifier.
The phobic metaphor.
From the bite to unscrewing.
Anna, mistress of the horse.

The truth about Hans, Freud tells us, has not been completely obtained. Today we must try to formalize the observation a bit differently. The sole interest in this operation, if it has one, is to draw in as close as possible and to cover what happens in a way that is more rigorous.

Certainly, in this observation, there is every possible French door. Since it is also concerns a phobia of horses, one could indeed rave until the end of time about the horse. It is a highly singular animal which recurs throughout mythology. One could very well make valuable comparisons with Little Hans’ horse.

Robert Fliess, the son of Freud’s correspondent, who occupies an honorable place in psychoanalysis, has published in the IJP, in the jubilee number for Freud’s centenary, an article entitled Phylogenetic versus Ontogenetic Experience, a meritorious lucubration which is extremely striking. It is so by its manifestly inadequate character. The author tries to resolve the enigmas that the text of the observation of Little Hans presents by pouring into the dossier an enormous extrapolation, which does not have only the single disadvantage of supposing resolved, in a completely unjustified way, something which is not.
He centers things in a way that is perfectly valuable upon the famous dialogue between Little Hans and his father, which I call the great dialogue, and which culminates on April 21st. I remind you that this is where Little Hans literally calls upon his father to play his role as a father, saying to him -- *You have to be jealous*. One cannot believe that the father has no part in the emergence of this sentence, which one feels is ripened by everything that precedes it. In the course of the dialogue, Hans develops the fantasy in which his father, before going up to the mother's bedroom, stumbles against a stone and is hurt, as little Fritz was in the past. Blood must flow. The dialogue is closed with Hans's sentence -- *No matter what frightened denials you make, Das ist wahr, das musst wahr sein, that has to be true.*
Our author insists with a great deal of finesse on the use of words which give to what little Hans says a style soutenu 1 -- in French in the text -- here more than anywhere else, and in this regard, he illustrates very well the inadequacies of the English translation. These remarks, which certainly have their value, really show the sensibility that the members of the first analytic generation preserved with regard to the properly verbal relief, the tone, and the essential role of certain signifiers. But the most interesting thing is a rather refined speculation on the role of the father in this case.

It is in fact the father himself who for the first time introduces a word, Schimpfen, which one translates into French as gronder, to scold -- What would I scold you for? The author rightly points out that this is an intervention that appears a bit strange at this moment of the dialogue, and that it interrupts the exchange with Little Hans. But he then speculates on what there might be, on the father's side, of a participation in something that he supposes is in the ego of Little Hans, which should be in the course of developing a superego. This labored theory does not constitute an extrapolation that is too daring, but simply translates the author's need to apply a preformed category to the case. We can see it in his hesitations -- he translates the phenomenon in question by saying either that the superego is in statu nascendi, in the process of being born, or that it is certainly not yet been born, or that this is the birth of the superego. That is what is very strange.

A reference is then made to the work of Mr. Isakower, who has greatly insisted upon the predominance of the auditory sphere in the formation of the superego. He surely had a presentiment of the problem which we do not cease to pose concerning the function of speech in the genesis of that normative crisis which is called the Oedipus complex. We owe to him some pertinent comments on the way that, when occasion offers, this sort of apparatus whose framework we know, this network of forms that constitutes the superego, can show itself. He grasps it in those moments when the subject hears purely syntactic modulations, empty words strictly speaking, since it is only a question of their movement. In these

1 "An elevated style."
movements of a certain intensity, we can, he says, grasp the quick of something that is related to an archaic element -- the child integrates the adult's speech at a time when he cannot yet perceive its meaning, but only its structure. That, in sum, would be interiorization. We would thus have here the earliest form allowing us to conceive what the superego is.

That is still an interesting comment, and one could imagine, in the framework of a seminar, considering it together with the dialogue of Hans and his father. But it would certainly not be in order to find any help in it. On one side, it is considered that the superego, as an internal factor, is founded upon an integration by the subject of the general movement and the fundamental structure of speech. On the other side, it is a matter of an highly externalized dialogue -- does he suppose that the paradoxes can be levelled with a reference to the preceding remark?

Certainly, I admit that we have been looking for general references to what we are describing, even that we must at every moment. But I have always underlined the need to study the experience itself as closely as possible. It is only on this condition that we have a chance of making the concepts of analytic experience and their management progress.

For our part, we shall in no way proceed as does Mr. Fliess.

Everything that we have done up to the present rests upon a certain number of postulates -- which are not absolutely postulates, for they are founded upon our earlier work of commentary, which implies a whole reflection upon analytic experience and what it gives us. One of those postulates is this -- that neurosis is a question posed by the subject with regard to his very existence.

In hysteria, this question takes the following forms -- *What does it mean to have the sex that I have? What does it mean to have a sex? What does it mean that I can even ask myself the question?* In effect, because of the introduction of the symbolic dimension, man is never simply a male
or a female, but must situate himself in relation to something that has been symbolized which is called male and female.

If neurosis is related to the level of existence, it is so in a way that is even more dramatic in obsessional neurosis, where it is not only a question of the subject's relation to his sex, but of his relation to the very fact of existing. Hence one situates as obsessional the questions -- *What does it mean to exist? What am I like compared to who I am without being it since I can in some way dispense with it by taking enough distance to conceive of myself as dead?*

If neurosis is thus a sort of question that is closed for the subject himself, but which is organized, structured as a question, symptoms allow themselves to be understood as the living elements of this question that is articulated without the subject's knowing what he articulates. Put like that, the question is living, and the subject does not know that he is in this question. He is often himself an element in it, which can be situated at different levels -- at an elementary, almost alphabetic, level, and also at a higher, syntactic, level, where we may allow ourselves to speak of a metaphoric function and a metonymic function, taking our departure from the idea given us by those who study language, at least by a certain number of them, that these are the two principal sides to the articulation of language. What makes it difficult for us to keep to the grain in commenting on observations is that we must always beware of tilting too absolutely to one side or the other.

For an observation to be decipherable, we must begin by analyzing. The specific of the neurotic's question being that it is absolutely closed, there is no reason why it should reveal itself more to someone who contents himself with taking a sketch of it -- it would remain merely an indecipherable text, enigmatic, hieroglyphic. It is for this reason that people could make observations of neuroses during the decades before Freud arrived, without even suspecting the existence of this language. For *neurosis is a language.*

It is thus always to the extent that there is a beginning of a deciphering that we succeed in grasping the transformations and proceeding to
manipulations which confirm that it really is a matter of a text, in which we find our place with the help of a certain number of structures. The latter appear only in so far as we manage the text with ease.

We can do it at the level of a pure and simple cut, as is done for cases that are especially closed, for enigmas, in a way that is no different from what we are shown in any text of Poe's, which remind us of the common practice for deciphering messages sent in a style that is coded or highly coded. By taking a count of the signs that recur with the greatest frequency, we manage to make interesting suppositions, such as that a given sign corresponds to a given letter in the language into which we think we must translate the coded text.

With the neuroses, we are fortunately engaged in operations of a higher order, where we find certain syntactic groups with which we are familiar. The danger is evidently always one of entitling these syntactic groups, drawing them too far towards what one could call properties of soul, or indeed, pushing them a bit too far in the direction of a sort of natural instinctualization. That is to refuse to recognize [méconnaître] that what all of a sudden dominates is the organizing knot which gives some of these groups the value of a unit of signification, what we currently call a word. Thus, for example, I recently alluded to the well-known identification of the boy with the mother, and had you notice that such an identification is always made only in relation to the general movement in the progress of an analysis. As Freud energetically points out in the observation of Little Hans, on page 319 of the German text, the path of analysis can never repeat the process of development in a neurosis.

There we come to the quick of the matter. In our attempt at deciphering, we must follow what has been effectively knotted in the text of the neurosis. Now, this text is submitted to the use, in the present situation, of an element from the subject's past, which is used as a signifying element. That is one of the clearest forms of the x of condensation. When we approach the signifying elements of the text, we thus cannot abstract ourselves from the fact that it can be decomposed into two terms situated at two very distant points in the history of the subject, and yet we must
still resolve things according to the mode of organization that they have currently. That is what obliges us to seek the laws proper to the solution of each of these organized discourses, according to how the neuroses present themselves to us.

Only, there is not simply organized discourse, there is also the way in which a dialogue is engaged upon for the solution of this discourse, and that will complicate things further. The establishment of the dialogue implies in effect that we offer our place as the locus in which a part of the terms of the discourse must be realized. Virtually, and in the beginning, the latter, by the sole fact that it is a discourse, implies somewhere this Other who is the place, the witness, the guarantee, the ideal locus of its good faith.

It is really there, in the revealing bath of dialogue in which the meaning of discourse will be formulated, that we take our place in principle. That is where we are called to be, and where we see the elements of the subject’s unconscious emerge, that is to say, the terms which will take the place that we hold. The dialogue progressively deciphers the discourse, showing us the function of the personage whose place we occupy. That is what is called the transference. During the course of the analysis, this personage does not fail to change.

Thus we try to bring the meaning of the discourse into the light. We ourselves as persons are integrated as signifying elements into the discourse of the neurosis, and it is by virtue of this that we are made able, are summoned, on occasion, to resolve its meaning.

It is essential always to keep these two planes of intersubjectivity in sight as the fundamental structure in which the history of the deciphering develops. And that must always be situated in its place in our observations.

In the case of little Hans, we had to demonstrate the complexity of the relation to the father. Let us not forget that in effect, it is the latter who does the analysis. There is thus the real, actual father, in dialogue with the child. This is already a father who has speech. But beyond him, there is that father to whom this speech is revealed, who is like the witness of its
truth, the higher father, the all powerful father, whom Freud represents. That is an essential characteristic of the observation which deserves to be kept in mind. As to the structure that is at stake, this is to be found in every species of relation between the analysand and the analyst. Also, this sort of superior power is so inherent to the paternal function that it always tends to be reproduced in some way.

That is really what makes the specificity of those cases in which the patient had to deal with the father Freud himself. There, the doubling did not exist, the super-authority did not exist behind him, the patient sensed very well that he had to deal with someone facing him who had made a new universe of signification arise, a new relation of man to his own meaning and his own condition, and that, for the use of the patient who was there. What seems to us paradoxical in the sometimes highly astonishing results that Freud was able to obtain, and also in the very astonishing modes of intervention which were in his technically, cannot be otherwise explained.

Saying that allows us better to situate the direction in which our interest is tending. All through the preceding years, you have seen me elaborate the fundamental subjective schema, namely the symbolic relation between the subject and that Other who is the unconscious personage leading and guiding him, while the imaginary other, the little other, plays an intermediate role, that of a screen. Little by little our interest shifted, and we were led to reflect upon the very structure of the discourse in question, which presents distinct problems which are no less fundamental.

During the very course of this year, we have shifted our interest progressively. There are, certainly, laws of intersubjectivity. These are the laws which regulate the subject's relation to the little other and to the big Other. But that is not the whole of what we are dealing with. The original function of discourse, where language is at stake, deserves to be approached step by step. This discourse also has laws, and the relation of the signifier to the signified is something distinct from intersubjectivity, although it can overlap it, like the relations of the imaginary and the symbolic.
Thus, in our progress this year on the topic of object relations, we have seen the emergence of the original place of elements which are really and truly objects, which are in an original, founding state, which are even formative of objects, but which are nevertheless entirely different from objects in the full sense. They are in any case very different from real objects, since they are extracts from psychopathology, that is to say, from malaise.

They are objects made to function as signifiers.

I first isolated the object as having the function of the signifier when I spoke of the fetish, and from now until the end of the year, I shall not have gone much further than considering phobia.

Nevertheless, if you have clearly understood what we have tried to bring into play each time that we have spoken of the phobia of little Hans, you will have a mental model, and all later progress can be conceived as a more profound study, an extension of it to other neuroses, and most notably to hysteria and to obsessional neurosis.

In phobia, things are particularly simple and exemplary. Every time that you have to deal with a phobia in a young subject, you will be able to understand that the object of this phobia is always a signifier. It is relatively simple in appearance although its management is not, from the moment that you come into play. But basically, it is a signifier.

That is the meaning of the formula that I gave you --

[Formula, p. 395 ]

\[
\left( \text{_____} \right)^{\text{I_____}} \hspace{1cm} M
\]

\[ M + \phi + \alpha \]
The terms that appear below the bar represent what comes progressively to complicate the basic relation to the mother, from which we began when I spoke to you of the symbol of frustration, S(M), when the mother is present-absent. It is there that the child's relations to the mother are established over the course of time, in the subsequent development.

The case of little Hans makes us immediately arrive at that extremely trying stage in which the mother is complicated by supplementary elements of all sorts. There is first of all the phallus, φ. I have told you that this was certainly the element of a critical abyss in that dual relation which the current analytic dialectics represents as being so closed. One must on the contrary understand to what point the child is himself in a relation to an imaginary function in the mother. On the other side, there is the other child, α, who, be it only for an instant, chases, expels the child from the mother's affection.

You will always see a phobia appear in a child at this critical moment, which is typical -- something is lacking, which will come to play the fundamental role in the issue of the crisis, apparently without issue, in the child's relation to the mother. We do not need to make hypotheses in order to demonstrate it. The entire analytic construction rests upon the consistency of the Oedipus complex, which may be schematized thus --

\[(F)\text{ M ~}\]

If the Oedipus complex signifies something, it is that from a certain moment onward, the mother is considered and lived as a function of the father. The father deserves a capital F here, because we consider that he is the father in the absolute sense of the term. This is the father on the plane of the symbolic father. This is the name of the father, which founds the existence of the father in the complexity in which it is presented to us. The entire experience of psychopathology reduces this complexity for us under the heading of the Oedipus complex. The introduction of this symbolic element brings a new, radical dimension to the child's relation with the mother.
To complete the second part of the equation, we must start with empirical givens. They indicate the existence of something which can, grossly speaking, and subject to commentary, be established more or less like this --

[Formula, format p. 396, bottom.]

\[(F) M \sim (-f) (x) \]

\[\Pi\]

What I notate as \(\Pi\) under \(x\) would be the real penis. The \((-f)\) is what is opposed to the child in a sort of imaginary antagonism. It is the imaginary function of the father, in so far as the latter plays the aggressive, regressive role implied by the castration complex.

If we want to formalize Freudian experience, we must take it at the letter of the law, accepting it at least provisionally. It affirms the constancy of the castration complex. Whatever the discussions to which it may later lend itself, we shall never cease to need it as a reference, and experience underlines its coherency with the Oedipus complex.

On one hand, something occurs in the relations with the mother, which introduces the father as a symbolic factor. It is he who possesses the mother, and legitimately enjoys her. This is a function that is both fundamental and problematic, which may on occasion be weakened or fragmented.

On the other hand, something has the function of introducing into the instinctual play of the subject, and into the assumption that he makes of its functions, an essential signification which is truly specific to the human species in so far as it develops with the supplementary dimension of the symbolic order. This signification which is present here, lived in human experience, is called castration.

Analysis represents castration in the most instrumental way -- a pair of scissors, a sickle, a hatchet, a knife. These are signifiers, which strike at the sexual functions. They are a part, one could say, of the instinctual heraldry of the sexual relation in the human species. We could try to list the
heraldic elements of one or another animal species. It is probable, for example, that the colored pectoral plastron of the robin red-breast can be considered as an element of signal, in parade as in the intersexual struggle. Whatever the case, one finds in the animal the equivalent of the constant character of this paradoxical element which is, in man, tied to a signifier that is called the castration complex.

Thus we write the formula for the Oedipus complex with its correlate, the castration complex. But one must be aware of the fact that the Oedipus complex is itself organized on the symbolic plane, which supposes behind it the instituting existence of the symbolic order. An episode in the observation of little Hans shows this well.

At a certain moment of their dialogue, the father tries to lead Hans towards the consideration of all sorts of physiological explanations. The father, who is timid, does not push things to their conclusion, as is always the case with him. But when poor little Hans says that he does not really understand the function of the feminine organ, the father, in despair, ends by giving him the explanation, while all of his fantasies show that the child knows very well that all that is there in his mama's belly, whether she is symbolized by a horse or a carriage or not. But what the father does not see is that the child is only interested in the genealogical construction.

This interest represents a normal moment in the subject's progress. It may be reinforced here by the specific difficulties of the neurosis, but it is normal, and it comes up in little Hans at a moment when we are already very far advanced in the observation. The child has had this long discussion in order to construct the genealogical possibilities which exist, namely, the different ways that a child can be related to a father and to a mother, and what that means.

He goes so far as to construct one of the most original sexual theories, and Freud indicates that he has not often found one like it in children -- and in fact, there are throughout the whole observation elements which are unique. The theory is as follows -- little boys give birth to little girls, and little girls give birth to little boys. Do not suppose that this is a theory that would be impossible to discover among genealogical organizations.
One can even say that there is some truth in it, and that it is consistent with elementary structures of kinship.

It is because women make men that men can then perform that essential service of permitting them to pursue their function of procreation. But that supposes, of course, that we are considering it in the symbolic order, that is to say, in a certain order which determines a regular succession of generations. In the natural order, as I have very often had you notice, there is no obstacle to everything's turning exclusively around the female line, with no discrimination concerning the product, with no impossibility of the son's impregnating the mother, and to the extent of his possible period of fecundity, the following generations. What interests little Hans is the symbolic order, which is like the center of gravitation for his whole extraordinarily luxuriant and fantastic construction.

To say it now in general terms, the interrogation of the symbolic order emerges in the child with regard to the big F in the form of a question – What is a father? The father is in effect the pivot, the fictive and concrete center that maintains the genealogical order, which allows the child to mingle in a way that is satisfying in a world which, however one must judge it, culturally or naturally or supernaturally, is the world to which he is born. It is in a human world organized by this symbolic order that he appears, and that is what he must confront.

Is not the discovery of analysis to show us the minimum of exigencies to which the real father must respond if he is to communicate, make felt, and transmit to the child a notion of his place in this symbolic order? It is equally taken as given that everything occurring in the neuroses is made precisely, in some way, to make up for a difficulty, indeed an insufficiency, in the way in which the child had to deal with the Oedipus.

Something else occurs to complicate the situation. It is what one calls regression. It is a matter of intermediary elements deriving from the primitive relation to the mother, which already carry a certain dual symbolism. Between this primitive relation and the moment at which the Oedipus properly speaking is constituted, all sorts of accidents can occur, which stem from nothing other than the fact that the child's different
elements of exchange come to play their role in the understanding of the symbolic order. In short, the pregenital can be integrated into the Oedipal level, and can come to complicate the question of the neurosis.

In the case of phobia, we have something simple. Nobody contests the fact that in this case, the child has arrived, at least for a moment, at what one calls the genital stage, in which the problems of the integration of the subject's sex are posed in all their plenitude. It is thus on this plane that we must understand the function of the phobic element.

Freud considered the function of the phobic element as corresponding in structure to the primitive function isolated by the ethnography of his time, that of the totem. That is probably no longer very tenable in the light of current progress in structural anthropology, in which the totem no longer plays a prevalent and axial role, and where it is replaced by something other. But, we analysts, in our practical experience -- and in so far as in the end, it is barely on the plane of phobia that Freud has demonstrated the totem to have a signification in analytic experience --, we must still transpose it into a formulation which would be less subject to caution than the totemic relation is. That is why the last time, I introduced what I called the metaphoric function of the phobic object.

That is to say that the phobic object comes to play the role which, because of some deficiency, because of some real deficiency in the case of little Hans, is not fulfilled by the figure of the father. Thus the object of the phobia plays the same metaphoric role as that which I tried to illustrate for you with this image -- *His sheaf was neither miserly nor hateful*.

I showed you how the poet used metaphor to make the paternal dimension appear in its originality in the case of this old man in his decline, reinvigorating him with all the natural surging of this sheaf.

In that living poetry which is the phobia in this case, the horse has no other function. It is the element around which all sorts of significations will turn, and which in the end will form a compensatory element to what has been lacking in the development of the subject, that is, in the developments which have been furnished him by the dialectics of the
milieu in which he is immersed. But that is only possible in the 
imaginary.

It is a question of a signifier that is raw. It is not without some 
predisposition, already vehicled by the whole carriage of the culture that 
the subject draws behind him. In the end, the subject did not need to look 
for it anywhere other than where one can find every sort of heraldic 
element -- in a book of pictures. These are not natural images, but images 
drawn by the hand of man, with all their presupposition and history, in 
the sense that history is historied with myths, with fragments of folklore. 
It is in his book, just opposite the picture of the chest with the stork on a 
red chimney, that Hans found the image of a horse being shod. We can lay 
a finger on it -- it is a horse represented.

We have no cause to be astonished that subjects regularly have recourse 
to forms which one can call typical because they always appear in certain 
contexts, in certain connections or associations which may escape those 
who are its vehicles. The subject chooses one of them to fulfill a very 
precise function, that of assuring the momentary stabilization of certain 
states -- in the present case, the state of anxiety. To fill the function of 
transforming this anxiety into a localized fear, the subject chooses a form 
that constitutes a stopping point, a term, a pivot, a pile foundation, to 
which what wavers can be attached, and which is under menace of being 
carried away by the internal current issuing from the crisis of the maternal 
relation. That, in the case of little Hans, is the role of the horse.

Certainly, it appears to hinder the child's development a great deal, and 
for those around him, it is a parasitic and pathological element. But the 
analytic construction shows us that it also has the role of something to 
hang on to, a major role as a stop. It is a point around which the subject 
can continue to rotate what otherwise would be declared in an unbearable 
anxiety.

The whole progress of the analysis consists in this case in extracting, in 
bringing to light, the possibilities offered by the child's use of this signifier 
which is essential as a substitute in his crisis. It is a matter of allowing this 
signifier to play the role that the child has reserved for it in the
construction of his neurosis in order to assure his relation to the symbolic, by taking it as succor, and as a reference point in the symbolic order.

Here is what the phobia accomplishes. It allows the child to manage this signifier, by drawing from it possibilities richer than those it contains. In effect, the signifier does not in itself contain in advance all the significations that we shall make it speak, it contains them rather through the place that it occupies, the place where the symbolic father should be. To the extent that this signifier is there as corresponding metaphorically to the father, it allows the accomplishment of all the transferences, all the necessary transformations of all that is complicated and problematic in the relation inscribed on the bottom line -- namely, the mother, the phallic function, and the child -- which each time necessitates a distinct triangle with regard to the real mother. For that one needs a term which would be beyond the child's mastery, which makes him afraid, and even which bites.

That is why we write on the other side what is most menaced, namely, the penis of the child --
What does the observation of Little Hans show us? It is that, in such a structure, it is useless to attack its likeliness or its unlikeliness.

It is not by telling the child that this is foolishness, Dummheit, nor is it by giving him very pertinent comments on the relation that there is between the fact that he touches his pee-pee maker and the fact that he experiences more intensely the fears that the stupidity inspire, that one seriously gets things moving. On the contrary.

If you read the observation in the light of the schema that I have just given you, you will perceive that these interventions, which are not without some effect, never have the direct, persuasive bearing of the initial experience, and the efficacy that one might wish. On the contrary, the whole interest of the observation is in showing clearly that on these occasions, the child reacts by reinforcing the essential elements of his own symbolic formulation of the problem. He replays the drama of phallic hide-and-seek with his mother — Does she have it? Or doesn't she? —, showing very well that here it is a matter of a symbol, that it is there as one, and that there is no question of disorganizing it for him. Whence the capital importance of a schema like this.

What is in question for us in the analysis is perhaps, in fact, to make this schema evolve, to allow the child to develop the signifiers with which
the system is pregnant, and not to rest at a provisional solution which consists in his being a little phobic who is afraid of horses. But this equation can be resolved only according to its own laws, which are those of a discourse that is determined, with a very precise dialectics, and not that of some other discourse. One cannot begin without taking account of what this equation is made to sustain as a symbolic order.

We are now able to give the general schema of its progress.

It is not vain that the father intervenes, the great symbolic Father who is Freud, as well as the little father, this father who is loved, who has only one fault — but it is huge — it is that he does not truly satisfy his function as a father, and at least for a while, his function as a father, or a god, who is jealous, eifersn, as little Hans vehemently says.

If the father speaks to him with a lot of affection, and devotion, it is still without being able to be more than he has been up to the present, namely, a father who in the real does not wholly fulfill his function. As for the child, he does literally what he wants with his mother, and indeed gets into her bed despite the father. That does not mean that he does not love his father, but that his father does not fill the function which would allow the situation its schematic and direct outcome. We find ourselves, thus, before a complication — the father begins by intervening directly upon the term $\Pi$, according to Freud’s instructions, which proves that things are not yet completely in focus in the mind of the latter.

We could, in this regard, enter into articulations of detail which would allow us to formulate what is at stake in a completely rigorous way, with a series of algebraic formulations transformed one into another. I dislike doing that, a bit, and fear that some minds are not yet completely open to what, I believe, is the future, in what concerns the clinical and therapeutic analysis of the evolution of cases. Every case, at least in its essential stages, must lend itself to summary in a series of transformations.

The last time I gave you one example, and put the initial formulation on the board --

$$ (M + \phi + A) M - m + \Pi $$
then the terminal formulation --

$$\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{T} \end{array} \right) \quad M \sim b + \Pi$$

$M + \phi + \alpha$

and finally --

$$f (M) (M') \sim \left( \begin{array}{c} \phi \end{array} \right) \Pi$$

All of this is taken in a big $\Lambda$, in a logification.

$$\Lambda \quad F \quad \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{T} \end{array} \right) \quad M \sim b + \Pi$$

$f \quad M + \phi + \alpha$

From the moment that we begin to speak of it, and that this $\Lambda$ is taken between the big $F$ and the little $f$, we can ask ourselves at what major moment the transformation occurs. When is the little $f$ going to intervene here in $b + \Pi$, and when will big $F$ intervene on the level of big 'T'? I have not up until now gone into its successive transformations, but nothing prevents us from doing it, by following what happens in the observation and the way in which things evolve.
Immediately after Freud's intervention there is produced on April 5th a fantasy which will play a major role, and which will later give its place to everything occurring under the sign of Verkehr, that is to say, of transport, with the ambiguous sense of the word. One can say here that in a certain fashion, the first term of our equation finds quite a good incarnation in the fantasy.

In effect, the fantasy that Hans then develops is that of seeing the cart on which he has climbed to play suddenly drawn off by the horse. This fantasy gives evidence of a transformation of his fears, and constitutes a first essay at a dialectics of the phobia, which can be written thus --

[Format, in box, p. 403, #4]

\[ H \]
\[ \overline{I} \]
\[ M + \phi + \alpha \]

The horse here is an element which draws something after it, while little Hans has come to a place on the same cart where there is accumulated the whole load of sacks which represent, as what follows in the observation demonstrates, all of the mother's possible, virtual children. Nothing is more feared by him than to see his mother charged anew, beladen, that is to say, fat, rolling, carrying, -- like all these charged carts which cause him so much fear -- with children inside her belly. As the continuation of the observation shows, the cart and, occasionally the bathtub, have the function of representing the mother. The fantasy thus signifies -- One can put a whole heap of these little children there, I'll put them there myself, and we'll transport them.

It is, one could say, a question of an early imaginative exercise. The image that I am giving you here, if it is as distant as possible from every sort of natural consent in psychological reality, is, on the other hand,
extremely expressive when taken from the point of view of the structure of the signifiying organization. Little Hans here draws a first benefit from dialecticizing the function of the horse, the essential element of his phobia.

We have already seen little Hans insist on maintaining the symbolic function, for example, in one of his fantasies, that of the giraffe. Here, in everything that follows Freud's intervention, we see him somehow making every possible test of the functions at play in this group. Little Hans is at first put on the cart amidst all of the heteroclitic elements which he so much fears will be carried off with him God knows where, by a mother who is henceforth for him only an uncontrollable, unforeseeable power, with which one does not play, or to use a very expressive term of
slang, with whom y' plus d'amour,² that is to say, there are no longer any rules in the game, because others meddle in -- and because little Hans himself complicates the game by bringing in, no longer just the symbolic phallus with which he can hide-and-seek with his mother and the little girls, but also a real little penis, because of which he gets his hands tapped.

That shows us that if the child believed absolutely nothing said by the gentleman who spoke to him like the Good Lord, but only found that he spoke well, it still emerges that he has been able to begin to speak, that is, to tell tales.

The first thing that he will do will be to maintain a distinction that clearly shows the difference between the real schema and the symbolic schema. He says to his father --Why did you tell me that I love my mother, when it's you that I love? That is how he announces it.

After which, what results? Little Hans starts the whole movement of his phobia, by giving the horse all that he can give, every virtual possibility. The horse can be harnessed, or unharnessed, can bite or fall, etc. And that is why we have all these paradoxes.

Do not forget that at the very moment when Hans was most afraid of the horse, a signifier pregnant with every danger, between the 3rd and the 10th of March, he allowed himself to play freely at horses in the company of a new maid, and this was an occasion for him to indulge with her in every possible incongruity, to use the most impertinent manners, to threaten to undress her, explaining that then they could see her Wiwimacher. All that is part of the role that maids had in Freud. You see that at this moment the horse frightened him not a bit.

Still while maintaining the function of the horse, Hans then makes use of all the occasions it offers him to learn and to elucidate the problem. In sum, he has discovered an essential property of the situation -- starting from the moment when the whole group is logified, one can play with it, that is, one can allow oneself a certain number of exchanges and permutations of the signifiers thus grouped. That is the point of the initial

² Literally, "there's no more love."
transformation. Otherwise, I do not see why we should be there any longer, scrutinizing what the child tells.

We have here nothing other than what we shall find again at the moment of the transformation which will prove decisive, from the bite into unscrewing of the bathtub. Between the two, the relation between the characters changes entirely. It is not the same thing to bite the mother greedily, which gives an apprehension of her natural signification, and indeed to fear in return that famous bite which the horse incarnates -- or to unscrew the mother, to unfasten her from her place, to mobilize her in this business, to arrange so that she too enters into the whole of the system, and for the first time as an element that is mobile, and at the same stroke, equivalent to the others. The system is thus presented like a vast game of bowls, with which the child will try to reconstitute a tenable situation, and indeed, to introduce the new elements which will allow him to recrystallize the situation.

That is what happens at the moment of the fantasy of the bathtub. That could, for example, be written something like this, with a permutation which would give us --

\[
\left( \underline{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_}\right) \Pi \sim M (b)
\]

\[
M + \phi + \alpha
\]

The symbol \(\Pi\) represents the sexual function of little Hans, and the small \(b\) the mother in so far as he makes her enter herself into the dialectic of movable elements, which makes her an object like any other, and thus allows him to manipulate her. One can then say that all that sort of progress which is the analysis of the phobia in some fashion represents the decline of the mother with regard to the child, and the mastery that he progressively takes of her. The following stage, on which I shall conclude
next time, unfolds entirely on an imaginary plane. In a certain way it is 
regressive with regard to what has been presented up until now but, in 
another way, it really marks a progress.

Little Hans makes his sister herself come into play -- that element 
which is so painful to manage in the real -- in the dimension of the 
imaginary. He deploys an astonishing construction around her, a 
blooming fantasy, which consists at first in supposing that she has always 
been there in the big box, almost from all eternity.

That supposes a signifying organization that is well developed in him. 
If even before she is born, this sister was already in the world, by what title 
was it? It is too evident -- by imaginary title. We have Freud's explanation 
there. Something is presented here in an imaginary form that is repeated, 
indefinitely, constant, permanent, in the form of an essential 
reminiscence. Little Anna has always been there, in the great chest behind 
the carriage, where on occasion she travels separately. Little Hans 
emphasizes clearly that she is all the more there because in reality he 
knows very well that she was not there. It is precisely during the first year, 
when she has not yet been born that he insists that she was born, and that 
she indulged in everything that he indulged in himself, logically, 
dialectically, in his discourse and in his games, during the course of the 
first part of the treatment.

At an other moment, he tells us that she is beside the coachman, rides 
without stirrups, and holds the reins, -- no, he says, she was not holding 
the reins. There is there something like a difficulty in distinguishing 
reality from imagination, an ambiguity between Wirklichkeit and 
Phantasie, which Freud notes. But it is really by the intermediary of this 
imaginary child who has always been there, who, moreover, will always be 
there, that little Hans continues his fantasy, and that there is the beginning 
for him of a rapport, equally imaginary, by which his relation with the 
maternal object will be stabilized. This object of an eternal return frays the 
way for him towards the woman to whom this still very young man will 
accede.
Little Hans literally uses his little sister as a sort of ideal of the ego. She becomes the mistress of the signifier, the mistress of the horse, she dominates it, and it is with her as intermediary that little Hans can himself come to whip the horse, beat it, dominate it, become its master. It is thus that he will henceforth be in a relation of mastery with regard to what will later be inscribed under the heading of spiritual creations -- mastery of the imaginary other which for him will be every sort of feminine fantasy, what I might call the daughters of his dream. It is with this that he will always have to deal, this narcissistic fantasy in which the dominating image has just become incarnate. While resolving for him the question of the possession of the phallus, this image will leave the domination that the subject has taken of the critical situation in an essentially narcissistic and imaginary state.

That is what will mark with a profound ambiguity what is later produced by way of an issue or a normalization of the situation. The stages are well enough indicated in the observation. It is after the ludic development of his fantasies and the reduction to the imaginary of the elements now fixed as signifiers, that the fundamental relation will be constituted which will allow him to assume his sex. He will assume it in a way that, as normal as it may be, can still be supposed to remain marked by a deficiency.

I shall only be able to show you all the fine points next time, but for today, I shall say something that will indicate the defect of the point that the child has reached in order to hold onto his place.

Nothing is more significative in this regard than what is expressed in the terminal fantasy of unscrewing, in which the child's seat is changed in order to give him a bigger behind -- and why? To fill this place that he has made much more manageable, this bathtub in which the theme of the fall can come to be dialecticized, and be evacuated as it happens. It is here that the atypical, anomalous, almost inverted character of the situation can be seen.

The normal formula of the castration complex implies that the boy, to speak only of him, can possess his penis only on the condition of finding it
anew, in so far as it is returned to him after he has lost it. In the case of little Hans, the castration complex is ceaselessly invoked by the child, who himself suggests its formula, adds images to it, practically summons his father to make him suffer this trial, and as a reflection of it, he foments and organizes such a trial on the image of his father, he injures him, he wants this injury to be realized. Is it not striking to see that after all of these vain efforts to achieve this fundamental subjective metamorphosis, what occurs in the end does not concern his sex, but his seat? -- that is to say, his relation with his mother.

Thenceforth, little Hans will be able to fill the place, but this result is gained at the expense of something which is not apparent from this perspective. It is the dialectics of the subject's relation to his own organ. Here, since it is not the organ that is changed, it is the subject himself who, at the end of the observation, assumes himself as something like a sort of mythic father, such as he has managed to conceive him. God knows that this father is not at all a father like all the rest, since he is a father who, in Hans's fantasies, is capable of having children by himself. As the husband says to the gendarme in *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* --

*Come back tonight and see how nature*  
*Will give me progeny without a wife.*

That is why one cannot say that everything in the relative position of the sexes has been assumed, or everything of the gap that remains from the integration of these relations.

How to judge the result of a particular analytic progress? -- if not by the paradoxical inversion of certain terms, which can be expressed in symbolic notation by plus and minus. In the present case, one can say that little Hans has not passed by the castration complex, but by another route. And this other route, as is indicated by the myth of the installation man who changes his behind, leads him to transform himself into another little Hans.
That is the whole meaning of this final detail, which Freud gives as the epilogue of the case. When, much later, he again sees Little Hans by then grown up, it is to hear him say -- *I no longer remember any of that.* We see in that the sign and the evidence of a moment of essential alienation.

You know the story that they tell, of a subject who went off to an island so as to forget something. The people who found him came up to him and asked him what it was that he wanted so much to forget, and he could not reply. As the story neatly says -- he had forgotten.

In the case of Little Hans, something still incites us to change the accent, and I would almost say the formula, of this story. If there is some stigma of inachievement both in the analysis of little Hans and in the Oedipal solution postulated by his phobia, it is this. These circles and detours of the signifier that were revealed to be salutary, which made the phobia gradually vanish, which made the signifier of the horse superfluous -- if they have operated, it is -- not because Little Hans has forgotten, but because he has forgotten *himself.*

26 June 1957

---

3 *Non pas que le petit Hans aoublié, mais qu'il s'est oublié.*
ENVoi
FROM HANS-THE-FETISH
TO LEONARDO-IN-THE-LOOKING-GLASS

Exit via the maternal ideal.
Hans, daughter of two mothers.
The vulture was a kite.
The Other become little other.
The imaginary inversion of Leonardo.

Today is our last seminar of the year. I did not want to have to repeat
myself today in summing things up, which, whatever the effects, is not a bad method.

The last time I left aside a certain number of things, and because of that perhaps did not push my analysis to the end.

I formalized some little letters, and I tried to indicate in what direction one could make an effort so as to get used to writing relations in such a way as to have fixed reference points, from which one would not have to back down in the discussion, and which would one could not avoid, once having posited them, by profiting from all that there may habitually be of something too supple in the play between the imaginary and the symbolic, which is so important for our comprehension of existence.

What I have thus sketched for you is a beginning of this formalization. I know very well that I have not given the reasons for all of the terms. A certain indetermination may thus appear to remain in the way these terms are linked together. One cannot explain everything all at once. In the article which will appear in the third number of the revue La Psychanalyse under the title L’Instance de la lettre (The Agency of the Letter), you will
see a perhaps more rigorous justification of what determines some of these formulas, namely those of metaphor and metonymy.

At the point that we have reached, the important thing is, I believe, to have suggested to you the possibility of using such formulas in order to situate the relations between the subject and the other’s different modes of being, which cannot otherwise be articulated, for our usual language does not give us the bases necessary for doing so.

I have thus left some things behind me. And after all, why should I not? Why want, even in the case of Little Hans, to furnish a complete formula of the question that the case poses?

You know that I mean to make my commentary under the heading of the questions raised by Freud. That does not, however, mean that I want to make of each of his works, or even of the whole of his works, a system that is closed. The important thing is for you to have learned sufficiently, and for you to learn better every day, that Freud changes the very bases of psychological thought by introducing into it a dimension that is foreign to it. The foreign character of this dimension, with respect to any psychological fixation of the object, constitutes the originality of our science, and the basic principle through which we have to understand our progress in it.

To close the Freudian interrogation again, to reduce it to the field of psychology, leads to what I would call without further formalism a psychogenesis that is raving mad. You see this psychogenesis gaining ground implicitly every day in the way that psychoanalysts envisage the facts and the objects with which they have to deal. The sole fact that it survives is so paradoxical, so foreign to all neighboring conceptualizations, so shocking, and at the same time, finally so tolerated, that it must be added to the principal of the problem, and must be resolved at the same time in the solution that we shall bring to the problem of the Freudian dimension, which is to say, the problem of the unconscious.
I have thus left to one side in the observation of little Hans, this whole play which you can now follow.

You know its elements sufficiently well to see, in rereading the text, the mythic play in which there is accomplished what I shall call the reduction to the imaginary of the sequence of maternal desire as I have written it in the formula $M \Phi \alpha$, which notates the relation of the mother with that imaginary other which is her own phallus, then with whatever new elements may arrive, namely, other children, the little sister Anna, in this instance.

The infantile mythification in the imaginary play set off by the, let us say, psychotherapeutic intervention, shows us a phenomenon whose originality must be understood as an essential element of the Verarbeitung of the analytic progress. It is a dynamic and crystallizing element in the symbolic progress, in which the analytic cure as such consists.

If in effect, I have not pushed the analysis further, I still want to indicate the elements that I have not touched upon. In fact, I have indicated them in passing, but without explaining their exact function in relation to the mythic machinations to which the child gives himself up, under the stimulus of the analytic intervention.

One element is correlative with the great mythic invention concerning the birth of little Anna and her permanence from all eternity, so prettily fomented by Hans in his mythifying speculations. It is the mysterious personage, truly worthy of the best tradition of black humor, of the stork -- the stork who arrives with a little hat when no one is there, who bows, and puts his key in the lock. It presents aspects that are absolutely unheard of, if one knows how to hear what little Hans is saying -- *It went into your bed*, he says. As much as if to say, -- *in your place*. Then he starts again -- *into her bed*. Then the stork goes out again, unremarked by all, not without making a little uproar, a simple matter of shaking up the household after his departure. In short, this character, who comes, who goes, with an imperturbable, indeed, disquieting air, is surely not one of the least enigmatic creations of little Hans, and would be worth our taking
some time over it. It will be useful to indicate its place in the general economy of the case at this moment in the progress of little Hans.

Little Hans can succeed in fomenting his imaginary manipulation of the different terms here present, under the suggestion of the psychotherapist father, himself groomed by Freud, only by disengaging something that is clearly announced just before the great mythic creation -- the birth of Anna, and with it the stork. We see the thesis of death announced by Hans's text itself, and by the father, in the fact that little Hans has a stick -- we do not know why, no one has ever spoken of this cane before -- with which he taps the ground asking if there are any dead below.

The presence of the theme of death is strictly correlated to the theme of birth. This is an essential dimension to highlight for the understanding and the progress of the case. The truth is that this theme, this power of generation carried to the ultimate degree of mystery, between life and death, between existence and nothingness, poses particular problems, which are different from the problem of the introduction of the signifier of the horse. It is not its homologue, it is something else, which we shall perhaps see next year, and that I shall leave in reserve. The rubric that I shall choose for what I shall develop for you next year will very probably be **the formations of the unconscious**.

So I shall once again underline that it is significant that little Hans, at the end of the crisis which resolves the phobia and dissolves it, installs himself in something as essential as a refusal of new births. A sort of treaty will henceforth be established with the stork, and with the mother. You will see the meaning of the passage which deals with the relation between the mother and God concerning the possible arrival of a child, a question so elegantly resolved in the observation by Freud's little note -- *What woman wants, God wants*. That is really in effect what his mother has told him -- **In the end, it depends on me**.

On the other hand, little Hans says that he wants to have children but also that he does not want there to be any others. He desires imaginary children, inasmuch as the whole situation is resolved for him by an
identification with the maternal desire. He will have the children of his
dream, of his spirit. He will have children structured according to the
model of the maternal phallus, which he will finally make the object of
his own desire.

But it is well understood that there will be no more new children, and
this identification with the mother's desire taken as an imaginary desire
constitutes only an apparent return to the little Hans that he was before,
who played with little girls at a primitive game of hide-and-seek in which
his sex was the object. Now, Little Hans no longer dreams of playing a
game of hide-and-seek, or more exactly, no longer dreams of showing
them anything other than his fine stature of a little Hans, that is to say the
personage who, by a certain path, has become himself finally -- this is what
I want to get to -- something like a fetish object.

Little Hans is situated in a position that is passivized, and whatever the
heterosexual legality of his object, we cannot consider that it
exhausts the legitimacy of his position. He joins there a type which will
not seem strange to you in our epoch, that of a generation with a certain
style that we know, of the years around 1945, of those charming young folk
who wait for the initiatives to come from the other side -- who wait, to say
it plainly, for someone to unbutton them. That is the style in which I see
the future of this charming little Hans being designed, heterosexual
though he may appear.

Hear me well. Nothing in the observation allows us, at any moment, to
think that it will be resolved other than by the domination of the maternal
phallus, in that Hans takes its place, identifies with it, and masters it,
certainly. The only thing which could correspond to the phase, or the
complex, of castration, is no more than what we see sketched in the
observation in the form of the stone against which someone has just been
hurt. The image that flowers from it, if one may say that, is much less that
of a toothed vagina, I would say, than that of a phallus dentatus. This sort
of immobilized object is an imaginary object, to which all masculine
assault will fall injured victim.
It is in this sense that we can say that the Oedipal crisis of little Hans does not strictly speaking end in the formation of a typical superego, I mean a superego like that produced according to the mechanism indicated in what we have taught here about the Verwerfung, namely, that what is rejected in the symbolic reappears in the real. That is the true key, at a closer level, to what happens after the Oedipal Verwerfung.

In effect, it is in so far as the castration complex is both attempted, but cannot be fully assumed by the subject, that an identification with a sort of crude image of the father is produced, an image carrying reflections of his real characteristics, of what is heavy, indeed, crushing in them. We see renewed there one again the mechanism of a reappearance in the real, but this time, a real at the boundary of the psychical, within the frontiers of the ego -- a real which imposes itself upon the subject in a way that is quasi-hallucinatory, to the extent that the subject, at a given moment, comes loose from the symbolic integration of the process of castration.

Nothing like that is manifested in the present case. Little Hans does not have to lose his penis, since he does not at any moment acquire it. If little Hans is identified with the maternal phallus, that does not mean that he can properly speaking assume the function of his own penis. There is no phase of symbolization of the penis. In some way, the penis remains in the margin, disengaged, as something that has never been other than shameful, reproved by the mother, and what happens does not allow him to integrate his masculinity by any mechanism other than by the formation of an identification with the maternal phallus, which is really of a completely different order than the superego, that function which is no doubt disturbing, but also stabilizing. This is a function belonging to the order of the ideal of the ego.

It is inasmuch as little Hans has a certain idea of his ideal, in that it is the mother's ideal, namely a substitute for the phallus, that little Hans is installed in existence. Let us say that if, instead of having a Jewish mother in the progressive movement, he had had a mother who was pious and Catholic, you see by what mechanism, as by chance, little Hans would have been gently led to the priesthood, if not to sanctity.

494
In a case like this one, where the subject is introduced into an atypical Oedipal relation, the maternal ideal is very precisely what induces a certain type of situation and solution in the subject's relation to the sex. The issue is accomplished by identification with the maternal ideal.

That pretty much sketches the terms in which I shall situate the outcome of the case of Little Hans. All throughout the observation, we have indications that confirm it, sometimes very moving ones.

Thus at the end, little Hans, decidedly discouraged by the paternal deficiency, fantasmatically makes himself his own initiation ceremony, by going and standing entirely naked, as if he wanted his father to come forward, on the wagonnet on which he is compelled to watch all one night, like a young knight, after which, thanks to some pieces of money given to the conductor of the train -- this is the same money that will serve to appease the terrifying power of the Storch --, little Hans is on his way on the greater circuit. The matter has been settled. Little Hans will be nothing other than a knight, a knight more or less under the regime of social security, but finally a knight, -- and he will have no father. And I do not believe that anything new in the experience of his existence will ever give him one.

There is, just afterwards, a somewhat belated intervention by the father. The opening of the father's understanding during the course of the observation is not one of the least interesting things here. After having begun whole heartedly, believing strong as steel in all the truths that he has learned from the good master Freud, the father, as he progresses in the management, sees how far the truth is much more relative. And at the moment when little Hans is going to begin his great mythical delirium, he lets a phrase escape him that one scarcely notices in the text, but which really has its importance.

It is at a moment when they play at telling things, when little Hans at every instant contradicts himself, when he says, *That's true, that's not true, that's so you will laugh, but still it's very serious.* The father, who is no fool, and who learns in this experience, says, -- *Everything that one says is always a little true.* And then, the father, who has not succeeded in his
own position -- it is rather he who ought to have been made to go through analysis -- tries to correct that, though it is already too late, and says to little Hans, -- \textit{What it comes down to is, you wanted mine.}

This delayed intervention leads little Hans to a very pretty little gesture, which is given special lighting in the observation -- at the very moment when the father is speaking to him, he lets the little horse fall. The conversation is over, the dialogue has run out, Little Hans is installed in his new position in the world.

Thenceforth Little Hans is a young man with the power of having children, capable of engendering infinitely in his imagination, and of being entirely satisfied with his creations. That is also how, in his imagination, the mother lives.

As I have told you, little Hans is not the daughter of one mother, but the daughter of two mothers. This is a remarkable, enigmatic, point, on which I already halted the observation last time. Surely, the other mother is the one whose presence and power he has had too many occasions to know -- the father's mother. Nevertheless, that the subject assumes this duplication or doubling of the maternal figure which enters into the conditions of the final balance, is really one of the structural problems that the observation raises.

It was there that I ended the seminar before last, in making the comparison with Leonardo da Vinci's painting, and also with the case of Leonardo da Vinci, and it is not by chance that Freud paid so much attention to it.

It is to this text that we shall today devote the time that remains to us. We certainly cannot pretend to exhaust the \textit{Childhood Memory of Leonardo da Vinci} in a single lesson. This will be a lesson for before the vacation, that I like to give as a sort of winding down for an attentive group like you, and which I thank you for being.

Let us leave little Hans to his fate. But before leaving him, I shall point out to you again that if, while speaking of him, I alluded to a certain evolution in the relation between the sexes, and referred to the generation of 1945, it was certainly so as not to introduce an excessive currency. The
care of painting and defining what the current generation might be, of
giving it a direct and symbolic expression, is something I leave to others,
let us say, to Françoise Sagan. I do not cite this name by chance, for the sole
pleasure of being up to date, but to recommend as vacation reading, in the
August-September 1956 number of Critique, a study entitled Le Dernier
Monde nouveau that Alexander Kojève has made of two books, Bonjour
tristesse and A Certain Smile, by the successful author I have just named.
You will be able to see what an austere philosopher, used to concerning
himself only with Hegel and the highest politics, can draw from works so
frivolous in appearance.

It will not fail to instruct you. And, as they say, it will do you no harm,
you will risk nothing. The psychoanalyst does not do his recruiting among
those who give themselves up entirely to fluctuations of fashion in
psychosexual matters. You are, if I may say so, too well oriented for that,
indeed, do not even get good grades in this matter. This reading may have
the advantage of making you enter into the bath of what is current, and as
a result, may give you a perspective on what you are doing, and on what
you must be ready to hear sometimes from your patients. It will also show
you that we must take account of the profound changes in the relations
between men and women could occur over a period which is no longer
than that which separates us from the time of Freud, when, as they say,
everything that would become our history was in the course of being
fomented.

All that is also to tell you that Don Juanism has perhaps not completely
said its last word, regardless of what analysts say about it. If they have
contributed some interesting things about it, if something just has been
glimpsed in the notion of Don Juan’s homosexuality, that is certainly not
to be taken as it is habitually taken.

I believe profoundly that Don Juan is a character who is too distant
from us in the cultural order for analysts to perceive him accurately. The
Don Giovanni of Mozart, if we take him as the epitome of the character,
and as something that properly speaking signifies the end point of a
question in the sense that I intend here, is surely something other than the
mirror figure that Rank wanted to construct for us. It is certainly not only from that angle, and through the question of the double, that he must be understood. I believe that, again contrary to what they say, Don Juan cannot be confounded purely and simply, and far from it, with the seducer who has little tricks that succeed every time. I believe that Don Juan loves women, I believe that he loves them enough to know, on occasion, not to tell them so, and that he loves them enough so that when he does tell them, they believe it.

That is not negligible, and reveals many things -- that the situation is always for him without issue. I believe that we must look in the direction of the concept of the phallic woman.

In the relations of Don Juan with his object, there is of course something related to a problem of bisexuality, but it is precisely in the sense that Don Juan seeks woman, and that means the phallic woman. As he truly seeks her, and goes after her, and is not content with waiting or contemplating, he does not find her, or he ends by finding her only in the form of that sinister guest who is in effect a beyond of woman, whom he does not expect, and it is not for nothing in fact that it is the father. But let us not forget that when he presents himself, it is, curiously, in the form of a guest made of stone, stone with its absolutely dead and closed aspect, beyond all the life of nature. It is there that Don Juan comes in the end to be broken, and finds the fulfillment of his destiny.

The problem that Leonardo da Vinci presents us is completely different.

2

That Freud should be interested in Leonardo da Vinci is not a fact about which we need to ask ourselves questions. Why something happens rather than not happening must really, in general, be the last of our worries. Freud is Freud precisely because he was interested in Leonardo da Vinci.

It is a question of knowing how he was interested in him, and what Leonardo da Vinci could be for Freud. To answer that question, there is
nothing better than reading *A Childhood Memory*. I gave you notice early enough so that some of you will have done it, and will have perceived the profoundly enigmatic character of this work.

Here is Freud in 1910, arrived at what we can call the height of happiness in his existence. It is at least thus that things appear from the outside, and, in fact, he does not neglect to underline it for us. He is internationally recognized, has not yet known the sadness or the drama of separations from his most esteemed students, he is at the eve of the great crises, but up until here can feel that he has made up for the delays of the last ten years of his life.

And this is the Freud who takes as his subject Leonardo da Vinci. Everything in his background, in his culture, in his love of Italy and the Renaissance, lets us understand that he should have been fascinated by this personage. But what will he tell us about him? In what he says, he does not show a trivial acquaintance, or even a reduced sensibility, concerning the outlines of the personage, far from it.

And yet on the whole, the text of Freud can be reread with interest, and even with an interest that rather increases over time. Even if this is one of the most criticized of Freud's works -- and it is paradoxical to see that it is one of those of which he was proudest -- the people who are always the most reticent in such a case, and God knows that they might well be, I mean the specialists in painting and art history, end with time, and to the extent that the greatest defects still appear in this work, by all the same perceiving its importance. Thus this work of Freud's was almost universally pushed aside, despised, indeed disdained by the art historians -- and yet, despite all the reserves which remain and which the weight of new documents proving that Freud made errors can only reinforce, it remains nevertheless that someone like for example Kenneth Clark, the former director of the *National Gallery*, in a work that is not very old, could recognize the great interest of Freud's analysis of the painting that I showed you the other day, the *Saint Anne* that is in the Louvre, together with the celebrated cartoon that is in London, which are the two works.
around which Freud centered the study that he made, or believed he
told, of the case of Leonardo da Vinci.

I suppose that I do not have to give you a resume of the course of this
little work.

There is first a rapid presentation of the case of Leonardo da Vinci, of its
strangeness. This strangeness, which we shall ourselves review with our
own means, is certainly seen clearly, and on the whole, what Freud says is
well aligned with regard to the enigma of the personage. He then wonders
about the singular constitution of this painter, in truth, his predisposition,
and his paradoxical activity. I say this painter for the moment, though he
was so much besides that as well. Freud finally turns to this fragment that
he has so well thrown into relief in all of its ramifications -- namely, the
sole childhood memory of Leonard da Vinci's that we have -- I seem to
have been destined to interest myself in the vulture. One of my earliest
childhood memories is in fact that while I was still in my cradle, a vulture
came to me, opened my mouth with its tail, and struck me several times
with its tail, between my lips.

That is a disconcerting childhood memory, Freud tells us, and he
makes links, and by these links he leads us where he wants to lead us. We
follow him because we are accustomed to this prestidigitator's game which
consists in superimposing in dialectics and in reasoning what is very often
confused in experience and in clinic work, though these are, however, two
registers that are completely different. I do not say that Freud manages
them in a way that is improper. On the contrary, I believe that he manages
them in a way that is inspired, that is, he goes to the heart of the
phenomenon. Only, we are wrong to follow him with a total slackness of
spirit, accepting in advance all that he says, namely that is a question here
of a sort of superposition or surimposition, between the relation to the
maternal breast, and a fellatio, at least imaginary, which he poses from the
outset, and which would also have the meaning of a veritable sexual
intrusion.

That is given by Freud from the outset, and it is on this base that he
articulates his construction, in order to lead us progressively to an
elaboration of what is profoundly enigmatic in the case of Leonardo da Vinci, his relation to his mother. He makes all of the peculiarities of this strange personage rest upon that, his probable abstinence in the first place, and then his singular, unique, relation to his own work, made up of an activity always at the boundary between the realizable and the impossible, as he himself writes on occasion -- that series of ruptures in the different beginnings of an undertaking in his life -- the singularity which isolates him among his contemporaries, and makes him, already during his lifetime, a legendary figure, supposed possessor of every quality and every competence, a universal genius. All the idealization that already in his own time surrounds Leonardo da Vinci -- Freud will deduce that for us from his relation to his mother.

He takes his start, as I have told you, from this childhood memory. This vulture with the quivering tail which comes to strike the child is, he tells us, constructed as the screen memory of something which is the reflection of a fantasy of fellatio. Freud does not hesitate an instant to put it like that, and one must all the same recognize that for a mind that is not forewarned, that will not pass without at least raising one problem, for it is precisely the whole interest of Freud's investigation to reveal that, up until an age probably to be situated between three and four years, Leonardo very probably had no other presence than the maternal presence, and certainly no other elements of sexual seduction than those which he calls the passionate kisses of the mother, nor any object which could represent the object of his desire apart from the maternal breast. In the end, it is surely on the plane of fantasy that the revelation, in so far as it can have this signal role, is placed by Freud himself.

All of that rests, in sum, upon one point, which is none other than the identification of the vulture with the mother, inasmuch as she would be precisely the figure at the source of the imaginary intrusion.

Now, let us say straightaway, there occurred in this affair something that one might call an accident, indeed a fault -- but it is a fortunate fault. Freud only read this childhood memory in the citation of the passage in Herzfeld, that is to say that he read it in German. Now, Herzfeld translated
as vulture something that is not a vulture at all. This fact has been noted by several scholars, most recently by Meyer Shapiro, in an article that appeared in the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, n°2, 1956.

Freud might have had a suspicion of it, for, as usual, he did his work with the greatest care, and the translation carries a reference to the pages in the manuscripts, in this instance the *Codex Atlanticus*, which is a dossier of Leonardo da Vinci's to be found in Milan. It has been translated pretty much into every language, and there is also a translation into French, highly inadequate, but complete, having the title *Carnets de Léonard de Vinci (The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci)* in which one finds the manuscript notes left by Leonardo, often alongside his drawings. Thus Freud could have gone to this reference in the notes of Leonardo da Vinci, which are generally of five, six, seven lines, a half page at most, mixed in with the drawings. This note is just beside a drawing on a page devoted to the study of the flight of birds, which comes up in several places in the work of Leonardo. Leonardo da Vinci says -- *I seem to have been destined to interest myself particularly*... not in the vulture, but precisely in what is drawn alongside, and which is a kite.

That the kite should be particularly interesting in the study of the flight of birds is an observation that already occurs in Pliny the Elder. The kite should, according to him, draw the attention of pilots, because the movement of its tail is particularly exemplary for the activity of steering. Leonardo da Vinci was equally interested in it. It is quite fine to follow the adventures of this kite down through the ages -- known since antiquity, reproduced by many authors, some of whom I shall discuss incidentally in a bit, and which ends up in our days, they tell me, in the hands of Mr. Fokker, who devoted himself to the on-site study of the movement of the kite's tail at a certain period between the two wars, when he was inventing some very neat preparations for the manoeuvering of the bombadier plane, a disgusting parody -- I hope you are of the same opinion on that -- of natural flight. One cannot expect better of human perversity.

The kite, moreover, is well designed to provoke it. It is an animal that has nothing at all especially attractive about it. Belon, who did a very
beautiful book on birds, and who had been in Egypt and in other corners of the world on behalf of Henri II, had seen some in Egypt, and he paints them as sordid and scarcely agreeable.

I must say, I had a moment’s hope that everything would work out, namely, that Freud’s vulture, kite though it was, would still have something to do with Egypt, and that it would in the end be the Egyptian vulture. You see how I always want things to be arranged. Unfortunately, it is not at all the vulture.

There are kites in Egypt, and I can even tell you that while I was taking my breakfast at Luxor, I had the surprise of seeing in my peripheral vision something which went *frôu-out*, and then took off obliquely with an orange from my table. I thought for an moment that it was a falcon, but I quickly realized it was nothing of the sort. It was not a falcon, for the beast alighted on a corner of the roof, put down the orange to show that it was a simple matter of a teasing, and I saw very well that it was a reddish animal, with a distinctive air. I immediately ascertained that it was a kite. You see that it is a familiar animal that one can observe.

But the situation is complicated. There is an Egyptian vulture which resembles it closely, and it is this one which could have made things work out. It is the one that Belon cites, and that he calls the sacred Egyptian, and which has been known since the time of Herodotus by the name of Hierax. There are a great number of them in Egypt, and naturally it is sacred, that is, Herodotus informs us, one could not kill in it in ancient Egypt without suffering the worst consequences. It somewhat resembles a kite and a falcon. In Egyptian ideograms, it is this bird that corresponds more or less to the letter aleph, of which I spoke in my lecture on hieroglyphs and their exemplary function for us. This is the vulture, that is to say something like the sacred Egyptian that is in question.
The Egyptian Vulture

Everything would go very well if it were this one that served for the goddess Mout, of whom Freud speaks with regard to the vulture. But that does not work, and Freud was really very much mistaken, for the vulture which serves for the goddess Mout is this one.

The *Gyps Fulvus*

This one does not have a phonetic value like the other. It is used as a determinative element, in the sense that one adds it. Either it indicates the goddess Mout by itself, and in this case, one adds a little flag to it. Or it is integrated into a whole sign which is used to write Mout, with the little determinative. Or one is content to make it equivalent itself to M, all the same adding a little t to phoneticize the term. One finds it in more than one connection, always where the mother goddess is concerned.

This entirely different vulture, a true *Gyps*, which does not at all resemble the preceding one, which is on the boundary between kites and falcons and other closely related animals, is really the vulture at question in everything that Freud picks up from the tradition of the bestiary -- for example Horapollo, writing at the time of the decline of Egypt. The writings of the latter, which are fragmentary, a thousand times transposed, recopied and distorted, became the object of a certain number of collections.
in the Renaissance, to which the engravers of the period added little
emblems, which were intended to give the significative value of a certain
number of major Egyptian hieroglyphs.

This work, of which I show you an edition of 1519, done during the
lifetime of Leonardo by Aldo Manutius, should be familiar to you all, since
it is the one from which I borrowed the drawing that ornaments the cover
of the review *La Psychanalyse*. Horapollo gives the description that I see
written here — *The painted ear signifies the work done or which one must
do*.

But we must not let ourselves be drawn along by the bad habits of an
epoch whose every gesture is not to be imitated.

It is in Horapollo that Freud found the reference that the vulture has the
signification of the mother, but he also found a much more interesting
remark, one which makes him take a step further in the dialectic —
namely, that this is an animal for which the female sex does not exist.¹
This is an old zoological falsehood which, like many others, goes back very
far, and which one finds asserted in antiquity, not however in the best
authors, but it is no less generally accepted in medieval culture. Freud
allows that because Leonardo da Vinci was literate, he must have known
this story. It is probable, and there would be nothing extraordinary in that,
for it was very widely known, but it has not been proved. And there is all
the less interest in proving it, since this is not about a vulture.

I pass on to you the fact that Saint Ambrose takes the history of the
female vulture as an example that nature gives us expressly in order to
facilitate our understanding of the virgin conception of Jesus. Freud seems
to accept, without criticism, that this is in almost all the Fathers of the
Church. I must tell you that I have not gone to check that, for I only
learned this morning that it is in Saint Ambrose. In fact, I knew it already,
for a certain Piero Valeriano, who made a collection of these legendary
elements of the period in 1566, first edition, seemed to me a particularly
important source to consult to see what, at that epoch, a kite and a certain

¹ Thus in the original. The context indicates that the sense should read
"...an animal in which only the female sex exists."
number of symbolic elements might be, and he points out that Saint Ambrose made an account of it. He also signals out Basil the Great, but he does not mention all the Fathers of the Church, as the author to whom Freud refers seems to allow.

The vulture was only female just as the escargot was only male. It was a tradition, and it is interesting to compare the two, because the escargot is a terrestrial animal, and rampant, whereas the vulture conceives in the sky, offering wide its tail to the wind, as it does in a very fine picture.

The story of the vulture has its interest, like so many stories of this kind, which abound in Leonardo da Vinci, who was highly interested in the fables constructed on these stories. One can read in his notes, for example, that the kite is an animal strongly given to envy, and maltreats its young. You can see what would have resulted if Freud had stumbled upon that, and the different interpretation that we would give of the relation with the mother, if we started from there.

Am I going to show you that out of all that, nothing remains, that there is nothing to retain from all this part of Freud’s elaboration? No, that is not the reason I am telling you this about it. I would not take the facile advantage of criticizing an invention of genius after the fact. It often happens that with all sorts of defects, the view of the genius has been guided by a many other things than such minute research, and has gone much farther than the evidence that some accident has placed within his reach.

The question is to know what it means, and what it allows us to see.

Six years after the Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, and ten or twelve years after the first perceptions that Freud had of bisexuality -- in what Freud has up until then made clear concerning the castration complex on one hand, and the importance of the phallus, of the imaginary
phallus in so far as it is the object of Penis-neid for the woman, on the other -- what does the essay on Leonardo da Vinci introduce that is new?

It introduces very precisely, in May 1910, the importance of the function of the phallic mother, and the phallic woman. Not for the subject herself, but for the child who depends upon this subject. That is the crux of what Freud brings us on this occasion.

That the child is linked to a mother who is on the other side linked on the imaginary plane to the phallus insofar as it is lacking -- that is the relation that Freud introduces, and it is absolutely distinct from all that he has been able to say up until then about the woman's relation to the phallus. I have made the whole fundamental critique of object relations to which I proceeded this year turn around this original structure, in so far as it is destined to institute a certain stable relation between the sexes, founded upon a symbolic relation. I believe I have made that perfectly clear in the analysis of little Hans. We find evidence of it here in Freud's thought, and it is what, in itself alone, allows us access to the mystery of Leonardo da Vinci's position.

In other terms, the fact that the child, in so far as he is isolated in a dual confrontation with woman, also finds himself before the problem of the phallus as lacking for his feminine partner, that is to say, in this instance, the maternal partner -- that is the pivot of everything that Freud elaborates concerning Leonardo da Vinci. That is what constitutes the highlight and originality of this observation, which is, in addition, and not by chance, the first work in which Freud mentions the term narcissism. It is thus the beginning of the structuration as such of the imaginary register in the work of Freud.

We must now pause a moment over what I shall call the contrast and the paradox of the personage of Leonardo da Vinci, and ask about the other term introduced here by Freud, not for the first time, but which appears here with a special insistence -- sublimation.

Freud refers from time to time to a certain number of what one might call the neurotic traits of Leonardo da Vinci. I mean that he is continually
looking for traces of a critical passage, of a relation left in I do not know what repetition of terms, in some sorts of obsessional slips. That paradoxical I do not know what that there is in Leonardo's thirst for knowledge, in his *cupido scienti*, the traditional name for the curiosity which animated him -- of this Freud makes almost an obsessional trait, since he calls it a *compulsion to ferret*, *Grübelzwang*. One cannot say that there is not a certain indication of it there. Nevertheless, the whole personality of Leonardo da Vinci is not explained by neurosis. And, as one of the essential issues of what remains from the infantile drive exalted, indeed fixed and which is at cause in the case of Leonardo, Freud brings in, not without having already introduced it in the *Three Essays*, the notion of sublimation.

You know that, other than saying that sublimation is a drive directed towards objects which are not the primitive objects, but which are the highest objects among those offered to human and interhuman consideration, Freud later added only a few complementary remarks, showing the role that sublimation could play in the installation of the interests of the ego.

The term sublimation has since then been taken up by a certain number of authors in the psychoanalytic community, who tie it to the notion of neutralization, of de-instinctualization of the instinct. I must say that that is something very difficult to conceive -- a delibidinization of the libido, a disagressivation of aggressivity. These are the very fine terms that we see most readily flowering from the pen of Hartmann and Loewenstein. They scarcely enlighten us concerning the mechanism of sublimation.

The interest of a study like that of Leonardo da Vinci by Freud is that we can find some ideas there, and at least begin a reflection which might allow us to make the term sublimation rest upon a base that is better structured than the notion of an instinct which is de-instinctualized, indeed, of an object which, as they say, becomes more sublime -- for it seems, if we follow the *ego* psychologists, that this is the *Stuff of sublimation.*
Leonardo da Vinci was himself the object of an idealization, if not of a sublimation, which began during his lifetime, and which tends to make of him a sort of universal genius, and in addition, an astonishing precursor of modern thought. That is what some maintain, even very erudite critics, who have begun, as Freud did before, to clear the ground of the problem. Others are doing the same thing on other planes than that of art. Duhem, for example, says that Leonardo da Vinci had glimpsed the law of falling bodies, or even the principle of inertia. Even a slightly closer examination from the point of view of the history of science shows that nothing of the sort is so. Nevertheless, it is clear that Leonardo da Vinci made astonishing discoveries, and that the drawings that he left concerning kinematics, dynamics, mechanics, ballistics, often give proof of an extraordinarily pertinent perception, very much in advance of his time -- which does not in any way allow us to believe that there had not already been, on all of these planes, very great advances in their mathematization, especially for example, in kinematics.

Still, due to a remnant of the Aristotelian tradition, that is to say a tradition founded upon the certain evidence taken from experience, a connection was not made absolutely between the rather advanced mathematical formulation that had been made of abstract kinematics, and the domain of experience, -- I mean that of real and extant bodies, which appear bound by the law of weight, which so encumbered the human mind with its experiential evidence that it has taken all of this time as you know to arrive at a correct formulation of it. Remember that we still find in Leonardo da Vinci, in his drawings and in the commentaries that accompany them, entries such as this -- a body falls all the more quickly as it is heavier. We find it explicitly, and again, implicitly. I think that you have all retained enough of your secondary education to know that this is a profoundly false theorem, although experience, as they say, seems to impose it, experience on the mass level of common experience.

Yet, what is it that makes the originality of these drawings? If we take one part of what he has left, for example the drawings from his work in engineering which have so astonished, indeed fascinated, both his
contemporaries and successive generations, one perceives that they are
very often extraordinarily in advance of their time, but that they cannot go
beyond certain frontiers not yet crossed concerning the use, and, one might
say, the vital entry of mathematics into the order of the analysis of real
phenomena.

In other words, what he brings is often of an absolutely admirable
inventivion, construction, creativity, and it is already extremely fine to
see, for example, the elegance with which he determines the theorems that
can serve as a basis for the evaluation of the progressive change in an
instance of force attached to a body in circumvoluble motion, that is to say,
one which turns around an axis. If this force is linked to an arm, and the
arm turns, what will be the variation of the efficiency of this force with
respect to the lever’s turning? These are problems that Leonardo da Vinci
excelled in translating by what I would call a sort of vision of the field of
force determined not so much by his calculations as by his drawings. In
short, the intuitive element, the element of creative imagination, is tied in
him to a certain predominance given to the principle of experience, source
of all sorts of brilliant, original intuitions, but which are despite
everything partial, with respect to an engineer’s blueprint.

That is not insubstantial. You see there all the difference, we are told by
a critic of the history of science like Koyré, that there is between a drawing
to an engineer’s blueprint. An engineer’s blueprint, if it can in itself all
alone manifest all sorts of intuitive elements, certain quantities or values
which are take on image and materialization in the mere disposition of
the apparatus, is not capable of resolving certain problems at higher,
primary-symbolic, levels. And in the end, we will see in Leonardo da
Vinci a theory of the inclined plane that is inadequate, indeed false, which
will not be clearly resolved until Galileo, and to use a term of Koyré’s
again, with the revolution constituted by the mathematization of the real,
the fact that it was resolved to purify method radically, that is to say, to put
experience to the proof of terms, statements of the problem, which start
squarely from the impossible.
Understand that one must first disengage the formulation of the formulas to be submitted to the hypothesis from every sort of so-called intuition of the real, and must renounce, for example, evidence such as this -- that it is the heaviest bodies which fall fastest. It is then only that one can begin to elaborate by starting from another point of departure, this time correct, that of gravity, that is to say that one starts with a formula which cannot in any way be satisfied anywhere, for one will always have only impure conditions of experience for realizing it.

It is because one begins with a purely symbolic formalization that an experiment can be realized correctly, and that a mathematicized physics comes into being. One can say that after centuries of efforts to arrive at this point, no one ever succeeded before it was resolved to make a separation between the symbolic and the real at the outset, and researchers, from generation to generation, had not been able to attain it by the long series of their experiments and tentatives, which are in any case fascinating to follow. That is the whole interest of the history of science. Up until there, things remained in this in-between, incomplete, partial, imaginative, fulgurant realm, which could make Leonardo da Vinci himself formulate -- this is what I want to get to -- that in sum his position was essentially a relation of submission to nature.

The term "nature" still plays an essential role in the work of Leonardo da Vinci. Nature is, for him, at every moment, that whose presence he must grasp. It is the element that is absolutely primary. It is an other whom one must confront, whose signs one must decipher, whose double one must become, and, if one may say this, whose co-creator. All of these terms are already in the notes of Leonardo da Vinci.

That is the perspective from which he interrogates nature, to arrive at a confusion of the imaginary with a sort of other which is not the radical Other with which we deal, and which I have taught you to designate as being the place, the locus, of the unconscious. What other is it, then?

It is very important to see, in this regard, how much Leonard da Vinci insists upon saying that there is no voice in nature, and he gives demonstrations of it that are so curious, so amusing, that it is worth the
trouble to see how much it becomes truly an obsessional preoccupation for him to demonstrate that there cannot be anyone who responds to him, who would be what everyone then believed in, a spirit which speaks from somewhere in the air. He insists upon it, he returns to it often, and in fact, there were people for whom it was an almost scandalous truth to proclaim it.

Nevertheless, Leonardo da Vinci interrogates nature as an other who, both is not a subject, but whose reasons can be read. I say this because it is in Leonardo da Vinci -- Nature is full of infinite reasons which have never been seen in experience.

The paradox of this formula, if we make of Leonardo da Vinci, as has often been done, a sort of precursor of modern experimentation, is there to show just the distance that we are from him, and the difficulty that there is in grasping, after the fact, once a certain detachment in thought has been accomplished, just where the thought of one whom we call a precursor was engaged.

Leonardo da Vinci's position with regard to nature is that of a relation with an other who is not a subject, but whose history one must yet detect, whose sign, articulation, and speech, whose creative power must be grasped. In short, this other transforms the radical character of otherness of the absolute Other into something that is accessible through a certain imaginary identification.

I would like to see you consider this other in the drawing to which Freud refers, and where he notes as an enigma, the confusion of bodies which makes Saint Anne difficult to distinguish from the Virgin.

This is so true that if you turn the drawing, you will see the painting that is in the Louvre, and you will perceive that the legs of the saint are on the side where at first the legs of the Virgin were, in the most natural pose, and in almost the same position, and that where the legs of the Virgin are now, the legs of Saint Anne were before.

That there is question here of a sort of double being, whose aspects are revealed one behind the other, cannot be doubted. That the child in the London drawing prolongs the arm of the mother a little like a marionette
in which the arm of the one who moves it is inserted, is no less striking. But note that alongside of this, the other woman, without moreover our knowing which one, raises in profile beside the child the index finger that we find in all the work of Leonardo da Vinci, in the *Saint John the Baptist*, the *Bacchus*, the angel of *The Madonna of the Rocks*, and which is also one of his work's enigmas. There is here something that images very well the ambiguity between the real mother and the imaginary mother, the real child, and the hidden phallus. If I take the finger as its symbol, it is not because it roughly reproduces its profile, but because this finger, which one finds everywhere in Leonardo da Vinci, is the indication of that want-to-be\(^2\) whose term we find inscribed everywhere in his work.

It is a matter of a certain position taken by the subject with regard to the problematic of the Other, who is either this absolute Other, this closed unconscious, this impenetrable woman, or behind the latter, the figure of death, who is the absolute final Other. The way in which a certain experience composes with this final term of the human relation, the way in which it reintroduces within all that the whole life of imaginary exchanges, the way in which it displaces the radical and final relation to an essential otherness in order to make a certain relation of mirage dwell in it, that is what is called sublimation. At every moment, on the plane of genius and creation, the work of Leonardo gives an example of it.

That is also, I believe, what is expressed in this drawing, a sort of singular cryptogram. This drawing is not unique, but is the double of another, done for a painting that Leonardo da Vinci never painted, for the chapel of the Servites. He reproduced in it theme of Saint Anne, with the Virgin, the Child, and a fourth term of which we have spoken, namely Saint John, who is, moreover the lamb.

In the fourth term of this composition of four, we must very evidently find -- as each time that I have spoken of it, and from the moment when the configuration of four is incarnate -- the theme of death. Where is it? Naturally, it is everywhere, it passes from one to the other.

\(^2\) *Manque-à-être*. The neologism "want-to-be" is the English rendering suggested by Lacan. See *Écrits: A Selection*, Translator's Note (by Alan
Death is also what will leave the sexuality of Leonardo da Vinci dead, for that is his essential problem, around which Freud poised his interrogation. Nowhere do we find in the life of Leonardo da Vinci evidence of a true tie, a veritable captivation that is other than ambiguous and transient.

But that is not in the end the impression left by his history. It is rather of a dreamed paternity. He protected, patronized some young people for their refined decorative painting, and they passed into his life, several of them, without, however, any major attachment having really marked his style, -- and if there must be someone to classify as homosexual, it would much rather be Michelangelo.

Is death here in this sort of double, namely in the one who is there before him and who is so easily replaced by this lamb?

Piero da Novellara wrote to Isabella d'Este on August 8, 1501 that for two days all of Florence filed before this cartoon preparatory to a work for the main altar of the Annunciata in Florence, and which Leonardo never did. And everyone hovered over this scene of four, in which we see the child held back by his mother at the moment that he is going to climb on the lamb's back, and question its meaning. Everyone understands that it is the sign of his drama, of his passion, his future destiny, while Saint Anne, who dominates the whole, restrains the mother so that she will not turn him aside from his own destiny and his sacrifice. And it is in fact from the subject's separation from the latter that Freud makes the whole drama which followed in the life of Leonardo da Vinci derive.

The final personage, the most enigmatic of all, is the Saint Anne, restored, installed in a purely feminine relation, purely maternal, Other, with a capital O, essential in providing the whole equilibrium of the scene.

This Saint Anne is far from being an invention of Leonardo's contrary to what is said by Mr. Kris. Even Freud did not for a single moment believe that the theme of Anne, the Virgin, the child, with the fourth personage who is introduced here, was an exclusive invention of Leonardo da Vinci's.

Sheridan), p. xi.
If the fourth personage represents a problem in the history of religious motifs that is rather specific to Leonardo da Vinci, it is not the same for the representation of Saint Anne with the Virgin and the Child. It is enough to have the slightest notion of what was happening at that period, to have read a little in any history text, to know that it was precisely between 1485 and 1510 that the cult of Saint Anne was promoted to a highly elevated degree in Christianity, in connection with the critical dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin. One must recognize in it the outcome of a spiritual theme, and of many things other than spirituality, since this was the time of the campaign of indulgences, and there were released over Germany all sorts of little prospectus representing Saint Anne, the Virgin, and the Child, through the purchase of which one could have some ten thousand, even twenty thousand, years of indulgences for the next world. So this is not a theme invented by Leonardo da Vinci, and it is not true that Freud attributed its invention to him. There is only Mr. Kris to say that Leonardo was alone in representing such a trio, whereas it would have sufficed to open Freud simply to see the theme of this painting represented with the title Anna-Selbdritt, that is to say Anna-Herself-Third, -- in Italian, Anna Metterza.

The trinity of Anna is a function that crops up at a moment which was without any doubt critical, and there is no question of our rethinking it, for we cannot let ourselves be drawn along too far by the historical critique of Christian devotion. Let us say that we encounter in history the constancy of a sui-trinity, if I may express myself so, which gains a whole value from finding its psychological incarnation in Leonardo da Vinci.

What do I mean by that? Leonardo was surely a man put into a profoundly atypical position with regard to his sexual maturation, which is in contrast, dissymmetry, with what one finds elsewhere in him, namely that sublimation carried to an exceptional degree of activity and realization. In the elaboration of his work, a hundred times begun anew and truly obsessional, nothing could be structured without there being something to reproduce this relation of the ego to the other, with the necessity of the great Other, which are written here on the schema by
means of which I sometimes ask you to take your bearings with regard to these problems.
The Inversion of Leonardo

What are we to think of the atypicality realized by the especially dramatic engagement of this being in the ways of the imaginary? That he should draw the skill of his essential creations only from this trinal scene, which we also found at the end of the observation of little Hans, is one thing. But apart from that, does it not enlighten us on a correlative disturbance in his own position as a subject? I mean, his inversion.

The inversion of Leonardo da Vinci, in so far as one can speak of his inversion, is for us far from being simply reducible to the paradox, indeed, the anomaly, of his affective relations. In any case, this realm seems to us marked by a singular inhibition in this man endowed with every gift.

Moreover, it has perhaps been said a bit too often that there is nowhere in Leonardo da Vinci any erotic theme. That is perhaps going a bit far. It is true that in Freud's time, the theme of Leda had not yet been discovered, that is, the theme of very beautiful woman and a swan who almost joins with her in an undulating movement no less delicate than his lines. It is striking that it should once again be the bird that represents the masculine theme in an imaginary fantasy. But let that go.
If we stay with the experience that we are able to have of Leonardo, there is one element which we cannot eliminate. That is his manuscripts.

I do not know if you have ever happened to leaf through a volume of this in reproduction. It makes quite an effect to see all the notes of a gentleman written in mirror script. When you finally read them, you see him speak all the time to himself, addressing himself as "you" [tu] -- You will do this, you will ask Jean de Paris the secret of painting al secco, you will go get two pinches of lavender or rosemary at the corner shop. It is things of that order, with everything mixed together. How can one not be struck by it?

In sum, the relation of identification between the ego\(^3\) and the other which is set up in this case, seems to me essential in understanding how the identifications from which the ego of the subject proceeds are constituted. It seems to come down to the idea that in correlation with every sublimation, that is to say with the process of desubjectivation or naturalization of the Other which would constitute its essential phenomenon, one always sees produced on the imaginary plane, in a form that is more or less pronounced according to the greater or lesser perfection of the sublimation, an inversion of the relation between the ego to the other.

Thus we would truly have, in the case of Leonardo da Vinci, someone who addresses himself and gives himself orders through his imaginary other. His mirror writing would belong purely and simply to his own position vis-à-vis himself. We would have here the same sort of radical alienation as that on which I concluded my last seminar, with respect to the amnesia of little Hans.

At that moment, I asked a question. It is also upon a question that I shall end today -- that of whether the process which we will call sublimation, or psychologization, or alienation, or egoïzation, does not imply in its very direction a correlative dimension, that by which a being forgets himself as imaginary object of the other.

\(^3\) Moi. The French term covers the sense of the terms "ego," "self," and the emphatic "I."
There is in effect for a being a fundamental possibility of oblivion in the imaginary ego.

3 July 1957
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The collective work cited in the first chapter is entitled
La Psychanalyse d'aujourd'hui (Psychoanalysis Today); there is
a commentary upon it in "The Direction of the Treatment and the

The journal to which reference is made in Chapters IV and V is the
Bulletin d'activités de l'Association des psychanalystes de Belgique, no 25,

The painting to which allusion is made on page ... has not been
identified. The letter by Freud, mentionned on p. ... has also not been
identified. It may be that the painting in question is not one by Titian, but
by Veronese, and that it is the Venus and Mars United by Cupid which is
at the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

A certain number of manuscript indications made by Jacques Lacan
appear in the typed copy which he gave me. I have been able to refer to
notes taken at the time of the seminar by Paul Lemoine; I thank my friend
Gennie Lemoine for having authorized their use for the edition of The
Object Relation, as for the whole of The Seminar.

I should also like to extend my thanks to Claude Cherkki, who, after
Paul Flamand and Michel Chodkiewicz, assumed the direction of Editions
du Seuil; to Evelyn Cazade-Havas, who is continuing the work of François
Wahl in matters concerning the edition of The Seminar. She was the first
reader of the manuscript, and was kind enough, at my request, to verify
the diagrams of Vienna noted by Paul Lemoine; to Jean-Claude Baillieul,
who examined the text at the different stages of the making of the book.

Finally, I thankfully acknowledge the welcome extended to me by
the Bibliothèque de l'Ecole de la Cause freudienne, 1, rue Huysmans, Paris VIè.

As the edition of The Seminar of Jacques Lacan is a Work-in-progress, I shall be glad to receive corrections and possible additions, addressed to me in care of my publisher. J.A.M.

The sketches on pages ... ("The giraffe with the pee-pee maker"), ... ("The unloading ramp"), and ... ("The Untere Viaductgasse") are taken from the Analyse der Phobie eines 5-Jährigen Knaben, vol. 7 of the Gesammelte Werke of Sigmund Freud, published by S. Fischer Verlag (Frankfurt-am-Main) (© 1941, Imago Publishing Co., London).

The map of Vienna (pp. ...) is taken from the 1905 edition of the Baedeker Guide to Austria-Hungary, whose title page is reproduced on p.

---

p. 15 - II - Introduction
p. 38 - III - The Three Forms of Lack of the Object
p. 52 - III - The Signifier and the Holy Spirit
p. 78 - IV - The Deduction of Formulation
p. 114 - IV - On Analysis in Buddhism and its Consequence

Orient = Path of Osiris
The Primary of the Phallus and the Young Homosexual

p. 120 - V - Someone is Beating a Child and The Young H.S. Co
p. 145 - VI - Don and the Young H.S. Co
p. 168 - VII - The Function of the Veil
p. 195 - VII - Identification with the Phallus

p. 260 - VIII - The Phallus and the Unarticulated Mother
p. 261 - VIII - The Structure of my life in the Observation of the Phal
p. 261 - VIII - On the Oedipus Complex
p. 261 - VIII - On the Oedipus Complex