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The Invention of New Love in Psychoanalysis

1. Love has defined philosophy since its very beginning. It is part of its very name: *philia sophias*, love of knowledge. Undoubtedly an unusual love, but one which appears in a slightly different light when one confronts it with psychoanalysis. Philosophical love of knowledge points towards what psychoanalysis identifies in the phenomenon of transference – transference love.

What is transference love? Freud declared transference love to be artificially produced in an analytical situation. It is therefore merely a semblant of love – though every love could be defined in relation to the semblant – and a crutch supporting the analytic process. Freud famously claimed that in analysis a particular pathological complex is replaced by so called transference neurosis, which includes the person of the analyst. In this regard, transference neurosis is *par excellence* an illness of love, even love *as* illness. And Lacan will later isolate a double supposition in this transference relation, one concerning knowledge and the other the subject. Both suppositions are unified in one concept: *the subject supposed to know*.

The link between transference and philosophy becomes clear once one recalls that Lacan explained the phenomenon of transference by referring to Plato's *Symposium*. Socrates, this ambiguous missing link between philosophy and sophistics, between the Master and the Analyst, is declared to be the inventor of transference: a true hysteric addressing and questioning the knowledge of the Greek masters. Socrates not only invented philosophy, and was in this regard the first pure philosophical thinker, but he also invented philosophy precisely by introducing a specific technique of how to manipulate this love of knowledge. He was obviously not the first one in history to have a crush on knowledge. Already Parmenides was seduced by *philia* of the Goddess, and even though the entire phenomenon of transference love was already present in this philosophical *Urszene*, it still needed to be detached from its poetic letter, in order to become strictly philosophical. What is important here is the fact that for Parmenides this

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“surplus knowledge”, to use the very appropriate expression of Jean-Claude Milner, belonged to a Goddess, whereas with Socrates it becomes attributed to God, more precisely, to the Name-of-the-Father, which is, if one follows Lacan’s suggestion, in the end only one of the names of the White Goddess.¹ Nevertheless, philosophy is inaugurated by a logical shift from Goddess to God, from Parmenides to Socrates: the philosopher no longer is seduced (by the speech of truth), but rather falls in love (with knowledge). Transference replaces seduction.

Again, the link between transference and philosophical love consists in the supposition of surplus knowledge, which the analysand places in the analyst, whereas the philosopher attributes it to God. But whoever still believes in God and wisdom in these happy hypermodern times, apart from anachronistic neurotics and philosophical nostalgics? The trick here is that one does not need to believe in them – the unconscious does this for the subject. For the unconscious concerns precisely a hypothesis of knowledge, which does not know itself, and a hypothesis of God, which does not know that it does not exist. So we are near to the conclusion that as long as the subject is defined as *parlêtre*, to use Lacan’s neologism, that is, as speaking being, it will have to deal with these two hypotheses. Not only that “God is unconscious”, as Lacan famously claimed, but also that the unconscious is deeply philosophical – it simply loves knowledge, since it does not know that it knows it, and precisely because it does not know that it knows it. Every emergence of transference is therefore a philosophical act. And consequently, in every analysand there is a philosopher. But we know that the task of psychoanalysis is not to form good philosophers, but to awaken them from their “eternal” philosophical dream. It is therefore entirely understandable why Lacan saw in anti-philosophy a crucial element of psychoanalytic teaching: the analyst needs to guide the analysand’s philosophical desire, his transference love of knowledge to its limits, and in this sense one can claim that for psychoanalysis the main goal is to bring an end to love – to introduce finitude and temporality, which will make an end to this eternal philosophical love. Psychoanalysis has no pretension to last forever, no pretension for eternity, since it presupposes a radical non-relation between the analysand’s supposition and the analyst’s position. For otherwise psychoanalysis would have to abolish its fundamental goal, the direction of the cure. In this regard, Socrates did invent transference love –

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¹ See Jacques Lacan, “Préface à *L’Éveil du printemps*”, in: *Autres écrits*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2001, p. 563.

but he did not invent it in the same way as Freud. The Freudian reinvention of transference love produces a historical discontinuity since it reveals philosophical striving towards knowledge as an entanglement with the semblant, which suppresses the problem of the real by replacing it with the question of being.

2. Love, and in this sense philosophical love does not differ from subjective love, aims at being, as Lacan will famously claim. Herein one can detect the basic difference between Freud and Lacan, on one hand, and between philosophy and psychoanalysis, on the other. Lacan's statement concerns every love, and in this sense he makes no distinction between transference love, this supposedly artificial formation or product of the analytic situation, and love outside analysis, the one which "happens" between two subjects. By aiming at being, love also aims at the Other, since the question of being is articulated precisely in the Other. Here, Lacan's reference is obviously Heidegger, who linked the unveiling of being with language, this Other *par excellence*. This is the point where Lacan nevertheless introduces a shift in the Freudian conception of love. While Freud insisted in the narcissistic character of love, Lacan demonstrates that love presupposes the positive existence of the Other and that even narcissistic love can not be fully reduced to the imaginary. There is always a certain referentiality, a symbolic dimension of love that resists its reduction to narcissism.

Lacan nevertheless adopts the Freudian idea of narcissistic love when he links his analysis of love to the philosophical question of the One. Here, Freud and Lacan share the same reference, Plato's *Symposium*. To simplify the matter, Freud defines Eros as the tendency towards One, which strives to appropriate the object, which would fill the subjective lack. Lacan follows this line of thought when he claims that love operates on the level of impotence and that it is defined by a fundamental ignorance. Love may be aiming at being and hence at the Other, but as far as it represents an articulation of the subjective lack, it ignores the fact that it is essentially a tendency towards "being One".² In the end, the impotence of love is linked to its incapacity to reach the Other, without bringing it back to the question of the One. Here, Freud and Lacan both recall the Aristophanes myth, where love is presented as a search for the lost half, and therefore precisely as a tendency to reduce the Other to the object, which is supposed

² Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire*, livre XX, *Encore*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975, p. 12. (English translation, W. W. Norton, London and New York, 1998, p. 12.)

to fill the subjective lack. In this sense, love is an articulation of a subjective lack in the Other, whereby the Other is split on itself, symbolized by A, the big Other as synonymous to the symbolic order, and *a*, the object-cause of love, which is exposed and detached from the Other. This reduction also demonstrates that love in fact aims at the semblant – at being as semblant *par excellence* – and that it is never univocal: affirmation of the Other always implies its reduction to the object.

Lacan somewhere underlines that the aim of psychoanalytic discourse is to force the passage from impotence to impossibility, thus from semblance to the real, from love to jouissance. From the perspective of transference love, this passage appears as a dissolution of love, a stepping out of the field of love. And it seems that in relation to the entire topic of anti-philosophy, this implies also the gesture of stepping out of philosophical discourse as the fortress of transference love – of transference love which wants itself as a system. But anti-philosophy is not simply a refusal of love, but rather its subversion, since it conserves the moment of *philia*. Hence, one should rather expect that anti-philosophy will re-articulate, rather than simply reject, the question of love. And the question can in fact be formulated as follows: can love support the passage from impotence to impossibility? After we step out of transference love, is there a dimension of love which would be the effect of this passage? In short, is there a “new love”,³ to use the expression borrowed by Lacan from Rimbaud’s short poem *À une raison*?

192 Here it is worth recalling the fundamental lesson in love given by Freud’s invention of psychoanalysis. This lesson is contained in the very distinction of the two faces of love, which were later linked together by Lacan. The experience of transference love is not only something which stands at the beginning of every analysis, or which inaugurates and supports analytic experience as such, but also something which triggered the very invention of psychoanalysis. And in this regard, every analytical situation repeats the invention of psychoanalysis. Every analyst is forced, as Lacan will claim towards the end of his teaching, to reinvent psychoanalysis. In this sense, psychoanalysis does not have any *a priori* guarantees and Lacan’s statement on the reinvention of psychoanalysis as an analytical imperative in fact radicalizes the implications of the statement that the analyst is authorized by nothing other than himself. This self-authorization implies that the analyst is not authorized by any pre-existing or pre-supposed knowledge. From this perspective, self-

³ Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire*, livre XX, *Encore*, p. 20. (English translation, p. 16.)

authorization and the idea of the reinvention of psychoanalysis explicitly reject Lacan's famous *matheme* doctrine, which is supposed to offer a minimum of authorization beyond the analyst's position, since it is supported by the idea of the real knowledge. Whereby this real knowledge is characterized precisely by the fact that it forecloses any dimension of love. The real can not be loved, since its impossibility causes the opposite of love, namely anxiety. The real can be loved merely through its reduction to the question of being, that is, on the level of the inseparability between the real and the semblant, as it is articulated in philosophy.

The invention of psychoanalysis and the discovery of the unconscious thus coincide with Freud's clinical encounter of transference. The document communicating this psychoanalytic rupture is the case study of Emmy von N., which is included in the clinical part of Freud and Breuer's *Studies on Hysteria*. In his correspondence Freud describes the difficulties that the patient caused him in his attempts to hypnotize her – that is, precisely, in his attempts to produce an *artificial* transference relation. In the end, the patient sabotaged the very idea of artificiality and communicated an important lesson in love – love already *is* semblant, and the patient already was “hypnotized” by the transference itself: there is no hypnosis of hypnosis. The turning point in Freud's treatment of the case took place when the patient unexpectedly wanted to embrace him. This explicit expression of love awakened Freud from the discourse of hypnotism, that is, from the discourse of the master. While hypnotism conceptualized the unconscious as Other consciousness, the recognition of love revealed the unconscious as knowledge, which does not know itself, and thus enabled the invention of the transference unconscious. Only when the unconscious was invented in relation to transference love was the concept of the unconscious detached from its romantic context. Transference is rooted in the logic of the semblant, and therefore in the logic of the surface. Transference love thus abolished the idea of unconscious depth supposed by the discourse of hypnotism and introduced a new topology of the unconscious. The situation between Freud and his patient demonstrates that the transference relation was visible all along, maybe even too visible. And the invention of the transference unconscious basically forces the visibility of this very visibility of the unconscious. It makes the visible ... visible, it creates new conditions for the visibility of the visible.

Let us now return to Lacan's reference to Rimbaud. Therein, Lacan claims that Rimbaud's poem posits love as a sign of the fact that the subject changes *rea-*

sons. And he adds: “One changes reasons – in other words, one changes discourses.”⁴ This statement is best illustrated by the situation between Freud and his hysterical patient. Here, the experience of transference love in fact signals a discursive shift – Freud abandons the technique of mastery (hypnotism) and discovers analysis. And when Lacan specifies that his statement on love as a sign of discursive change means that every passage from one discourse to another is accompanied by the emergence of analytic discourse, he is actually claiming that the phenomenon of transference functions as a knotting point, around which all discourses are articulated. Every discourse implies a certain economy of transference love – whereby the analytic discourse functions as an exception, because although the psychoanalyst assumes the position which supports transference love, he assumes it on the very border between the interiority and exteriority of the transference situation. The analyst does not believe this love – he believes *in* it, but not *to* what it enunciates. Or to put it differently, the analyst subtracts himself from the identification of his position with the transference image of the *subject supposed to know*. In the end, one could claim that the analyst refuses to play the role of a good God – he refuses the philosophical tendencies of the transference unconscious. Hence, there is a radical discrepancy between the analyst’s and the analysand’s positions, since the transference demand is articulated from a position of impotence, whereas the answer comes from a position of impossibility.

Psychoanalytic discourse thus assumes a double position towards the question of love. Firstly, love plays the role of a certain orientation in thinking – this is the meaning of the reference to Rimbaud, where love signals the change of reasons. If psychoanalytic discourse gave a blow to man’s narcissism, as Freud famously declared, then one can conclude that Freudian invention discovered love as the decentralization of thinking. While in philosophy love still operates as a normalization, in psychoanalysis it produces an internal struggle: by hurting human narcissism, it precisely gives a blow to a certain kind of love.

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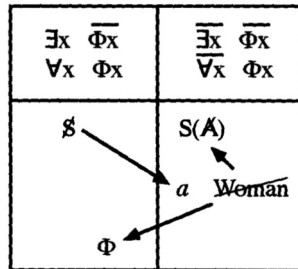
To develop this orientation in thinking means to produce a logical articulation of psychoanalytic discourse on the basis of love, whereby this new orientation produces what Lacan called “half-saying”, a new modality of enunciation, which has the effect of *forcing*, in reference to which one can speak about the passage from impotence to impossibility. At the same time, love exposes and enacts the

⁴ *Ibid.*

non-relation between the position of impotence and the position of impossibility, presenting it as an impossible encounter between the analysand and the analyst. Whereby this setting is repeated in the analytical situation – and it is precisely here that psychoanalysis erases the difference between transference and “normal” love – the non-relation between the sexes, or the non-relation which psychoanalysis claims forms the very core of sexuality. The non-relation which assumes the very status of the psychoanalytic real and which Lacan articulated in the form of the statement: “There is no sexual relation.”

3. Linked with the problematics of love, the statement declares that for speaking beings love serves as a crutch of the sexual relation. Consequently, Lacan’s central determination of the relation between love and sexuality goes as follows: love supplements the sexual relation. This determination is ambiguous, because Lacan uses the French term *suppléer*, which means both to complete and to substitute. The ambiguity of the term itself thus repeats the ambiguity of love itself, the inconsistency which essentially defines it, namely that there is no univocal enunciation in love. Instead, love is placed in the very split between being and non-being, between the *il y a* of sexuality and the *il n’y a pas* of the sexual relation. Love is a reaction to the non-being of the sexual relation on the level of being. And as such a reaction, love presents itself as the (symbolic) repetition and (imaginary) visibility of the sexual non-relation, its effect and re-enactment.

The double meaning of *suppléer* in fact corresponds to two sexuated positions and two logics which determine the sexual inscription of the speaking body in the field of language. The formulas of sexuation developed by Lacan in *Encore* can therefore be read as formulas of love, or love-letters.⁵



⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 73. (English translation, p. 73.)

As is well known, the masculine side of the formulas communicates the logic of All: the totalizing function is split into a universal function and a singular exception, which limits the universe of masculine subjectivity. The dramatic expression Freud gave this *logic* was “castration”, and this appellation caused well known misunderstandings. What did Freud actually understand under castration? He merely described a symbolic operation which limits the field of *jouissance* by reducing it to erogenous zones. Although it may appear that erogenous zones cut up the bodily totality and abolish its imaginary consistency by circumscribing islands of *jouissance*, this is not entirely the case. What such a limitation of *jouissance* actually produces is a normalization of the body. *Jouissance* is translated into a symbolic function, which centralizes the mode of *jouissance* around a certain model. This model is the phallus – which, again, should not be understood in its literal meaning, but rather as a signifier, linked to a certain region of the body, which is marked by the fact that it supports *jouissance*. Jacques-Alain Miller made a very strong point when he named this logic the *signifierization of jouissance*, meaning that *jouissance* is channelled by the signifier pointing towards another signifier and formalized by a universal logical function. This is what the lower masculine formula communicates: $\forall x \sqrt{x}$ – the signifierization of *jouissance* is valid for every speaking being; or in relation to *jouissance*: *all* *jouissance* is signifierized, that is, translated into the phallic function. Or in other words, the phallic function is valid for every or the entire subject. But as was shown by the very structure of Freudian psychoanalytic myths – e.g. Oedipus, primordial Father and Moses – such a limitation of *jouissance* is possible only on the basis of an exception: $\exists x \leftarrow \sqrt{x}$, there exists an x for which the universal function does not count – that is, there exists an x which participates in more *jouissance* than is offered by the signifierization of *jouissance*, by the translation of *jouissance* in the frames of the signifier.

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This step demonstrates the following: in order to be able to limit a certain field one needs to establish a limit to the function which provides consistency to this very field and therein makes it *all*. Thus, one has to constitute a negativity supposed to exist. Freudian myths raise the claim that this All can be constituted only by means of constructing a mythical/hypothetical negative exception of the universal function, which should be endowed with a certain more-of-*jouissance*, or surplus *jouissance*: a subject supposed to enjoy more.⁶ The limitation of the field introduces the

⁶ Men will therefore assume that Woman is such a negative exception (“women enjoy more, etc.”), metaphysicians will claim that this negative exception is God, and neurotics will claim

couple All/lack. And this subjective lack, which Lacan also uses to describe surplus jouissance, is object *a*. Roughly put, *a* designates the objectivation of the lack, which formalizes the constitution of all jouissance. But *a* does not assume the position of exception – the place of exception is empty and remains negative, whereas the object *a* functions as a positivation of this negativity, which is placed by the subject in the Other sex as the object of surplus jouissance. That the place of exception remains empty is best expressed by the fact that for its elaboration Freud did not find any better tools than mythological constructions, which more or less blurred the logical picture. One should in fact acknowledge the full weight of the fact that the normalization of jouissance is accompanied by the construction of an empty place and the parallel introduction of the negativity problem, which bounds the field of love and jouissance to the question of the lack. And the lack places love precisely as a complement, i.e. as what should establish a relation between the subject and the object of love, the famous One that both Plato and Lacan link with love. Here, the sexual non-relation appears as something that lacks consistency. From the point of view of All, the object completes or complements the lacking relation between a man and a woman, placing love as a tendency towards the One-relation. Here, one ends up again with love as impotence – the incapability to produce the One of the sexual relation.

The feminine position, on the other hand, is determined by the logic of non-All. And since the concept of non-All was often critically read in connection with a lack and castration, one should recall that non-All, far from reducing women to the old Freudian problem of *Penisneid*, is introduced as rejection of a lack and castration. In this sense, non-All is the key concept of Lacan's own version of Anti-Oedipus. The above feminine formula of sexuation consists in negating the exception, postulated by the masculine side of the formulas: $\neg\exists x-\Phi x$, there is no *x* for which the universality of the signifierization of jouissance would not hold. This formula abolishes the negativity of the place and the question of the lack. But this abolition im-

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the same for the Father. It is therefore clear why Lacan at one point draws an equivalence between God and (inexisting) Woman – they constitute two faces of the same hypothesis or supposition. Whereby it has to be clear that the entire topic of feminine Other jouissance, which will be discussed later on, does not fall under the same field. Here, we are no longer dealing with a supposedly bigger jouissance, but with a modality of jouissance, which stands outside the phallic function and therefore abolishes its self-enclosed universality, producing a split in the symbolic. The point of Other jouissance is therefore not that the subject enjoys more, or in a different way, but that the very relation between the signifier and jouissance is inverted.

plies the construction of an open universality (or open set): $\neg\forall x\Phi x$, which should be read: non-all x is subjected to the signifierization of jouissance. This logical construction of non-All implies the opposite of limitation, infinitization, or its topological equivalent, decentralization. The logic of the non-All does not simply abolish the negativity of the place by constructing an infinite “level of immanence”, but rather by exposing the hole in the symbolic order, thus abolishing the very place of the lack.⁷ For this reason the feminine position in the symbolic will be represented as a pure split – between the signifierization of jouissance, i.e. the translation of jouissance in the signifying frames, and the opposite movement, which can be described as the *enjoymentification of the signifier*, the inscription of jouissance in the signifier, which detaches the signifier from the field of the Other.

Lacan articulates this problem in connection with the question of the inexistent Other jouissance. The way he illustrates this Other jouissance clearly shows that we are dealing with the opposite movement – from jouissance to signifier, rather than from signifier to jouissance. He evokes mystics and adds that mystic writings testify to a beyond of the phallic function, or more precisely, to an outside of the signifierization of jouissance, to a feminine jouissance, which is “added” next to phallic jouissance and which redirects the debate on jouissance and love towards the question of the real: “Doesn’t this jouissance one experiences and yet knows nothing about put us on the path of ex-sistence?”⁸ Though Lacan’s reference to mystics may leave the opposite impression, the question of the Other jouissance does not lead back to the question of negativity, despite his claim that the testimony of the mystics always amounts to the conclusion that they experienced the Other jouissance, but nevertheless know nothing of it. This very statement is in itself already enlightening enough – Other jouissance is a matter of *body* and not a matter of *knowledge*. The Other jouissance is jouissance of the body – but jouissance which is not mediated through the signifier, that is, it is not limited to an erogenous zone, which is precisely the territory of the signifier, whereby this territory is in a specific way detached from the body.⁹

⁷ Concerning the relation between “hole” and “place”, see Jacques-Alain Miller, “Le dernier enseignement de Lacan”, in: *La cause freudienne*, 51, Paris: Navarin, pp. 15-16.

⁸ Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire*, livre XX, *Encore*, p. 71. (English translation, p. 77.)

⁹ Lacan claims that phallic jouissance is *hors-corps*, outside body – an erogenous zone is therefore a sort of “organ without body”, it is not fully integrated in the imaginary consistency or totality of the body.

In the case of mystics, *jouissance* functions as something which needs to be linked with what Lacan in Joyce's case, more precisely, in the case of Joyce's symptom, called the "body-event". The expression means both: bodily event and body-as-event, that is to say, the symptom represents the taking-place of the body itself. And in this regard Joyce's case clarifies the mystical experience of the Other *jouissance*. The claim that this *jouissance* lacks communication, or that it is impossible to transmit, is not entirely true. Lacan clearly demonstrates this when he underlines the mystic's passion for writing: "These mystical jaculations are neither idle chatter nor empty verbiage; they provide, all in all, some of the best reading one can find."¹⁰ The experience of Other *jouissance* is communicated in the very writing and in the way this writing, its style, modifies the very nature of the signifier and forces its logic. What unites Joyce and mystics is this passion for writing, in which the relation between the signifier and *jouissance* is subverted. The signifier is here no longer the cause of a subjective lack, thus channelling and regulating enjoyment in the direction of desire, and signifying limited areas of the speaking body as territories of *jouissance*, but instead becomes the cause of enjoyment, or more precisely, it is invaded by/invested with *jouissance*. The signifier is detached from the signifying chain and becomes a letter, which is inscribed in the living body. Writing produces chains of signifiers-*jouissance*, and Lacan's technical term for these chains is: *lalangue*. In their writing, mystics and Joyce express their passion for *lalangue*, this dimension of language, where the question of the Other *jouissance* articulates itself in terms of the inscription of the signifier in the living body. And one could claim that mystic writings are the remainders of this experience of the bodily inscription of *jouissance*.

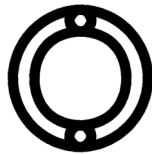
The feminine position thus negates the position of exception, whereby this negation abolishes the presupposed place of the exception of the symbolic normalization of *jouissance*. Once the external limitation of *jouissance* is abolished, the field remains finite, but hollowed, constituted around the hole of inexistence. For this reason the feminine position, unlike the masculine one, where love aims at the lacking object, will articulate love as a non-relation without mediation of the object. It is only based on the logical position that love can in fact appear as what is added to the hole of the sexual relation, rather than trying to fill it. Here, love functions as an indicator of and supplement to the sexual relation. More precisely, as its invention.

¹⁰ Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire*, livre XX, *Encore*, p. 71. (English translation, p. 76.)

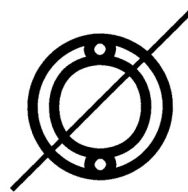
An indicator in the sense that it does not fill anything, since the hole entails the absence of the place and is therefore impossible to fill. Here, love functions as the visibility of the sexual non-relation, as its sign or index. And as stated, love does not merely express the non-functioning of sexuality, but simultaneously, based on this hole around which it is articulated, it produces a certain forcing. The result of this forcing is nothing less than an invention of the sexual relation. Lacan indicates this when in one of his later interventions he defines the sexual relation as the relation between sinthoms:

There is a sinthom “he” and a sinthom “she”. This is all that remains from the so-called sexual relation. Sexual relation is an intersinthomatic relation. Precisely for this reason the signifier, also belonging to the order of the sinthom, functions. And precisely for this reason we can suspect how it functions: through the sinthom. How can we then transmit the virus of this sinthom in the form of the signifier? This is what I tried to explain in my seminars. But I think I can not say more about it today.¹¹

There is thus a dimension of love beyond lack and castration. Impotent narcissistic love produces a normalization of the non-relation, whereas impossible sinthomatic love implies a certain reciprocity. This reciprocity manifests as mutual stuckness, since love as the sinthomatic invention of the sexual relation necessarily presupposes the hole of the non-relation. As support for an understanding and visualization of this love, one can recall Lacan’s topological schema from his seminar on Joyce, which concerns the difference between a false and a true hole and which illustrates the transformation of the former into the latter:



False hole



True hole

The left image shows two intertwined rings, i.e. the sinthom man and the sinthom woman, which indicate a hole. But this hole is false, since it does not

¹¹ Jacques Lacan, “Conclusions”, in: *Lettres de l’École freudienne de Paris*, 25, vol. II, Paris: EFP, 1979, p. 220.

provide Borromean consistency to the knot. This false hole can be transformed into a true one by introducing a third term. In this second case, on the right, one gains a borromean link (relation) between the three terms, accompanied by the material effect of the hole.

This topological transformation of the hole can serve as a metaphor for the invention of a sexual relation on the level of *sinthomatic* love, showing that this very invention nevertheless affirms the hole of the non-relation. Only when a *sinthom* man and *sinthom* woman entangle in love does the hole of the sexual relation become truly operative, whereby the consistency of the relation functions as the effect of this love.¹²

4. Love as a *sinthomatic* invention appears as the opposite of transference love. Transference love presupposes, whereas love-invention forces. In this regard, both faces of love correspond to the pair transference unconscious and real unconscious. The compatibility between transference love and transference unconscious is obvious and has accompanied psychoanalysis since its very beginning, whereas linking love-invention with the real unconscious seems to oppose the path on which Lacan passed from transference unconscious to the real unconscious. For when he introduces the concept of the real unconscious, he adds a very indicative remark:

When [...] the space of lapsus has no range of sense (or interpretation), only then is it certain that one is in the unconscious. It knows, itself. There is no friendship here that this unconscious would support.¹³

No *friendship* – that is to say, no *philia*, and thus no knowledge that one could presuppose. But this restriction here concerns transference love. The real un-

¹² Additional attention should be devoted to the remark that the signifier functions precisely due to this invention of the sexual relation as a relation between *sinthoms* and that it also belongs to the order of the *sinthom*. This statement obviously presupposes a certain shift in the relation to Lacan's previous teaching, but can be traced back to what happens with the signifier on the level of Other *jouissance*. The signifier belonging to the order of the *sinthom* is already a *forced signifier*, a signifier as something that is spit out of the very field of *jouissance*. This is how one should read the famous phrase: *Ça parle*. *Jouissance* speaks, but it does not speak in the same way as truth speaks. While truth can say "I, truth, speak", *jouissance* does not speak in terms of "I". "Id speaks" through symptoms as inscriptions of signifiers in the living body, which is to say, by detaching signifiers from the dimension of subjectivized speech.

¹³ Jacques Lacan, *Autres écrits*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2001, p. 571.

conscious does not offer any support for transference, because it does not support any knowledge, except entirely empty and useless knowledge, reduced to absolute certainty: “It knows, itself.” Here, there is a clear discrepancy between certitude on the level of the real unconscious and transference certitude. The scholarly example of such transference certitude would be Descartes’ construction of the *subject supposed to know*. Descartes namely needs a good God to guarantee subjective certitude, whereby the supposition concerning God should be non-deceiving: “subject supposed to know” means “subject supposed not to deceive”. As long as God is non-deceiving, that is, supports transference, the subject can produce knowledge. Ontological proof can accomplish its work, as long as one can believe that God has no bad intentions. And it is the same Cartesian God that Lacan in 1964 declares to be unconscious.

No love thus corresponds to the real unconscious. But as far as love is not merely the desire to be One, but also a response to *no sexual relation*, as far as love undergoes the passage from impotence to impossibility, then its second modality can be put in a pair with the real unconscious – namely as what, based on the orientation of the real, forces the passage from the real unconscious back to the Other. Love as the invention of the sexual relation therefore signals a certain re-orientation in thinking.

In light of the relation between the real and the transference unconscious, one can also understand the equivocal title of Seminar XXIV, *L'insu que sait de l'une-bévue s'aile à mourre*. The title echoes: *L'insuccès de l'Unbewusste, c'est l'amour*, the non-success of the unconscious is love. The question is of course: which unconscious, which love? Non-success is posited as what defines both love and the unconscious, but both are also internally doubled in relation to the real, so that there is a double movement between the unconscious and love. The non-success of the transference unconscious is love-invention, as far as it is not the effect of a lack, but the effect of a hole, which unsubscribes the subject from the transference unconscious, as Lacan claimed in the case of Joyce. Love-invention thus communicates the collapse of the transference hypothesis of the unconscious as knowledge. And in this regard it also represents a limit of Freudian psychoanalysis. The non-success of the Freudian unconscious should therefore be linked with the fact that the subversion of love forces the passage from the transference unconscious to the real unconscious. In this the emergence of transference love remains a necessary condition and starting point of this movement. At

the beginning of analysis there is transference – the hypothesis of the *subject supposed to know* and the reality of the transference unconscious. But there is also the opposite movement, which reduces the real to its transference hypothesis. In this regard, transference love entails the non-success of the real unconscious – non-success in forcing the passage from the unconscious to the real, non-success in forcing a new orientation in thinking. And lastly, non-success in escaping the domination of the *subject supposed to know*.

Based on this setting one can also understand why love-invention will play a crucial role in the question of the forcing of philosophy. In Seminar XXIII this forcing is explicitly formulated:

The said which results from what is called philosophy is not without a certain lack, and I am trying to supplement this by referring to what can only be written, bo-knot [...] I will allow myself to say that writing changes the sense of what is in question, namely *philia* of wisdom. Wisdom is difficult to support otherwise than with writing, with the writing of bo-knot – so that, in short, excuse me for this self-praise, what I am trying to do with my bo-knot is nothing less than first philosophy, which seems to me can be supported.¹⁴

And it continues:

Philia is time as thinking. *Philia* is time-thinking.¹⁵

This setting clearly demonstrates what is at stake in the forcing of philosophy. Philosophy as love of knowledge is not without a lack – precisely, the lack of desire, thus philosophy as desire internally presupposes the idea of eternity. This eternity can take the form of God, but also of eternal truth or eternal idea. And Lacan continues that this philosophical love, “eternal” love, can not be supported – namely supported in the material sense, because the object of philosophical love, surplus knowledge, does not exist. And the impotence of this modality of love resides in the impossibility to halt the metonymical shifting of the object. The entire effort in forcing philosophy is therefore linked with the

¹⁴ Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire*, livre XXIII, *Le sinthome*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2005, pp. 144–145.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

question of whether philosophy can be orientated by the real, and decentralized by the impossible. A more general version of the problem would concern the relation between thinking and the real: can the real become a matter of thinking?

Lacan's answer is affirmative, under the condition that this philosophical lack is substituted for by a new philosophical love, which descends from eternity to time. And the real can become a matter of thinking only insofar as thinking becomes *matter*, that is, materialist. The Borromean knot combines both moments. It abolishes the lack and it invents a new modality of ideas, idea-as-body, thus orientating philosophy towards time. It is not surprising that in this reorientation of philosophy, the key concept becomes that of the event.

The basic point of this topological turn from lack to hole – and consequently: from signifier to Borromean knot, from symbolic transference to real forcing – is aimed at both philosophy and psychoanalysis, Plato and Freud. In his seminar on *Transference*, Lacan speaks of what he calls Plato's *Schwärmerei*, claiming that this *Schwärmerei* consisted in the fact that Plato projected the supreme Idea onto what Lacan himself calls an "impenetrable hole". Plato therefore masked the hole-as-consistency with the supreme Idea, which produces nothing other than the place of the lack. On the level of philosophy, this implies that the eternal idea prevails over the temporality of real events.¹⁶ And precisely the same point can be addressed to Freud: his *Schwärmerei* can be linked to the fact that he projected a castration-lack where he should have seen the hole of the sexual non-relation. It is therefore not surprising that Freud theorized only narcissistic love and transference love, whereas Lacan ended up finding a new modality of love in no one other than Joyce, this radical testimony of failed transference and a reinvention of Freud for the new century.

¹⁶ In Seminar XXIII the forcing of philosophy is linked with temporality and Lacan claims that the new *philia* means nothing other than "time-thinking". The question of *philia* and time thus points back to an analysis of logical time, but I will only note this question here.