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Freud's Jewish Science and Lacan's *Sinthome*

David Metzger

In chapter nine of *Seminar XVII*, Lacan writes that the position of the analyst cannot be separated from Jewish history (158). More particularly, the invention of analytic discourse is part and parcel of a Hebraic tradition--represented by the *Book of Hosea*--in which one's god underscores the fact that even if everyone is speaking (let's say about sexual knowledge) this does not mean everyone is saying something. One of the defining moves of a Jewish Science, in this specific frame of reference, would be to situate the knowledge, "There is no Other," precisely where other intellectual and religious traditions establish their rapport with the divine as "I am your Other." In the first section of this essay, "Belief and The Clinical Structures," we will observe how Lacan situates this "There is no Other" in terms of hysteria, obsession, psychosis, and perversion. We will also see how the confirmation of these clinical structures leads Lacan to conceive of unconscious fantasy as something constrained not by the Other but by what he called the "sinthome." Sections two and three of the essay ("God and Discourse, the example of Aquinas"; "God and Sinthome, the example of Descartes") chart a similar development in the theological arguments of Thomas Aquinas and René Descartes. In "*Moses and Monotheism: Is there a Jewish cogito?*" (the final section of the essay), we will see how Lacan's specific delineation of the sinthome can be traced to Freud's own hope for a "Jewish Science," his desire to construct "something" that might shoulder the weight of Jewish fantasy.

I. Belief and the Clinical Structures

In terms of analytic practice, we might more specifically render Other as Other Sex, leaving us to consider the position of analyst as the "There is no Other Sex," where other [End Page 149] discourses might find "I am your Other Sex."¹ For this reason, Ellie Ragland, in her most recent book, *Essays on the Pleasures of Death* (1995), proposes a precise relation between "belief" and the "structures" delineated in the Lacanian clinic:

The neurotic [is] an atheist or an agnostic, a disbeliever in God who tries to evade the problems of the Other while holding on to the Other's desire. The pervert [is] a true atheist, one who has no symbolic father at all, only the gaze of the real father. The psychotic, the only true believer, believes in the gods who inhabit the field of the real, speaking in omniscient voices and casting looks that

scald. Belief shows that we necessarily think we have innate language or innate knowledge precisely because we 'have' a structural deficiency we must deny (220).

What precisely is this structural deficiency? Is it what one might term "the unconscious"? Not really. The unconscious, in this light, might be viewed as an answer to questions the human subject does not altogether understand. In their most overt forms, these questions concern one's particular orientation within a field of signifiers Lacan termed "The Other." For the hysteric this question is "Am I a Man or Am I a Woman?" and for the obsessional it is "Am I Alive or Am I Dead?" The unconscious tirelessly responds to these questions:

The Name(s) of the Father ___ ___ ___ *a*
The desire of the Mother

In some sense, this response is not much of an answer. In fact, the response of the unconscious might only be another question. Much like the computer from Douglas Adams' *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1989)--if I may use an example from popular culture--the unconscious provides an answer that is in need of interpretation. "What is the meaning of life, the universe and everything," one of Adams' characters asks. "42" the computer responds (120). The major difference between the unconscious, as Lacan understood it, and Adams' fictional computer is that the unconscious has something up **[End Page 150]** its sleeve; it wears our hearts on its sleeve, one might say. In other words, the unconscious proposes that the object *a*, the "There is no Other" sustained by the laws of interpretation, is itself an answer. If we are not satisfied with the object *a* offered by the unconscious, there is always *jouissance* understood, at the level of the unconscious, as (1) the equation of the Names of the Father with the Desire of the Mother, (2) the assumption that the "I" of one's own particular *cogito* (I think; therefore, I am _____) is either a mother or one of the three fathers (the symbolic, imaginary, or real).

Without the object *a*--which we might term "a third position" that is neither the mother nor the father--the unconscious becomes real for the individual. The unconscious becomes not something to be interpreted, but exactly who one is at the level of the "I am (the I) think." This "I" is psychotic, subject to the law/*jouissance* of the Real Father for whom nothing is prohibited, since the object *a* is no longer remaindered. The object *a*, one might say, is precisely what even the Real Father cannot make use of--except for the psychotic.

For this reason, Ellie Ragland called the psychotic, "the only true believer." This statement will make more sense if we observe that, in *Seminar XX*, Lacan spoke of *jouissance* as the only substance for the unconscious subject. To suggest the implications of such a statement, Lacan called this seminar *Encore*: the unconscious deals out the same card (*a*)--the possibility of identifying with one's *sinthome*--and as unconscious subjects, we have only one Other

response, an imperative that repeats our *jouissance* (*Encore!?* Again!/? Hit Me!/?).

One might understand this imperative as the *sinthome* (of hysteria, or obsession, of psychosis, of perversion). And one might understand the interrogative as (the) discourse (of hysteria, obsession, and so on). This is not to say that discourse and symptom are the same--only that in light of some such thing as the unconscious, one might assume the following: (1) both discourse and symptom impose themselves on the human subject; (2) *jouissance* is the sister to truth.

Statement (2) is a chapter heading taken from Lacan's *Seminar XVII: L'envers de la psychanalyse*, where Lacan presents **[End Page 151]** his most thorough presentation of a psychoanalytic theory of discourse. What is more, if one recognizes that, for Lacan, truth is a position taken in one's discourse and *jouissance* is something guaranteed by one's *sinthome*, one can see how the relationship between symptom and discourse delineated above might lead Lacan to just such a statement about truth and *jouissance*. *Jouissance* (the choice of either the desire of the mother or one of the three fathers) is that which substantifies the human subject (as an "I") in the "discourse of the Other" understood here as "the unconscious."

But how is this "discourse of the Other" possible? Where does it come from and in what matter might it presume to speak? The first step to understanding Lacan's designation of the unconscious as the "discourse of the Other" is to recall Lacan's description of alienation and separation. After all, the logical operations gathered under the headings of alienation and separation result in the S1, S2, and a that Lacan identifies with the subject, other, production, and truth positions of the discourse structures ² :

Alienation: the subject of the unconscious (S) discovers that there is a whole (S1) in her being in relation to the Other (S2). This is not to say that the human subject can be represented entirely in the Other. Quite the contrary, the effect of this S1 is to ground the human subject's lack in terms of the Other.

Separation: the subject of the unconscious (S) discovers that there is a hole (*a*) in her being in relation to the Other: "There is no unconscious I." For this reason, human subjects cannot be represented entirely in the Other (S1----S2). The effect of this *a* is to ground, in terms of the Other, the human subject's lack of a signifier for an "I" at the level of the unconscious.

In the above description of alienation and separation, lack seems to be a lack-in-identity. One asks of the Other, "who am I?" And the answer is either alienation, "S1: If not the S1 or master signifier, then I don't know" or separation, "a: There is **[End Page 152]** an 'I,' but I don't know where" (separation). ³ Lacan takes this formulation a step further when he speaks of *jouissance* as a substance. The question "Who am I?" is more specifically the question, "Who am I to enjoy?" The latter question might be understood in two ways: "who am I to enjoy?" or "Who am i to enjoy?" In this manner, the question

of one's identity and the question of one's identity as a subject of enjoyment are related in Lacan's conception of the Other. It is no surprise, then, that the unconscious has only one answer to any question of identity, "object a." The problem is that the object a doesn't mean anything. Someone hosting a party might insist that we enjoy ourselves, but that does not mean we have any idea about how to go about doing that in public or in private. Now, let's see how *jouissance* (the mere choice of either the desire of the mother or one of the three fathers) necessitates that the unconscious assume the status of a discourse.

II. Discourse and God: The Example of Aquinas

Lacan defines "discourse" in terms of four positions:

<i>subject</i>	<i>other</i>
truth	production

Furthermore, Lacan tells us that these four positions are themselves the result of something called "the signifier" and that these discourse positions are reflected in Aristotle's four-part sketch of causality. Lacan, unfortunately, does not go on to explain how these four positions in discourse specifically relate to material, final, efficient, and formal causalities delineated by Aristotle. However, we might begin to understand Lacan's point if we consider, as he did, that Aristotle's notion of causality addresses four possible responses to the human subject's "birth into language": 1)Subject: I am something for the Other understood as efficient cause, 2)Other: But my actions are not wholly constrained by this Other as formal cause, 3)Production: Something else (a material cause) assumes the duties I presumed were the Other's, 4)Truth: I can know what **[End Page 153]** Other (a final cause) constrains my actions. Or more simply put, for Lacan, discourse promises that we might know our Other. However, in this possibility of knowing one's Other, one assumes that the truth does not set a person free from her or his Other (the order of symbolic constraint), but the truth can, under certain conditions, make a person free to enjoy his/her Other.

The alternative to this enjoyment is to be enjoyed by one's Other. Earlier, I had indicated that, for Lacan, truth is the little sister of *jouissance*. At this point, we might recognize that, for Lacan, truth is a choice of or by *jouissance*: to enjoy or be enjoyed by one's Other. Notice, however, that this *jouissance*, this enjoying or being enjoyed, is predicated on the existence of the Other, which may or may not exist or may only exist as an image or as a symbol for an individual's particular preference for order (I like it; I don't like it; It behaves; It misbehaves). For this reason, one might speak of discourse--within a Lacanian orientation--as, in some fashion, constraining us to speak in a particular way, but

it does not impede us; it does not keep us from saying something embarrassing: "if the Other does not exist, there is no such thing as discourse (the making of a social relation in language); therefore, if there is discourse, then the Other exists." This statement is embarrassing not because it is incorrect, but because it leads one to consider that the Other might be understood as a fiction. In theological terms, this embarrassment characterizes the development of medieval Christian thought from Anselm (whose tautological argument inspired Gaunilo the Fool to equate the existence of God with the existence of a fictional island) through Augustine (who asked if one could really live as a Christian in a non-Christian state) and Aquinas in whose work this theological embarrassment blossoms into an anxiety fostered by the very presence of a Christian state. Clearly this genealogy of medieval Christian theology is inadequate. I only can hope to present the general contours of a Lacanian orientation to Christian theology, here--outlining, in the broadest terms, the general problem of treating God as Other, or treating God as discourse.

Aquinas' discussion of "Offices and States" from the *Summa* provides one example of how the existence of the deity **[End Page 154]** as Other might translate itself into a theory of discourse while, at the same time, weakening the existential necessity of the deity. If one is to understand discourse as a way to construct a social link, as Lacan did, how might the fact of a "state" be related to the particular requirements for the deity's existence?

Aquinas addresses this difficulty from the very beginning. "It seems," he writes, "that the concept of state does not denote a condition of freedom or slavery. 'State' comes from the verb 'to stand,' and one is said to stand by reason of his upright position" (3). First of all, we must consider why someone would at first think that a state has something to do with freedom or slavery, that a state is the effective working out of another person's dominion over another. One might assume that an individual human subject who stands upright does so according to his or her own wishes. A state, assumed here as a congress of those that might stand, would then simply be a series of individual states (or standings). Undoubtedly this way of speaking will seem curious to the modern reader. It will be argued that what Aquinas is making reference to is not "state" as nation but "state" as "condition"--just as one hears these days of someone who is in a "state" of confusion, for example. In fact, this assumption about "state" is very much what Aquinas is responding to. Aquinas feels compelled to say that the concept of a state is not a condition, not even a condition that might qualify one person as a slave and another as a master. Such a state would only be a way of speaking about one person's relationship with another--not a way of speaking about one's relationship to the deity. That is, how is it that one discovers that there is a state given the one to One relationship required by a god? Through obedience, one discovers the state as the image of the One. ⁴

The second problem that Aquinas addresses is the apparent "stability" or "immovability" of the state as "standing." If a person remains steadfast as the

one, if a person does not deviate from his/her standing as the one of God, how does this lead to something that we might recognize as social? It doesn't. Aquinas tells us, at this point, that steadfastness in one's standing is an effect of virtue, and virtuous activity is one of the building blocks of the state as a social entity. In other words, **[End Page 155]** what we are able to see of the state as a social entity is the state as an individual standing. Through obedience, an individual discovers that her/his individual standing might persist as something social, here conceived as an image unobstructed by an individual's desire.

But if all of this is true, how is it possible to account for the differences among individuals except as a master discourse founded on the construction of a most curious theoretical entity, "everybody's fantasy"? Desire might be that which distinguishes the human subject from the divine, but without desire how is it possible to distinguish among human subjects? For this reason, the existence of grades, orders, and offices might seem to be a problem. Further, if obedience, virtuous activity, steadfastness, and standing lead to a state, doesn't it appear that a state is very much concerned with freedom qua freedom from desire? In that case, the state is a condition of freedom from or slavery by desire or sin.

Aquinas observes, as well, that one is required to represent oneself in court. There are to be no advocates. It is possible to see here the basis for a presumption of guilt. In one's sin, in one's desire, one is individual; therefore, when accused of sin or wrongdoing, one must stand alone because, in sin, one is alone; only in public discourse (one might go so far as to say in the impossibility of representing one's sin to another) one discovers that all discourse is good discourse. All discourse is social; all discourse is godly. The only problem with this notion is that if all discourse is godly, how is it possible to account for the possibility that one person might have a more pleasant life than another. Surely God's whim is not what makes one person a slave and another a master.

Aquinas replies by saying that differences in position are reflections of how other people are disposed toward one's nature. He then indicates that one's position cannot be easily changed; one is not first poor, then rich. Rather, one's position has a certain steadfastness of character. One gets what one deserves. And what one deserves is a measure or condition of what one gets. Thus, a state does have something to do with how one dominates or is dominated by others, for how one dominates or is dominated is a mark of one's relation (through grace or sin) to a permanent cause (one's particular relation to the deity). **[End Page 156]**

From this discussion, Aquinas draws three points: (1) Being upright as such does not pertain to the notion of a state; no matter how upright one might be, this means nothing in terms of the state unless one "stands fast and steady"; (2) Being steadfast is a necessary but not a sufficient cause for the state; (3) Differences among individuals are themselves individual. In other words,

one's dominion over another cannot constitute a state; a state is no one person's work or power. As Aquinas (1973) put it, "a state requires stability in that which regards the condition of the person himself" (7). The stability requisite of a state is founded on the individual's particular relationship with the deity; this relationship is the very condition for the state.

This position is not without its problems. One major problem is that, curiously enough, a person's particular relationship to the deity is sin. Remember, as we discussed above, Aquinas argued that human subjects are alone and particular to themselves only in sin. In this manner, Aquinas' discussion of God as a social relation opens up an entire heretical field where some might assume (as the Knight's Templar were accused of doing) that only through sin (our fundamental difference from God) might a Christian state be established. The reality of a so-called Christian state might then be a sign of difference or original difference from God (sin/original sin) or a master discourse presuming to address "everybody's fantasy" (a.k.a. obedience). If one recalls the schema for the unconscious that I presented in section 1 (the names of the father over the desire of the mother, then object *a*), one might understand that both of these alternatives seek to constitute the unconscious as Real (a place where the Other might be said to ex-ist) by ignoring the position of the object *a* as something unavailable for use even by the Real Father, the Incestuous Father. Aquinas leaves us with the following dilemma: Either nothing is available to this God-The-Father (sin/original sin) or everything is (obedience). With both of these alternatives, the deity's relationship to the state (which I have used as a metonymy for "discourse," as Lacan understood it) is contingent rather than necessary. And for good reason. The deity's existence must be contingent to discourse, or we might need to consider the possibility that the deity is evil- - [End Page 157] either because God assumes both the position of "nothing is available for [his] enjoyment" and "everything, including sin, is available for [his] enjoyment" (as we seem among the Manicheans) or for God "everything is" (what Descartes projected and rejected much later in the character of an "evil genie who deceives" and what de Sade proposed and embraced as "Nature"). The confirmation of the deity will require something other than discourse, just as confirmation in the psychoanalytic clinic requires something other than discourse, something that Lacan called the *sinthome*.

III. Sinthome and God: The Example of Descartes

The very possibility of a psychoanalytic discourse responds to the problem of confirmation adumbrated in philosophical critiques of the statement, "God exists." For the purposes of this discussion, I will focus on two general philosophical criteria for evaluating the presumed existence of a deity: (1) "The existence of God" makes sense of something outside of language (*a*); (2) "The existence of God" makes possible something that is inside of language (Φ). The little letters provided in parenthesis are what Lacan called mathemes; Lacan used these symbols to reorient philosophical and scientific discoveries in terms

of something that emerges in the psychoanalytic session, Freud's so-called "discovery" of the "unconscious." This is not to say that these little letters are the unconscious; rather these little letters allow us to speak--without irony--about the unconscious. I say "speak without irony" to underscore what Freud (1900) himself recognized as "problem of confirmation" for anyone who presumes to speak about the unconscious: when one speaks about the unconscious, doesn't it seem that it is no longer unconscious (147). These mathemes, although carefully defined by Lacan, afford the psychoanalyst the possibility of speaking about it (as a place or position in language), while--at the same time, recognizing that we are not speaking about it (as meaning). In other words, Lacan uses these mathemes to demonstrate how it is that human subjects might know or understand something **[End Page 158]** ever present in what they say but never present in what they mean.

For example, when one asserts that God must exist in order for a person (understood here as the I of the Cartesian "*cogito*") to know what it means to know something, a Lacanian might write in the argument's margins, *a*, the *objet petit a*, the object cause of desire, something more than *jouissance*. A Lacanian orientation of Descartes' *cogito*, then, would be that there are no words for what it means to know oneself as being or not being, but words are nevertheless compelled to do this awesome work of confirmation. What is more, the fact that language is not quite up to the task requires that people pitch in, by way of interpretation, to help language along. These interpretive efforts (whether constative or performative), these ways that people help language along are what Lacan called *objet petit a*. Descartes, one might say, helped language along by asserting that thought was not wholly subject to language, leading him then to assume that human subjects exist outside of language only insofar as they think. There is something outside of language (I am) that can be confirmed insofar as one identifies with something outside of language (I think). In this regard, one might say that the "I think" is the phallus, as Lacan understood it (the all that is in language or *jouissance*), and the "I am" is the object *a* (the not-all that is in language or *jouissance*).

A Lacanian might then write Descartes' *cogito* in the same manner that Lacan wrote down the fantasy of the obsessional: __ a, a, a, a. . . . But there is one proviso. Descartes believed in the existence of God, and for this reason, he is not caught in the potentially infinite regress/progress afforded by moving from one not-it to another. That is, Descartes did not assume that a series of not-its (object *a*) would ever lead us to the following whole: all that is in language, all that is not. In this manner, his *cogito* (unlike Anselm's argument) avoids speaking about God as a tautology. Descartes positions God as something that functions like a language but is not language itself. This is what Lacan called the *sinthome*, the guarantee that there is at least one word, one "thing" (a master signifier) **[End Page 159]** which language allows us to identify as a human subject (either an all or a not-all in language).

From this rather brief discussion of Descartes, one might make some general statements about Lacan's use of mathemes: 1) mathemes are a psychoanalytic short-hand; 2) Lacan uses mathemes in order to write unconscious fantasy, so that he might posit the *sinthome* as the possibility of confirmation for psychoanalytic inquiry. The first, rather superficial observation describes the obvious: explaining, or making sense, of a matheme takes more time than writing it. The second observation will require more explanation. We will need to see how the *sinthome*, as Lacan understood it, allows him to show how one matheme can be held together with another.

This is not to say the phenomena of obsessional neurosis is the same as the phenomena of hysteria or psychosis; these phenomena are related not by something apparent to the eye, let's say, but something apparent to the eye of analysis. Obsession, hysteria, and psychosis are not definable, within a Lacanian orientation, according to a preset catalogue of characteristics. Nosological characteristics are what something other than the "I" (understood here as objecta and not as master-signifier) of psychoanalysis might want; nosological characteristics are the generic/logical exigencies that sustain a particular individual's *sinthome* as obsessional, hysteric, perverse, normative, or psychotic. Let me explain further.

Those familiar with Lacan's early work (some of which is presented in his *Ecrits*) will remember that Lacan advised analysts to solve crossword puzzles. Why would he do that? Even in the early 1950s Lacan had conceived of symptoms as a particular chain of signifiers (things to which one might identify because of language). And just as one might say that if 5-across is lymph, then 5-down must begin with an l, the presence of one signifier delimits the signifiers that might be even "free-associated" with it. The particular moments, at which the 5-across is lymph and 5-down appears to be house, are the psychoanalyst's hint that something other than the symbolic order is at work in the analysand's speech. Lacan called this "something other," fantasy. And he developed a precise way of identifying these moments when something **[End Page 160]** other than the symbolic order (or the subject constrained by the exigencies of the symbolic order) was speaking: $a, S, S(A), \Phi$. Thus, to write Descartes's cogito as " $\Phi \rightarrow a$ " means that one has written down what was said (what *it* said) in Descartes' argument, but not simply what Descartes said. Now, what does this "what *it* said" mean? And how might one be in a position to confirm this "what *it* said"?

With reference to Descartes, we are not really in the position to make such a determination--although we might recognize, in light of psychoanalysis, the particular discourse structure that Lacan called the "discourse of the master." With reference to an analysand, however, we might be able to say something else--if we assume that the analyst is not in the business of putting words into the analysand's mouth. Where then do these words come from? One might say the Other, from the set of all signifiers or words. And if the symbolic order does

not always constrain or order this big-O Other, what does? We're back, again to the *sinthome*, which Lacan tells us is the guarantee--other than the Real--that some Other exists for us at the level of fantasy. What is more, not every *sinthome* makes the same guarantee. Understanding hysteria as a *sinthome* means knowing what kind of Other is guaranteed by the hysteric's fantasy; understanding obsession means knowing what kind of Other is guaranteed for the obsessional, and so on with the other clinical structures. In this manner, one's *sinthome* might be connected with one's ability to believe--one's fantasy of believing--in a particular Other as opposed to any Other.

IV. Moses and Monotheism: Is There a Jewish Cogito?

Has Lacanian psychoanalysis, then, proposed that God might be what we have been calling "the *sinthome*" rather than a discourse? Or, does Lacan leave theology precisely where Aquinas and Freud left it, at the very point where the object of desire (the Mother State, we might call it) is proximate or realizable? Indeed, how strong is the confirmation of psychoanalysis tied to theological confirmation? **[End Page 161]**

A Lacanian response might be to say that both Freud and Aquinas thought neurosis and its attenuations of guilt and anxiety were a better deal than psychosis, and that Descartes did not. So, Lacanians pick up theology right where Descartes left it, at the point where the unconscious is Real, where Lacan identified psychosis. But rather than accept the terrible price of psychotic certainty, analysis offers the possibility of identifying with one's *sinthome*--by placing the object *a*, which is beyond the reach of any demand, precisely in the position of the master signifier (You are this!), which is wholly available to the Real Father. One of the initial results of this analytic move is the analysand's identification with the object *a* (I am this non-signifier for the Other). We might wonder if this is precisely the space which Freud opened up for the Jewish faith in *Moses and Monotheism*, "People of the Jewish faith believe they are the chosen ones [for the Other]" (1939, 143).

If one were to map this statement onto the Cartesian schema previously delineated, the psychoanalytic goal of Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* becomes a possible answer to the question, "How might Jewish faith and religious practices avoid the infinite regress/progress fostered by a *cogito*: I think; therefore, I am (this), I am (that), I am (the other thing), and so on, until the world of beings (possible I am's) has been evacuated? In other words, "How might Jewish faith and religious practices accommodate 'symptoms,' as they have been delineated in psychoanalytic practice?" If the Jewish faith cannot make such an accommodation, perhaps, psychoanalysis will develop as something other than a Jewish science.

Freud even goes so far as to suggest that Christianity might be viewed as Egypt's "vengeance on the heirs of Akhnaton" (1939, 136). Perhaps he did not

wish that psychoanalysis should do the same. Freud tells us that "there is no place in the framework of the religion of Moses for a direct expression of the murderous hatred of the father" (1939, 134). For that reason, he attempted to write the Jewish fantasy. Just as we observed that an "it" speaks in Descartes' *cogito*, so Freud observed that an "it" speaks in the Exodus: Moses was an Egyptian; Moses was killed in the wilderness (142). Using Lacanian mathemes, one might write Freud's statements as **[End Page 162]** follows, $a/\sim\emptyset\rightarrow\Phi$, in order to indicate that what Freud is addressing here isn't historical but is, rather, history understood as fantasy operating according to the logic of the *sinthome* and not the logic of the symbolic order. History is a choice: "being this (*a*) for some Other rather than not meaning anything ($\sim\emptyset$) for some Other leads one to access a *jouissance* remaindered by our failed attempts to verify the existence of an Other/God. Whether the historical Moses was an Egyptian or not is hardly the point; the point is that given all of the possible evidentiary constraints of history, faith, and interpretation, *it* wants to say Moses was an Egyptian, and *it* wants to say Moses was killed in the wilderness. The focus of a Jewish science, then, would be to see how a *sinthome* might shoulder the weight of this fantasy and not the other way around. ⁵

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Notes

1. Now, does this mean that Lacan thought that, as an analyst, he assumed the position of a god charted in Hebraic thought? No. But Lacan is warning us that for some psychotic patients the analyst might appear as such. For that reason, there may be no end to an analysis for a psychotic patient except her/his death. An analysis may only be able to temper the psychotic's *sinthome*, since there is no such thing as a psychotic discourse; the psychotic does not speak in order to make a social link. The psychotic speaks so that others might bear the burden of interpreting what he or she experiences as Real. The psychotic has foreclosed the master signifier that keeps him/herself from ex-isting as the Other in the Real. The psychotic, for that reason, would not be able to make a move into the discourse of analysis, since analysis--as I suggested above--involves placing the object *a* in the position of the analyst's master signifier, which again is foreclosed for the psychotic.

2. In *Seminar XVII* and *Seminar XX*, Lacan delineates four discourse structures; each is constructed by placing one of four mathemes in one of the four positions in each discourse structure.

The four mathemes: S1, the master signifier; S2, knowledge; , the unconscious subject; *a*, the object *a*, cause of desire, also known as the more-than-*jouissance*.

The four discourse structures:

U	M	H	A
$\frac{S_2 \rightarrow a}{S_1 \quad \mathcal{S}}$	$\frac{S_1 \rightarrow S_2}{\mathcal{S} \quad a}$	$\frac{\mathcal{S} \rightarrow S_1}{a \quad S_2}$	$\frac{S_2 \rightarrow \mathcal{S}}{S_2 \quad S_1}$

For further discussion of Lacan's discourse structures, see my book, *The Lost Cause of Rhetoric: The Relation Between Rhetoric and Geometry in Aristotle and Lacan* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1995).

3. Lacan's discussion of separation might be understood as his particular reading of the Freudian dictum, "*Wo es war, soll ich werden.*"

4. Aquinas presents, here, the logical basis for the foundation of monasteries: put the S1 (the master signifier of the law) precisely where there was desire (*a*) and a community will be formed. Place obedience where the master signifier of the law was, so that a person might not relate his/her desire to the law. In fact, one can observe just such a procedure in chapters 4 and 5 of St. Benedict's Rules of Order. In chapter 4, St. Benedict lists what it is a member of the order should and should not do—for example, "not to murder, not to commit adultery, not to become attached to pleasures." Then, in chapter 5, entitled "Obedience," Benedict suggests that members of the order need not worry about only seeming to follow the law of the order if they so hastily commit themselves to work that they forget about whether or not they wish to do it or not: "The first degree of humility is obedience without delay. . . . Such as these, therefore, immediately leaving their own affairs and forsaking their own will, dropping the work they were engaged in and leaving it unfinished, with the ready step of obedience follow up with their deed the voice of him who commands. . . . [T]he Lord says, 'Narrow is the way that leads to life,' so that not living according to their own choice nor obeying their own desire and pleasure but walking by another's judgment and command, they dwell in monasteries and desire to have an Abbot over them. Assuredly such as these are living up to that maxim of the Lord in which he says, 'I have come not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent me'" (St. Benedict 186).

5. Freud makes the same point in a much more specific fashion: "The seed of monotheism failed to ripen in Egypt. The same thing might have happened in Israel after the people had thrown off the burdensome and exacting religion. But there constantly arose from the Jewish people men who revived the fading tradition, who renewed the admonitions and demands made by Moses, and who did not rest till what was lost had been established once again. In the course of constant efforts over centuries, and finally owing to two great reforms, one before and one after the Babylonian exile, the transformation was accomplished of the popular god [] into the God whose worship had been forced upon the Jews by Moses. And evidence of the presence of a peculiar psychical aptitude in the masses who had become the Jewish people is revealed by the fact that they were able to produce so many individuals *prepared to take on the burdens of the religion of Moses in return for the reward of being the chosen people and perhaps for some other prizes of a similar degree*" (emphasis mine, 111).

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