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Of Masters and Madmen: I Cannot Believe What I Am Thinking

– On Two Modes Of The Master Discourse

The current article is part of a larger project on Lacanian algebra and machine music called *The Four Discourses of Musical Enunciation*. It can, however, easily be read on its own as it deals with what I find to be some sort of schism within the Lacanian discourses – specifically in the Master’s discourse. A productive schism nevertheless. I am not attempting some sort of patricide, nor am I proposing a hysteric pulling of the rug from under the Lacanian system. Not only is such a system yet to be seen in its full coherence, but even more so, I think any Lacanian reader must perpetually be on the lookout for precisely these kinds of inconsistencies, schisms, paradoxes or flat out contradictions. Not for reasons of “disproving” Lacan (it has been tried and done), but rather as an attempt at the sort of thinking I believe Lacan is trying to provoke. It is almost as if we are called to the type of attention one would expect from an analyst; one that listens for breaks, inconsistencies, slips, contradictions and so forth, not to call them out as “mistakes” in the patient, but rather as somewhere in the discourse where there is thinking at play without the speaking subject being fully aware of this.

Lacan, to my knowledge, never heard a piece of electronic music, and the immense field of electronic music performers and music theorists seems to care little about Lacan. I do not claim that there is an obvious, overlooked connection here; that the Lacanians are missing out on modern computer music and that the musicians, let alone the machines, are missing out on structural psychoanalysis. There is no theoretical relationship – the two do not fill out a gap in each other. But all the more reason to pursue the incompatibilities: As any Lacanian knows; the pursuit of an impossible relationship can be quite productive.

It remains my entrance to the questions of computer music and psychoanalysis that music first and foremost is to be seen as enunciation rather than to be analyzed on the level of object, let alone as a “tool for communication” or similar platitudes. In this respect, the four discourses give this project what it wants, words for a discourse that has none, and at the same time give Lacan what he wants: “A discourse without words” (as stated in *Seminar XVII*).¹

Yet, while this should leave everyone happy, the approach also brings us to a logical impasse. At first, I thought this was related to the fact that I am trying to squeeze something in where it absolutely does not fit – but if one keeps moving, it becomes apparent that the paradox goes a little deeper than just the patient, that is music. Rather, perhaps a specific lack in this patient is able to superimpose itself upon a more structural lack in the algebra, showing us how a certain productive short circuit lays the foundation for the discursive wheel.

MUSIC AND DISCOURSE

My point of departure is that a certain division can be made in music; not on behalf of how it sounds, which would be the musical object, but on behalf of the addressed enunciation that is inevitably at play in any musical discourse.ⁱ Thus, the division of music into that of the Master, the University, the hysteric and the analyst is by no means a division of genre, as this would be a clear shorting between statement and enunciation, just as we cannot conclude the patient’s pathology from his or her words alone.

ⁱ This is developed in much more detail in my dissertation *The Four Discourses of Musical Enunciation*. (Not yet published)

$S_1 \rightarrow S_2$

$\mathcal{S} \quad a$

(Fig. 1: The Master's Discourse)

The starting point is naturally the Master's discourse, since it functions as a kind of proto-discourse for the others. This also means that all the other discourses relate to this one, in that they all relate to the S_1 . The historical precedence that according to Lacan accrues to this discourse goes for the musical one as well, in so far as the S_1 remains that which structures musical knowledge, or musical technique. Obviously, musical knowledge is not the same throughout musical cultures, neither geographical nor temporal, but the *function* of the S_1 nonetheless remains stable. Historically, only technique, as a concept, remains constant across the various genres, inventions, and developments of musical endeavors. Harmony or dissonance, pitch or timbre, rhythmically constant or fluid, minor or major, half steps, whole steps or microtonal, there is close to nothing that has not been challenged and changed when it comes to aesthetical listening and production, and almost none of the perceived constants of today's music have not at some point been something else – except precisely the *function* of S_1 , the function of a structuring principle. It is an obvious historical example of how the S_1 cuts a figure through the S_2 , a figure that retroactively works as a rule which then seems to have always structured the S_2 – the field of knowledge as such.

Yet, the master signifier is not inherently different from any other signifier – rather it has obtained a structural position in which it has come loose from the dialectic, metaphoric and metonymic nature of the battery of signifiers. Any S_2 can thus become an S_1 by the function of its structural position.

From this position, the Master is the agent who puts the slave to work. We have plenty of musical masters, from Beethoven to Mozart to Haydn to Bill Evans to Louis Armstrong to Schoenberg to Beyonce. What constitutes such a master is by no means a simple question. One reading could be that the master is simply the best in a certain discipline. The most masterful. One can imagine a kind of Hegelian master/slave struggle in which two (or more) violinists compete to remain or to become the master. Many such struggles or competitions exist, as when orchestras open auditions to find a new 1st violinist, as when music schools open for applications, or in the countless talent shows

of popular culture; we always go through the same races of elimination to determine who functions most effectively in a certain discipline. The function of S_1 is technique, castrating the subject to play with certain clear limitations, such as pitch, timbre and timing. This bars the subject, who slips under the line and becomes separated from the possibility of playing, or enunciating, whatever, whenever, however. At the same time it produces an audience with a certain knowledge at the place of the other, who produces enjoyment or desire in the form of object a . The signifier for this desire we could call applause – something that definitely flows towards the Master. We even use this term from time to time; a master violinist, a master guitarist or a master composer, not to mention the frequent use of so called “master classes”.

Here I will use the function of the concertmaster in the classical orchestra: The most skilled musician in the 1st violin section, who not only supervises the tuning (ensures the Law), but is expected to lead the string section through the concert with something as minuscule as the gestures of the bow (a Master’s gesture if there ever was one). The concertmaster sits closest to both the conductor and the audience – we could say that the Master’s position is at the same time closest to both the Law and to enjoyment.

There is something in such a “direct” reading that we can simply, empirically affirm: Masters exist. But there is also something in such a reading that does not seem to follow the discursive logic that Lacan tries to establish. This type of discourse would surely follow the historical predominance that he ascribes to the Master’s discourse. For the longest time in music history, learning an instrument meant apprenticeship. Being apprentice to a master. And here comes part of the problem. Being the master in such a musical discourse primarily means having a certain knowledge, something which is by definition on the side of S_2 . In this sense, the master/apprentice relationship is much closer to the University discourse – in which the agent is an agent of knowledge. The master of such a discourse does not amount to a “full” master in the Lacanian sense. A Master who “breaks the silence with anything”²² (as Lacan open his very first seminar). Perhaps the key to the understanding of the difference lies in the bar that bars the agent from the split. Remarkably, the Lacanian split is not merely a split between conscious and unconscious – that which I know about myself and that which I do not know about myself. Rather, I am split between myself and the very split. The Master is not just split

by the dividing bar, but split from his own split, not just divided into conscious and unconscious, but divided from this very split as well – divided from the fact that there is an unconscious. In this way, what must remain hidden in the Master’s discourse is the way that the Master is not fully himself. The Master remains dependent on both the recognition from, and the knowledge of, the slave from the right side of the formula.

So what is it in terms of determining negativity that sets one violinist apart from the next, posing one as the Master? The decisive absence is of course the absence of mistakes. When a master pianist enters the stage, sits down at the piano in a single cone of light with the eyes of thousands of spectators resting on this performance, on the fingers, in this moment, what is most clearly present – so present that the air is thick with it, is the possibility of mistakes. A kind of nervousness on the side of the spectators in fact, as with a circus trick that only remains exciting in so far as there is actually the possibility that it could go wrong. The Master in this sense remains in the position as long as mistakes, even when the stakes are high, can remain absent – or hidden.

In this, it is the smallest details that give away the privileges of the Master. Besides entering the stage last, receiving the biggest applause, probably the largest pay-check, a bouquet of flowers and undoubtedly the most fame, the true mark of the Master is in the small gestures that are allowed from this position without reference to anything other than itself. Everyone must wait for the soloist to be ready, and everyone remains suspended at the mercy of this Master for a brief moment, before a small nod – or whatever gesture – can set things in motion, as “the Master breaks the silence with anything”; surplus enjoyment if ever there was one.

But what kind of Master is a master pianist? Someone who has fully appropriated the knowledge and techniques of a specific field, while successfully eradicated mistakes from his or her musical discourse. Yet, this amounts to nothing more than a slave. Locked in knowledge, locked in reproduction and slaving away under someone else’s rule. Castration per excellence.

Here we are at the first pause in our structural impasse, insofar as the musical Master by necessity abides to the rules of the S_1 , since this technique remains the Law that allows for division between master and slave in the first place. Thus, the musical Master exists, but he himself is a slave to the instigating Law of S_1 . The more masterful one

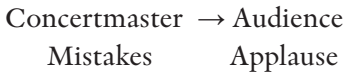
seems, the more one abides to the castration principles of the slaves.

This could lead one to conclude that there is no true Master's discourse within music – the discursive wheel quite simply “begins” with the discourse of the University.

But what I propose is another solution to the schism. Namely that there is, as it were, two logical moments to the Master's discourse; two modes of it so to speak. I will call these a stable Master's discourse, and an unstable Master's discourse respectively.

THE STABLE MASTER'S DISCOURSE

We can approach these two structures by looking at the musical Master's discourse: The agent of the discourse is the concertmaster, S_1 , the most skilled musician in the battery, who addresses on the one hand the rest of the musicians but through these of course also indirectly the audience, S_2 . The audience holds the signifier of desire, the applause.



(Fig. 2: The musical Master's discourse)

In settings outside the “classical” music scene, we could quite simply replace the concertmaster with a “traditional” star, like those we know from the pop-cultural scene:



(Fig. 3: The Star's discourse)

So far, so good. This gives us the stable Master's discourse with its inherent paradox of being at the same time in the position of the primordial father with all the enjoyment at hand, *and* in the position of the supreme slave, subjugated to the ultimate castration of the Law. Fundamental to the stability of this discourse is the bar between the agent and the truth, preventing the split, mistakes, from entering the discourse. The stability in a sense hinges on the “strength” of this bar.

This allows us to turn to the other mode that I claim the Master's discourse can function in.

THE UNSTABLE MASTER'S DISCOURSE

The basic problem with the stable Master's discourse of music is that the proper Master is not simply the one who "makes the most sense". It is rather the other way around: It is the one who can get away with not making sense. The whims and kinks of a Master are from the point of view of the other not perceived as "mistakes", but rather as intriguing or even enigmatic messages to borrow a term from Laplanche. As such, a Master's discourse is not necessarily utterly coherent. In fact, to some degree the very decisive feature of what makes the Master's discourse is to some surprise an element of nonsense. The Master is able to draw from a place outside of established sense, as it is of course clearly seen in the many different versions of gurus or specially gifted people in both the spiritual and the artistic domain. A true guru does not just make sense, but must rather leave one pondering. The Master has you interpreting, dissecting what could have been meant with the seemingly incoherent statements. This is of course fully absent in the case of a concertmaster or a star solo violinistⁱⁱ. It is not that we leave the venue surprised at what went down, but rather that we got exactly what we hoped we would.

The S_1 is, in its very foundation, a nonsensical signifier. Nonsensical in the sense that it halts signification. It stands outside of the dialectical nature of language and from this position it keeps the other signifiers in check. It is not that they are not in motion. Rather they are in motion in relation to the S_1 . It is what fits perfectly by not fitting at all.

This gives us a very different view of the Master. One with a central nonsensical element. The hallmark of a Master is thus neither a central nor a top placement in the symbolic order. It is rather that which has some sort of connection with the outside. Of course, we should be clear here; such an outside does not amount to a third in the relation between agent and other – it is not a meta-language. The trick is that the Master does not draw from any such place at all, but rather short-circuits the signifying chain itself, pulling up an S_2 into a surprising position, disrupting the signification process. This

ii Yet, one could see this function more fully developed in the case of the conductor, the Maestro. A kind of surplus role with an abundance of nonsensical gestures that only gain their symbolic meaning with the hard, interpretive work of the battery of musicians. Still, it is the Maestro who is celebrated as the genius. The function of the Maestro is dealt with in greater detail in *The Four Discourses of Musical Enunciation*.

is what Bruce Fink means, when he states that the Master signifier is characterized by being “undialecticized”³. It precisely does not signify anything (specific). It signifies that it signifies.

Such a meaninglessness is remarkably absent in musical masters. They make plenty of sense, and their mastership is fully justified. There is a certain calculability in their discourse. The true Master is unaccountable. Whereas accountability, calculability, sanity, and stability; these are virtues of the slave.

And so our paradox goes: On the one hand, the master musicians are justifiably masters both quantitatively and qualitatively. We can account for their masterhood, and they both carry the functions of leader, best in their field, un-exceeded in terms of virtuosity and skillfulness. Most importantly, they enjoy the surplus product at their own will. Yet, on the other hand, they remain ruled; bound by the castrating laws of the very skills they are the masters of. Only insofar as they accept the premise of the disciplines they are mastering, can this position stably exist. And herein lies the difference between the two modes of the Master’s discourse: In the stability.

MASTERS AND MADMEN

Think for instance of the apparent disregard of rules that can be in an improvised jazz solo. For the uninitiated, it might be hard to determine why this should be so utterly masterful, or even musical. However, the point here is that initiation is required to even make such a distinction, but that the Master seems to be at the same time occupying a place at the very heart of this initiation, and one that is beyond: The musical freedom of the Master does not consist in the removal of the dividing line, but rather a kind of fantasy about what “full” subject one could be, had one not been at the mercy of castration. When a Master draws from outside the established sphere of musical rules, in what seems like access to a certain beyond, it is precisely not in total disregard of said rules, but rather with a meticulous awareness of exactly how they are being broken.

The truth of the Master, as according to the discursive algebra, is precisely not a “true self” underneath the social constructions of society and the symbolic roles it entails, but instead the very split itself. Or as the famous Lacanian formulation goes: The madman is not only a beggar who thinks he is king, but also (even more) a king who thinks he is king. There is a lack of identity in any symbolic position – a gap amounting to the symbolic castration. The truth about the king, or

the Master, is of course not that he is king. However, the truth is not simply either that he is *not* king. Such a revelation functions merely on the level of knowledge. The truth about the position of the Master is nothing more than the fact that it is never univocal.

In this sense, neither of these situations can thus amount to what I call the unstable Master's discourse. That is, neither the lecturing or pontificating discourse of the music teacher, the concertmaster, or similar technically superior characters, nor can it be the carnivalesque exception to rules that we see these Masters exhibit in the free improvisations of jazz for example.

Instead, The unstable Master's discourse that I am trying to uncover rather has two distinct features:

- 1) It is temporary (hence unstable), and
- 2) it initiates either a new Master's discourse or a University discourse.

If the stable Master's discourse depends upon a certain kind of belief in its own enunciating position, that the agent is on some level a Master, the disruption of this stability or position is the permeation of the bar that keeps the split at bay. The split that always connotes that the agent is not fully him- or herself. Such a permeation allows for the split to "speak" for a brief moment, taking the chance to fill something into the mouth of an otherwise smooth Master's discourse. Naturally, the split does not speak in the usual sense as an agency with a discourse, but rather it makes itself heard as a break or a disruption. That is to say, in such a moment, there is not only one enunciation, that from agent to other, from Master to slave, but also one from the unconscious of the Master to his or her own conscious speech.

$$\frac{S_1}{S} \rightarrow \frac{S_2}{a}$$

(Fig. 4: A slip in the Master's discourse)

If the arrow of the Lacanian algebra indicates enunciation and its direction, then the slip that breaks up the machine-like function of smooth discourse is an arrow that crosses the bar on the side of the agent. However, even if the bar is being crossed from \$ to S₁, the state-

ment itself still belongs to the agent. There might be two voices but there is only the one mouth. In terms of musical performances, the audience, on the side of S_2 , only sees the one (imagined) subject, the agent, on the side of the Master. If this subject was to really “listen to the slip” the signifier on the top left hand side, the S_1 , would relate to another signifier, dialectizing it, giving it a place among the others in the battery, S_2 . As far as a subject is that which represents a signifier for another signifierⁱⁱⁱ, the true subjective relation would then be moved to the relation between $\$$ and S_1 , forcing the wheel to rotate into the Hysteric’s discourse. This would amount to some kind of a breakdown on stage, that we might very well be able to empirically find examples of in the history of musical performances, but obviously it also breaks down the Master’s discourse. Thus, we see clearly why the Master cannot fully relate to, cannot fully “listen to” or accept the enunciating arrow from the barred subject, for structural as well as empirical reasons. He simply cannot believe, what he is thinking. However, the arrow is undeniably there, but to remain in the Master’s discourse, it must gain an echo-like or even ghost-like character, as indicated by the dotted line when it crosses the bar. It is there for sure, but when it slips into discourse, the Master cannot relate to it – cannot recognize it as a truth, as this would set in motion the above-mentioned turn of the algebra. Whatever kink, hiccup, false note, unintentional rim shot or forgetfulness should come across the bar will consequently become part of the Master’s seemingly conscious discourse – and from the point of view of the other; not as mistake but as mysterious intention.

THE FASHIONABLE MASTER,
THE UNFASHIONABLE UNIVERSITY

So, if the unstable Master’s discourse is productive, what does a Master produce? He produces slaves^{iv}. Not as much materially as by positing a new set of ideals. A new standard, if you will. However, it is not the business of any and all Master’s to set new standards. To do so is to

iii Lacan states this in slightly different versions throughout his seminars, amongst other places in *Seminar XI*, p. 207.

iv Of course, the proper “product” of the Master’s discourse is object a . The Master’s discourse is full of enjoyment. Nonetheless, the formal function of the establishment of a Master is at the same time the establishment of the slaves. No S_1 produces the other signifiers as S_2 (even if non-chronologically so).

destabilize the status quo to some degree. A concertmaster has no interest in risking his or her position by trying something radically new. There is a kind of leap of faith involved in any paradigm shift. It ruins stability; just as it ruined the stability of the fundamental scientific theories of time and space when the theory of relativity was proposed by Einstein. From what position are such paradigms broken? In what discourse is a groundbreaking new theory of mathematics, physics, psychoanalysis, or music unearthed? Even if, in the strict logic of the discursive wheel, the only constellation in which we see a new S_1 produced is the analyst's discourse, there is something that really does not sit right in calling Dante's poetic discourse, Beethoven's musical discourse, or Einstein's theoretical discourse, analytic. Groundbreaking as they all evidently are, initiating new schools, new University discourses, none seem to quite fit the formula of the analyst. It is not just desire speaking or flowing freely, and the recipient cannot really be said to be the barred subject. At the same time, none of them are concertmasters, as they cannot be said to simply be relating to and castrated by a certain technê the way that applies to the Master of the stable Master's discourse. Rather, there is a certain moment of retro-activity at play in the way they set a new S_1 , a new standard as it were.

A paradigm shift of this nature comes about in a moment of instability; in a moment of proposing a new interpretation of an existing signifier: A Master intervention; something intervening in the order of the slaves, seemingly incomprehensible, but nonetheless setting a new order, a new S_1 . Einstein did not initiate a new Master's discourse because he had obtained all the knowledge of a certain field, but rather because his discourse broke the field in a manner that forced it to rethink itself.

Naturally, such a moment is unstable, but nonetheless sets a new stable order. Thus, the unstable Master's discourse has the function of either initiating a new stable Master's discourse or a new University discourse. The former could be witnessed by looking at today's pop music scene, in which one fashion seamlessly replaces the next. A Master, one of the big names in pop, proposes something, some new fad, utilizing a particular instrument, a certain production style, chord progression or aesthetics. Even if the changing styles are utterly groundless, they nonetheless put all the slaves to work, directing themselves unquestioningly towards this new S_1 . For a time, there is a stability in musical fashions. The brief intervening of an unstable Master's discourse can result in a change to a stable version of some

more or less coincidental feat. A (perhaps too) simple example of this could be the widespread use of the so-called *autotune-effect*. A somewhat daring move initially, now it is almost obligatory in contemporary pop music. However, to say that it is a new musical path, a paradigm change, would be a vast overstatement. It is not that a new University discourse was initiated, a genre, style or technique invented, but rather that a nonsensical signifier established itself within a certain field, and for a time, its structuring effects are stable.

On the other hand, the initiation of a new University discourse was brought about when Einstein proposed something at first incomprehensible, that still ends up putting all the slaves to work, forcing knowledge itself to restructure. A new field is established; a field that can justify itself. It is a discourse in which this knowledge itself starts “speaking”, while the Master hides under the line as the insensible ground for sense itself. This could not reasonably be stated about the autotune fashion.

THE PRODUCTIVITY OF NOT BELIEVING YOURSELF

Yet, even if the results of an unstable Master’s discourse, an intervention, can “stabilize” itself in two quite different discourses, the instability of the intervening Master is the same. The instability in which something is risked, in which some enunciated is dared. This very act of enunciation, the act of breaking the silence, is an instability that is not so much an instability of “the system” as such, but a moment of doubt manifested as security. A certain stability is surely being questioned, but it is not the stability of an external Master, as in the hysteric’s discourse. Rather, the proper instability of the Master’s discourse that I am proposing is one’s own stability; not merely as an inward questioning as in insecurity, doubt or uncertainty, and not merely as an outward questioning either, as in accusation, rebelliousness or hysteria. The productive Master-gesture is the proposal of a new ground that even oneself does not yet stand on. The instability thus aims at the firmness with which it is believed that one is identical to one’s own position. This split drills a hole, and from this hole something arises, something comes across the barrier which is not merely a mistake in the sense of the negation of a “right note” for example. Rather, what comes across the line for a brief moment is the hesitation or doubt stemming from being not fully identical with the position, one finds oneself in. This, precisely, is truth in the Lacanian sense; that which opposes knowledge. Finds a crack in it. Yet, here, at

a central point of my argument, we must be very precise: The hesitation here is in the momentary realization of the gap. The gap between the symbolic position of the S_1 and the fact that discourse is being generated from this position. In the moment of hesitation, as the split comes across and the univocality shatters, the undoubtable function of the S_1 is doubted: Seeing oneself from the outside, as the Master necessarily does in such a hesitation, inevitably the S_1 gains a kind of minimal perspective. An offset. A step towards dialectization. The simplest appearance of this realization is that things could be different than they are. A chance could be taken, to break the silence – with anything.

The truthful realization in the hesitating moment is that of recognizing that enunciation does not merely stem from the agent's position, but always also from that which subverts or even undermines this position. In the hesitation in which the Master's discourse becomes unstable, the gap is not mended, but rather probed. For is this not precisely what any act of thinking must go through? Are not all scientific, philosophical or musical breakthroughs based on a daring moment of self-subversion? To propose the theory of general relativity, one would have to disrupt a certain continuity in one's own thinking, position and knowledge. To climb to the top of the ladder and kick it away underneath oneself, to paraphrase Wittgenstein. A certain cut is being made. A productive Master's intervention with the important difference that the intervention does not merit itself on wholeness, a Master intervening with some sort of symbolic mandate, but rather it gets its merit from being a productive split in discourse that sets in motion a new order, as it were. A function that would otherwise be found merely in the analyst's discourse^v. When breakthrough theories are presented, when revolutions, whether in politics, math or music, are brought about, it is not from the analytical discourse per se, but rather by attempting, daring to posit a new structure. Subverting one's own position with the very gesture in which one proposes a new.

I CANNOT BELIEVE WHAT I AM THINKING

So what does this mean – that the S_1 is addressed by its own split? It means that in the somewhat clear stream of consciousness that pres-

v It should be noted, however, that Lacan seems to explore in the second lecture of seminar XX, *Encore*, that any "turn of the wheel" – any change from one discourse to another, goes through the analyst's discourse.

ents our everyday “inner” monologue – our day-to-day thinking, there is something defying univocality itself. On surface-level, the speech of the Master has a kind of “mono-logical” character. In the sense that for any given other, it sounds like a monologue, but it also presents a certain kind of undoubtable, unifying or homogenous logic – a mono-logic. And is doubt not precisely a break in this? Or what is doubt other than the mere “hearing of another voice”? As I am speaking, even if this speaking is simply the unvoiced monologue of thinking, another voice breaks in; suggests that things could be otherwise than what I am about to say or think. Not necessarily as a positive counter-proposal, but merely the split drilling a hole in the mono-logical nature of thought. In this way, many of the great thinkers, the great disrupters of common sense or time-honoured truths, were not simply operating from within the hysteric’s discourse, directly addressing the Master, installing doubt at every turn and so on. Neither were they just filling out holes in the scientific order proposed by the existing (hidden) Master as one would see it in the standard University discourse. And it would not be fair either to claim that we are seeing an analyst’s discourse unfold in which some sort of free association is going on – desire speaking on its own, as it were. Rather, more often than not, new theories are proposed precisely as new Master’s discourses. A system set in motion, say, the consequences of general relativity, S_2 , by a seemingly nonsensical proposal, that time and space are inseparably connected and together determine the geometrical properties of gravity, S_1 .

Thus, what I am arguing, is that a certain mode of the Master’s discourse might be needed to account for such “breakthrough moments”. One that is neither the usual “stroke of genius” or “divine inspiration”, but instead of such a clear insight – a system outside the system – what is founded in the unstable Master’s discourse is a restructuring merely by virtue of the lack of univocality.

Another voice makes itself heard without saying a word. Nonetheless, this “making itself heard” is precisely enough to dismantle the undoubtable nature of the S_1 , which sets things in motion.

1 Lacan 1969: 3

2 Lacan 1953: 1

3 Fink, *The Lacanian Subject*, chapter 7.

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