

# August Seminar

## Lacan's Conceptual Aporias

*From Void to Thing; From Thing to Other; From the One to the Other*

Date: Wednesday 23 August 2017

Time: 6-8pm

Location: Tutorial Room-3; NIDA, 215 Anzac Parade

### A b s t r a c t

It is an axiomatic fact that Lacan is very difficult to read or probably impossible to comprehend for many readers and even for those who are oriented in Lacanian studies. The most paradoxical part of his theories doesn't include his writing style and the use of rhetoric alone. The real puzzling enigma is posed by the inaccessibility of his concepts and conceptualization. From my experience as a teacher, among Lacan's concepts, the Void (hole), the *Thing*, the Other, and the One have always mystified readers and students. These concepts are interrelated to one another. The *Thing* (*das Ding*, *la chose*, the Void or hole), which is rooted in Kantian, Freudian, and Heidegger's discourses, refers to the primordial maternal object, *Thing* towards which desire is directed. The object is inaccessible and actually lost forever. This object may be accessible only by the transgression of the Law, as often happens in religion and literature. Sophocles' *Antigone* is a good case in point. The protagonist reaches the *jouissance* of the *Thing* only by plunging herself in a pure desire—her death. The object *a*, or the little object is the only leftover of the maternal object, which causes and animates desire. The object *a*, is engulfed in drives to which a subject is superseded in fantasy. The *Thing* is in the real and it takes the locus of the Other in the symbolic, whereas the object *a* remains in the imaginary order. The *Thing* is lost and always and appears in discourse as the presence of an absence, lack, Void, emptiness, and hole, (James Joyce). This also identifies the divided subject. The locus of the Other is occupied by language and the unconscious. The Other is also marked by the lack which is represented by the phallic signifier of the One (S1) that determines the symbolic order. The One is rooted in Pre-Socratics, Neoplatonism, and Heidegger. Among other disciplines, these concepts are pertinent to literary studies, film studies, and philosophy.

The August Seminar will attempt to clarify and make simple understanding these key concepts in Lacan's theory. We will also have a selective reading from Lacan's Seminars (VII and XX).

**Dr Ehsan Azari Stanizai**

### Readings:

Lacan: *Seminar VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Routledge, 1997

Lacan: *Seminar XX: On Feminine Sexuality, the Limits of Love and Knowledge (Encore)*, W W Norton & Company, 1975