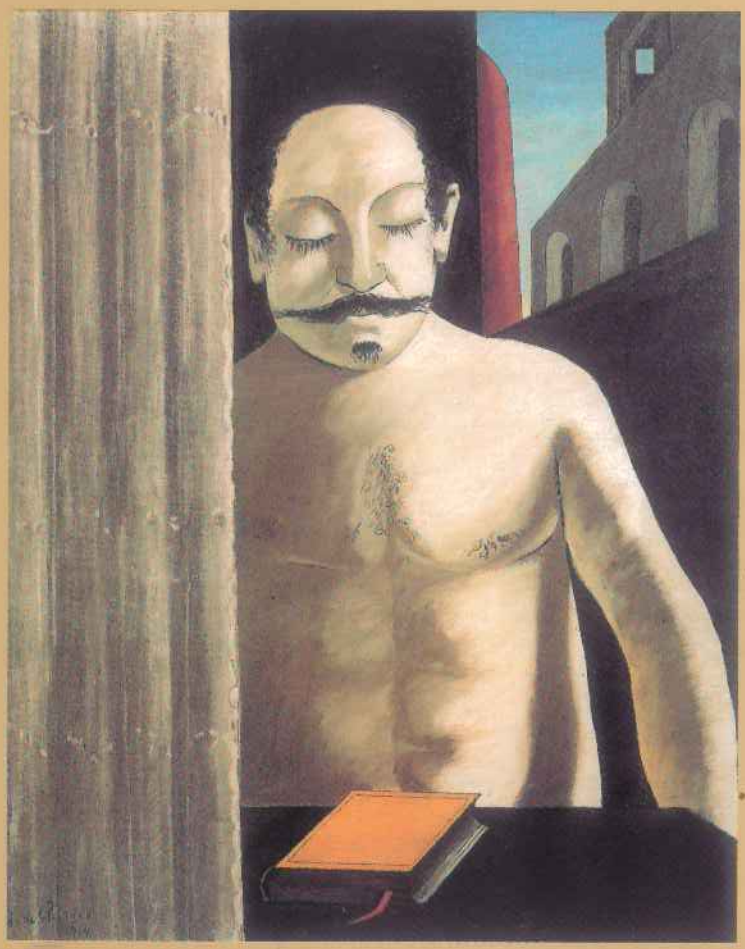
LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS



Proceedings of the

Sixteenth International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis

Urbino ♦ July ♦ 1999

Edited by **Frederico Pereira**

Published by **Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada,** Lisbon

SIXTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON

LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

Edited by FREDERICO PEREIRA

Urbino

July • 1999

Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Culture (SUNY-Buffalo, USA)

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Published by **Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada**, Lisbon

Cover plate: «Le cerveau de l'enfant» (1914) by Giorgio de Chirico

Photocomposed by *Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada* – Lisboa

Printed by *Printipo - Indústrias Gráficas, Lda* – Damaia

Depósito Legal n.º 161841/01

ISBN 972-8400-30-6

2001

Contents

P A P E R S

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 3-11

Psychoanalytic poetics: Freud's rhetoric and hermeneutics

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THE LANGUAGE OF INWARDNESS

The center of interest in the interrelations of psychoanalysis and literary studies has always fallen on the special, individual constructions that are operative in literature (and in life) and which were first professionally phenomenalized by psychoanalysis. Norman Holland (1976) in his *Literary Interpretation and Three Phases of Psychoanalysis* defined three different strategies of such a construction, using the idea of the unconscious, the ego and finally the self as leading concepts in the different phases. More recently, however, several authors (like Felman, 1980) suggested that psychoanalysis may have an even more important function in postmodern literary studies: it can help us elaborate on the question of inner language, or more exactly: the different levels and types of language that articulate, phenomenalize our hidden desires like concentric circles. In a sense this new strategy can be the fourth phase, and its function is to account for the traces of the pre-rational, prelinguistic formation of inwardness. Such a trend may start from the idea that both literature and psychoanalysis have their unique strategies to handle, to phenomenalize the same: the traces of the increasingly compelling presence of a chaotic inner world. This more and more direct visibility, this disturbing presence of the personal, the inner is due to the postmodern dissolution of the repressive-representative social techniques that usually help mediate, articulate desires, inner feelings. In spite of the fact that this inner language is definitely different from the grammatically constructed language, it still can be called language for it operates as a discourse and it uses fragments of everyday speech as the most directly available material for associations.

It must be admitted, however, that Freud never produced a clear-cut theory of inner language – the supposedly core component of this fourth phase in the parallel development of psychoanalysis and literary studies. He commented, however, very often on concrete instances, usually problematic ins-

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tances of language (spoken and body language) that meant to articulate that hidden world. In my paper I discuss a few of these comments and place them in parallel with another great linguist of our inner world, Lewis Carroll and his Humpty Dumpty. Due to my limited space I deliberately leave out a third author, James Joyce, whose *Finnegan's Wake* is probably the most important undertaking to include the deepest possible layer of this inner discourse into a literary work.

THE HERMENEUTICS AND RHETORIC OF FREUD

For a long time I had endorsed the general hypothesis that Freud, without being theoretically conscious about it, developed a special hermeneutics, the hermeneutics of self-consciousness, or in a simpler term, the hermeneutics of desire. The classical hermeneutic conception (that was represented among Freud's contemporaries by philosophers like Dilthey or philologists like August Boeckh or Hyppolite Taine) would suggest that in the background of cultural or personal texts there can always be found an essentially subjective message, a hidden meaning. Freud clearly searched for such a hidden, symbolic meaning, a certain inner content that could explain and correct the more surface-type phenomena, like symptoms, dreams and other personal non-causal events.

In the *Studies on Hysteria* Breuer and Freud stated that the patients suffered from hidden memories and their symptoms could be cured by the use of language, by the narrative articulation of the original event. I believe that the Elisabeth von R. case was the first document in which Freud systematically constructed the hermeneutic-rhetorical nature of this relation. This was clearly the «specimen case» of the book on hysteria, as Freud stated, it was «the first full-length analysis of a hysteria undertaken by me», where «I arrived at a procedure which I later developed into a regular method and employed deliberately» (Breuer-Freud, 1895, 206). Right after these quotations we find the first mention of Freud's archaeology metaphor, another powerful name to refer to the nature and relations of inner meanings: «This procedure was one of cleaning away the pathogenic material layer by layer, and we like to compare it with the technique of excavating a buried city» (Breuer-Freud, 1895, 206). It is important to note, even at this early point, that the layers of the buried city represent an interesting complex, as the different layers, the historically different towns may have connections with each other, they may represent some common «meaning», but it is also possible that the towns were built at the site in different ages, and nothing, or only some unknown ruins connected the new builders to the old site. In this case it is impossible to talk about «common meaning», the essential aim of the hermeneutic expectation. The builders of the towns, however, always reacted at, always «read» certain «texts», probably the mixed material possibilities of the geographical site (like closeness of water, the possibility of effective defense etc.) The further pages, the ongoing analysis of the case can be understood as the elaboration and expansion of this archaeological metaphor from its phenomenal, simple version into a – to use the expression of Nicholas Abraham – complicated «anti-phenomenal» format.

A few pages later Freud discussed the meaningful relation of the somatic symptom and its meaning:

> We might perhaps suppose that the patient had formed an association between her painful mental impressions and the bodily pains which she happened to be experiencing at the same time, and that now, in her life of memories, she was using her physical feelings as a symbol of mental ones (Breuer-Freud, 1895, 208).

The physical is a «symbol» of the mental, or today we may say that the physical is a sign, or a signifier while the mental is the signified. The relation, however, is rather simple and accidental, it is indexical, to use Pierce's term, the signifying connection of two events that take place at the same time. The index «is a real thing or fact which is a sign of its object by virtue of being connected with it as a matter of fact» (quoted by Silverman, 1983, 19). Freud, however, went beyond the statement of a simple indexical relation, as the connection between pain and memory, bodily sign and mental image was

based in his interpretation on a very personal decision, and it is this private character of the otherwise material indexical relation from which the real Freudian semantics can evolve.

A little later Freud reported «the discovery of the reason for the first conversion» and this event «opened a second and fruitful period of the treatment» (Breuer-Freud, 1895, 217). The memory that was operative in the background of the pain was that «it was in this place that her father used to rest his leg every morning while she renewed the bandage round it». This way the hermeneutics was completed, as the symbolized was found, and the memory really «joined in the conversation» (Breuer-Freud, 1895, 217) between therapist and patient, showing up at certain moments. Freud soon noted that the situation was not as simple. «I found – he wrote – that in fact none (of the symptoms) occurred which had not been provoked with some contemporary event» (Breuer-Freud, 1895, 218) that is a special kind of receptivity, requiring a reading or misreading from the patient that allowed for the interpretation and resulted in the symptom. Moreover Freud found that the different symptoms and the different situations, when they emerge, have a certain connection, similarity.

> «The original painful spot in her right thigh had related to her nursing her father; the area of pain had extended from this spot to neighboring regions as a result of fresh traumas. Here, therefore, what we are dealing with was not strictly speaking a single physical symptom, linked with a variety of mnemic complexes in the mind, but a number of similar symptoms which appeared, on a superficial view, to be merged into one symptom» (Breuer-Freud, 1895, 219).

Freud first analyzed (compared) the bodily reactions that came up in the memories of the patient, like standing («she was standing by a door when her father was brought home with his heart attack»; «she was standing at her sister's death bed» etc.), sitting, walking and lying. The memories that comprise the image of «standing» are not connected symbolically, or metaphorically, because they do not have an essential meaning, but they operate like metonymies, they are acts that take place beside events having something in common. The metonymical chain, however, cannot operate hermeneutically, it does not have a meaning, standing, sitting, walking etc. cannot be translated into a parallel inner message, but they construct a layer of connections without clear reference. The process is a rhetorical play on the level of the signifier and does not refer to a hermeneutically available signified. The analyst and the patient both work this way, they search for metonymies that do not have and probably do not want to have clear reference, they search for constructions that function like a buried city, a possible complex that can be a realization of some need or desire. The importance of this rhetorical difference is that metaphors are analogical, their source is always a mental insight, they connect different levels of meaning, lead from the surface to the deeper layer. Metonymy on the other hand is an indexical sign, connected and left on the level of material reality of contiguity, on the plane of the syntagmatic relation, and the meanings here are on the same semantic plane. The metonymy does not essentialize but disseminates. The Freudian interpretation that is built on metonymy does not seek the hidden, the secret, but rather the event of secretness, as metonymies refer to the place where some meaning is missing. In case of everyday (and traditional poetic) use of metonymy we can substitute the missing entity from our knowledge of the world, we say «string» and from our experience we substitute this as «stringed instrument». In the case of psychoanalytic therapy, however, we are faced with a situation where no contextual knowledge is available, therefore metonymy loses its normal coherence. The interpretation, therefore, can never arrive at a solution, at a hermeneutic resting point, but must go on and on along the metonymical chain.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* the hermeneutic-rhetoric interplay became even more complicated. One trend was that Freud wanted to be more hermeneutic, as the major change from the *Studies on Hysteria* to the dream-book was that Freud realized: the different symptoms refer to more than just fragmented traumatic events. He realized that a whole hidden empire, the unconscious was responsible for the operation of symptoms. Freud closed the analysis of the «specimen dream» with the following statement:

> «I have completed the interpretation of the dream. While I was carrying it out I had some difficulty in keeping at bay all the ideas which were bound to be provoked by a comparison between the content and the concealed thought lying behind it. And in the meantime the 'meaning' of the dream was borne in upon me (...) *Thus its content was the fulfillment of a wish and its motive was a wish*» (Freud, 1900, 195).

We are informed that the dream was given an essential center, a meaning, which was the fulfillment of a wish that could be defined. The psychoanalytic process is a special hermeneutics a search for the hidden personal wish that was originally transcribed into a script, a dream or a symptom. The repressed, unconscious idea plays the same role here that the transcendental message, the Word occupied in Biblical exegesis.

The triumphant statement, however, contains some resentment by mentioning the «difficulty» of «keeping at bay» the «ideas» that were the product of a «comparison» «between the content and the concealed thought lying behind it». What is this *act of comparison* that provoked the difficulty, that made the interpretation complicated? This is probably the very activity that lifted out the meaning from the haze that enveloped it. Comparison is a *formal activity* and it is a *reading* of different meanings, the perception and definition of similarity and difference. And Freud clearly states that the difficulty lies in this very act of necessarily biased reading relation, the instability of the speaking voice.

Moreover, in case we analyze the examples of interpretation of the Irma dream, none of them can be called hermeneutic, they do not aim at the essential meaning, but they stay with the metonymical surface:

> «*pale, puffy; false teeth*
> The false teeth took me to the governess whom I have already mentioned; I am now inclined to be satisfied with bad teeth. I then thought of someone else to whom these features might be alluding. She again was not one of my patients, nor should I liked to have her as a patient» (Freud, 1900, 186).

The interpretation uses metonymical relations which are connected to a person, one person to another similar person etc. It is rhetorically strange, however, that first we have a list of words, or a fragment, and the interpreter produces metonymies to extend this meaningless fragment. First we (or the dreamer) have something, then this something gets a metonymical (or rhetorical) extension so that it can approach meaningfulness. Two important features can be stated here: first, it is clear that even the metonymy is secondary, the primary rhetorical technique operates in a way that we have a name, a word, and we try to attach something to this word. This basic rhetorical process is called *cathacresis*, the misuse of words and names. Postmodern literary theory, Paul de Man's deconstruction, Derrida's philosophy and Nietzsche's philosophy of language gave a central role to cathacresis as the representative, rhetorical sign of the impossibility of a final, hermeneutically available meaning. Cathacresis has another side that is clearly present in Freud's analysis: It is *reader-oriented*, it discards the intentions of an author and the possibility of representing the outside world as well. We may just note here that the cathacretic metonymic relations are often formed by material, sound similarities of the signifiers. Saussure called this rhetorical technique anagram or hypogram, where phonetic similarity discards the double level character of the figure and leads from language back to language.

A crucial question of rhetoric, which was first raised by Socrates against Gorgias, is the validity, the truthfulness of the rhetorical expression. What can we know about the reader? Is it possible to validate, to pin down his reading position? Probably not, as the history of the Irma dream shows: it has received and still receives literally hundreds of interpretations. The cathacretic-metonymical chain offers open possibility for reading without ever offering a final meaning. Freud adds a note again, commenting on the possibilities of the interpreter when he is faced with such a rhetorical construct:

> «I had the feeling that the interpretation of this part of the dream was not carried far enough to make it possible to follow the whole of its concealed meaning. If I had pursued my comparison between the three women, it would have taken me far afield. – There is at least one

spot in every dream at which it is umplumbable – a navel, as it were, that is its point of contact with the unknown» (Freud, 1900, 186).

The first sentence represents Freud's hermeneutic attitude, his belief in the central symbolic meaning. The second sentence, however, exemplifies the metonymic nature: following the chain would «take him far afield», that is: instead of finding the center, he would be drawn into an endless reading position, and into the dissemination of meanings. In the third sentence Freud even explains the metonymic process – ironically – with a metaphor, the metaphor of the navel. This image has received extensive psychoanalytic interpretation in the past hundred years. Even the translations are interesting. The original German word was «Nabel», which means navel and navel cord as well. In the Hungarian translation, which was done by a major psychoanalyst, a friend of Ferenczi and Freud as well, István Hollós, we find «navel cord». The navel cord is a primary connection to the mother, the navel is the memory of this connection. A more recent interpretation of this can be found in a paper by Shoshana Felman (1985), a paper that was published in a volume put together after the death of Paul de Man. Felman had shown her writing to her fatally ill teacher and later she published his reactions. For Felman the reading of the metaphor concentrated on the idea of connection, while for de Man the navel was the symbol of a cut, a separation. To generalize the dialogue: we are probably offered both to be connected and at the same time cut off (from language, meaning) when we face our crucial metonymic chains in case of the compelling presence of subjective language.

In a much later chapter of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in Chapter 6, entitled «The Dream-Work», Freud added a footnote in 1925. In this Freud condemns the overzealous analysts who think that every dream should get its own meaning:

> «They seek to find the essence of the dreams in their latent content and in doing so they overlook the distinction between the latent dream-thoughts and the dream-work. At bottom, dreams are nothing other than a particular *form* of thinking, made possible by the conditions of the state of sleep. It is *dream-work* which creates that form and it alone is the essence of dreaming» (Freud, 1900, 650).

In this often quoted passage Freud suggests that it is not the content, the wish that should be taken as the central component of dreaming, but those formal, linguistic processes that transform the latent into the manifest. In this passage, and with the earlier idea of comparison, Freud denied that a wish could be the final essence of dream interpretation, and *in place of hermeneutics* he introduced a new approach, the *rhetorical attitude*. All the processes of the dream-work that Freud mentioned in the book were of rhetorical nature; that is, they are formal and non-grammatical processes that operate regardless of the original idea and regardless of the available referential reality as well.

In the *Introductory Lectures* we can find a seemingly simple sentence that, I suggest, offers a key to the starting point of a hermeneutic or rhetoric interpretation. The sentence reads as: «Interpreting means finding a hidden sense» (Freud, 1916, 115). The sentence can be read both hermeneutically and rhetorically, it has a deconstructive double meaning. In one reading the aim and the result of interpretation produce a certain sense, a meaning that is usually hidden but can be made available with some hermeneutic care. On the other hand it is also possible to read that sentence with emphasis on hiddenness, on the veil, on the mask. The first reading suggests that the mask has a signified, in the second the interpreter is called to care for the masked character of the object. The first task is hermeneutical, while the second is rhetorical. In German the term «hidden sense», «verborgnen Sinn» refers to the secretive nature, but in the text the emphasis is on the hidden and not on the sense. Interpretation depends on whether we can find the existence of *hiddenness* in the otherwise seemingly simple, clearly understandable or translatable human world. A very special attitude is required of the reader, as hiddenness cannot be defined objectively, through the analysis of structure, but only through a certain suspicion. As early as in the Fraulein Elisabeth von R. case we find the crucial features of this «verborgenheit». In it Freud quotes a line from Goethe's *Faust* as an association to explain the facial expression of the patient: «Das Maskchen da weissagt verborgnen Sinn» («Her mask reveals a hidden

sense»/Breuer-Freud, 1895, 206/). In case of a mask it is impossible to find out the essential meaning (the wish, the signified) and the only aim can be the search for the hidden meaning of the mask (that is, the signifier) and not of the masked (which is the signified). The «comparison of ideas» that may lead to meaning is the comparison of the associations, readings connected with the mask and not the relation between the mask and the face. It would be interesting to analyze the rhetorical nature of the relation of hiddenness between the mask and the face. It is not symbolical, we cannot arrive at reliable information concerning the face with the help of the mask. The word mask refers to a figure that played a crucial role in deconstruction: it is a cathacresis, the use or misuse of a name to express something that cannot be expressed.

In the *Introductory Lectures* Freud defined the relation of the manifest to the hidden as an «Ersatz», a substitute. It is important, however, to understand the exact nature of this substitute relation. First of all, an «Ersatz» does not refer but exists, it repeats the other thing that is substituted. Freud suggested that the «dream elements» «are ungenuine things, substitutes for something else that is unknown for the dreamer» (Freud, 1916, 143). This substitute is a simulacrum, it is something like a loose brick in a wall where some treasure was hidden. The successful hiding requires that nothing should betray the original intention of hiding, the place of the hidden treasure. The substitute in this case has the opposite function than what the signifier-signified or the symbol-symbolized relations have: it does not show, but it really hides. The *Ersatz* is misleading by nature, it is the veil, the cover and not the insight.

The relation was discussed by Freud and his followers in many different forms. It would be interesting to collect all those metaphors that psychoanalysts later used to name this crucial relation. Nicholas Abraham discussed psychoanalysis as an anti-semantics, terms like the unconscious, and words of the patients, elements of dreams «cannot strictly speaking signify anything, except the founding silence of *any act of signification*» (Abraham, 1979, 19). To explain the relation, he quoted Laplanche on the nature of the relation between the somatic and the psychic: «The relation between the somatic and the psychic is conceived neither as a parallelism nor as a relation of causality (...) it must be understood by a comparison with the relation existing between a delegate and a sender» (Abraham, 1979, 20). The substitute and substituted are the *delegate and the sender*, and Abraham himself adds another pair: the *shell and the kernel*. These metaphors are important insights of leading theoreticians and at the same time practicing psychoanalysts about this unsayable relation between the different layers of our inner semantic reality. It would be interesting to analyze the message of these terms, but even without such a analysis it is clear that the relation is different from the usual hermeneutic relation.

THE RHETORIC AND THE HERMENEUTIC OF HUMPTY DUMPTY

At this point I would like to leave Freud and turn to a writer who faced the same problem: the constructive and deconstructive role of metonymical chains, the essential rhetoricity of subjective language. I have two writers in mind, James Joyce and Lewis Carroll, but I have space here to deal only with Lewis Carroll's Alice books, more exactly, chapter VI of *Through the Looking-Glass* in which Humpty Dumpty appears and interprets four lines from the poem titled *Jabberwocky*. Humpty Dumpty was a great reader of metonymies, or more exactly cathacretic text and cryptonymies. Humpty represented in himself the *possibilities as well as the dangers* of rhetorical hermeneutics, rhetorical reading of the world, of Alice and first of all himself. He was a *rhetor*, a psychoanalyst and a philosopher of postmodern linguistics.

In the story Humpty appears when in a dream-like (and dream in the Alice books is just as important as it is in the case of Freud) state Alice tries to buy a few eggs in a dark little shop. Darkness, small space, hallucinatory fantasies, the nursery rhyme, eggs all around etc. clearly take the event to a very deep regression. She reaches out for an egg but she suddenly finds herself at a wall where a large egg is sitting. The living egg clearly emerges from the haze of a hallucinatory fantasy,

and the first reaction of the little girl is to go back into her past and recall a nursery rhyme and a name that she found there: «she saw clearly that it was HUMPTY DUMPTY himself».

It seems that every rhetorical reading needs a very exact positioning of the reader, who am I?, who are you? are crucial questions here. I am Elisabeth von R. and I am Sigmund Freud. But for decades the readers of Freud's case study were satisfied with such a fake name as Elisabeth von R. or Irma, or Wolf Man. They notoriously searched for the «real» name, if it exists at all. The names are absolutely important not only for Alice, but also for Humpty Dumpty:

«Don't stand chattering to yourself like that,» Humpty Dumpty said looking at her for the first time, «but tell me your name and your business.»

«My name is Alice, but ---------»

«It's a stupid name enough!» Humpty Dumpty interrupted impatiently. «What does it mean?»

«Must a name mean something?» Alice asked doubtfully.

«Of corse it must,» Humpty Dumpty said with a short laugh: «my name means the shape I am-and a good handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost.»

Proper names are purely referential words, in a Fregean sense they have no meaning, only reference. Humpty, however, disagrees with Frege and suggests that names have a meaning, or we can attach a meaning to any name. This act displaces names and elevates them into a figurative, a catachretic position. With this the differentiation between language and reality is weakened. The figurative presentation works in both directions: the name defines the body, the body expresses the name (remember Elisabeth von R.). Normally (except for nicknames) we refuse this and believe that our body cannot relate to our name, and we are usually deeply hurt when a bodily character is used as a name. Nicknames are always rhetorical devices, the name Piggy for a fat boy is a metaphorical construct. In a normal social situation, from where Alice speaks, the name is connected with the self, with a personal and social construction that represses and systematically denies its bodily sources. For Humpty names and bodies are directly and mutually projected onto each other, they have a literary existence, as they are both readings of each other. This way the borders of the self are dissolved, object and subject, ego and non-ego melts into an undifferentiated unity. The same strange process operates on objective time, on language and on the interpreter as well. At a point Humpty's strange necktie becomes the theme of the dialogue as Alice mistakes it for a belt:

«It's a cravat, child and a beautiful one, as you say. It's a present from the White King an Queen. There now!» They gave it me» Humpty Dumpty continued thoughtfully as he crossed one knee over the other and clasped his hands round it, «they gave it me - for an unbirthday present.»

Here the boundary between inner time and chronological objective time disappears, the chronology of life becomes the figurative function of inner feelings as every day is an unbirthday. With unbirthdays the birthday-quality is projected onto other days, it is a double metonymy as between my birth and the given day (connection in time), and between the birthday and other days (connections with the time sequence) we find a syntagmatic relation. Birthday is deeply personal and deeply bodily, the separation of our personal body from another one, from the mother's body. Birthday is our personal expression, an essential and endless prosopopeia that saves us from effacement (remember: Humpty's whole body is a face, and later he criticizes Alice as «your face is the same as everybody has»).

After settling the problem of unbirthdays Humpty initiates a new problem, that of language and speech:

«There's glory for you!»

«I don't know what you mean by glory,» Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. «Of course you don't-till I tell you. I meant >there's nice knock-down argument for you!»

«But glory doesn't mean a nice knock-down argument,» Alice objected.

«When I use a word,» Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, «it means just what I choose it to mean-neither more nor less.»

«The question is,» said Alice, «whether you can make words mean so many different things.»

«The question is,» said Humpty Dumpty, «which is to master-that's all.»

Humpty's relation to words again transcends the border of grammaticality. Words, language are normally shared instruments that become personal articulations here. Humpty is a rhetorician, he uses words to exist. And this activity is clearly not the question of proper grammar but of sheer personal power of persuasion. The rhetorical quality becomes even more clear when Alice asks Humpty to interpret the meaning of a poem, the famous Jabberwocky:

«You seem very clever at explaining words, Sir,» said Alice.

«Would you kindly tell me the meaning of the poem called Jabberwocky?»

«Let's hear it,» said Humpty Dumpty. «I can explain all the poems that ever were invented-and a good many that Haven't been invented just yet.»

This sounded very hopeful, so Alice repeated the first verse:–

«Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mom e raths outgrabe.»

«That's enough to begin with,» Humpty Dumpty interrupted: «there are plenty of hard words there. Brillig means four o'clock in the afternoon-the time when you begin broiling things for dinner.»

«That'll do very well,» said Alice: «and slithy?»

«Well slithy means lithe and slimy. Lithe is the same as active. You see it's like a portmanteau – there are two meanings packed up into one word.»

«I see it now,» Alice remarked thoughtfully: «and what are toves?»

«Well toves are something like badgers-they're something like lizards-and they're something like corkscrews.»

«They must be very curious-looking creatures.»

«They are that,» said Humpty Dumpty? «also they make their nests under sun-dials-also they live on cheese.»

«And what's to gyre and to gimble?» to gyre is to go round and round like a gyroscope. To gimble is to make holes like a gimlet.»

«And the wabe is the grass-plot round a sun-dial, I suppose?» said Alice surprised at her own ingenuity.

«Of course it is. It's called wabe you know, because it goes a long way before it, and a long way behind it-»

«And a long way beyond it on each side,» Alice added.

The interpretation has two main methods. One is connected with the materiality of language and splits or unites the words through similar sounds. These are the so called portmanteau words, they playfully open up on both sides. The other method is metonymic-allegorical, as it attaches metonymical associations to an accidental form, and in this way sets up origins of meaning. This is a radical rhetoricity, however, as the starting point is not an everyday word or meaning but the metonymical chain is built up from the meaningless. The last words of Alice suggest that the process not only «goes a long way before it, and a long way behind it-», but «a long way *beyond* it on each side». It seems that everything in life originates from the lack of origin, from the meaningless materiality of language, from the body of words, and our rhetorical activity is the source of our self.

The story has got, however, another line of reasoning that I omitted. Early in the discussion Humpty asks Alice about her age:

Seven years and six months! Humpty Dumpty repeated thoughtfully. An uncomfortable sort of age. Now if you 'd asked *my* advice, I'd have said 'leave of at seven' - but it's too late now.

I mean, she said, that one can't help growing older.

One can't, perhaps, said Humpty Dumpty; but two can. With proper assistance, you might have left off at seven.

At stake is the sensitivity of the speaker, the reading capacity. One interesting suggestion is that this capacity can be improved by *dialogicality*, «one can't perhaps, but two can» - suggested Humpty Dumpty. The theme of our earlier quotations concern *the nature of the object* (time, reality, language) of the experience. The topic of this quotation concerns *the modality of perception*, that special, personal state that allows a radically different approach to the world, to language. To get a radically increased and intensified experience of the world and self we need both - suggests Humpty Dumpty. In case of modality we need a relation to transform to another crucial time sequence. Humpty already penetrated into time, into objective time, into chronology, as can be seen in the unbirthday theory. There

the time sequence is normal, it organizes the forward flow of time, it is future-oriented even if its organizing idea is genealogical. The instrument of relationality, however, turns to the time sequence that leads backward, to the personal past, and disrupts the common principle of «one can't help growing old». Moreover it does not really change the time sequence but tries to stop time, it kills objective time, to preserve something, a timeless, personal status. The question is, of course, why we need something apparently negative, the prohibition to grow up to achieve something positive, the enrichment of experience? In fact, how old is Humpty Dumpty? The very likely answer is that he is ageless, he has been an egg ever since, and we know that it has a «good handsome shape». Is he, for ever, under seven? What is before age seven? In the development of the individual the so-called latency period sets in around age seven. The major achievement of latency is the complex process of *repression* that is a continuous activity of forgetting experiences that cannot be forgotten. The blocking of conscious memory especially hits bodily memories and the positive and negative relational unity with the other. Repression is a power relation that receives its enormous dynamic force from the dangerous negative events, the traumas in our early life. Traumas, or more exactly the *memories* of traumas always fragment, endanger our shaky unity. Repression has a crucial role in forming our self, a coherent subjective construction that blocks the memory of faults, blanks, deficiencies, it is a universal denial that saves our coherence but loses certain regions of our existence at the same time. Humpty's suggestion was to risk the danger of these traumas, to risk the effect of dire, often dreadful memories to allow a more basic, enlarged view and experience of existence. We know he paid a high price. After the interpretation of Jabberwocky he recited a poem to Alice that «was written entirely for her amusement», a personal poem, her own poem, but an unfinished poem. Humpty suggested coherence referring to the four seasons, but the story that slowly unfolds is brutally interrupted by silence in the middle of the sentence. «That's all» said Humpty Dumpty. «Good-bye». Alice slowly walked away repeating a «long word» of Humpty, when she heard that «a heavy crash shook the forest from end to end». The crash shatters the egg without any promise, even without the false promise of a new coherence of growing up. It is a return to disruption, to the undifferentiated fragments of a traumatic past.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 13-26

Reception of different 'genres' of Freudian texts (*)

LÁSZLÓ HALÁSZ (**)

INTRODUCTION

Freud's influence on literature which was greater than to that of any other psychologist can be explained not only by his subject, but by his ways of approach. Freud (1955:2,160-161) remarked of his first case histories about hysteria written together with Breuer that they could read as short stories, which he found rather problematical from the scientific point of view. He felt some tension between the scientific aim of cathartic method inspired by literature and the manner of non-scientific presentation of symptoms connected to the patients' history of sufferings. He explained this not by his personal affinities but by the nature of the material. After all, according to his affinities psychology was science and nothing else (Freud, 1955a:282).

In two papers I presented at our earlier conferences and published in our volumes (Halász, 1992, 1996) I talked about some Freudian texts as fictive literary and historiographical texts not only metaphorically. But even in these Freud starts from the fundamental phenomena and mechanisms discovered by himself, and in his opinion these are parts of science. This means the testability of the empirical predictability based on his hypotheses (Grünbaum, 1984). Thus, my interest in literary-artistic characteristics of Freudian texts does not wish to play off psychoanalytical hermeneutics against empirical psychoanalysis.

In postmodern literature (and in postmodern philosophy and perhaps in some sciences), and in postmodern taste, too, the borderlines between fictive and nonfictive are blurred (Habermas, 1988), as a sign of changes in social thought (Geertz, 1983). From this point of view Freudian text is a postmodern phenomenon as well. The fundamental work *The Interpretation of Dreams* in which Freud traces several of his dreams back to novels that deeply affected him, can be read as an autobiographical novel in which the author discovers unconscious material from his childhood. The

(*) The study was financially supported by the National Scientific Foundation (026234).

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narrative, presented in the first person singular, a rather popular narrative form at that time, is a general theory of dream interpretation and is at the same time a particular history of the author's life (Thomas, 1990).

As I pointed out when analyzing his book *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud mixed the forms and did not easily give up his idea of writing novels. And several decades earlier, at the end of his *Leonardo*, he realized that what he had written could be regarded merely as a psychoanalytical novel. Although here, as with his first case studies, he refers to literature as something lacking in scientific value, in the case of Moses he does not regard his original literary endeavour as negative. While *Moses* is a psychological text – at least in its intention –, it is a historical and no less a literary text at one and the same time. But as I also showed in detail, Freud's work displays an even greater paradox. One of his earlier works is devoted to the interpretation of a literary piece, *Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's Gradiva*. As a matter of fact, this his longest work of literary interpretation is the work of a historian whose specialty is the remote past.

Freud – in accordance with the narrative tradition – paid great attention to fashioning a good story, one which is continuous, coherent, clear and closed, as Spence (1982) has emphasized. However, Freud admired not only Antiquity – he liked classic detective stories as well. But when we read Freud's stories the material itself and the new, special way of understanding that makes the material understandable, that is, unambiguous, are determined by his intentions. Freud's control over his readers is significantly greater than that of the classic detective story writers over theirs (Fish, 1989). At the same time, Freud approaches his reader (audience) using an intimate «conversational» style. Mahoney (1982) has analyzed in detail the Freudian rhetorical-poetical devices which helped him to appeal to the receiver.

According to my paper presented at our last conference (Halász, 1999), Hungarian undergraduates studying to secondary-school teachers and the better informed psychologists-to-be in particular saw no significant contradiction in thinking of Freud as a great scholar and a great writer. The well-informed undergraduates and those who had acquired their knowledge from literature as well were able to tolerate Freud's peculiar position between science and hermeneutics, between nonfiction and fiction. They have a good chance of reading and processing psychoanalytical texts in a less biased way assuming that they read them at all.

We shall continue where we have left off: with the reading. What happens when subjects process Freudian texts which are unfamiliar to them?

In the interests of operationalisation we shall consider Freud's work somewhat simplifying it so that its pieces or parts basically satisfy the criteria of a scientific product in so far as they are special texts built on contradiction-free abstract conceptual-logical thinking able to grasp universally valid, general connections (rules, trends, mechanisms). Other Freudian products or parts are, however, much closer to literary fictions, if the stress is on creating a good, interesting, believable and illuminating story, on portraying individual forms, situations and events. They are vividly dramatic, they want to go to the generalizable, literally in an exemplary: example-giving and allusive way. First we think of Freud's case stories (including *Gradiva* and *Leonardo*) and his autobiographical texts. Based on Philip Sidney, Hirsch (1984) says that the poet suggests a general principle and at the same time gives an example. Our intention is to use relatively short, but in themselves meaningful and well-understandable Freudian texts which represent both kinds of text.

Hypothesis. We suppose that the subjects, who do not know the texts and have not been instructed about their characteristics and their authors, will judge them differently according to the text-types.

METHOD

The texts. Two texts of 260-260 words represent the scientific text-type. One outlines the conscious, preconscious and unconscious psychological qualities (see *An Outline of Psychoanalysis*,

Appendix 1), the other speaks of the system of secondary elaboration of dream work (see *Totem and Taboo*, Appendix 2). The narrative- literary text-type is represented by two texts of similar length. One recalls a story of the author's childhood in relating to his father in the first person singular. The story leads him to his feelings towards Hannibal, Menasse and Napoleon (see *The Interpretation of Dream*, Appendix 3), the other describes a man's peculiar characteristics in connection with his riches (see *The Wolf Man*, Appendix 4).

Questionnaire. This consisted of five parts:

a) A list of 23 items expressing the reader's realized aims and motives. The items were used to study the reading of a novel by Kirstina and Lõrincz (1992, 21-22). The items can be clustered from the point of view of reading functions. Namely, aesthetic (item: gives me aesthetic enjoyment), conative (ítems: encourages me, fulfills my expectations, justifies my ideas, makes me think, gives me a good example, forms my view of life, gets me to act), entertaining (items: entertains me, refreshes me, relaxes me), expressive (items: calms me, cheers up, confronts me with a task, helps me frame my ideas, sets me free, shocks me), informative (items: extends my horizon, informs me, reveals some relations, works like a mirror, tells me something that is new).

b) A list of 28 items referring to the characteristics of the genre (the text) itself. The list was constructed using items which appear rather frequently in psychological studies on reception including the present author's studies. The items represent the dimensions of actor (items: eventfulness, leading protagonist), emotionality (items: empathy, excitement, interestingness, relaxation, surprise, tension, uncertainty), evocativeness (items: evocative force, imagination, richness in details, variability, elaborateness, playfulness, symbolism), nonfictionality (items: factuality, objectivity, exactness vs subjectivity), readability (items: readability, understandability), structure (items: ambiguity, complexity, openness, originality, unity, well-formedness).

As is usual in such cases, the borderlines between some categories are not well-defined and the categorization of some items is disputable. But the significance of the possibility of error was reduced by the fact that the overall frequencies of the functions were computed and if there was an item whose frequency was striking, this was emphasized and treated separately.

c) Specifying three key words of the text.

d) A list of four items specifying the «genre»: scientific work, literary narrative work, between literature and science, something else.

e) Judging the quality of the text.

Subjects. 87 well-motivated Budapest secondary-school students (52 females, 35 males) who had not yet sat their maturity examinations took part in the study.

Procedure. The study was conducted in a classroom. The experimenter informed the subjects that they were requested to take part in a psychological study the aim of which was to yield data as to how people understood different texts. The subjects had to give only their gender and age as personal data. The reading was preceded by a written instruction as follows: «Please read the text – which is a part of a greater work – carefully, if you wish, several times to try to grasp it in order to understand it as much as possible.» Each subject read two texts, one of each genre, in varied order.

The reading of the given text was followed by the questionnaires. The order of the items in the questionnaires varied. The order of the questionnaires also was changed, with a restriction: to avoid premature commitment about identification of the «genre» and the scoring always occurred at the end. The written instructions in the questionnaires (in the mentioned order) were:

a) «Here is a list of different reasons why you may read texts. Please underline those which express your opinion.»

b) «Here is a list of different traits which may characterize texts. Please underline those which express your opinion.»

c) «Specify three key words which altogether recall the point of the text as completely as it is possible. (The key words may come form the text, but you may choose them as you wish.)»

d) «Out of the ‘genres’ in the list please underline the one which is the most appropriate to the text just read.»

e) «Please judge (encircling one of the figures on a five-point scale) how well-written the text in the appropriate genre is.»

RESULTS

Reading functions. The informative function was strikingly more frequent ($p<.001$) than any other (four) functions with the expository-scientific text about the psychological qualities (hereafter expository1) and with the expository-scientific text about the dream-work (hereafter expository2) (based on analysis of variance and t test). The frequency of the conative function was higher than the other three functions ($p<.01$ or .001). According to this in the upper quartile of the items were found only the items referring to them: tells me something that is new, informs me, reveals some relations, extends my horizon and makes me think, justifies my ideas. The frequency of the conative function was higher ($p<.001$) than that of all others except the informative function, the frequency of the informative function was higher than that of the aesthetic function with the two narrative-literary texts, the frequency of the informative function was higher than that of the expressive function with the text about childhood memories (hereafter narrative1), the frequency of the entertaining function was higher than that of the aesthetic function with the other text about a man’s characteristics in connection with his wealth (hereafter narrative2) ($p<.01$ or .001). With the two narrative-literary texts one of the items of the expressive function: shocks me, two items of the conative function: gives me a good example, forms me a view of life were found in the upper quartile; at the same time the number and weight of the items of informative function were reduced.

Directly comparing the frequencies of the different texts a striking difference ($p<.001$) could be found in the informative function between the two expository-scientific and the two narrative-literary texts: this function was more characteristics of the former than the latter ones. The entertaining function was more significant with the narrative1 text than the expository1 text. If the frequencies of the two expository or the two narrative texts were reduced, the conative and the entertaining function were more significant with the narrative-literary text-(type) than with the expository-scientific text-(type), while with the latter one the informative function was remarkable ($p<.001$). (Figure 1)

Dimensions of traits. The frequency of nonfictionality was strikingly higher ($p<.001$) than that of any (another five) dimensions, that of the structure was higher than that of the other four dimensions, again the frequency of actor was lower than that of any other dimensions with the two expository-scientific texts. The items in the upper quartile were as follows: factuality, objectivity, exactness (nonfictionality), complexity, ambiguity, well-formedness (structure), interestingness (emotionality), richness in details (evocativeness). The frequency of readability was strikingly higher ($p<.001$) than that of emotionality, evocativeness and structure, that of (non)fictionality was higher than that of emotionality, evocativeness and structure with the narrative1 text. The frequency of readability was strikingly higher ($p<.001$) than that of emotionality and evocativeness, that of actor was higher than that of emotionality and evocativeness, that of structure and of nonfictionality was higher than that of evocativeness with the narrative2 text. The items in upper quartile with both texts were as follows: readability and understandability (readability), leading protagonist (actor), besides these subjectivity ([non]fictionality), empathy (emotionality), openness (structure), symbolism (evocativeness) with the narrative1 text, complexity (structure), factuality and objectivity (nonfictionality), uncertainty (emotionality) with the narrative2 text.

Directly comparing the frequencies of different texts with the frequencies of structure, readability and actor were higher with the two narrative-literary texts ($p<.05$ or .01) than with the two expository-scientific texts. The frequency of nonfictionality text was higher with the expository1

($p<.05$ or .01) than it was with either of the narrative texts, the frequency of emotionality was higher with the narrative1 text ($p<.05$) than with the expository1 text. Reducing the frequencies of the two expository text and the two narrative ones, and the dimensions of readability, emotionality and actor were significant with the narrative texts ($p<.01$). (Figure 2)

Key words. The narrative texts aroused strikingly more responses concerning different contents ($p<.001$) than the expository texts, independently of the fact that the way of presentation was direct-subjective or followed the point of view of an omniscient narrator. The subjects specified a greater number of words from the narrative texts, but a significant percentage of them did so using one particular word ($p<.01$) than from the expository texts. The consequence of the same phenomenon was that if only the words were computed which were denominated by a minimum of one-third of the subjects who read the given text, the number and the frequency of the words with expository texts were higher ($p<.001$) than with the narrative texts (Table 1).

Specifying the «genre». The decisive majority of the subjects judged both expository texts as scientific works ($p<.0001$), about one-sixth considered them between literature and science; nobody supposed them to be literary works. The decisive majority of the subjects judged the narrative1 text to be a narrative literary work ($p<.0001$), a smaller percentage of them thought of it as between literature and science, or characterized it as something else: as an autobiography, autobiographical novel or essay. In the case of the narrative2 text the ratio of the subjects who found it a narrative literary work also was decisive ($p<.001$), almost one-fifth thought of it as between literature and science and almost one-fifth specified it as something else: a literary psychological essay, a character portraying work, a reflective work (Figure 3).

Quality of the texts. The average scores of the texts were from better than middle up to nearly good on a five-point scale. The expository1 text received a higher score ($p<.01$) than the narrative2 text. The reduced average of the two expository texts also was higher ($p<.01$) than that of the narrative texts (Figure 4).

Connections between the variables. With regard to the subjects who chose the items which were at the top of the upper quartiles (the two most items most frequently underlined), we investigated which of the items they chose.

The fundamental items of the expository1 text as follows: makes me think, complexity, informs me, factuality (93-73% chose these). Each of the four items was considered an independent variable, the most frequent dependent variables were the other three items, and scientific work, reveals some relations, objectivity, extends my horizon, tells me something that is new, exactness, and some striking key words given in Table 1. (Each variable was chosen by a minimum 50% of the subjects.)

The fundamental items of the expository2 text as follows: complexity, tells me something that is new, makes me think, objectivity (68-54% chose these). Each was considered an independent variable, the most frequent dependent variables were the three other items, and scientific work, informs me, interestingness, factuality, reveals some relations, and some striking key words given in Table 1. (Each variable was chosen by a minimum 50% of the subjects.)

The fundamental items of the narrative1 text as follows: makes me think, subjectivity, readability, forms my view of life (74-30% chose these). Each was considered an independent variable, the most frequent dependent variables were the three other items, and literary narrative work, empathy, symbolism, openness, understandability, shocks me, and a lot of varied key words given in Table 1 as other. (Each variable was chosen by a minimum 33% of the subjects.)

The fundamental items of the narrative2 text as follows: makes me think, leading protagonist, complexity, shocks me (80-27% chose these). Each was considered an independent variable, the most frequent dependent variables were the three other items, and uncertainty, readability, factuality, subjectivity, literary narrative work, and a lot of varied key words given in Table 1 as other. (Each variable was chosen by a minimum 30% of the subjects.)

Anyway, there was no significant difference between the results of females and males.

FIGURE 1
Reading functions according to text-types

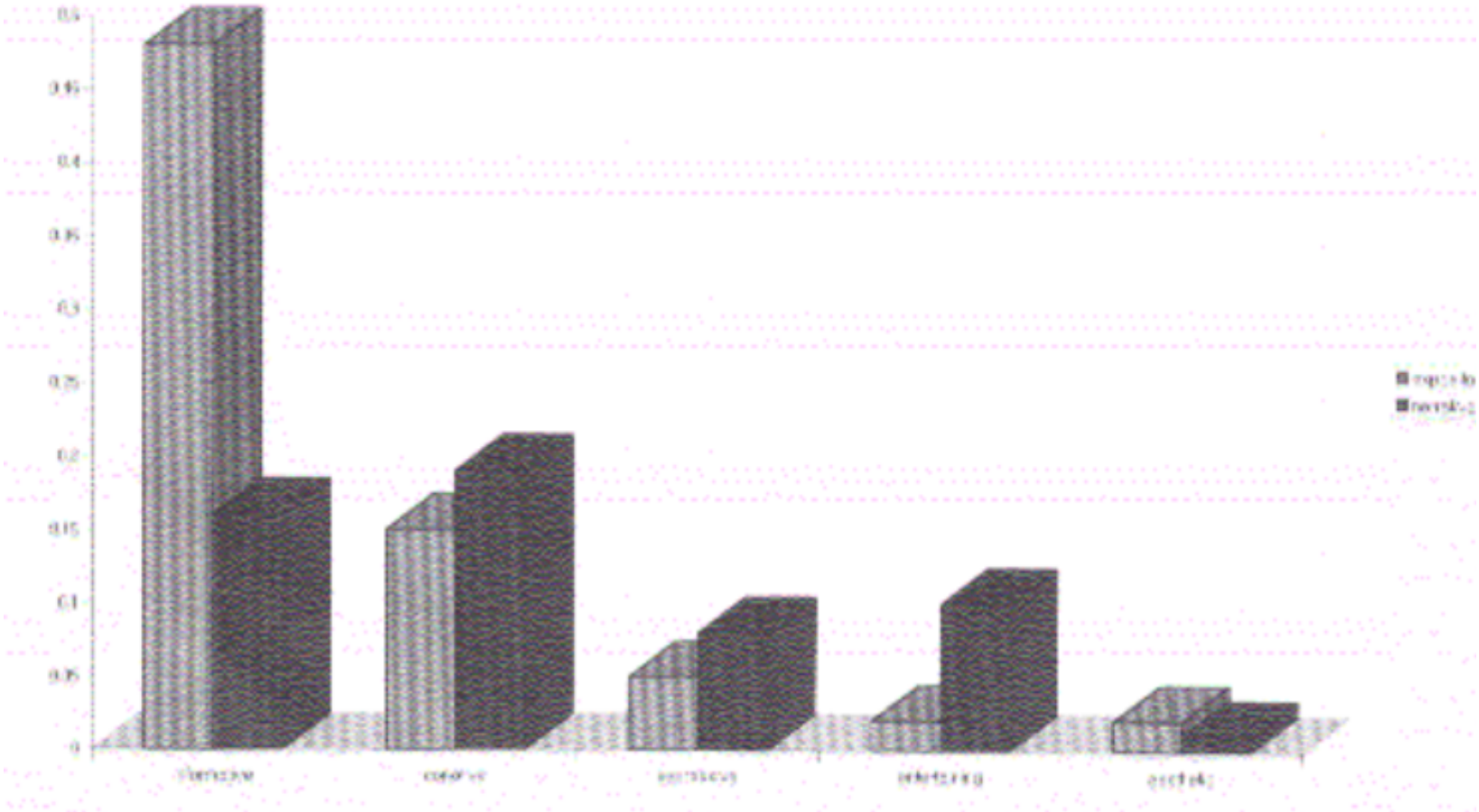

FIGURE 2
Dimension of traits according to text-types

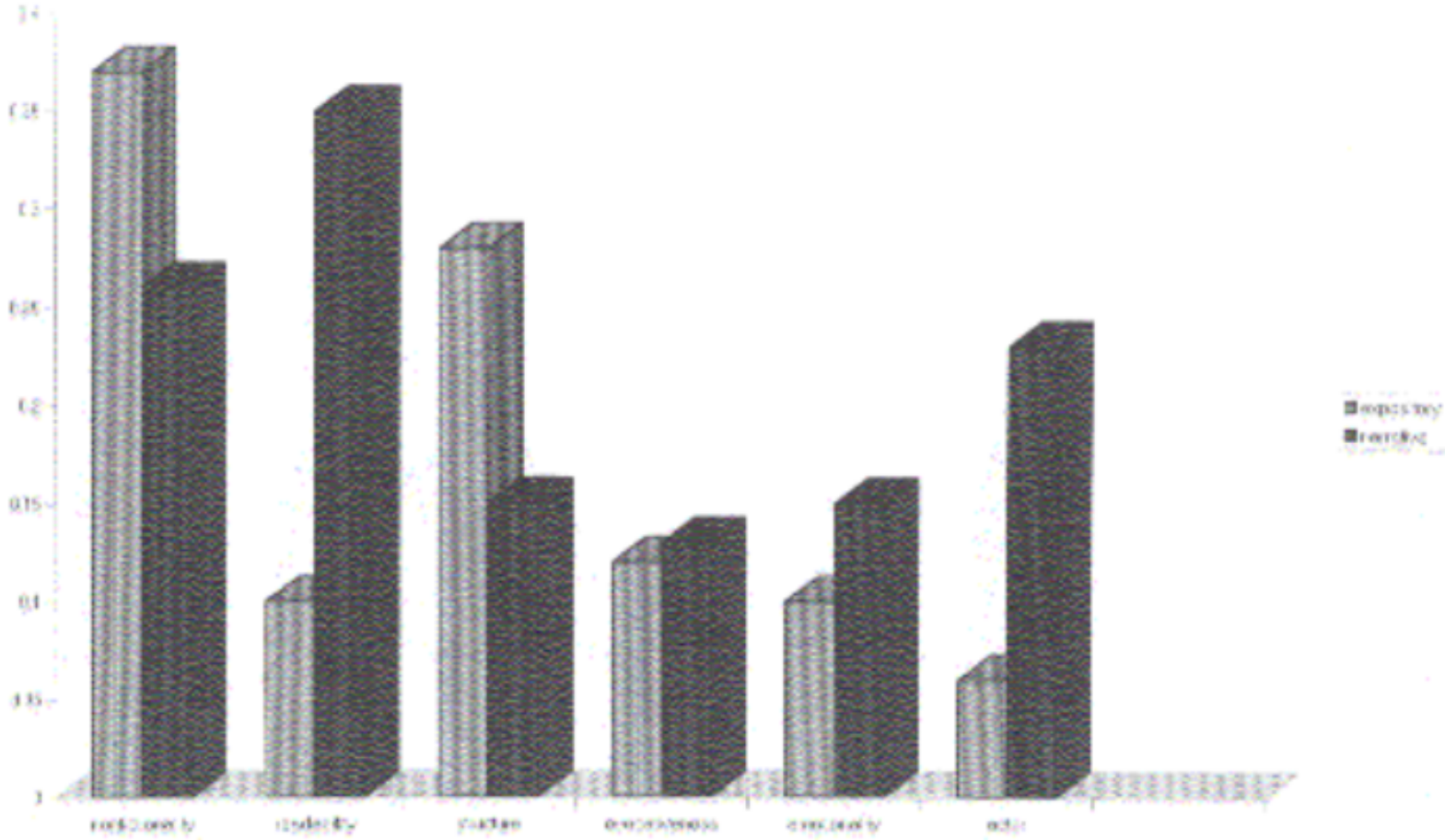

FIGURE 3
«Genre» according to texts

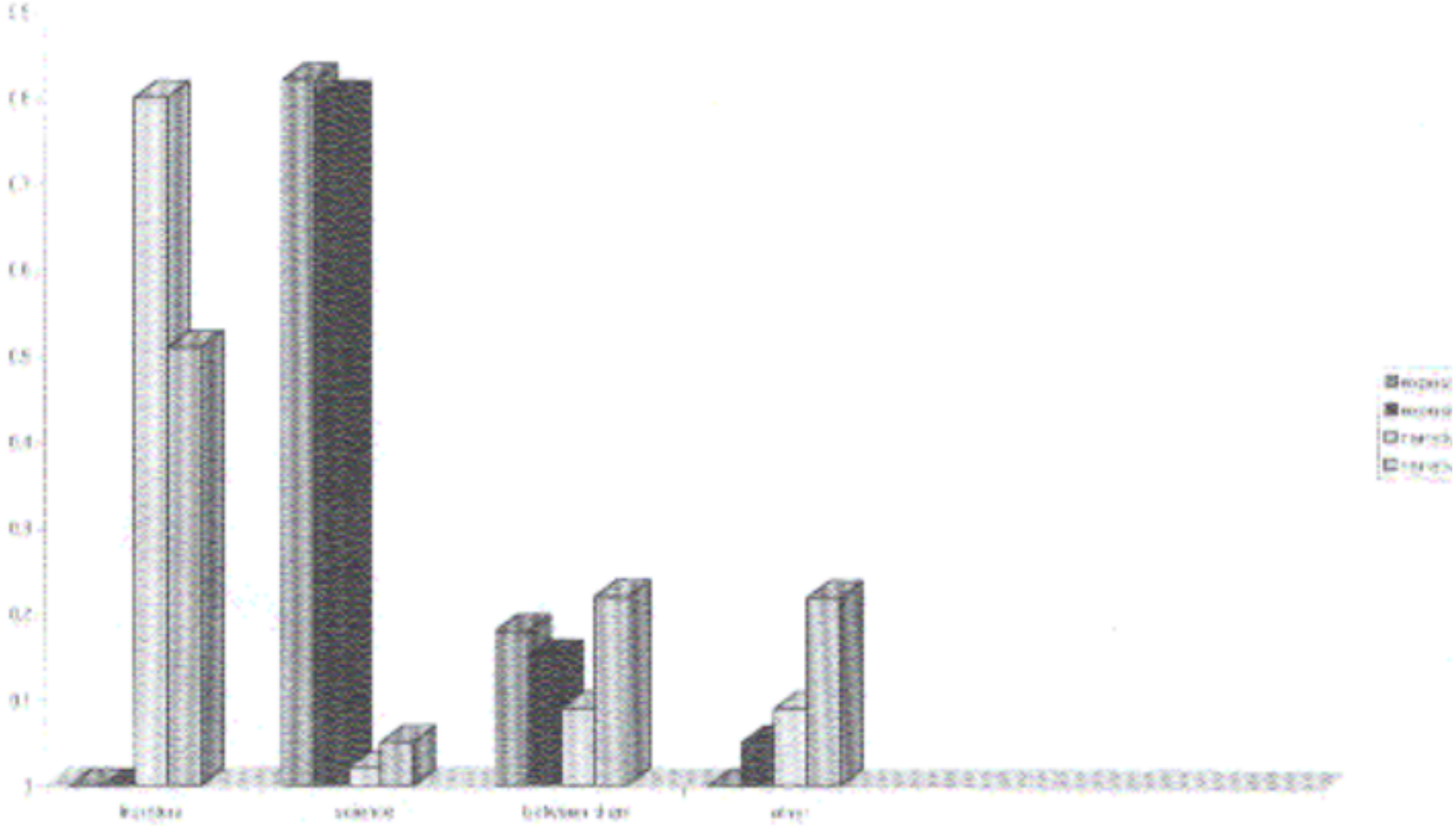

FIGURE 4
Quality of texts

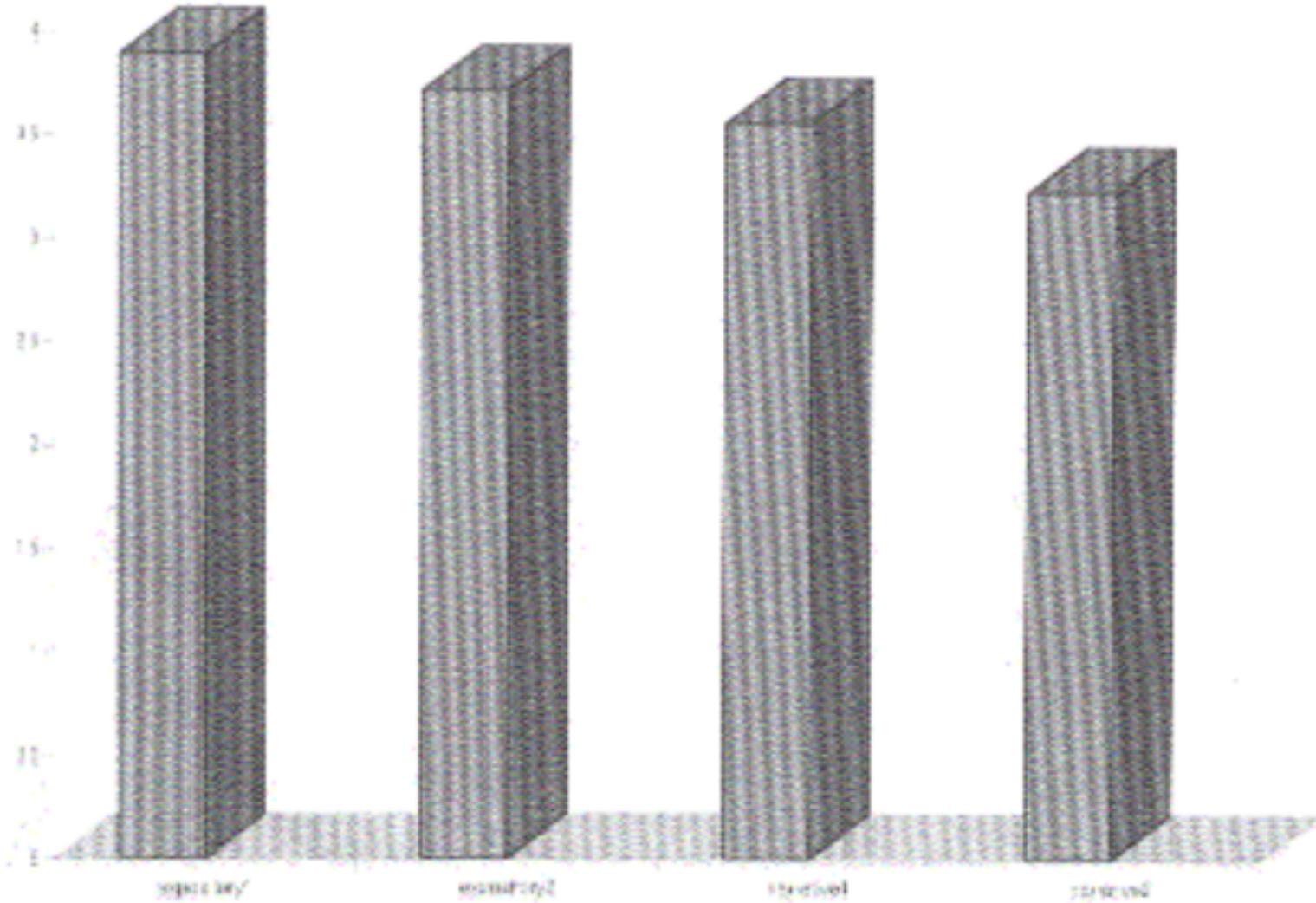

TABLE 1

The most important data relating key words

expository1	expository2	narrative1	narrative2
38%	27%	72%	63%
The proportion of specified words as compared to total words			
9%	10%	38%	32%
The number of specified words and of total frequency by a minimum one-third of the subjects			
3/85	2/51	1/17	2/32
Outstanding categories (as compared to all the responses per one key word)			
Expository1		Expository2	
conscious	43%	dream thought (-contents -interpretation -work -analysis)	80%
unconscious	64%	dream	52%
preconscious	36%	system	30%
thought	27%	secondary elaboration	20%
other	80%	intellectual function	20%
		other	60%
Narrative1		Narrative2	
ideal(s)-model	38%	money	41%
childhood memory	23%	emotional activity	36%
		wealth	27%
Jew (antisemitism)	24%	surgeons	20%
other (in all)	187%	other (in all)	178%

DISCUSSION

Despite the fact that at the beginning the subjects did not know the texts or their authors, and they did not know about our hypotheses and the selection process of the texts (in any event they were probably not interested in these), the two sorts of texts were sharply separated from each other by their responses. In accordance with these responses the texts about psychological qualities and the features of dream-work are strikingly characterized by the dominance of informative function, and of dimensions of nonfictionality. The texts about childhood memories and some traits of a protagonist are separated by conative and informative function, and by dimensions of readability, emotionality and actor. The former are primarily characterized as scientific, the latter as mostly literary narrative work.

Although the subjects judged each text to be relatively well-written, the variations judged as scientific were given even higher scores in their 'genre' than were literary works. We can therefore say that compared to the subjects' experiences about scientific works, the given texts were rather clear, or, from another side: that they expected more brilliance and more beauty from a literary text. In an earlier study by the present author (Halász, 1997), when confronted by 23 items of reading functions similar subjects were asked to underline the items they expected from a good literary work, the frequency of aesthetic function was strikingly high. And this ratio of frequency was not achieved by that of different literary texts presented in that study nor by that of the actual texts. The individual textual pattern – which was not chosen by the subjects – is necessarily not suitable as an idealtype.

The text-type judged to be scientific orientated the subjects rather surely according to the distribution of the connections between the items of reading functions, the characteristics of the texts and genre; a greater number of the subjects agreed in the identification of the dominant «genre» of the text and the variables characteristics of the text than the text-type judged to be literary narrative. The text-type judged to be scientific orientated the subjects more unambiguously to state what it was about than the text-type judged to be literary narrative according to the distribution of the frequency of key-words. In other words: the former text's readers were less divided about the essential points of the text than the latter text's readers. The consequence of the greater uncertainty was the increase of the response distribution which it can be called the freedom of interpretation as can be experienced with literary works.

The separation of the texts in accordance with our hypothesis was gradual, even if it was based on the statistically significant differences of the variables. Although the expository1 and 2 texts were obviously different from the narrative1 and 2 texts, and as compared to this the difference which separated the identical text-types from each other was secondary, this difference was not unessential in a given case. It could be seen that the literary effect of narrative1 text was more significant than that of narrative2. It is sure that Freud's oeuvre gives a wide-ranging possibility to choose the sets of text-corpuses the members of which are of an equal distance from each other along the explanatory-narrative or scientific-literary continuum. While the texts close to the two poles of the continuum are representatives of pure «genres» which are the opposite of each other, the texts around the center, be they on this side or the other, are the members of a text-family of blurred genre.

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Appendix 1

In the course of this work the distinctions which we describe as psychical qualities force themselves on our notice. There is no need to characterize what we call ‘conscious’: it is the same as the consciousness of philosophers and of everyday opinion. Everything else psychical is in our view ‘the unconscious’. We are soon led to make an important division in this unconscious. Some processes become conscious easily; they may then cease to be conscious, but can become conscious once more without any trouble: as people say, they can be reproduced or remembered. This reminds us that consciousness is in general a highly fugitive state. What is conscious is conscious only for a moment. If our perceptions do not confirm this, the contradiction is only an apparent one; it is explained by the fact that the stimuli which lead to perception may persist for considerable periods, so that meanwhile the perception of them may be repeated. The whole position is made clear in connection with the conscious perception of our thought-processes: these too may persist for some time, but they may just as well pass in a flash. Everything unconscious that behaves in this way, that can thus easily exchange the unconscious state for the conscious one, is therefore preferably described as ‘capable of becoming conscious’ or as preconscious. Experience has taught us that there is hardly a psychical process, however complicated it may be, which cannot on occasion remain preconscious, even thought as a rule it will, as we say, push its way forward into consciousness. There are other psychical processes and psychical material which have no such easy access to becoming conscious but must be inferred, recognized and translated into conscious form in the manner described. For such material we reserve the name of the unconscious proper.

Thus we have attributed three qualities to psychical processes: they are either conscious, preconscious or unconscious. The division between the three classes of material which possess these qualities is neither absolute nor permanent.

Appendix 2

Our everyday experience is capable of constantly showing us the main characteristics of the «system». We dream during the night and have learnt to interpret the dream in the daytime. The dream can, without being untrue to its nature, appeared confused and incoherent; but on the other hand it can also imitate the order of impressions of an experience, infer one occurrence from another. The dream succeeds more or less in this, but hardly every succeeds so completely that an absurdity or a gap in the structure does not appear somewhere. If we subject the dream to interpretation we find that this unstable and irregular order of its components is quite unimportant for our understanding of it. The essential part of the dream is the dream thoughts, which have, to be sure, a significant, coherent order. But their order is quite different from that which we remember: from the manifest content of the dream. The coherence of the dream thoughts has been abolished and may either remain altogether lost or can be replaced by the new coherence of the dream content. Besides the condensation of the dream elements there is almost regularly a regrouping of the same which is more or less independent of the former order. We say in conclusion, that what the dream-work has made out of the material of the dream thoughts has been subjected to a new influence, the so-called «secondary elaboration», the object of which evidently is to do away with the incoherence and incomprehensibility caused by the dream-work, in favour of a new «meaning». This new meaning which has been brought about by the secondary elaboration is no longer the meaning of the dream thoughts.

The secondary elaboration of the product of the dream-work is an excellent example of the nature an the pretensions of a system. An intellectual function in us demands the unification, coherence and comprehensibility of everything perceived and thought of, and does not hesitate to construct a false connection if, as a result of special circumstances, it cannot grasp the right one.

Appendix 3

I may have been ten or twelve old, when my father began to take me with him on his walk and reveal to me in his talk his views upon things in the world we live. Thus it was, on one such occasion, that he told me a story to show me how much better things were now than they had been in his days. 'When I was a young man', he said, 'I went for a walk one Saturday in the streets of your birthplace; I was well dressed, and had a new fur cap on my head. A Christian came up to me and with a single blow knocked of my cap into the mud and shouted: "Jew! get off the pavement!"' 'And did you do?' I asked. 'I went into the roadway and picked up my cap', was his quite reply. This stuck me as unheroic conduct on the part of the big, strong man who was holding the little boy by the hand. I contrasted this situation with another which fitted my feelings better: the scene in which Hannibal's father, Hamilcar Barcas, made his boy swear before the household altar to take vengeance on the Romans. Ever since that time Hannibal had had a place in my phantasies.

I believe I can trace my enthusiasm for the Carthaginian general a step further back into my childhood; so that once more it would only have been a question of a transference of an already formed emotional relation on to a new object. One of the first books that I got hold when I had learnt to read was Thiers' history of the Consulate and Empire. I can still remember sticking labels on the flat backs of my wooden soldiers with the names of Napoleon's marshals written on them. And at that time my declared favourite was already Masséna (or to give the name its Jewish form, Manasseh). (No doubt this preference was also partly to be explained by the fact that my birthday fell on the same day as his, exactly a hundred years later.) Napoleon himself lines up with Hannibal owing to their both having crossed the Alps. It may even be that the development of this material ideal is traceable still further back into my childhood: to the times when, at the age of three, I as in a close relation, sometimes friendly but sometimes warlike, with a boy a year older than myself, and to the wishes which that relation must have stirred up in the weaker of the two playfellows.

Appendix 4

He had become very rich through legacies from his father and uncle; it was obvious that he attached great importance to being taken for rich, and he was liable to feel very much hurt if he was under-valued in this respect. But he had no idea how much he possessed, what his expenditure was, or what balance was left over. It was hard to say whether he ought to be called a mister or a spend-thrift. He behaved now in his way and mow in that, but never in a way that seemed to show any consistent intention. Some striking traits, which I shall further discuss below, might have led one to regard him as a hardened plutocrat, who considered his wealth as his greatest personal advantage, and who would never for a moment allow emotional interest to weigh against pecuniary ones. Yet he did not value other people by their wealth, and, on the contrary, showed himself on many occasions unassuming, helpful, and charitable. Money, in fact, had been withdrawn from his conscious control, and meant for him something quite different.

I viewed with grave suspicion the way in which he consoled himself for the loss of his sister, who had become his closest companion during her latter years, with the reflection that now he would not have to share his parent's inheritance with her. But what was perhaps even more striking was the calmness with which he was able to relate this, as thought he had no comprehension of the coarseness of feeling to which he was thus confessing. It is true that analysis rehabilitated him by showing that his grief for his sister had merely undergone a displacement; but it then became quite inexplicable why he should have tried to find a substitute for his sister in an increase of wealth.

He himself was puzzled by his behaviour in another connection. After his father's death the property that was left was divided between him and his mother. His mother administered it, and, as he himself admitted, met his pecuniary claims irreproachably and liberally. Yet every discussion of money matters that took place between them used to end with the most violent reproaches on his side, to the effect that she did not love him.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 27-34

Between internal experience and artistic form

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The motto of my paper is the practice of narration.

I recall my great enthusiasm when I first approached the topic formulated in such a way. Mainly because it had a refreshing effect on my imagination and fanned my readiness to study such a fascinating topic. Namely I fancied the ease, all that lightness of existence at the moment when beginning with – never mind its obscurity – the personal writing experience on the one side and interpretative writing on the other – both of which I will saturate with generalising thought to such a degree that ultimately my own theory will hatch and develop. Without embarrassment the theory will be revealed in public today.

The idea seemed so interesting that I decided not to do a thing but wait patiently until it reached a certain criticality and forced its way through a barrier, making a leap into the domain of full realisation. Most important is not to force oneself, not to press your mind, let it mature slowly. When one has such an approach to the world, time takes a backseat to thought processes. Every now and then, especially at the initial phase, when the conference is far away, we often wonder if it is passing at all. Rather, it trickles. Only later does it gather momentum and seize us, and to our despair carries us off on the back of a furious foaming wave.

The day when I received the program of the conference I labelled it, in panic, black Monday. For the whole afternoon I felt on my skin the bitterness of a suddenly narrowed consciousness. I would not be able to do anything for the next two weeks and surely I would not manage to crystallise my personal theory of narrative! In my heavy and empty head the thought that I must borrow a theory from someone else kept ringing. And if such a theory turned out to be inexpensive enough I would simply buy it and at last have it as my own to be used to my heart's content.

I knocked at my neighbour's door so lightly that he hardly heard me. Frankly speaking, it's good that he heard it at all. On a daily basis he is extremely thrifty and I myself like that kind of person. I sometimes even adore them.

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I wheedled, let me count, an astonishing sum out of him, which made my knees bend. I wish everyone could have such a thrifty and at the same time generous neighbour. Naturally, most of all, I wish such a neighbour on myself throughout the whole life and all of eternity. Will you pay me back? He didn't exactly say but rather whispered. Pay me back, and he pondered here, when you have completed and returned the paper. But don't even try to play any tricks or you will end up in prison.

With a cellular phone I called a baggage taxi and we immediately set off to the centre where the bookstores crowd themselves and where the libraries are moribund. To get some fresh air we headed to the outskirts of the city and then further and still further toward the suburbs, toward the deluded civilisation where country folk live enclosed by crumbling fences, where toothless faces smile, and where one may spend the night under a night sky full of holes from under a ceiling full of holes. I am not going further, the driver of the baggage taxi said stubbornly. And when I asked why, why and once again why, he had no choice but to think it over. Don't you see that there is a deep hole in this world?! If you want to fall into it, feel free; I'm going back to the big city. But the books. I must unpack the whole theory but just show me where. Maybe here on the grass margin or maybe here under this juniper? Surely not out in the open field?

I waited a moment on the grass margin under the shade of a pine – for it was not juniper. My studies of the narrative theory did not go well, so at once we set off, as it turned out, on our journey back. He was silent, although not long ago he had came back from America and still had it in his veins. He had all the herrings he had fished for until the day he fainted. He had fainted because of a dream he'd unluckily had which turned out to be a nightmare. His colleagues took him for a fish, filleted him, and canned him.

I paid the fare and hid in my study to finally complete the paper. I had a ton of distinguished works, domestic as well as foreign. I sat down in an armchair. I was very comfortable, but nothing, literally nothing, came to me. The moment I reached for an author all I could see was the can and the taxi driver inside it.

Such a view does not pique one's appetite, so for hours I did not eat but only sat with a distaste that grew and touched upon abhorrence and disgust toward entire whole world. I did not want to see anyone. At that moment, on the horizon, appeared Adam, a computer scientist by profession and by birth my patient whom I had not seen for at least a year because he'd fallen away from psychoanalysis, but not abruptly. On the contrary, he'd mildly suspended it, explaining that with every unpaid session he was running into debt and felt bad because of the shame typical of the debt-ridden, the victim of a long, and let us hope not chronic, unemployment. To all of these adversities one more was joined – love, love and again love. He came back to me because he was possessed by this feeling. He is thirty years old, but has fallen in love for the first time in his life. And not with Martha his wife of four years, but with Eva her friend from work. He can't eat, he can't sleep, he has lost thirty kilos and is continually crying so, that his pockets are full of tears.

With a tremor in his voice he repeated several times how much he had wanted to come to me that day because he himself is not capable of coping with this strange and terrible story.

I was sitting on a chair and with will power desired to achieve maximum concentration of attention. However, it was hard to gather my thoughts in the tension that developed.

Suddenly I felt I started clutching at the story that Adam called strange and terrible. A light flashed in my head, something like a suspicion that the patient, by giving an account of a terrible event, in fact intends to arouse his analyst's acceptance, affection and maybe even admiration.

I waited yet another moment until my interpretation had ripened and at last asked gently if he hadn't come here only to tell me that strange events happen to exceptional people.

This short interpretation exhausted me to such an extent that I moved to the armchair to rest. I deluded myself that I had hit the nail on the head. Meanwhile, my idea caused my tension, rather than decreasing or disappearing, to rise even further. I felt my forehead, which was instantly covered with sweat. Now I had no doubt that the patient felt attacked and wounded by the suggestion, the insinuation that he had came to me to look for admiration. Furthermore, I had given him a reason for taking my comment as a sign of disrespect. Thus, I made a mistake, a major

mistake! For if he had fallen in love for the first time in his life, without having any point of reference, he couldn't know how to react. And therefore he has the full right to look at his feeling with fright, as if at a nightmare, but also with the fascination connected with his admiration of Eva, his surrender to her charms - simply a pleasant idealisation.

With a sudden influx of hope, I thought that I desperately needed to discover the motive that lay at the root of this disrespect because otherwise I would not forgive myself the mistake I had made. Therefore, I intensified my self-consciousness but without success. I was unable to track down anything except intuition.

So I returned to my chair.

Till now it had always pleasantly cooled me but was beginning to burn me with an intensifying strength.

I remained motionless but the heat started to be unbearable. And I thought, this is the end of me because I am sitting on an electric chair.

Now I had my last request. Without hurry I would smoke my last cigarette. Two women and a man were the executioners who openly entered my study, I could even recognise them.

I was relishing my last cigarette and they, in a flash, put the electrodes on me – forehead, feet and wrists.

They are smiling and are waiting. The moment I spit out or swallow my cigarette-butt, the electrodes will be connected to high voltage electrical current. The moment my body starts to smoulder, the two women will unveil their faces and maybe kiss me coldly goodbye.

I was possessed by feelings; suddenly I heard Adam's voice. The feelings were so intense that I had no idea how to cope with them.

Silence set in, a silence overflowing with helplessness, his helplessness and mine. Both of us had lockjaw and in the growing pause we lacked words. Not silence but conversation only could break the halt, this intensifying tension, now practically unbearable.

He, but also me, we two, were in a desperate situation. Could this, indeed, have been his aim? Nothing paralyses us more than love on one side and death in the electric chair on the other. Both of us were on the edge, experiencing the dark line, a turgid pause, an interminable break. Neither he nor I existed anymore in this world; we were absorbed by the abyss, a bottomless chasm. But in spite of all that, he set his hopes on me, had connected some illusions with my person. So I had to, by sheer willpower, strike some sparks from myself, which would be a word or at least the shadow of speech.

First I coughed giving out a coarse, bestial grunt. But in my inner thoughts I clung to the hope so hard that I felt certainty that the vision of the electric chair would disappear completely along with the panic connected with my death sentence. A brave smile appeared on my face, which usually has a cowardly expression. It was with this smile that I openly outdistanced myself from the turbulent emotions that constantly overpowered my patient. At the moment he did not have such skill at his disposal but aspired to it. He imagined me as a strong man, tempered by love and death. Adam coming to me had more or less consciously believed that I would enable him to adopt my mastery, this magical art of distancing oneself from the feelings which enslave us.

I coughed again and transferred my inner monologue into an external one; expressed in such a refined style that the patient had nothing himself to add. The second possibility is such that all the stigma contained in the living word he simply ignored – because it had been addressed directly to him but was not his property.

On Monday I met Eva and from that day on she became my woman. He began in a manner to rivet my attention, which in fact was divided, but at the same time full of suspicion. I did not interrupt him; let him talk, let him spin his yarns (or his narration). I was simply enchanted by it. Along with it I was experiencing love.

No, I will not interrupt him, let him speak.

At her side I opened up to a greater degree as than ever before with a woman. And she also opened up before me.

He kept on speaking and I nodded my head to express that I understood him perfectly. Of course, I nodded, allowing room for future growth because I know that one is incapable of fully understanding another person, especially a patient. Therefore, if I gave a sign of assent on one side and a sign of dissent on the other because I doubted – what could all this mean? Well, nothing less than that in the face of his story of his love for Eva I became barely critical, point-blank naive. It was very enjoyable to hear that women's ideals, boundlessly noble, characterised by all-embracing indulgence, exist, in spite of all complications, in this world – simple as the sunny weather.

Just a moment Adam, wait, because I have the impression that all this that you are experiencing entirely fits the expression: a new beginning. It is a fact that you have come back to psychoanalysis after a long break, as if you are starting it anew. You are not telling me about Martha, your wife of four years, but about a couple of weeks' or a couple of months' relationship with Eva. It is she with whom you fell in love. Therefore we have a case of new love. In addition, you have the impression that you have never opened up before to anyone as you have in front of her and now in front of me. Maybe you have summoned up enough courage for this act of sincerity not without reason. You may have assumed or felt that we are not a threat to you. Neither Eva nor I will condemn your feelings, nor criticise your conduct. If so, than on the contrary, we will admire you. Anyhow you are counting on our friendly attitude and acceptance.

Adam reacted instantly.

Yes, but Eva had said, she did not want to hurt anyone. Bad luck had it that she is Martha's friend from work. She will not allow someone to suffer because of her. So I utterly do not know what I should do. Because Eva is my dream and I am hers. But Martha also says that she loves me. And that she fell in love with me the moment she saw me in church, and this was a few months before our wedding.

I felt that I should not exploit the church element, but I could not resist the opportunity.

Hence I started with the very simple: in church, you say? At once I dragged the church into an assumption – as a matter of fact the deep conviction – that Adam, my miserable patient, may associate Martha with conscience, with a sense of guilt, in general with inhibition and a paralysing condemnation. It is because of the church, because of the grandmother, mother, aunt, and now because of his wife that he is so well-bred, so well-mannered for the sake of appearances, with tears in his eyes and constant shame in his hands. When he walks even on a deserted street he is not a male but a priest, an altar-boy with bent head and knees. He even runs with his knees bent. And when he is to protest, he first unnoticeably makes the sign of the cross and through his gaze asks for forgiveness, to consign his readiness to rebel to oblivion.

I looked into the mirror by accident and to my amazement I noticed my hands clenched into fists. But why? For what reason? At first I thought it a natural reaction to the sound of a bell which began tolling at the nearby church.

It tolled and I sank into my armchair and listened intently to the melodious sounds. And I felt in me a growing joyous anxiety. And the conviction that it was no coincidence that I so easily visualised the figure of Adam, putting him in a rather dim light. After all it was me who was to become a missionary! It was me who was to learn the magical art of kneeling-while-running before God who supposedly is everywhere! And now when I hear a church bell I clench my fists and unconsciously revolt against the Lord on High. For this rebellion I pay a high price again and again, which is a sense of guilt, qualms of conscience, a lack of metaphysical concentration - on the whole, the lack of a deeper, multidimensional existence. All my worry boils down to one thing: not to fall while skimming over the surface of the world. Time flies relentlessly and I am sitting here in this armchair doing nothing, literally nothing. Some create theories, others are passionately involved in practice. And me? I just wait and wait and am not bored at all. It is precisely this thread I do not comprehend. I should be bored to death, yet here I am happy and joyous although I feel that in a minute, if not in a minute then in an hour, in a week at the latest, I will drop to the very bottom.

To the very bottom, to the very bottom, I repeat to myself and at the same time I ponder: to whom does this suicidal wish belong – to me or to Adam or maybe to both of us? Or maybe to

someone who constantly reflects over whether he has the right to make a public appearance in the form of a lecture that will contain his doubts: is it worth continuing this existence on this sick planet, under a sick sun, under a musty moon, under blind stars unable to show me the Milky Way or any other way?

I returned to the chair again to get close to the patient.

Suddenly I confessed to her what was happening to me. I cry or I am sad. I cuddled against her and she said she fell in love with me in those tears. So somehow she cares about me.

Listen Adam, the college and I are much the same. A year ago you were employed part time in our dean's office and recently also part time in the rector's office. In addition I accepted you for the analysis post. Marta fell in love with you again and as to Eva, you are her dream. (I thought to myself: life is beautiful.) Anyhow, Adam, you may treat all these events as an explosion of happiness, an eruption of personal success. You may even think that all of us have your well-being at heart, but you may also wonder whether you have not exaggerated somewhat in your greed. Maybe one of the part time jobs is just too much?

I was waiting for him to associate the part time job with Eva, but I did not live to see it. Eva was the very breath of Adam's life. Eva and once again Eva.

But the day before yesterday I returned home and a feeling of emptiness swept over me.

Following the word emptiness a pause followed, a rupture so gigantic appeared that I thought that I would die in sorrow of sorrow. I am making him aware of greed and he in return shoots at me with emptiness. And hollows me out, makes me helpless. Emptiness is contagious as cholera, as plague. To have a patient with emptiness, God forbid! Although on the other hand, without Eva he has to feel just as he feels now. The case is extremely complicated and becomes even more complicated. I do not know if I'll be able to cope with it. Obviously I'll do my best.

Just a moment, just a moment. Where did we stop? Oh, yes, Adam, you are trying to tell me that you have thrown Martha from your heart and invited Eva there?

Yes, exactly.

Just a moment, just a moment. Adam, are you trying to say that there is not enough room for both of them?

Well, well! And Adam heaved a sigh of relief. Only yesterday I thought it would be possible to reconcile them. Therefore I confessed, that is, I suggested that Martha could allow me to meet Eva as my friend.

«As my friend», I repeated in his tone and then in my own tone, so the patient would notice the difference between his position and mine.

Yes, yes, he responded, I confessed all this to inform Martha that she must allow me, that is, must agree that Eva be my friend. That we could meet one another, see one another. But why see Eva everyday? It's straight as a poker. Because I can't live without seeing her for at least an hour a day. I can't, I can't.

«Can't live», I repeated modestly because I couldn't afford interpretative extravagance. I preferred to listen instead of playing the wit. What does knowledge mean compared to a man madly in love?! Adam is wise in his madness. Long live love! Long live love! Let a man go wild with feeling that subordinates him to itself! It's better to die than to live in a void! I felt I was overacting, but I liked the feeling.

In exchange I promise Martha not to deceive her as my wife. I just want to be near Eva. But Martha shouted out: then this is a divorce! This is a divorce! And she phoned my parents informing them that I wanted to divorce her. So I wonder does she love me so much or is she afraid to be alone? I began to explain to her that we are going through a crisis and she agreed. She acknowledged that crisis builds and strengthens our marriage. We were to have a party over at our place and Eva was invited, but Martha cancelled it.

Martha cancelled it, I repeated deliberately. Still, Adam, the question rises: Why have you told her about Eva in the first place? And because he kept on thinking and thinking, I added: Maybe you wanted to open up toward her in the way you have done with Eva and me?

After considering it for a moment, he said, I thought if told her about Eva and she accepted it, it would be easier for me to stay with my sweetheart. But I see now that she has not accepted Eva.

Adam, you may think of me in a similar way, that I also do not accept Eva and I also do not accept you.

In any case, today is Friday, so tell me how I will survive without Eva till Monday.

That's at least two days, I said with grave seriousness, but it was obviously by a way of joke.

I will die without her, and Adam violently burst into tears, just like a child. I have to confess whole-heartedly that Eva is an extraordinary woman.

But do you know Adam why she is so extraordinary? Because neither she nor I criticise you; on the contrary, we accept your behaviour, your feelings, your thoughts and fantasies. And at last you can be yourself.

It's true, the patient agreed. She doesn't force anything on me. At last I can be myself. She doesn't wear a mask. I do not have to make any effort as is the case with Martha who constantly demands something from me, to behave myself, to play-act in life as an actor on the stage. I will give you an example. There was a guy at Eva's party. And suddenly he didn't know if he should stay or leave. So he asked her, awaiting an answer. And guess what Eva said? It is not my question, friend, but yours. And Arpado left, left at once. He didn't even shut the door behind himself.

And Adam demonstrated Arpado's departure. A sudden exit, but at once full of painful reluctance, infinite hesitation. Meanwhile, in my mind, the boy blended with my patient to such an extent that he began to symbolise him. This is exactly him, Adam, who doesn't know if he should leave Eva or stay at her place, stay at the party or go back home where Martha is waiting for him. But the sweetheart says: that's your problem, not mine. And saying this she refers him to his adulthood, which should assist him in the decision making.

Think or say whatever you want, but she has no features of adulteration. She is so healthy. Eva has healthy parents. She loves me and I love her.

I was silent but still I had my own interpretation. Adam in his idealisation has gone too far and constructed a healthy genealogy, has hastily created an ideology. Her parents were faultlessly healthy and Martha's conjecturally – were of poor health. And as a result his parents were and still are exceptionally healthy.

If we had met in a different situation – only her, in other circumstances – only her, in another time – only her, all the time – only her. Only her, but what about me? I don't know what to do. I don't want to lose this love, bury it, but on the other hand I do not want to destroy my marriage because maybe the fascination will pass in a week and my feelings within a month. I don't know when I will be better off. Then when I chase after a dream or self-love? Or when I give it up?

After self-love, I repeated his word but Adam did not hear my voice, which emphasised the conflict in which he had entangled himself. In his heart he was beside Eva, in his mind and reason or maybe just common calculation – beside Martha. It was a stereotypical but at the same time acute conflict between love and conscience. At times he felt the conscience in himself and at other times Eva felt it for him. The moment of harm was delegated to the woman attracted by Adam's love, but it was she who foremost listened to her conscience and its recommendations not to hurt anyone. Besides this, Adam was not convinced as to the fruit of intention – he would hurt someone, but would it bring any results? It might turn out that he would be left with empty hands.

Suddenly before my eyes I saw a crying Martha and I felt sorry for her. I wanted to say that Adam was hurting her with his love for Eva, but I restrained myself. If I reveal that he is hurting his wife I will instantly be on the side of the severe, condemning superego. I will jump out of the tracksuit and jump into a monk's frock or a cassock and become a missionary or a priest who thunders forth from the pulpit and threatens of hell. Meanwhile Adam was on fire with his inner conflict.

If I give up love what awaits me? A wretched existence with Martha, emptiness. I want to shift the closeness, the feeling which I have for Eva toward Martha but without result. I don't know

how to behave. I don't know because this has happened to me for the first time in my life. I have never been in love before. We mutually declared our love, but I see now that it was an illusion. I only love Eva. I can't live without her. I don't want to behave like a fool and give up love only because society wants me build a family since I got married.

Suddenly I imagined this arrangement: Adam on one side, and me, Martha, citizens, society, the whole nation, and the humanity of the universe on the other. All of us unanimously ignore his love for Eva and demand his renunciation of Eva in the name of higher but ultimately soulless purposes. He is furious but also full of determination that he will not surrender to the pressure of herd expectations to give birth to children and bring them up to be more or less respectable inhabitants of Earth. Let the nation reproduce and develop without me.

Do you mean to say Adam that you do not intend to have children?

But I do want to impregnate Eva and have children with her, he replied quickly and with relief. The most important thing is that she is a good person. And do you know why? Because she doesn't force anything on me. I will have children with her – good; I will not – also good. I met her not long ago, just half a year ago. What a babe, I thought to myself once or twice, and invited her to a pub. We drank beer, which was cold, and the music was hot, hence I bent over her chair and stated how very close she was to me. I couldn't be sincere and open with Martha, but with Eva – yes. I have never told anyone so much about myself, neither has she. Anyway I treated myself to an irresolvable situation. I tell Martha that Eva is close to me. I do not say that I love her but only that I want to be close to her. And she, can you guess her reaction? That I am babbling like an insane person and that she doesn't understand me. That I am an egoist because I am breaking away from marriage, which is most important. Maybe my longing for a love with Eva exploded so suddenly because I have never experienced such feelings with Martha. We said to one another: what is love, nobody knows exactly. The most important thing is work, her job, mine. If we get married it will be beneficial for both of us. She will do something for me, I will do something for her. We will supplement and support one another. Everyone has virtues and weaknesses, shortcomings, defects.

Do you want to tell me Adam that Eva also has some insufficiencies? And that she has a sufficient number of them?

I burst out laughing at my awkward play on words. I had resorted to it not without a particular intention. Namely I desired to facilitate Adam's entrance into transition. Let him attack me; after all it is obvious that I am not an ideal parental figure. I do not provide a model for a loving father, rather the opposite. At last, human, you have an exceptional occasion to reach my weakness. And I admit that I am a frail creature although I give the impression of forged steel. If only you summon up enough courage, you will be able to break me in half, just like a bar of chocolate and eat it, you glutton! Remember however that you can only devour half; the other half you are to keep for other patients, giving it to them. This is what relinquishment is.

He was still silent. In spite of that, I thought to myself that I had hit the nail on the head with that play on words. I comforted myself that very soon I would be hearing a litany of my weaknesses and a list of Eva's defects.

Time flowed irrevocably and he did not say a word. Even a trivial word. Eva remained ideal, me too. He was in love with her and also with me because he thought that neither she nor I would demand anything from him. Just as he wanted to be with Eva for an hour a day he also wanted to be with me; obviously not paying for the session. At that moment I should have said to him: You come to me, you pay. If I allowed him not to pay I would confuse him. Instead of helping him I would impede his understanding of human interrelations, relationships in general. Precisely those ties take place on the principle of give and take, laws and obligations.

And although I did not demand payment my horizon cleared up. I felt that I was holding Adam in my hand at the moment when I came to the conclusion that he was taking advantage of me, making a fool of me. Suddenly I thought this not a problem of lack of money but frail love. If he loved psychoanalysis more he would get the money, would constrain himself to some sacrifices

because love is also repudiation. For example he could give up some meat dishes which are unhealthy and fattening on a daily basis. If he loved Martha more it would be easier for him to cope with his marriage crisis. Meanwhile even before he feels unwell with her, he has started to behave as if life with his wife is unbearable and as a result escapes to Eva because she «understands» him and does not expect anything from him. Now he «loves» Eva. She is to me (and he says it as if he were hypnotised), she is to me a crystallised form of love. If he loves her so much, why is he afraid at the same time that this love may turn out to be an illusion? If he involved himself more in the relationship he would probably be more self-confident. Maybe the whole difficulty, his whole problem, boils down to the fact that he is not able to love truly because he is unable to involve himself in the relationship fully.

I felt my head exploding due to all my deliberation and felt myself slipping into a sort of vicious circle but I couldn't stop thinking, I couldn't cease attempting to pierce the essence of Adam's love.

So I have him in my hand or maybe it is he who holds me? Let us assume that I am holding him but lightly so he is able to slip away and fall onto the couch where he lies and mumbles.

Crows, ravens, pigeons, bats, owls.

Crows, pigeons, owls?

Adam replies: I say these things to salute free association.

He burst out laughing and I thought that in my patient two opposing tendencies were finding expression. The first one by common understanding is considered to be virtuous and socially desirable, the second on the other hand is censured and outright condemned. On the one hand Adam wants to be an adult – procreate, have children, in other words, wants to create. On the other hand he dreams of life without obligations, wants to live jauntily on this world as long as possible, to be free as the birds which he mentioned in his short eruption of free association.

I burst out laughing, he said in a doleful tone, but I am sad, I feel hopeless.

He turned from side to side and was waiting, full of tension. I felt how hard it was for him, perhaps as hard as it had never been before. I knew that he longed for comfort but I was also convinced that with the sorrow that he spread around the room he wanted to manoeuvre me into lamenting over him, into compassion.

Oh, how poor you are, how rejected you are.

Just a moment, poor because rejected? After all, Adam did not say that he was rejected! It was I who interpreted it in this way. It was I who made the associations – his sadness caused by the rejection of his love. It was he who first rejected, it was he who betrayed and who is now afraid that he will be as alone as the pine at the grass margin where I sat down to study the theory of narration with the firm hope of writing a fascinating paper for a very serious conference. To tell the truth it is me who deserves mercy.

Minutes passed and I still listened with one ear while it passed out the other instantly, so I do not even have a line of written text. The worst thing is that I am unable to do two things at once. Even worse is that until now I have been convinced that it was the opposite with me and that my attention could be effectively divided. Now it turns out that I don't have the skill to do so. If I did, nothing would stand in my way to carry out two activities at the same time: to analyse Adam and simultaneously write the paper for the conference then relentlessly approaching.

And how is it with me? Not only is it bad, it is so disastrous that it couldn't be worse. When listening to Adam, I completely forget the paper. When thinking about the paper, Adam disappears. To make a long story short, I feel rejected by my cognitive powers. To make it yet shorter, my own mind has betrayed me. Until now I respected it so much! Anyway, it has let me down. The power of my mind is only an illusion, an irritating deception. If it weren't for the paper I would live in peace, in the sweet conviction that I am able to carry out numerous actions simultaneously. But now it turns out that my mind has burst like a colourful soap bubble. Damned paper. Damned conference!

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 35-42

Frieda Fromm-Reichmann: A psycho-historical retrospective

MAX DAY (*)

Frieda Fromm-Reichmann grew to be a magnetic teacher in the field of psychiatry and a powerful force in the psychoanalytic psychotherapy of psychoses. She developed her ideas about this field first in Germany and then in the United States at Chestnut Lodge, Maryland, where she spent the last twenty-two years of her life, between 1935, and April 28, 1957. This is an attempt to summarize what is known of her personal development, given her Orthodox Jewish background, the dynamics of her family, the German approaches to child-rearing, the relationship with her mother and father, the parental mistreatment of her «ugly» sister, Grete, and how these factors determined her growth in this field.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Frieda Reichmann was born on October 23, 1889 in Karlsruhe. Her parents were good bourgeois of modest means. Her father traced his family back three hundred years to the 16th century. His grandfather, Seligman Feuchtwanger, born in 1786, was a silver merchant and had a wife, Fanny Wassermann, who bore him eighteen children. Their daily life was one of simplicity and modesty with a love for learning. As soon as Seligman had earned enough to take care of the needs of his family for the day, he politely turned away all customers and devoted himself to studying the Talmud. Frieda's father, Adolph, was one of Seligman's 93 grandchildren. Her mother, Klara Simon Reichmann, was one of eleven children.

Frieda was born just about nine months after her parents married. She weighed eight and one half pounds, was blue-eyed, fair-skinned and healthy. They could afford a maid to care for their children only because her mother worked as a cashier in the husband's business. The father's heart lay in his passion for literature and music – the modern version of his grandfather's study of the Talmud. He resented having had to stop his studies to go to work to support his mother and sibs when his father

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died and he was young. Klara, sharing his interest in classics and music, had been trained as a teacher with no hope for a future in that field. Her only respectable course was to marry. She felt it was «terrible» that women were forced into marriage. Yet she insisted that she loved her husband and valued the life she shared with him. In fact, they had their mutual marital disappointments and used their children to compensate for their deficits.

Klara was interested in politics. She was a powerful swimmer but gave it up at the age of eighty, because she felt it unseemly to continue to swim after that age. She allegedly swam across the Rhine once fully clothed. Her family life was less satisfying. She insisted their children would be musical. In this regard she had her way with the second daughter, Grete, whom she otherwise looked down on. Klara was energetic, had a wit and was clearly the more powerful member of the couple. Adolph adored her and deferred to her. She called him «Zip». It was explained as being short for Prinzip, since he was a man of many principles. Frieda, understanding what lay behind the parental social lies, thought it stood for Zipfel or «little penis». Clearly the contempt was not far below the surface. Only in her analysis did Frieda realize that she looked with contempt on her father, since she saw him through her mother's eyes. In general, father was treated as a dumbbell but, in fact, she later conceded he knew what was what. Frieda regarded her mother as a powerhouse. If her mother walked towards a wall, the wall would give way. She later recognized that she had this same tendency but that it was not such a charming quality and so she controlled it. Only by early middle age did Frieda begin to regard herself as creative and productive in her own right. Until then she felt all her success was due to her mother's paving the way for her.

When Frieda was two and one half years old, her sister, Grete, was born, an ugly child. Outward appearances were important to Klara. The nurse suggested Grete be baptized a Catholic so she could enter a nunnery. Grete was less sturdy and energetic than her mother and older sister. Family members were openly cruel, saying they loved her very much, even though she was ugly. Frieda's character resembled the mother's; she thus suited the mother and responded to her molding and prodding by thriving. The difference in character from her mother led Grete to being molded in a negative way, to which she responded by withdrawing so that her emotional development was stunted.

When Frieda was six, the family moved six hundred miles east to Koenigsberg in East Prussia, where her unsuccessful father entered the banking business under Klara's sister's husband. Her father was a not very successful iron merchant according to Hoff (1982), a social worker friend of Frieda's. Yet Hilde Bruch (1982), an analysand of Fromm-Reichmann, called him a successful banker. Her father was among the leading people of the Jewish community but, in secret, was not so scrupulously observant. Adolph continued to be a failure in banking as well, until he was made director of personnel. He enjoyed this niche, because it involved dealing with people, and the employees enjoyed him. Did Frieda identify with this aspect of him?

Frieda said she had been a psychiatrist for the family since the age of three, half a year after the birth of Grete. She was aware of the cross-currents between the parents. The children were constantly observed, admonished and praised. The children also observed the parents. Frieda would move back and forth in shuttle diplomacy to settle disputes between them, explaining each one's side to the other and making suggestions about a possible course of action to resolve the impasse. Had she been born thirty years later, she might have moved into family therapy.

When Frieda was seven, the mother miscarried with a male fetus. Although a male child was highly desired in Jewish families then, the mother would joke that he did not want to be born, since he did not want to be named Moritz after Adolph's father. Bitter humor was again used to deal with disappointment and sadness, as in the case of the nickname «Zip».

When Frieda was nine, the third daughter, Anna, was born. Frieda knew about the pregnancy and discretely kept Grete ignorant until the father could tactfully explain the coming of the child. At that point Klara became deaf and was afraid she could not be a good mother. She had wanted six more children. She was able to conceal the hearing loss for five years. By the time Frieda was fourteen, her mother could no longer hear her, while she stood behind Frieda to braid her hair.

Both parents were plagued by hereditary deafness. Adolph had many gadgets at work that were

supposed to help him hear, all to no avail. He worried no one would marry his daughters with such a family background, especially if the parents wore hearing aids. Characteristically, Klara survived alone in England later on, deaf as a door nail. On the train she would carry a sign which read «Please put me out in Birmingham». A powerhouse and an adaptive one! In 1924 when Adolph could no longer hear the employees and was to be retired from his personnel position, he «fell» down an elevator shaft. Frieda later thought he probably committed suicide, adding the usual psychoanalytic disclaimer «unconsciously». She later had difficulty riding in self-service elevators. Again an identification with her father? Towards the end of her life, Frieda, too, suffered from the isolation due to this hereditary deafness.

Klara favored Frieda as the first-born, although she was a girl and she had desperately wanted a boy. Frieda protested vehemently that all should be treated equally but may have enjoyed it secretly nonetheless. In the family, manners, obedience, punctuality and a good handwriting were stressed. Thank you notes were written. On the Jewish New Year, each child had to write a letter, preferably in a foreign language, outlining resolutions for the new year and thanking the parents for all that they had done for them. In this way the new European custom of making new year resolutions was united with the old Talmudic approach applied to learning, in this case, of languages. Rebelliousness and temper tantrums were unheard of and were met with a more powerful punishment – Klara's displeasure. A good child was a healthy child. Frieda and Anna pleased the mother, while Grete, the scapegoat, was delicate and had headaches.

Anna said in her eighties, apparently without irony, «We had a wonderful, carefree childhood. We could learn anything we wanted to.» They had to study music, as Klara had promised Adolph, but they each could choose the instrument they wanted. Frieda was not musical but played the piano. Grete played the violin and Anna danced but they were not allowed to say out loud that they were better at it than Frieda. The dictum of «Don't criticize her; she's the eldest», stood her in good stead, even when false.

During the school year the day began at six-thirty A.M. with half an hour of music practice. When they returned home for the noonday meal, there were music lessons, special tutoring with Klara, Hebrew lessons and then homework. Klara and the three sisters memorized all of Faust. The traditional Talmudic approach had been applied to western culture. Then bedtime was early for all. The family gathered for prayers daily. Yet Adolph later made secret fun of Erich Fromm for praying and bowing with excessive religiosity. At seventeen Frieda told her mother she no longer believed in God and felt like a hypocrite during prayers. Klara smiled and said «Be a hypocrite for another year and then you'll know what you want.» Fun was bootlegged from the rich relatives at the estate of Klara's sister's husband, where the Reichmanns were the poor relations. The girls resented getting practical gifts, as they watched their cousins getting indulgences.

Frieda sailed along scholastically but as a girl was not permitted to go to gymnasium. Her mother with a few friends from her women's club, «Frauenbildung-Frauenstudium», organized courses for Frieda and several other such girls, so that at seventeen she passed the Arbitur, the entrance exams for the university. Her mother then made her stay home for half a year so that she might «learn all the things I have done for you, which made possible your studying for your Arbitur». So she stayed home and learned to sew, to mend, to cook and other female virtues. She was forced to stay in the kitchen until she could prepare a whole meal for the family and guests without the help of the maid. She had an interest in and gift for languages. The mother wanted her to pursue a career in teaching, her own original goal. Adolph wanted her to be a doctor and this time he prevailed. He wanted prestige for her, since the outlook for Jewish teachers was bleak then. The mother did not want her to outdo herself but in her eighties acknowledged to Frieda that her daughter had been right all along.

In 1906, Frieda was one of a few female students among hundreds of males, who were uncomfortable with or resented her presence there. One older professor kept admonishing her to go home and teach, that, since she was young and pretty, she did not have to come here to catch a man. He would not allow the women to dissect the cadavers with the men in the cellar. They had to wear colored smocks, since white ones looked like nightgowns. Despite all this, she had time for dances and

flirtations. She enjoyed her studies and especially obstetrics but, being short, needed a stool to stand on to deliver the babies and lacked the physical strength for it. She became passionately attached to the infants and the nurses resented her competition with them. This same attachment to babies was repeated in relation to patients.

She showed tact in responding to a psychotic, who mis-recognized her as someone from his past during a demonstration, and told him that professor Kraeplin wanted to talk to him now and that she would see him later. To everyone's consternation she kept her promise and went to see him. This created a hullabaloo. The professor told it to the clinical director, who told his wife, who told her friend, Klara, about what her daughter had done. The mother pooh-poohed the whole matter and supported Frieda.

She also recognized that Kraepelin, great professor though he was, lacked simple human tact in discussing his disease before an epileptic patient. He preached that one could not treat schizophrenics, because one could not understand what they meant. She knew she could do better than that.

The parents supported her decision to become a psychiatrist-neurologist. As an intern at the psychiatric institute of the hospital associated with the University of Koenigsberg, she listened to psychotics night and day and responded with some kind words to them. When she left, they showered her with gifts of appreciation. After she passed her state boards in 1913, she entered a residency in psychiatry-neurology. Her rich uncle could not believe Adolph would allow his daughter to become an «insane doctor». Usually her father gave in to her uncle but this time, to her great relief, he said that he should have thought of that possibility before permitting her to go to medical school in the first place. Once he had done that, he gave up all right of deciding anything else. To her surprise this wealthy uncle later gave her $10,000 to open a psychoanalytic, kosher, Jewish hospital.

She threw herself into her work. She saw herself as having to take over the job of her bosses, so they might pursue their interests and research. This she did with Kurt Goldstein. She noted that he taught her much. They later published together on brain injuries. Even her thirty-five neurological papers show «that her early style of interacting with patients was the beginning of the strong nonverbal strand of her therapeutic work» (Dyrud, 1989). Even in describing brain-injured patients, her stress was on how each one experienced his deficit. The point was to offer practical help to overcome the deficit. Was she thinking of «ugly» Grete? Even then she already saw the importance of a therapeutic team working together. She was determined that patients would get better. Yet this strong will was muted by her awareness of possibility, freedom and potentiality. She did not hold herself to any one approach and was ready to use various resources.

When Goldstein left, she told the superintendent that she, too, was thinking of leaving. He put her in charge of a hospital for brain-injured soldiers. Since women were not permitted to work in the Prussian army, she used her old diplomacy from her early life and got herself a rubber stamp, so no one would know she was officially in charge. She increased the size of the hospital from twenty to one hundred beds and became the consultant for two army corps. When a military inspection was scheduled, knowing the anti-Semitism and misogyny of the Prussian army, she told her boss to stay away from work. Even with her braids over her ears, she presented herself as an assistant, saying that the superior had had to go to the front. She warned her staff of the visit and told them that, if they wanted her to stay on, they had to live up to the ultra-strict rules of the Prussian army or the visiting officers would say that obviously a woman could not do this work. The hospital was organized for the visit with attention paid to every detail of uniforms, buttons, shoes, slippers under the beds and a blackboard at the front end of each bed. The visit went over well. She ran the hospital for two years without her name being on any of the records. Nevertheless, being strictly orthodox at the time, she never held office hours on Saturday and everyone knew why. She even took over the duties of a sick friend, who was a morphine addict, to cover for her, while taking care of her own responsibilities as well. After two years at this post, she moved to Frankfort, to which Kurt Goldstein had relocated and worked two more years with him.

She then decided to become a psychotherapist while continuing to take care of the teen-age daughter of her drug-addicted friend for four years. To get training in psychotherapy, she joined J. H.

Schultz at a sanitarium, «der Weisser Hirsch», The White Stag, in the mountains near Dresden. Of two hundred patients, one hundred and fifty came to reduce, thirty to get rid of diabetes and the rest to have a good time. Schultz tried to interest them in psychotherapy. He practiced a kind of relaxation therapy, which he called «autogenic training». He believed in massage, baths, cutting wood and other such approaches. The patients would also go to the opera and invite the doctors along. After three or four weeks, Schultz asked her to stay on and she told him of the personal considerations hindering her staying on. He allowed her to keep the teen-age girl with her at the sanitarium and arranged for her to have kosher food as well.

She began to read Freud and read about transference, which clarified for her the strange way that patients got tied up with their doctors. Since Freud said it was important to be analyzed, she got herself analyzed during the last two years at der Weisser Hirsch by Wittenberg in Munich, of whom no one has heard. Erich Fromm also went to him. When they were both through, they both wanted to take their analyst out for champagne and oysters, but unfortunately he died of cancer.

She was a Zionist and after working in der Weisser Hirsch for eight hours would treat poor Zionists for eight more hours. They paid her later. She used tips from wealthy patients as well as the $10,000 from her banker uncle to make a sanitarium for them. They helped each other giving Hebrew lessons, mending socks for one another and so on. The hectic pace grew too great for Erich and herself and so they founded their own sanitarium, where ten or fifteen patients lived and to which many others, living on the outside, came for meals and therapy. Some people from Frankfort and some rabbis came to her sanitarium to eat the kosher food, not to be analyzed. They hoped to analyze them and make them aware of their traditions as something to be proud of. Thus they would be helping the individuals and the Jewish people at the same time. One can see how a place like Chestnut Lodge would be a continuation of the same kind of devoted approach. She began to analyze Erich but when they fell in love, they stopped the analysis. They got married in her mother's house. She went to the required pre-marital «mikvah» or ritual bath, where she got tonsillitis, almost missing her wedding. Her father-in-law told her that he was delighted that she was going to take care of his spoiled son. «How right he was», she later ruefully exclaimed. For a while she was analyzing the housekeeper and the cook. When these two were in a state of resistance, there was hell to pay in the institution. She soon learned not to do that with them. (Her life seemed to be an endless series of admixtures of real life relationships with transference relationships, with later regrets.)

After four years they decided to give up the sanitarium, because their consciences and hearts were no longer in it. So on Passover, she and Erich went into the park in Heidelberg and ate bread and not matzoh. The punishment for that was «korvat», no children, which fate, ironically, made true. She went to get analyzed by Hanns Sachs, the training analyst for the German Psychoanalytic Institute. She went into private practice. Erich finished his analysis, got sick with tuberculosis and went to Davos in Switzerland for a rest cure. She was more active and energetic and had learned a lot from him about the use of ideas with patients. They later went through an amiable divorce, whatever that means.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Frieda moved to Alsace-Lorraine so she might continue with her patients and then to Palestine for a short stay. Soon, she moved to New York in 1935. She was proposed as a psychiatrist to Dexter Bullard, who ran Chestnut Lodge. At first there was no post available for her. Then she was hired as a temporary summer replacement and soon full-time. In response to her good work, Bullard built her a house on the grounds. Keeping in mind the saying «Build a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your house» Hilde Bruch, also a refugee, called Frieda's house «The Mousetrap».

HER STUDENTS AND ANALYSANDS

Hilde Bruch (1982) wrote warmly of her, having heard of this unusual woman psychiatrist near Washington, and of the warmth with which Frieda invited her, a pediatrician turning psychiatrist, to

psychoanalytic seminars. She began with psychotherapy Wednesday mornings, driving in from Baltimore for her hours. Soon it turned into analysis with hours on Saturday and Sunday. Here was the same overworking, over-devoted Frieda, as at the kosher sanitarium, in the mental hospital and in the family. Nevertheless the two would also go to Santa Fe to attend Indian dances or other cultural events and for analysis. Again she mixed transference with a real relationship.

Then by 1942, Frieda had moved the analyst's chair from behind the patient to next to the middle of the couch so she could see the patient and the patient could see her. (Mrs. Rank had also done this in holy Boston.) By then Harry Stack Sullivan had come into Frieda's life and into that of Chestnut Lodge, so that Frieda would discuss Bruch's case with him. The interrelationship took a turn to the more intimate and complicated. Right after Pearl Harbor, Bruch, also a refugee and upset about the war and her relatives in Germany, asked Fromm-Reichmann for help in rescuing a relative. Harry Stack Sullivan was instrumental in getting Bruch's only surviving relative, a thirteen year old nephew, an immigration visa to the United States. Bruch's nephew turned Frieda into a grandmother and she turned him into a grandson. She had him over to her place in Rockville and her summer place in Santa Fe and introduced him to the art and culture of the Pueblo Indians. When Bruch complained about life, Frieda would say things were not a «garden of roses». Bruch complimented Frieda for using this «precise» expression. In fact, it was Frieda's metaphorical enlargement of the English expression «a bed of roses». Bruch identified with Frieda as her analyst and as both being German refugees. They were both shocked by American women having a tearful session and then putting on make-up at the end of the hour. To them it meant covering up feelings; to the Americans it seemed to be a way of life. They shared eating the same type of foods, what they cooked and how they ran their households. Bruch marveled at how much of one's intimate life was tied up with such everyday things. They both liked to make independent observations. Yet this may have complicated the analysis.

Robert A. Cohen (1982) first met Frieda in 1938 and began his analysis with her in 1941, which lasted until 1947. The war years reduced contacts at times to thirty hours a year. The fee was seven dollars, three dollars down and four on account. For him she still sat behind the couch, followed the rule of abstinence and made occasional clarifications and rare interpretations. By 1945 her chair was at the level of his feet, so that each could see the other. Her interventions were less confined to transference and included confrontations with reality issues. By then he was clinical director at the Lodge. When they mutually agreed upon a termination, he found himself disagreeing with Frieda on every issue at staff conferences and so had to return to work out other matters with her, which both had found it convenient to neglect. He found her a gifted therapist and teacher of psychotherapy. Yet with him, too, she mixed professional and therapy relationships.

Joanna Greenberg, her most famous patient, wrote «I Never Promised You a Rose-Garden» under the pseudonym Hannah Green. The patient realized she was sick as a child. By ten she could not distinguish right from left. She threw herself into reading. Most useful was the equal status of patient and therapist. On the ward Frieda might be regal but in therapy, it was «You and I together». Therapy was a shared experience, in which the patient was the expert on mental illness and Frieda followed along. Regression was scary and being understood during regression hurt too much. Frieda was matter-of-fact when the patient disagreed with her that therapy might destroy her creativity. If Frieda was angry, she showed it. Her chief mistake was saying that therapy was scientific and that doctors with equal training could do the same job. They could not. The use of reality-testing at the beginning of therapy reassured Frieda but made the patient feel hostile. Frieda admitted her limitations in not having been a mother, who was invested in her child's mental health. It was a comfort to the patient not to be special to Frieda. Frieda later invited her to her place in Arizona not as a patient but as a distant relative. This was her usual yearning with many of her patients, to mix professional with personal relationships.

While she was steeped in Freudian theory, she was not interested in developing her own theoretical system and found it useful to rely on Sullivan's ideas on interpersonal psychiatry and on object-relations theory. Naturally enough she found that libido theory and structural theory alone were not useful in understanding schizophrenics. She was open, interested in the exchange of ideas, responsive and reflective, so that her comments on a paper would be what the paper stirred in her from her experience, not a critique. She felt strongly that psychosis could be treated even after many years of disturbance by the mutual efforts of the patient and the therapist as participant observer (1946). A person could emerge from psychosis as an artist of rank, converting previous symptoms and other responses to assets. Emotional experiences of psychotics differed from those of so-called healthy people only in degree, not kind. The patient required that the therapist show special sensitiveness, alertness and consideration for her past and present suffering. She felt the therapist had to be able to listen (1949) in light of the patient's experience, not the therapist's. Whereas she had been taught that psychotics withdrew their object cathexes and could not develop a transference, she discovered that, in fact, they developed only distorted and intense interpersonal transference relationships. The work consisted of making these distortions clear to the patient verbally and non-verbally. Attention should at first be focused on the immediate situation. Then one had to follow this up to see what in the patient's earlier life was the basis for these distortions. Comments should be made as questions, not assertions. The consistency of one's persistence was more important than the content of what one said. Attending to one's own feelings would give one clues as to what the patient was trying to convey. Sometimes mimicking a certain behavior or posture of the patient might help one understand the patient. She saw the patient in an intense conflict of wanting to withdraw and intense fear of wanting symbiotically to merge with the other. This resulted from defects in early mothering and led to subsequent deficits in personality development. The therapist had to make up for the mother's deficits in understanding by providing continuous warmth and diminution of anxiety to reach complete and harmonious understanding. (Was this a relic of her intermediary efforts with Adolph and Klara?)

After a decade, she realized that such goals were impossible to attain, sentimental, and naive. By now the efforts to achieve complete understanding were seen as merely preliminaries to establishing a basis for psychoanalytic psychotherapy. The patient was no longer seen as a passive victim but as an active participant in the family drama. More attention was paid to non-verbal behavior, hostility and destructive fantasies. His defenses insulated him from people around him, so that he remained isolated in guilt. When a durable working relationship was established, the conflicts, which interfered with the further development of healthy ways of relating to others, could be worked out. She continued to see the Oedipus complex as true for European culture but not for all cultures. Its appearance in the associations of psychotics was evidence that showed the need to work out interpersonal relations. This intense work with psychotics led her to be more flexible in her work with neurotics. She found that the couch might not always be necessary. It required one to be thrifty and cautious in one's interpretations. Attention should be paid to the here and now as well as to earlier times. The very setting for analysis as well as the analyst's values affected the development of the transference. Although Bullard had been using psychoanalysis to treat psychotics before she came to the Lodge, it was she, who helped make it a nationally recognized hospital.

She had to endure much skepticism and criticism by members of the American Psychoanalytic Association like Kurt Eissler and Edward Bibring. The latter is said to have trembled in rage as he asked «How can you consider yourself a psychoanalyst?» (I was in analysis with him at the time and, I, too, was frequently afraid of him. He, in fact, was shaking with Parkinsonism, which I, too, misinterpreted as rage.) Naturally much of the fighting turned on «It is either black or white». It took twenty years to pass for some of these same critics, Rangell, for example, to see it as matter of «black, white and gray and all colors too». Arlow (Brody & Redlich, 1952) was one of the early ones to recognize the cogency of her argument as explained by structural theory. On that occasion she received high praise from David Wright and Lawrence Kubie as well. She clearly had to fight major battles with

fellow analysts, many of whom were not treating psychotics. Many of her ideas and phrases have infiltrated the broader general field of psychotherapy and even work with neurotics. Yet the onrush of biochemical psychiatry is obscuring some of these findings for now.

SUMMARY

Frieda Fromm-Reichmann came from a German-Jewish orthodox family, where learning was highly valued. The mother was disappointed in having no career. She had contempt for the father for being a professional failure. They raised three daughters. Mother was cold towards Grete, who was not pretty, although she was musical, mother's precious avocation. A strong-willed woman, the mother showered favors and demands on Frieda, who responded by growing intellectually and personally but also by being strong-willed and regal. Frieda served as the go-between to settle disputes in her parents' marriage. Her mother had her tutored to get to university, a difficult step for women and Jews in Prussia then. Her experience in shuttle diplomacy between father and mother helped her survive and do well in psychiatric-neurological institutions in the army in Prussia. She met Erich Fromm, began to analyze him, fell in love with him, married him and then gave up being his analyst. Later they were divorced. She did not remarry, had no children but took care of patients and of the children of others. She came to Chestnut Lodge and stayed on for twenty-two years and helped make it a great psychiatric treatment and teaching center. A recurrent feature of her life was fusing therapeutic and personal relationships. This may have been the other side of the coin of her sensitivity to the importance of relationships.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 43-47

Fairbairn et l'Esthétique

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Mon point de départ est une *croissante perplexité* devant ce qui paraît être une *application* de la psychanalyse au champ artistique et en particulier littéraire.

Nous acceptons sans discussion les thèses freudiennes classiques, et nous suivons sans discussion leurs *applications* à de domaines où elles ne prennent pas racine.

Ainsi, les *Traits artistiques fondamentaux* (littéraire en particulier) sont abandonnés, et à leur place la question centrale devient celles de la *production de l'œuvre*.

L'esthétique freudienne est essentiellement une *esthétique de la production*, traversé cependant par la *fallace de l'identification* (H. Read, 1951), par laquelle en s'identifiant (en croyant s'identifier) à l'auteur, le psychanalyste croit pouvoir repérer les mouvements que chez le créateur sont en jeu, et qui sont (seraient) à la base de l'œuvre.

Le modèle de cette *esthétique de la production* (ou *esthétique de la motivation*, comme on a pu lui appeler) est bien entendu le rêve, la rêverie, en certains de leurs aspects. Sa dynamique est celle du *refoulement, échec du refoulement, retour du refoulé*, triade freudienne fondamentale (rêve, symptôme, acte manqué).

Bien entendu, tout processus de refoulement et de restitution du refoulé sous d'autres formes, se place sur le champ plus général du *fantasme* – dont la dynamique se fait présent dans l'*Œuvre*.

Donc, d'un point de vue freudien classique, l'Œuvre ne peut être comprise que

- du point de vue des rapports de *forces* et des conflits;
- du point de vue des instances ou systèmes psychiques engagés dans ces conflits;
- de l'investissement des quantités d'énergie psychique dépensés dans les mouvements ou déplacements présents de l'œuvre d'art, dans l'œuvre littéraire.

On peut dire le même de la façon suivante:

- sur le plan dynamique, l'œuvre littéraire est *déchiffrable* comme une version de l'*activité fantasmatique*. Sur le *plan topique*, elle se décrit comme un déplacement d'un système à l'autre, avec les tensions intersystématiques respectives;
- sur le plan économique, elle implique une mise en jeu du *plaisir* chez le Sujet-auteur comme chez le *Sujet-lecteur*;

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- la dynamique fantasmatique et l'opération narcissique débordant sur une économie de l'affect.

À part cela, ou avec cela, trois moments:

1) l'idée du *roman familial*, introduit dans une lettre à Fliess à propos d'une œuvre de C.F. Meyer.
2) L'articulation du fantasme et du rêve diurne, comme dans Gradiva.
3) La centration dans le motif central – inconscient – de l'œuvre (cf. P.L. Assoun, 1993).

Dans toutes situations, il est remarquable que c'est *l'œuvre en tant que telle*, en particulier dans ces *qualités formelles* qui est perdue, ainsi que, au fond, une *esthétique de la réception* – sauf pour dire que le poète avec le poème éveille chez le lecteur ou l'auditeur les mêmes fantasmes qui l'animaient, lui, dans son processus créatif.

Dans l'essentiel, donc: *une esthétique de la Production ou de la motivation*.

Si nous prenons les développements *kleiniens*, c'est un peu le même qui se retrouve, non pas tant d'ailleurs pour élucider la *motivation* de l'artiste ou de l'écrivain, mais plutôt pour essayer de déterminer à *quelles conditions* une *motivation* peut devenir œuvre d'art, peut devenir littérature.

C'est bien ce qui transparaît de l'essentiel travail de Hanna Segal (H. Segal, 1952) consacré à l'Esthétique.

L'argument central est le suivant: un sujet qui n'a pas «atteint» – comme on disait alors – la *position dépressive* ne peut pas véritablement *créer*, au point de vue de l'art.

Pourquoi? Parce que toute création ne peut exister que sur un *fond de perte perlaborée*, c'est à dire sur un processus de deuil, l'Œuvre étant l'élaboration symbolique de la perte.

D'autre part, la *dynamique de la réparation* est nécessairement présente dans l'Œuvre, l'Œuvre étant en fin de compte un processus de réparation.

C'est à dire que l'Œuvre est un au-delà des clivages primaires et des identifications projectives correspondantes, ainsi que de la force intempestive des pulsions de mort.

Sans ce mouvement propre à l'*élaboration dépressive*, il n'y a pas d'Art, il y a changement psychotique du Monde par projection d'objets internes clivés.

Ce qui veut dire d'ailleurs qu'il ne peut y avoir d'Art Psychotique. Comme il ne peut y avoir d'Art Perverse, dans la mesure où précisément la Perversion – comme la Psychose mais d'une autre manière – est fracture de l'élaboration dépressive, faille de la dépression.

Telles est dans l'ensemble le noyau des thèses d'Hanna Segal (H. Segal, 1952) concernant l'*esthétique psychanalytique*.

Comme on voit, si la motivation n'est plus au premier plan en tant que motif inconscient, c'est alors l'étude des *conditions* par lesquelles une motivation peut voir le jour en tant qu'œuvre d'Art.

L'approche de la théorie des Relations d'Objet – tellement ignorée en esthétique psychanalytique, d'une façon d'ailleurs apparemment paradoxale – est très différente.

Et avec elle, c'est de Fairbairn qu'il faudrait parler, Fairbairn qui a consacré deux articles à l'Art, plus un commentaire à la «*Psychanalyse de l'Art*» de Kris, celle-ci entièrement plongé dans les modèles de la Psychanalyse du Moi.

Les deux articles sont «*Prolegomena to a Psychology of Art*» de 1938, et «*The Ultimate Basis of Aesthetic Experience*», aussi de 1938, donc l'un et l'autre montrent les profonds changements *introduits par Fairbairn après son étude du phénomène schizoïde*, et qui sont connues à partir de ses «*Psychanalytic Studies of Personality*».

Le changement dans l'appréciation de l'Art est cependant introduit dès le début des *Prolegomena*, quand Fairbairn dit:

«The term Art is ordinary employed to describe a social phenomenon embracing three component elements: 1) *The Work of Art*; 2) The Creative *Artist*; 3) The percipient or *audience*» et encore «the fourth factor of *technique*».

C'est intéressant de voir que Fairbairn souligne le premier élément (Work of Art) et le mot *Technique*.

L'influence de la Poétique d'Aristote est claire, œuvre classique que Fairbairn connaissait bien, puisqu'en effet, quoiqu'en ce centrant essentiellement sur l'Œuvre – et en particulier, comme on sait, la Tragédie – Aristote n'a pas ignoré le facteur *Artiste* (les considérations à propos d'Herote en sont un signe) ni le facteur *Audience*, comme il est clairement énoncé et accentué dans la *Théorie de la Catharsis*, qui justement concerne l'Audience. D'ailleurs Aristote dans la *Rhétorique* avait aussi bien sous l'œil le Récepteur, puisque la Rhétorique est l'Art de *persuader*… quelqu'un, c.a.d., le destinataire. C'est d'ailleurs aussi ces trois aspects que Paul Ricoeur souligne en créant les concepts de Mimesis I, Mimesis II et Mimesis III, chacun relatif à l'œuvre, au créateur et au récepteur, en particulier dans son commentaire à la Poétique d'Aristote dans *Temps et Récit* (P. Ricoeur, 1983).

Donc Fairbairn subit la bonne influence d'Aristote.

Mais dès le début ce qu'il veut éloigner c'est le spectre de *l'attitude du récepteur* – non pas pour ignorer la participation de sa *fantasmatique* dans le processus de réception, mais plutôt pour éviter les courants de l'*Esthétique* que, depuis Schopenhauer, en particulier, voulaient fonder l'Objet Esthétique, ou plutôt la nature esthétique de l'Objet Esthétique sur ce qu'on appelait l'*attitude esthétique*.

Mais s'il éloigne l'*attitude esthétique* dans le récepteur en tant que fondement possible de l'Œuvre d'Art, il a l'habilité d'en réintroduire quelques aspects dans l'*élaboration artistique*. En effet, il va essayer de caractériser formellement l'*élaboration créatrice* par l'expression «for fun» – très mal comprise d'ailleurs par son disciple direct, analysand et ami, J. Sutherland (J. Sutherland, 1989), dans «*Journey into the Interior*», un ouvrage dédié à Fairbairn (le premier, d'ailleurs) Fairbairn dit: «Activities may be regarded as falling onto two great classes: (1) Activities undertaken for their own sake, i.e., activities undertaken for the satisfaction provided *by the activities themselves*; (2) activities undertaken as a means of providing satisfactions independent of those inherent in the activities in question.»

Les activités «for fun» s'opposent donc aux «serious activities».

Voici donc que Fairbairn essaye de caractériser de quoi il s'agit quand en parle d'Œuvre d'Art, et cette façon d'en parler – au-delà ou en dehors des motivations inconscientes – lui ouvre la capacité de percevoir le rapport essentiel entre l'activité artistique et «*the playing activities*» de l'enfant même. Au contraire donc de ce qu'on pense, le rapport entre art et jeu n'est pas un résultat récent d'élaborations post-winnicottiennes, mais des premières intuitions de Fairbairn – que Winnicott d'ailleurs connaissait…

Avec le principe du «for fun» inclus dans la nature de l'Art, Fairbairn peut réaliser une profonde critique du Puritanisme et de l'Attitude Puritaine face à l'Art comme expressions vivantes d'un Surmoi Sadique qui justement ne tolère pas, au fond, l'Art en tant que tel. L'attitude puritaine face à l'Art essaye justement de la transformer d'activité «for fun» en *activité utile*, c.a.d., *activité édifiante* en activité qui ne sert qu'au Salut de l'Ame.

Certaines racines d'une telle *attitude* pourraient d'ailleurs se trouver, peut-être, comme étant à la racine du rejet des Surréalistes par Freud – et *a contrario*, justement dans la critique radicale des puritanismes par les surréalistes.

Surréalistes que Fairbairn connaissait bien – et en particulier H. Read qui en a eu beaucoup parlé dans le Royaume Uni – et qui lui ont permis de *réaliser des comparaisons* extrêmement *intéressantes du point de vue d'une esthétique psychanalytique*. Par exemple, pour lui la question centrale n'est pas que *le thème* de la *Madonna* de Leonardo et celui de *Maternité* soit le même. Le considérer comme central serait en effet accepter une *position freudienne* de l'esthétique de la Motivation. La question centrale c'est *que tout en ayant le même thème, le résultat formel est complètement différent*.

C'est cette *sensibilité aux spécificités de la Forme* qui rend Fairbairn *singulier* dans le champ psychanalytique.

Son idée à l'époque suit cependant un chemin encore classique, en admettant que dans l'art – comme dans le rêve – il y a deux forces fondamentales, les *forces pulsionnelles* et *les forces de la répression*, dont le jeu respectif est à l'origine de l'expression formelle.

Par rapport à Leonardo, par exemple, il n'est pas difficile de voir que les Surréalistes montrent une contention limitée, et que leurs œuvres ont une relation beaucoup, plus directe avec «*the pressure of unconscious phantasy combined with the weakness of repression*». Et il ajoute: «*For it is the avowed purpose of the Surrealistic school to break down the barriers existing between the world of the unconscious and the world of outer reality.*»

Mais ces barrières sont barrières contre quoi? Non seulement contre des motions libidinales et des phantasies œdipiennes, mais aussi des phantasies destructives.

Cela est intéressant à souligner en 1938, mais, encore une fois, la question n'est pas *thématique*. On peut découvrir des phantasmes sadiques présents chez Goya ou les Surréalistes, au niveau du *Sujet Traité*, c.a.d., à la manière freudienne.

Plus intéressant est la problématique de *l'intégrité de l'objet*, autour de la dynamique de la destructivité, en particulier orale. À côté donc de la destruction il y a la *restitution* d'un objet dont *l'intégrité* est atteinte à différents degrés. Et, en effet, «*the principle of restitution is the governing principle in art*». Plus le sujet est capable de restitution, plus «classique» est l'œuvre. Moins la restitution est présente, plus la fragmentation objectale au niveau de la forme devient visible.

Tenir compte de cette dynamique mène à élaborer une nouvelle théorie du symbolisme, dans son double aspect négatif et positif.

Le symbolisme, comme on l'appelait alors, tel qu'il est présent dans le Rêve, par exemple, n'est pas seulement Masque, c.a.d., résultat de la triade freudienne de refoulement, échec du refoulement, retour du refoulé déguisé, mais aussi *construction positive*, élaboration de *Formes nouvelles*. «*Dream work' is not merely a negative but also a positive process. Dream work ceases to be merely a means of disguise, whereby repressed impulses evade an internal censorship, and becomes also a positive gesture on the part of the ego towards the ego-ideal*.» Et Fairbairn ajoute: «*Art-work must be regarded in a similar light.*»

Ces «gestes positifs» sont à l'origine de formes qui ne sont pas seulement des masques, mais aussi à l'origine des formes en tant qu'elles sont «*découvertes*» par l'artiste. C'est le cas des «*objets trouvés*» des surréalistes – où au lieu des mouvements des déguisements du refoulé, c'est le mouvement de la *découverte* qui est en jeu. L'Objet Trouvé est littéralement créé par la *découverte*. On pourrait dire qu'il est «symbolisé après coup». Un élément de la nature est «symbolisé après coup»…

Cela nous introduit au mouvement de la «symbolisation», et à ce qui dans la relation à l'objet peut être «excès de symbolisation» ou «insuffisance de symbolisation».

Dans les deux extrêmes il n'y a pas de Forme artistique, mais *Puritanisme* ou alors *déjection projective*.

C'est dans l'entre-deux que l'Objet Esthétique se trouve – «*the expressionist and projectionist theories of aesthetics each represent a half-truth*» (Fairbairn, 1938b).

Au-delà de Freud, donc, et au-delà même, anachroniquement, des théories kleiniennes plus tard développés, Fairbairn va se élaborer une théorie de l'Objet Esthétique non seulement en tant que manifestation d'un fantasme soujacent, mais aussi en tant que *Forme* qui est là, devant nous, *découverte* ou *reconstruite par nous*.

Ce que Fairbairn nous donne donc c'est les fondements d'une théorie Psychanalytique de l'Esthétique qui n'est pas, enfin, pure *répétition*.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 49-54

The anality of evil: Celine's anti-semitic pamphlets

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In 1937 Céline wrote *Bagatelles pour un massacre* within a month. His writing was «feverish, frenzied, restless, unbridled, incredibly fast, remorseless, lacking all caution, disorderly, like a thunderbolt, a sudden attack of rage, a warning, an expression of hatred, an insurmountable delirium», as his biographer Frédéric Vitoux described.[1] He wrote two more such books: *L'Ecole des cadavres* (1938) and *Les beaux draps* (1941). These works were called the «antisemitic pamphlets», «polemical works that communicated very precise ideas regarding ethnic difference and delivered an incendiary message of racial hate».[2]

The pamphlets should not be regarded as distinctive within Céline's oeuvre. The style, the profanities, the humour, the moral and aesthetics and even the punctuation (those telling…) all indicate they are part of a larger unit and should therefore not be seen as an unfortunate mistake. *Bagatelles pour un massacre* is not clearly separate from the author's earlier novels such as *Voyage au bout de la nuit* or *Mort à crédit*. Céline's alter ego Ferdinand appears in this book as well. He relates his trials and tribulations and lashes out against these wrongs: individual powerlessness in a world of decadence that periodically lets itself get dragged into bloody, senseless wars, the alcoholism and stupidity of the French, militarism and the failure of communism, which the author described after a journey through Russia in *Mea Culpa* (1936). The new element was that the pamphlets with their very violent language attributed all the evils afflicting France to the Jews.

Anti-Semitism is present in all of Céline's work and expanded into incredible proportions due to various conditions in the 1930s. Like others, Céline believed in the «Jewish conspiracy». He, too, claimed that Jews controlled all cultural means thanks to their financial power and mutual

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[1] Frédéric Vitoux, *La vie de Céline* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1988).

[2] Rosemarie Scullion, «Style, Subversion, Modernity», in Richard J. Golsan (Ed.), *Fascism, Aesthetics, and Culture* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1992), 180.

solidarity, thereby stifling the original, purely national culture with an imported sub-culture run by Jews. Jews had poor taste. They liked mediocre things and petit-bourgeois sentimentality. Jews lacked direct emotions. They spoke instead of sensing and reasoned instead of feeling.

Fascism has been examined primarily as a discursive phenomenon in recent years. Roland Barthes was among the first to emphasize the study of fascism and anti-semitism as *discourse*. By describing the text as an entity that is distinct from the author in which isolated forces emerge independently of the author's personality, he focuses primarily on the text's formal aspects. In doing so, he separates the text from the political content and loses sight of a fundamental issue: the influence and responsibility of authors and intellectuals. Barthes adopts what Susan Sontag has identified as an «aestheticizing» approach to literature and reduces Céline's ideological message to the subversive and in his view apolitical forces expressed in his specific language.[3]

Julia Kristeva takes the same position. She finds protection from fascism in artistic practice (is there no fascist art – what about Speer, Arno Breker, Leni Riefenstahl, Veit Harlan?); wherever there is *écriture* (writing), there is also *jouissance* (pleasure), which she believes preserves the literary purity. She is unable to explain Céline's support for Nazism: it is «an internal need, an inherent counterweight, a deep-seated need for identity». In her ahistorical view of the pamphlets, Kristeva emphasizes that «Céline's borderline narrative subjects and the fractured, lyricized voice in which they speak constitute a formal menace to monotheistic symbolism and the societal institutions it sustains».[4] In *Powers of Horror* she writes that the pamphlets have the same 'wild beauty' as the earlier novels, and that «the liberating truth of such a call of rhythm and joy, beyond the crippling constraints of a society ruled by monotheistic symbolism» is unmistakable.

Céline's primary anti-semitism is like a delirium to Kristeva, albeit one that like all other forms of political involvement keeps insanity at a distance and averts the loss of identity. In this condition described by Kristeva as 'abject' (i.e. the primal fear of the borderline, which has internalized hatred instead of love for the mother), Céline falls victim to the most archaic primal fantasy: the impossibility of disassociation from the mother. Kristeva illustrates her point by noting that Céline does not publish the pamphlets under his usual pseudonym (his grandmother's name Céline) but under his own name and that of his father, Louis Destouches.[5] This would be interesting if it were true. In fact, however, the pamphlets were written – as is indicated on the book – by Louis-Ferdinand Céline.

By focusing on the language of the pamphlets, Barthes and Kristeva accommodate Céline and further the effort that Philippe Alméras called his «postwar disinformation campaign».[6] This was a «strategy of self-rehabilitation by which the author sought to fashion a literary persona whose artistic stature would entirely eclipse the racist and reactionary substance of the political message he had delivered with such venom on the eve and in the early period of the Nazi occupation of France».[7] As Rosemarie Scullion notes, Céline's discovery was according to him «a marvellous technique allowing to reproduce the affective charge of spoken speech in writing». He never showed any sign of remorse about the content of the pamphlets.

I believe that favouring formal aspects as Barthes and Kristeva do dilutes and subordinates the content – and consequently the message – of the pamphlets. The anti-semitic discourse also loses its continuity, as Céline, the *great innovator of language and literature*, certainly figures within the tradition that extends from Drumont and the Dreyfus Affair in the nineteenth century to

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[3] Roland Barthes, *Leçon* (Paris: Seuil, 1978).
[4] Scullion, 181.
[5] Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l´horreur* (Paris: Seuil, 1980).
[6] Philippe Alméras, *Céline entre haines et passion* (Paris: Grasset, 1986).
[7] Scullion, 179.

today's negationists or Holocaust deniers. Céline's anti-semitic delirium concept is deeply embedded in this tradition and is verified and well documented, as Céline quotes from, plagiarizes and rewrites the anti-semitic propaganda from the 1930s.

Céline introduces himself as a physician and hygienist who is concerned about France's decadence and degeneracy. In 1924 Louis Destouches (as he was called at the time) published his medical thesis *La vie et l'oeuvre de Philippe Ignace Semmelweis* (1818-1865) about the Hungarian obstetrician who discovered the cause of childbed fever. At the time many pregnant women were dying of mysterious infections following exposure to the bacteria transmitted by physicians and students after dissecting corpses for research. «Céline's interest in childbed fever is an interest in an event by which life is destroyed at its origins by the living germs of cadavers – death, as it were, actively punishes the bearers of new life.»[8] Destouches identifies entirely with the misunderstood genius Semmelweis and his tenacious struggle against the deadly bacteria. Enthusiastically, Céline relates how half a century before Pasteur, Semmelweis 'seized' and destroyed the invisible bacilli.

Céline never discarded his hygienist preoccupation and obsession with revealing the invisible evil and cutting into puss-filled and putrid wounds to drain the filth. In *L'Ecole des cadavres*, he took it upon himself to inform diseased France about the pernicious bacteria it harboured: «Jews, Afro-Asian bastards, quarter Negroes, half Negroes and those from the Middle East and licentious, degenerate scum have no business in this country. They should get lost, as they are parasites that cannot assimilate. They are wicked, disastrous in all respects – biologically, morally and socially – and are rotting leeches. The Jews are causing great misery here.» Here, Céline dredges up France's rich tradition of anti-semitic literature. In *La fin d'un monde*, Drumont already wrote about the Jewish lepers who turned France into a social corpse, about the Jews who like swarming bacilli have gradually eroded the national organism and destroyed it. The same holds true for Céline's style, which resembles the equally spiteful articles in anti-semitic papers such as *La Croix* or *L'Antijuif*.

Céline was undoubtedly responsible for reviving the image of Jews as bacteria in France. *Bagatelles pour un massacre* is based entirely on the author's obsessive desire for purity, who urges 'cleaning', 'decontamination', 'disinfection', 'perfect Pasteur-like sterilization'. Céline became a contemporary Semmelweis, who clearly intended to inform ailing France of its disease and to liberate it of the deadly bacilli. Under the Nazi occupation in 1942, he wrote in the fascist newspaper *Je suis partout*: «Reason of race must take precedence over reason of state. No explanation to furnish here. It's very simple. Fanatical total fascism or death!»[9] Since 1940 the conservative Vichy government had become aware of the Jewish Question and had adopted racial laws that could easily hold a candle to those of the Nazis. As the American historian Robert Paxton was the first to demonstrate, this happened «not as a result of [the] German mandate but rather on the Vichy Government's own initiative, this legislation established a definition of Jewishness that was even more rigorous and inclusive than that applied in the 1935 Nuremburg racial laws».[10]

In Céline's work the term '*Jew*' seems to apply to all that is perverse and decadent. The Jewish persona enables Céline to conjure up a dualist world image in which Jews represent everything impure, unclean and filthy. Céline associates Jews with creatures that live underground in sewers, with mud and excrement. Jews are larvae and rats, the guards of sewers filled with faeces, he writes in *Bagatelles*. Is this the 'wild beauty' that Kristeva mentions?

In the years between the two world wars vicious anti-semitic postulations restored the currency of Jews as bearers of filth and infections throughout Europe (e.g. see *Mein Kampf*). On the

[8] Alice Yaeger Kaplan, *Reproductions of Banality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 116.
[9] Scullion, 185.
[10] Scullion, 185. Robert Paxton, *Vichy France. Old Guard and New Order* (1972).

one hand, Céline's anti-semitism figures within the fascist and rightist-anarchist discourse in France of the 1930s. On the other hand, compulsive neurotic fantasies emerge from the narrative processes and represent the core of the pamphlets. Céline's texts may be analysed as a literary «return of the repressed» in which obsessive fears are expressed symbolically.

Céline adopts a well-known theme from anti-semitic tradition, namely that the Jews aim to emasculate French men to make them like they are: «Until the end of time the Jew will crucify us to avenge his foreskin», he writes in *Bagatelles pour un massacre*. Anti-semitism has been interpreted (e.g. by Freud) as a type of castration fear, one that primarily symbolizes loss of power and control. Mysterious stories about Jewish circumcision undoubtedly come into play here. Jews, frustrated by this weird practice, aim to castrate French men. The sodomy in which Céline believes they engage with such lust serves more to humiliate France and to celebrate their own perverted exercise of power than to obtain sexual gratification.

The French are sodomized by the Jews metaphorically and especially literally. This figure of speech recurs throughout in the pamphlets: «Fifteen million Jews will fuck five hundred million Aryans in their asses!» «French citizens, from now on you will be fucked in the ass by Jews! Like they want, where they want! When they want!… Present your buttocks while awaiting new orders and put up your money.» «The kikes will grab you by the ass, and you need only say the word if you want to be fucked in your backside!»

The penetration metaphor is reinforced by the depiction of Jews as intruders, like bacteria penetrating healthy organs. Semmelweis' parasites have become Céline's sodomizers. In a society that seems to have fallen victim to fears of loss of virility, the Jew symbolizes unwanted (and perhaps secretly desired) penetration. He is in power, while the Frenchman assumes the female, masochist position of the sodomized slave.

The connection between anti-semitism and homosexuality is not new and dates back to the nineteenth century. Back then, physicians like Morel in France and Krafft-Ebing in Germany aimed to demonstrate that sexual perversions were attributable to physiological damage to the brain and hereditary defects, without denying that they could be acquired through bad habits or temptation. These factors (hereditary defects, odd habits, temptation) recur in anti-semitic discourse and in discourse about sexual perversions, especially homosexuality.

Céline's anti-Semitic fantasies depict the world of chaos and *hybris*, of violating all human and divine laws, of the transgression and the absence of limits, of total indifferenciation; this fear becomes somewhat manageable through the literary description, in which the author can act as God by creating a new world and a new moral. Still, the world remains one of regression, especially to the sadistic-anal developmental period, when children learn to control their bodies and consequently the world around them. Scatological themes prevail for this reason. Obsessed with purity, Céline is of course fascinated with the filth, the stench, the mud and the faeces.

The world full of monsters pursuing Céline, the world of the subconscious that is projected in society, is also symbolized by one's body, especially by the dirtiest part: the intestines. The psychotic depiction is that of anality, of the curdling intestines and the faeces. As Alice Yaeger Kaplan describes: «The important moment in Célinian language is the moment of loss; the separation of words from the mouth being reminiscent of the body's daily loss.»[11]

The pamphlets are like a symbolic transposition of the world of Céline's psyche, which may be reconstructed via a simple diagram. In this area a secluded section should offer peace and protection: France. This space is also personified by a resident (the narrator Ferdinand) and should be surrounded by a strong wall or fortress that seals off the area and keeps out intruders. Outside are hostile creatures, monsters that want to force their way in to kill those dwelling inside (the

[11] Yaeger Kaplan, 110.

Jews). This plan represents the Ego (the protected, secluded space), the Superego (the protecting, strong wall) and the Unconscious (the threatening, terrifying world). Jews are sensual, nervous, hysterical and neurotic. They seek immediate sexual gratification and do not shy away from cruelty. Jews symbolize the ominous forces of the Unconscious. Here lie the foundations of the political myth, a story explaining the 'Jewish conspiracy' that is supposed to offer protection from fears and to reinforce the Ego by creating a new, more controllable reality.

Céline's psychotic style reveals his self-destructiveness, his obsession with death and his need to form a different reality. That characteristic delirium-like style's destructive nature reflects the disintegration of the Ego and of the surrounding world, just as Céline experienced during World War I. The jerky flow of words – and especially profanities – conveys his representation of a collapsing world: he views writing as a compromise to avoid succumbing entirely, as well as a way to shape the shapeless.

The author's financial problems (which became known through his tirades against his publisher), his penchant for excrements, his compulsive-neurotic need for control: this is the world of anality that Freud described in his article *Charakter und Analerotik* (1908). Céline's style and vocabulary attest to an anal fixation that leads to a stereotypical perception of a dangerous, sadistic world.[12] The other is always the enemy, and after the war the Chinese become the 'yellow threat' preoccupying Céline: having somebody to hate is indispensable for the author to maintain a modicum of unity in the chaos of his paranoid fantasies. In the sadistic-anal fantasy the object is simultaneously destroyed and maintained so that it may be controlled. Thus Céline can claim that he loves Jews and even that he is one himself.

Céline's anti-Semitism is based on the same themes that Saul Friedländer has described with Hitler: the Jewish longing to rule the world, the abnormal sexuality and the desire to mix with the white race to render it inferior and impure as well and Jews as disseminators of bacteria and sources of infections.[13] Humour distinguishes Céline's pamphlets from other anti-Semitic writings. Though the pamphlets are nearly unreadable as sick products of a disturbed mind, Céline's astounding ingenuity in coming up with profanities and sexual metaphors is truly laughable in some parts. Jokes relieve the tension, and Céline seems to enjoy the dirt he tosses around him, like a child who proudly examines his own excrement.

Céline's tirade is a verbal diarrhoea. When he writes: «The kikes will shit in your face» («Les youpins te chient dans la gueule»), he means «I am shitting on the Jews». «Dirt is matter in the wrong place», wrote Freud; Céline wants to place the dirt where he feels it belongs to introduce a new order in the chaos. His effort emerges most clearly in *L'école des cadavres*, where he dabbles in biological racism and advocates eugenics to maintain racial purity. The demons of the impurity will, hopes Céline, rapidly be eradicated: «Racism above all! Disinfection! Cleaning!»

The obsessive sense of sickness and death, of impurity and decay and of the threat of cross-breeding and contamination is a recurring theme in the work of many French authors from the Interbellum. The responses to *Bagatelles* reveal that many writers with far-right sympathies viewed Céline as a kindred spirit. The first edition (20,000 copies) sold out quickly. During the war Céline was viewed as a guiding force in the circles of the active collaboration, like a new prophet of anti-Semitism. His extremism was popular: he swore by the type of anti-Semitism that the Nazis supported, because it was based on 'science' rather than on Christianity, and especially because the Nazis had devised a programme that would indeed solve the 'question'.[14]

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[12] Willy Szafran, *Louis-Ferdinand Céline. Essai psychanalytique* (Brussels: Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1976).

[13] Saul Friedländer, *L'antisémitisme nazi* (Paris: Seuil, 1971).

[14] Pierre-André Taguieff, *L'antisémitisme de plume* (Berg International, 1999).

The pamphlets are, like Drumont's *La France juive*, the best-seller of the end of the nineteenth century, a sick appeal for what we know today as ethnic cleansing, containing all widely known anti-Semitic stereotypes. Reading *Bagatelles* with Sander Gilman's *The Jew's Body* in mind would be most enlightening. The author may have been crazy, but he knew what he was doing: he was asking for the total destruction of the French and European Jews. Although the message is put in a modernist and in some places innovative form, we should not been lead into forgetting it's content.

Translation by Lee Mitzman

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 55-59

The dangerous romance of Swan Songs

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Swan Lake, based on the Myth of the Swan Maiden, is a psychological drama of the struggle between the real and the ideal. The root of the Swan Maiden legend is the metamorphosis of a human being, generally a woman, into a bird. Based on the folkloric theme of maidens who have been magically transformed into swans, the ballet depicts the doomed love of Prince Siegfried and the swan queen, Odette.

This paper will address two versions of the ballet. The first was choreographed by Petipa/lvanov, in 1895, and the second by Matthew Bourne, in 1995 and both used the Tchaikovsky's musical score. This ballet has many important facets and characters. The major focus will be on the dynamics of the prince who is the center of the story's conflict. The prince undergoes dramatic changes in the course of this ballet.

The basic analytic assumption about the prince is that he is faced with a crucial and timely identity crisis as he approaches his 21st birthday. His mother calls for him to become a responsible crown prince before he is ready to do so. The conflict this brings about is at the core of both productions of Swan Lake. What do we find that is similar in the princes in each of these versions?

In both ballets, the prince is depicted as a young man with little desire to spend his time in the court and is overwhelmed by the expectations of royalty. Both princes are invested in imaginary worlds far from the court. Both convert poor self esteem and a lack of interest in reality pursuits into a search for fantasy and idealized unreal figures. One interpretation is that the princes use projection of their own feelings on the people and events that pull their attention. They project images of good and evil with a plethora of splitting that make it easier for them to define the good from the bad. The obsessions of the prince in each ballet helps the character to focus on issues that defer growing up and prize fantasy over mastery. From an Eriksonisan developmental point of view they remain in the adolescent phase of role confusion. From a Kernbergian point of view they appear to maximize a borderline constellation of character structure, not neurotic or adjusted. From a Kohutian view they are ensconced in primitive negative narcissism with no opportunity to develop idealized or mirror transferences.

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Both princes choose passive and victimized suicides rather than to return to action required in the predictable real world. In both tales there are no positive father figures present and the mothers are portrayed in both ballets as disinterested in the emotional life of the princes. The mothers attempt to control their sons' behavior. Both princes choose to spend their leisure time outside the court. The fantasies these two young men choose involve a full commitment and they exclude the familial world. Both princes make decisions that lead to tragic endings. Both stories show the class struggle with the affluence of the court contrasted with the style of life of those outside the court.

Probably the most startling universality in these ballets is the demonstration of the seduction of death for the sad and lonely young adult. This tragic solution to the stress of an adolescent's life demands is familiar to all clinicians dealing with young adults who feel alienated and marginally invested in the world of adults. Finally, in both of these works, we see the psychoanalytic model that states that adolescence invokes a return to oedipal issues. The young adult becomes ensconced in the family triad. Ambivalence towards the mother figure and a search for an ideal substitute re-emerge. The lack of the father or father substitute maximizes the fear of an oedipal victory.

Leaving the similarities of these two versions it is time to focus on their differences. The Petipa/lvanov story is expressed in dance action segments that portrays parts of the tale. The prince arrives amidst his peasant friends who are not of the court to celebrate his birthday. The mood changes drastically upon the arrival of the queen mother who arrives amidst the prince's birthday party with his friends. She wants the prince to leave his friends, return to the court, stop drinking and choose a wife. It is time to grow up and take his place in the royal realm. The queen indicates that there will be a ball the next night during which the son must choose his potential bride. Hurriedly the prince exits to go hunting with his friend. The resurgence of oedipal issues is clear. The prince is threatened by his mother's intrusion with the aura of castration anxiety evident. He has not reached the point where he has alternative love objects around (although the bow he receives for his birthday can be considered a transitional object). He is psychologically cornered. It is predictable that this over stressed man will have to find a drastic way in order to cope.

In Act II he enters to the woods (with its womb-like atmosphere) and sees a swan he can shoot. The phallic aspects of his wish to pierce her with his arrow are obvious. The story indicates that the swan is a beautiful woman who is in the form of a swan during the day and in the form of a woman in the night. She has been placed in this strange split existence by a sorcerer named Von Rothbart who keeps her in this spell until she proves that she can find the commitment of a true love. This rather unexpected event changes the fate of the prince. Now he has a magical solution to his mother`s demands. Psychodynamically, a classical borderline splitting is now apparent with the swan as an all good object and Rothbart as the all bad object. The mother is also a negative self representation. She is cold and not interested in her son's feelings. The finding of the perfect woman who is laden with fantasy is typical of adolescent solutions. We know as the second act ends that danger lurks in the background as it does for any adolescent trying to find a fast fix.

The next act fulfills the prophecy. The ball begins and the prince rejects his mother's choices for his future bride. Suddenly a stranger enters who looks like his beautiful swan but dressed in black. He believes it is his true love and does not recognize the trick played by the evil Rothbart. He pledges himself before his mother to the black swan and chaos ensues.

We see here more of the splitting behavior that characterizes borderline adjustment. The prince is too much in need of his swan princess to see clearly. It can be hypothesized that he hallucinates the existence of his swan and of her black nature. We can conceptualize that the Prince's negative self representation has resulted in the projection of the evil Rothbart and the Black Swan. Rothbart enchants with no motivation that we know. The Black Swan and Rothbart are but reflections of the prince's dark side. The resulting confusion and rapid exit in Act III confirm the possibility that none of this may have happened at all. However, it is interesting to note that the prince goes regressively to his mother, crumpled and distraught, to receive her nurturance. We can consider the possibility that the prince is not strong enough to take a real woman and is too confused and disturbed to maintain his fantasy image.

In the final act the prince deals with his grieving white swan. She tells him she must die. Rothbart returns to affirm this fate. The swan runs to the cliff to commit suicide and the prince joins her. As they leap to their death, Rothbart dies because now the two lovers have shown true love. This ending again supports the interpretation of the prince's poor reality testing. We might consider his rediscovery of the idealized swan as a source of guilt. He has disappointed his mother who potentially could have emotionally castrated him and now he has disappointed his beautiful swan condemning her to death. He kills many birds with one stone.

Turning to the Bourne production there are many similar elements and many more that are not similar. The Bourne production is more like a full dramatic piece with subplots and details added. The swans in Bourne's work are all male so we are dealing with a prince who chooses a male love object not a female. Bourne also gives many clues about the rigidity of the court.

lt is important to note that Bourne begins his piece not at the 21st birthday of the prince but in a view of the prince when he is a young boy (perhaps 10 or 11). During the overture of the story we view the young prince in bed holding a stuffed swan close to his body. The bed seems too big for this little boy and we watch him having a nightmare of a tall majestic swan with a powerful form looking down on the boy in a threatening fashion. The boy awakens suddenly in terror. The door of his room opens and a cool attractive graceful mother enters. Showing no affect she touches his head to feel his temperature only to turn away and not touch the boy again. He reaches out to her and she ignores him by walking out the door. This scene seems to be crucial for the dynamics of the piece.

The oedipal struggle is already apparent. The boy dreams about the angry image of his swan doll. His aggression is already infiltrating his dreams. He is terrified and when his mother appears we understand why this is so as she is cold and disinterested. The boy does not receive the soothing experience offered by the good enough mother that makes fear bearable. Left with his own night fears, he is already on his way to an eventual separation from the mother, the crown and any hope of safety in this realm.

We see the boy awakening to the court rituals. He is dressed and groomed like a doll. Human interaction is missing. He joins his mother greeting the crowds but is bored and disinterested. There is a brief moment when a statue is unveiled of a male nude and we see by the Prince's second glance the indications of his homosexual yearnings. From this point the plot becomes very intricate.

Rothbart in this production is the press secretary of the queen. Throughout the ballet he keeps trying to put the prince in a compromising situation so that he will look ridiculous. This character seems real, not fantasized, but his actions still echo those of a dark evil figure that is so extreme that he might emerge in the thinking pattern of a borderline adolescent.

The next emotionally dynamic scene occurs between the mother and son. The prince is in his room. Removing his formal uniform, he stares at himself critically in the mirror, then drinks some alcohol from a flask. His mother arrives and they argue. He reaches out again for affection and she turns away. He becomes more aggressive in his demand for her attention. The dance is intense and disturbing. The mother finally gets away from his grip and again exits, this time pushing his shoulders up to make him look more masculine.

This scene gives further information about the sexual identity of the prince. He is an anxious person classically conceptualized as a woman trying to hang onto the cold and distant male lover. We also see the underpinnings of a regressed little boy who has been ignored by his mother for so many years. The important dynamic clue is his feminine identification and his deep hatred of himself. In terms of the adolescent issues the prince is in serious trouble. He has been publicly embarrassed and personally rejected at home. The prince, desperate to find solace, goes to the local Swank Bar, a disco dive, to get drunk and let his passions run free. lt is a psychedelic lust-ballroom of bellowing hot pink and red polka-dotted prom gowns with plummeting cleavages, sensuous hip thrusts, sexual come-on gazes and greasy pompadours. Sobriety has no home here. The Prince is again rejected.

He seriously contemplates suicide in the city park and writes a suicide note. Just before jumping into the lake he sees the male swan of his dream. The leader of the swans enters. The swan is strong and gentle. The prince finds himself completely attuned to his movements and in some ways he becomes a swan. Mirroring occurs for the first time for this neglected young man. Here we see the young man falling into a fantasy world that has no tie to reality. When the swans leave, the prince rips up his suicide note and departs with a smile. He is in love.

The third act takes place at the royal ball. The entire ball scene is loaded with dark male energy. The scene is awash with male dominance and power displays. The dance unfolds and suddenly a man in black leather arrives on the balcony. He enters and immediately approaches the queen in a highly seductive fashion. He takes the Queen's hand and runs his tongue over her from her fingertips to her elbow. The prince perceives him to be the swan from his encounter of the last evening.

When the Stranger-in-Black dances with the queen, the prince in fantasy, takes his mother's place. At first the prince's positive fantasy predominates. The dance is smooth and cooperative. Suddenly the Stranger pushes the Prince away instead of moving him back gently. His movements become rougher and rougher until he chokes the prince and twists his arm painfully behind his back. Psychodynamically we are watching the prince's fantasy become distorted. As he emerges from his fantasy he is ridiculed by the people in the court and he angrily tries to split up the Stranger and his mother. He pulls a gun out to shoot (probably his mother) and the press secretary also pulls a gun. A shot is fired and the commoner date of the prince is killed trying to protect him. Psychotic thought processes have led to a tragedy.

In the final act the prince lies in his oversized bed. He reviews the shocking events of the last few days. He sleeps fitfully, awakening in a frantic state. An entourage of people enter the room led by the queen and press secretary and followed by nurses all masked to look like the mother. Paralyzed he returns to his bed and begins to hallucinate again. Swans enter from under the bed and through the walls. They fill the room just as they filled the park. The swan leader emerges from the prince's pillows as if being birthed. He stands at his full height appearing as a male Venus rising from the ocean. The swan and the prince become close and this evokes an attack from the other swans. They kill both the prince and the swan leader. The boy crawls back on the bed and with sadness and defeat he falls dead over the edge of the bed. The swans are gone and the mother enters. She now falls over her dead son weeping. Above the bed we see the swan holding the young prince in his arms in staged lighting that suggests fantasy.

This act is a brilliant illustration of the kind of confused thinking that occurs in psychotic processes or in dreams. Good swans become bad swans. The nurses become angry mother figures. The bed becomes a birthing site. The ballet takes us into a fascinating psychological space that includes the tortured mind of an adolescent boy who cannot fit. Death seems to be his only respite.

I will briefly talk about the choreography as a way to understand the ballets. The principal role of Petipa/Ivanov's ballet is the dual character of Odette-Odile. This character resembles a Jekyll and Hyde role, in which the protagonist must dance as the [virgin] Odette, and the [whorish] Odile. Odette is a strange, enchanted, composite being. Ivanov conceived many of her gestures and steps in a bird idiom, intending to hint at Odette's dual nature, her shiffing life between woman and swan. She wears a white tutu that is short, revealing much of the dancer's legs. The tutu rigidly cantilevers outward from the hips, encircling her lower torso like a chastity belt of feathery protection. Her movements are soft, lyrical, weightless and melting, with swooning backbends, plunging tilts and lowered gaze. They are awash with pathos and innocence. Odile, the fraudulent swan is dazzlingly vertical moving with authority, assertiveness and independence.

Petipa/Ivanov's Siegfried is a young man, yet he is struggling with what he wants to be. Siegfried's character is not as fully realized as that of the Swan Queen. Outside of the three major pas de deuxs where he is reduced to a mere prop manipulating and supporting the Swan Queen, Siegfried appears incomplete as he is either statically pantomimic, professing his love to his beloved swan or his role is to display his male prowess through acrobatic feats of virtuostic high leaps, jumps with beats, and multiple turns.

An examination of the choreographic structure shows that this ballet is composed of two elements – prescribed classical ballet technique and pantomime. Classical ballet emphasizes formal values such as order, unity, clarity and symmetry. The ballet dancer is a disciplined instrument of precision whereas the modern dancer considers him/herself freely creative and a seIf-expressive individual. The way a modern dancer moves exemplifies certain manners of dealing with time, space and energy – which amounts to exhibiting manners of dealing with the world in which we live.

Petipa/Ivanov's original 1895 *Swan Lake* cloistered in traditional classic ballet styles forms an idealized image of the ballerina as a creature apart, an embodiment of beauty, desire, and otherness. She is an icon of femininity, gracefulness, teasing and mystery. With her soulful gaze and airy skirt, she inhabits a world remote from home and hearth that extolled a Romantic idea of nature.

Matthew Bourne's staging of Swan Lake deconstructs the cannon of one of the great romantic ballet fables, re-contextualizing a classic narrative ballet into a theatricalized dance-drama, that is highly pluralistic. It propels us into a fantasy noir of the 1950s through a mixture of social realism and illusion. The 1895 Romantic ballet reflected the needs, desires and the escapist dream of European society confronted with the Industrial Revolution. Petipa/Ivanov placed their ballet in a natural setting – an enchanted forest with a lake. The story is incidental to the suite of dances throughout the ballet. Bourne confronts the modern urban hubbub straight on, fabricating a city – industrial, man-made. His story determines the dance.

While Petipa/Ivanov relied on classically trained ballet dancers, Bourne incorporates elements of technical display from the ballet idiom along with the emotional expressiveness of contemporary dance style and ordinary gesture using wit and uniquely theatrical dance language. His use of movement makes available sympathy, power and freedom. His use of time is elastic and non-linear.

After observing swans' movements, Bourne re-conceptualized *Swan Lake* with an all male cast. Drawing from observations of actual bird movements on film and in their natural setting, Boume draws our attention the upper arm, elbow and upper chest/armpit as focal points on the body. His interest was in bringing out the swan's more primitive nature. In those powerful and extended swan wings is the metaphor of embrace.

In the male dancer's arms and surfaces of the chest, we witness an aesthetic of powerful elegance. The torso is often curved, recoiled or hovering to attack or enfold. Bourne's use of the male body departs from the ideals of classical ballet with straight stretched lines purposefully arriving at specific points in space.

Independent of her partner, Petipa/Ivanov's Swan Queen delicately crosses her wings in front of her, signifying protection, purity, and resignation. Her eyes focus downward averting direct contact with her male partner. Bourne's swan rests his wings with hands laid palm out on the back of the pelvis. This reduces the scale so that any arm movement taken out of this resting pose has by contrast an exaggerated length and reach. Man and bird stare at each other, the one with fear and passion and the other with sheer feral seeing. Like children's imaginary shadowplaying, the swans shape their hands into the form of their beaks always directing the action towards the Prince. The beak supplies nourishment, preens their feathers and attacks their enemies when threatened. Both the Prince and the Swan support, hold, caress and lift each other in a mutual exchange of emotional gesture. The male swan uses the surfaces of his winged arm instead of his hands. Repeatedly, the Swan shapes his hands towards the Prince as a form of emotional nourishment.

The human wings also become metaphors of betrayal and death. In the final scenes of the ballet, the Swan hopelessly tries to protect the Prince from his menacing flock. Like a scene from Hitchcock's "The Birds" the swans descend upon the Prince and the Swan, pecking them to death as the silhouette of their wings hovers above their rapacious, vulture-shaped bodies.

The Petipa/Ivanov choreography shares the story in brief signal-like episodes. The story is sparse and the classical dance is intricate. The Bourne version provides a story with a multiplicity of details, a complex plot and varied human motivations. The choreography of the Bourne production is one filied with an awareness of humor, intense sadness, pervasive sexuality and dramatic conflict. Both ballets give the audience a view of the struggles of manhood that the fabled princes experience.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 61-66

The rise and fall of Jerzy Kosinski

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Jerzy Kosinski's Holocaust novel, *The Painted Bird* (Kosinski 1965), remains a fascinating but problematic work. At the time critics marveled at its spare but hypnotic style, a miracle, they declared, for him to master English so quickly. Kosinski outmaneuvered any attempts to question its sources. He insisted that the manuscript be marketed as a novel but publicly claimed that key events had happened to him (Gelb 1982). For more than 16 years he was famed as a raconteur and novelist. In the early 80s he extended his reach to Hollywood. His novel *Being There* (1971) was converted into a movie in 1980, while Kosinski himself played a small part in Warren Beatty's *Reds* in 1981.

In 1982, however, two reporters from *The Village Voice* interrupted the flight of this Polish painted bird. They accused him of accepting editorial assistance from the CIA, committing plagiarism, hiring unacknowledged translators for *The Painted Bird*, and misrepresenting his past (Stokes and Fremont-Smith 1982). Kosinski had his defenders, but for the first time negative stories overshadowed the positive ones. The writer lost confidence in himself. Moreover even those who had never read his novels believed the accusations against him. His reputation never recovered from the attack. To make matters worse he was beginning to show the wear and tear of late middle age, a decline which in his case had been exacerbated by his erratic way of life. To the surprise of some of his closest friends, in 1991 the 57-year-old-novelist and raconteur committed suicide (Taylor 1991). After his death, his biographer, James Park Sloan (1996), pieced together the story of the writer's rise and fall. It is now possible to extend Sloan's analysis by reconstructing some aspects of the writer's inner life and sense of lived experience from the novels themselves.

Other recollections of the Holocaust (Klein 1957; Wiesel 1958) have moments of solidarity, but *The Painted Bird* presents a stark picture of complete emotional separation. It describes the travails of an unnamed boy who is entirely on his own and must endure a series of misadventures, each worse than the last. He survives but only by suppressing his emotions. He ceases to recognize his parents as important people in his life, and aside from some idealized father figures – Hitler, Stalin, and Russian soldiers – has little use for other people. As Andrew Gordon puts it, Kosinski's boy

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protagonist like all of his later heroes becomes «a secret agent, a saboteur, an underground man operating through silence, self-imposed exile, and cunning» (1986, p. 280).

When Kosinski published *The Painted Bird*, he was a young man in a hurry. The urgency of his desire for fame and fortune, however, masked his depression. From early in childhood, Kosinski had shown signs of being overwhelmed by the horror of the aging body. The evidence for the fear of aging appears both in his novels and in stories about his life recounted by his biographer. For example, he describes the peasant woman Marta in the beginning of *The Painted Bird* in purely negative terms. Marta was, as Sloan asserts, based on Marianna Pasiowa, a peasant woman in whose cottage the Kosinski family hid for a time. She is, Kosinski writes, «disheveled, wrinkled, her skin being «like an overbaked apple». «Her withered body», he continues, «constantly trembled», and her joints were «twisted by disease». To make matters worse Marta suffered from poor sight and constant tears, which coursed «down her face in well-worn channels to join glutinous threads hanging from her nose and the bubbly saliva dripping from her lips» (*PB*, p. 5). This picture would not encourage a person to grow old. Like Gulliver among the Brobdingnagians, he portrayed the old woman without empathy. Yet in real life the old woman was, as Sloan reports, «part of an underground railroad helping Jews escape» from the nearby town (p. 26). Throughout Kosinski's life he revealed a fascination with aging, but at the same time a dread. Thus in late middle age, as Sloan reports, he panicked at the beginning signs of bodily deterioration and infirmity. Indeed self-command had been a cardinal tenet of his ever since the childhood in which he had so little control over his destiny.

To understand the emotional barrenness of Kosinski's writing and the depth of his deception, one needs to consider carefully the key events of his early life (see Sloan 1996). He was born in Poland, which Hitler invaded in 1939. Unlike many Jews, however, Kosinski's father, Mojzesz (Moses) Lewinkopf, thrived on the challenge of outwitting the Germans. He predicted that the Germans would soon be occupying their city. As a result, he obtained forged papers and changed the family name to a Polish one, Kosinski, as part of their new Aryan identity. Then he moved them closer to the new Soviet border, where they could easily mix with the well-established Jewish population. Shortly thereafter, Sloan reports, young Jerzy started hiding his Jewish origins and showing an unpleasant side to his character (1996, p. 20).

The necessities of war forced Jerzy to develop what D. W. Winnicott calls a convincing false self. This self young Kosinski barely understood, and he certainly lacked anyone with whom he could discuss the matter. Sloan suggests that Kosinski's father might well have abused his son in some way or allowed others to do so (1996, p. 21). Lacking any evidence to support that hypothesis, he is not entirely convincing. Incidents of abuse, however, occur repeatedly in *The Painted Bird*. Moreover, Jerzy Kosinski's behavior during the war and afterwards demonstrates that he had been a disturbed, indeed a traumatized young boy. An early sign of Kosinski's emotional distress was his outburst against Jewish children who tried to befriend him. On another occasion horrified grown-ups discovered that he and a friend had endangered a toddler by pushing her in a carriage down a steep hill (Sloan, 1996, p. 24). The other boy broke down into tears, but Jerzy stood aloof.

Yet when one considers the effect of war on Jerzy's daily life, his insensitive behavior seems less surprising. He was only six when his family left their home, far too young to understand the reasons for their decision. Few parents in the 1930s would have explained such matters to a young child. They may well have feared that if he knew how tenuous their fate was, he would panic and give the game away. After the move, the active child was confined to close quarters and restricted in his choice of playmates. Suddenly young Kosinski learned that he was Jewish but must hide that fact. *The Painted Bird* and comments to friends later on in New York indicate the long-term effects of that masquerade. For some time after the war Kosinski tried to hide his ethnic background. He preferred to hint of a more exotic origin. In the novel, the child complains that peasants hate him for looking like a Gypsy bastard. The boy shows no fear of having his circumcised penis noticed by other children. In contrast, Sloan reports that Jerzy was terrified of such disclosure (Sloan, 1996, pp. 33, 37).

Then just as the family went into deeper exile, his parents were handed a small child. Before the

war Kosinski's mother had lavished attention on her son, who felt seduced.[1] Thus this adoption made her elder son feel emotionally deserted. Winnicott, who acted as a consultant to evacuated children in England during the Second World War, has described in detail the problems some children experienced when their mothers had another child under far more benign conditions (1971; 1996). Jerzy had not expected a rival for his mother's affection. To make matters worse, Henryk, unlike Jerzy, looked more Polish than Jewish and was easy to handle.

Jerzy felt the change in the family group keenly. His mother turned her attention to the new toddler. The father spent his time outwitting the Nazis. Their emotional withdrawal fueled Jerzy's intense jealousy of the younger brother. When one considers the exigencies of war – frightened parents, bad food, repeated moves, hostile and outspoken peasant children, who instinctively knew that Jerzy was Jewish and shouted their disapproval (Sloan, 1996, p. 34), a new baby brother for whom no preparation had been made – it is not surprising that the older boy suffered. To make matters worse, he was cut off from friends of his own age, who might have provided a helpful distraction. Winnicott talks of evacuated children's need to play war games with their friends, their need to take «holidays from self-control». He also stressed that uprooted children needed stability; moving from one billet to another was a sign that things were going wrong (1984, p. 56). Lacking friends, Kosinski was reduced, as Sloan emphasizes, to standing and impotently watching the peasant children play (1996, p. 36). He never forgot the misery of his feelings of isolation. Sloan feels that his limited freedom may well account for his obsessive interest in voyeurism in adulthood, his visits to sex clubs to observe transvestites and a variety of sex acts (1996, pp. 349-50).

Much of *The Painted Bird* reflects the misery that Kosinski felt. Rather than crediting his father with saving his life, Kosinski's boy hero is separated from his family from the start. Early in the novel he cries out for his missing parents, but very quickly he buries his memory of them. The boy's behavior, however, is not necessarily pathological. Winnicott noted that many of the evacuated children «forgot» their parents and siblings. In some cases their mothers, preoccupied with new jobs or new babies, seemed to «forget» their far away children as well. The psychoanalyst realized that both the parents and the children would need help to overcome their amnesia (1984, pp. 45-46). Kosinski's boy receives no such intelligent concern. He survives horrific tortures by learning to avenge himself upon those who hurt him whenever possible. When his parents finally find him in an orphanage, the boy makes it clear that he regards his father as a weak person for whom he has little use.

Both in the novel and elsewhere, Kosinski repeatedly told a story about a peasant who abused him by hanging him from his arms, above a vicious dog. Such an event probably was invented. Instead the writer had suffered trauma of a more subtle nature to account for his later difficulties. Cathy Caruth, the editor of *Trauma and Experience*, has pointed out that some survivors are invulnerable to situations that defeat others (1995, p. 4). Although Kosinski escaped the camps, the combination of the upheavals of war and the loss of his mother's undivided attention was more than Jerzy could bear. He was not separated from his parents, but he was uprooted from his home and moved repeatedly in the effort to hide from the Germans. Unlike the British children who were sent to the countryside to escape the London Blitz, his life was constantly in danger. If evacuation, as Winnicott acknowledges, «is a great tragedy», then Jerzy's situation was one as well (1984, p. 50).

Even a brief comparison of the plot of *The Painted Bird* to Kosinski's own life indicates how bereft he felt. The fantasy expresses the desperation he felt when nearly engulfed by anger and helplessness. As Sloan notes, he appropriated aspects his adopted brother's life story who was separated from his parents. At the same time, however, Kosinski added his own confused reactions to the

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[1] Kosinski obsessively describes his mother's huge breasts in *The Hermit of 69th Street* (1988). He claims that she had to abandon a career as a concert pianist lest her breasts hit the keys, but Sloan doubts the truth of that boast (1996, pp. 12-14).

moves and changes that he himself endured. In the beginning of the novel the young boy is utterly confused when Marta, his first caretaker dies. After she dies the boy has no protection. Instead he undergoes a series of punishments, much like Voltaire's Candide, but with deadly consequences.[2] Horrendous incidents are piled one upon the other, each worse than the last. They represent the torture that Jerzy longed to inflict on young Henryk. Once the boy learns the joys of revenge, he becomes the kind of hardened urchin Jerzy longed to be.

After repeated incidents of abuse, the boy learns to make a «comet» of fire, a preserve can which could be swung like a «censer in church» (*PB*, p. 28). This analogy turns out to be characteristic of Kosinski's thinking. Serving in the local Roman Catholic church helped both the writer and his character forge a safe, new identity, but only for a time. Instead, the boy bewails the tendency of the peasants to regard him as a Gypsy alien, noted for his hateful black eyes and black hair. He never says he is Jewish although he is aware that he has never been baptized. Sloan has discovered that the most emotionally wrenching moments in *The Painted Bird* were embroidered. Jerzy did drop a missal while serving at the mass, but no one threw him into a pit of ordure (1996, p. 35). Nor was he ever mute. Still one wonders with what mixed feelings, Jerzy served as an altar boy. Despite his lack of religious upbringing, he may well have feared exposure and the vengeance of God for his impersonation, as Maciek did in Louis Begley's *Wartime Lies* (1991). Moreover, even after the war, he had no confidant. Those who remember their own adolescence may recall the liberation they felt upon leaving home and finding others to whom they could talk freely.

Ironically words not silence eventually damaged Kosinski's reputation. Once he began telling the story of speechlessness (Sloan, 1996, p. 108), he repeated it many times, each time with slightly different details. Unlike most concentration camp survivors and refugees, Kosinski longed to discuss his stories of war-time trials. No doubt he had found no willing audience for his tales before arriving in New York. Surviving Jews would have far worse stories of deprivation, and even in the postwar period being Jewish in Poland was not an easy role. Innocent Americans who lived far from the war zone made ideal readers and listeners. Their respectful attention encouraged him to embellish his trials even more.

Throughout his life, Kosinski took short cuts. He never admitted that his first two nonfiction books had been translated from Polish (Sloan 1996, pp. 117, 125-126). Consequently, he suppressed the information that *The Painted Bird* was as well. Instead he pretended to have mastered written English within three months of arrival in America, a lie which contributed to his status as an American literary figure. In short order, the New York literati befriended Kosinski. He applied for a Guggenheim Foundation grant and was awarded it for his novel, *Steps*. This novel won the National Book Award in 1969.

Gradually, however, Kosinski's career and life began to deteriorate. His novels received less and less acclaim, his personal life became more and more disorderly. The turning point in his later life, however, was the *Village Voice* exposé. Not only do the reporters accuse him of plagiarism, but they end by challenging the writer's metaphor of the painted bird. Having little sense of poetic diction, they checked with «the Museum of Natural History, the Audubon Society, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service». A special agent of the Service declared, «If you paint a bird, it won't fly» (Stokes & Fremont-Smith 1982, p. 43).

Kosinski is hardly the first immigrant to have embellished his prior existence. Those who migrate from inaccessible countries have a special temptation to invent their pasts. In common with other survivors of the Holocaust, Kosinski suffered from what critic André Aciman called a «dislodged identity», «a displaced soul». He felt alienated from his family, his country, and from himself, a si-

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[2] Rosalie Kane suggested the comparison of the boy to Candide in a conversation, The Gerontological Society of America, Philadelphia, November 22, 1999.

tuation which Aciman declares to be «the hardest to articulate» (1998, p. 46). In an age-old American tradition Kosinski sought to heal himself by retelling his life. He remade himself, offering explanations for his unhappiness.[3] Unfortunately, that new persona depended upon public acceptance. Most interviewers report that the writer was a charmer who cared deeply about his reputation. Once his word was challenged, he felt shamed. Then the chaos of ill feeling, which had caused him to reject his past, overwhelmed him again.

A combination of factors contributed to the writer's suicide: his life-long instability and often self-destructive behavior; the decline in popularity of his novels; his inability to recover from the denunciation of *The Village Voice*; his worsening health; and the fall of communist dictatorships. Free travel being restored to Central Europe, others could investigate his stories, most of which were false. After the attack in the *Village Voice*, Kosinski's novel writing became an act of defensiveness rather than one of self-expression, a change of which he was well aware. Finally as he began to develop symptoms of heart arrhythmia, he began fearing an inevitable physical decline (Taylor 1991, p. 26). His enemies, he knew, were waiting for his fall. In sum, when he found that he could not longer anticipate pleasure in the future, he decided to end his life.

From our vantage point the critical calumny that Kosinski endured seems excessive. Those who interview people and experts on autobiographical writing have long since learned that the stories they encounter tell us more about the current feelings of the person than they do of the past (Gubrium 1993). Moreover, sometimes repeating a story enough times can convince the teller that it really happened. For example, several modern heroes turn out to have fabricated their lives, including novelist Marguerite Duras (Riding 1998) and Rigoberta Menchú, a Guatemala Indian and Nobel laureate, who recreated herself as «a kind of all-purpose Maya» to fight governmental oppression (Preston 1999, p. A8).

From our vantage point eight years after Kosinski's death, we can begin to examine the reception of his work a bit more dispassionately. The adulation and the denigration both seem excessive. Kosinski was a public figure who relished self-disclosure but also hid aspects of his character even from himself. To borrow Winnicott's phrase he had «an urgent need to communicate and the still more urgent need not to be found» (1963, p. 185). He was frequently interviewed and appeared on talk shows and movies. He played a pivotal role in the postwar literary community both because of his Jewish roots and his anti-Communist stance. Ruth Gay's *Unfinished Lives* (1996) explains why Kosinski's literary situation became so problematic. Eastern European Jewry was destroyed by the Holocaust, she notes. The survivors who went to Israel were encouraged to reinvent rather than recreate the Jewish story. This left young American Jews in the difficult position of being keepers of the flame. Thus when Kosinski's claim to be a survivor turned out to be greatly exaggerated, many readers felt betrayed and rejected him angrily. Moreover, such stories give heart to Holocaust deniers, who insist, against the incontrovertible proof, that the Holocaust never happened. Despite these caveats, now may be the time that readers and critics can recognize Kosinski's achievement. For he, responding to the ruthless craziness of the Nazis' attempts to exterminate the Jews, created an early postmodern novel with an «all-purpose» war victim, a representative of all the children whose lives were shattered by the Shoah.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 67-72

Rear Window and *Manhattan Murder Mystery*: Two primal scene fantasies (*)

SOLANGE LEIBOVICI (**)

Classical mystery novels present two story lines: the crime and the investigation. The first story relates the previous or current course of events, while the second story conveys the way the narrator – along with the reader – learns of the events and tries to solve the puzzle. The first story highlights a reality and the events transpiring in this context. In the second story the focus shifts to the author's style and literary strategies.[1]

In the suspense novel and the *roman noir* both stories take place simultaneously and are closely intertwined. The second story figures prominently, as the mystery is the point of departure. Readers are driven by curiosity – who did it and why – and suspense – they await the events predicted. These elements are also present in the two films I will discuss: Hitchcock's *Rear Window* and Woody Allen's *Manhattan Murder Mystery*.

In *Rear Window* the photographer L. B. Jeffries (James Stewart) is stuck at home with a broken leg. With a plaster cast covering his leg up to the thigh, he sits by the window day and night in the sweltering, humid summer heat spying on his neighbors through binoculars and his camera's immense long-focus lens. At the beginning of the movie the shades in his apartment are raised: we follow his view to watch the seemingly everyday events in the surrounding apartments, but we will also witness his secret fantasy.

The audience shares his concern about giving up his carefree, roaming photographer's life to marry Liza Freemont (Grace Kelly). His grounds for worrying may appear surprising: she is too beautiful, too smart, too rich and too perfect. He prefers the mediocrity of the working class neighborhood where he lives to Liza's posh surroundings.

One night, while spying on his neighbor Thorwald (Raymond Burr), who argues constantly with his nagging, invalid wife, Jeffries notices that the woman has disappeared. After watching Thorwald leave the house three times carrying a suitcase, Jeffries begins to think the man has killed

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(*) This paper was presented at the Fifteenth Conference in St. Petersburg in 1998, but was sent in too late. I thank Frederico Pereira for accepting to publish it in the proceedings of the Sixteenth Conference in Urbino, 1999.

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[1] Tzvetan Todorov, *Poétique de la prose* (Paris: Seuil, 1978).

his wife. By convincing Liza that his murder theory is right and having her sneak into the murderer's house, he manages to expose the murderer: Liza finds the vanished woman's wedding ring. Jeffries is nearly killed in the effort, when Thorwald bursts into his house and pushes him out the window. He breaks his other leg too.

Manhattan Murder Mystery is about the couple Larry (Woody Allen) and Carol Lipton (Diane Keaton). One night they meet their neighbors, the elderly couple Paul and Lillian House. Paul House is an amiable old gentlemen who collects stamps and is rebuilding his old movie theater. Lillian explains that they have bought twin cemetery plots so that they can be together after they die. Somewhat shocked, Carol realizes that she and Larry are headed toward the same peaceful, boring married life.

Upon returning home the next day, they learn that Mrs. House has died of a heart attack. Carol is immediately suspicious: Mr. House appears «too composed for a man whose wife just died». When she visits Mr. House she discovers an urn containing ashes in the kitchen cupboard. That night Mr. House leaves his apartment carrying a suitcase. Carol manages to get the key and pokes around the apartment while he is away. She is certain that Mr. House has killed his wife. At first Larry laughs at her: «You're making a mystery where nothing exists.»

Carol finds an ally in their friend Ted (Alan Alda) and takes him along on her investigation. She uses the murder as an excuse to make her own life more exciting and to flirt with Ted. Meanwhile Larry, a publisher, is being charmed by Marcia Fox (Anjelica Huston), a writer who likes to party and has, as she likes to say, «tremendous sex appeal». Ted and Carol keep circling each other, Larry has Marcia teach him to play poker, but nobody has the temerity to commit adultery. Larry quickly becomes jealous of Ted and Carol of Marcia.

Eventually, Carol and Larry discover that Mrs. House is still alive. Once again, the wedding ring is the evidence of the murder: Carol finds Mrs. House's ring at the hotel where Mrs. House is hiding; she will be murdered by her husband later on. Marcia solves the mystery and finds a way to expose Mr. House. The last part of the film is not very convincing and forms a sub-plot within the plot. Upon finding Carol in his apartment, Mr. House holds her captive in his movie theater. He tries to kill Larry as images from the famous mirror scene in *The Lady from Shanghai* loom in the background. Mr. House is knocked out, Larry frees Carol, and Ted starts seeing Marcia.

In both films the first story is about relationships between men and women, married life and being single and love and sex. The apparent calm is disrupted by the murder mystery in which a would-be detective teams up with a partner to solve the murder of a neighbor's wife. Both films are about curiosity and unveiling secrets. The second story uses dialogues and cinematic techniques to convey underlying themes. *Rear Window* is about watching forbidden things and fear of punishment, suspense and visualization of fear. *Manhattan Murder Mystery* addresses the irony and verbalization of conflicts.

Generally, the detective or the individual who has assumed this role (willingly or otherwise) is viewed as the incarnation of curiosity. Often this figure is lonely or tormented by fear and embarks on a search for some terrible secret. Deciphering the puzzle satisfies this curiosity. In turn, the empathizing reader or viewer delights in perceiving previously concealed disconcerting facts through the eyes of the hero.

This genre often relies on unconscious fantasy manifested by a simple action based on the verb, such as: «someone is murdered», or «someone murders a woman». Such a primal fantasy comprises the same elements as the primal scene. Readers or viewers accomplish what a helpless child – confronted with the mysterious sexuality of his parents – can not: solving the mystery and seeing. The terrifying fog of darkness enveloping the primal scene, often interpreted by the child as an act of violence, seems to be clearing.[2]

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[2] Jules Bedner, *Simenon et le jeu des deux histoires* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 1990).

Freud provides the best description of the primal scene in *Aus der Geschichte einer infantilen Neurose* (1915), the well-known case study of the Wolf Man, and identifies the following components in the story:

> a true incident – from a very early period – watching – immobility – sexual problems – castration – the father – something that instills terrible fear.

This scene is probably a subsequent fantasy based on vague indications from reality. Freud believes that this unconscious fantasy exists among all neurotics and probably with everybody else as well. As a primal fantasy, it links past with present, consciousness with the unconscious and imagination with reality. Lacan describes fantasies as scenes with a limited number of characters, an action, a prevailing affect and the presence of a specific body part. Though related in detail, the scenario is considered enigmatic by the narrator.

Aware of his intimate involvement in this story and able to express the feelings aroused, the narrator nevertheless experiences the fantasy as something that is forced upon him, and that repeats itself against his will. Rather than a story containing a plot, it is a tableau vivant, a frozen image of stills in which the action is limited to a few gestures.[3]

The open windows watched by Jeffries in *Rear Window* are like the many screens depicting lives – lives that all revolve around sex. A drunken musician holds wild parties, a beautiful dancer (whom he calls 'Miss Torso') is constantly surrounded by men ('wolves', according to Liza), two newlyweds in love cannot keep their hands off each other, a lonely woman (Miss Lonely Hart) pretends she has invited a man for dinner, an elderly couple has a dog that is probably killed by Thorwald and symbolizes punished curiosity. («Did he know too much?» wonders Liza.) The primal fantasy is projected in small shards on all those screens and multiplied, like the children's Christmas calendars with a window to be opened each day. Miss Torso seduces men, the drunken composer loses his temper, and the man brought home by Miss Lonely Hart nearly rapes her.

Jeffries is the voyeur who watches but will not be seen. He is both immobile and helpless, curious and excited by the events transpiring before his eyes; less physical than imaginary, as depicted by the elevated leg in a cast, which also symbolizes his helplessness. Here, everything revolves around the eyes, as a voyeur derives pleasure from that part of his body, and the projections of the eyes: the binoculars, the long-focus lens.

Despite her beauty and intelligence, Liza cannot convince Jeffries to marry her. While kissing her, he realizes that something strange must have happened in Thorwald's apartment and calls out: «There's something terribly wrong», an association that might refer either to the apartment across the courtyard but also to his own life. Even when Liza offers to spend the night and appears in a stunning negligee, he shows little enthusiasm. He keeps pondering about Thorwald, whom he saw wrapping a large butcher knife and a saw in a newspaper. Only when Liza joins him in his fantasy («Tell me everything you saw, and what you think it means») does he become interested in her.

Jeffries seems obsessed with the story of the suspected murder. His friend Doyle, who is a real detective, ridicules him and tries to convince him he is wrong: «That's a secret private world you look upon there. People do a lot in private they impossibly could explain in public.» Doyle thinks the story is a hallucination, and of course it is.

Jeffries' story and that of the murder are inextricably linked. The voyeur enjoys watching others and is terrified of his own sexuality (not to mention marriage). The nurse who calls on Jeffries every day correctly observes that the half-naked ladies he is watching hardly raise his temperature and diagnoses a hormone deficiency. In his fantasy sleeping with a woman means killing her. Consistently clad in light blue pajamas, Jeffries is the little boy reconstructing the

[3] J.-D. Nasio, *Cinq leçons sur la théorie de Jacques Lacan* (Paris: Payot, 1994).

primal scene in the dark (a frightening event from a very early period), who is immobile and helpless but also excited by the fantasy.

Still, Jeffries' fear – which is also his secret hope – will become reality at the end of the story, when Liza is searching Thorwald's apartment for evidence and is caught there by the murderer. Jeffries nearly causes the innocent Liza's death. His voyeurism, which is socially redeemed by his work as a photographer, relates to the fixation with the childlike scenario of the man who kills his wife – a popular theme in Hitchcock's films (*Notorious, Rebecca, Dial M for Murder, Vertigo* etc...).

Thorwald, the murderer, nearly catches Jeffries in the eeriest, most charged scene in the movie. Elsewhere, Liza was almost killed, as we watched from Jeffries' apartment (i.e. through his eyes). Now, the camera is focused on Jeffries. The real murder has yet to take place: that of the father killing the son. Thorwald (Thor, the powerfull god of revenge) comes after him with his butcher knife and his saw. We hear his heavy footsteps on the stairs, which are too heavy and too long, like the inhuman footsteps of a large stone statue, the vengeful castrating father, the commander from Don Juan. Norman Holland writes in a paper on Vertigo that «stairs are another Hitchcock preoccupation. Horrible things happen in Hitchcock movies at the top or the bottom of stairs».[4] Once inside – the door is not even locked – Thorwald repeats the same sentence: «What is it you want?» This question must be shocking to Jeffries, as he wants and fears exactly what Thorwald has done. Thorwald's entrance on the scene symbolizes the return of the repressed.

«What do you want?» («Que veux-tu?», «Che vuoi?») is the question of all questions, the one that can never be answered, the question which confronts the subject with the void of the Other (Lacan's 'objet petit a') and the unfullfillment of desire.

Jeffries blinds Thorwald with his flash (a reverse punishment: the father is blinded here) until the police arrive. By then, Thorwald has pushed him toward the window. Jeffries is already hanging in suspension and plummets downward soon afterwards.

At the end of the movie Jeffries is sleeping in his wheelchair with a contented smile and two legs in casts under Liza's protective gaze. Suddenly, Liza's appearance is more boyish: she is wearing jeans and flat shoes. Somewhat 'defeminized', she seems closer to Jeffries. Marriage – and consequently the sexual act – have been postponed again. Daily life has resumed, and the newlyweds across the courtyard are having their first argument.

Rear Window is not a *film noir*, despite the frequent and open use of Freudian aspects as a basis for the narrative developments. The hero of the *film noir* is a man who was originally level-headed but has been turned into a fugitive by passion or greed and has become estranged and unpredictable. Hitchcock's film is not a stylized vision of alienation and existential embitterment but the nightmare of a man at odds with his sexuality.

In Woody Allen's movie the references to Hitchcock include the city bus riding along on which Carol sees Mrs. House (whom she presumed dead). The bus is marked Vertigo in big letters. It rides straight across the scene, just as Hitchcock used to walk across the set in his own movies. Also the three M's in the title seem to refer to *Dial M for Murder*. In some respects *Manhattan Murder Mystery* is a remake of *Rear Window*.

Allen refers to his great predecessor and parodies him by replacing the suspense with irony. The primal fantasy is no longer dominated by fear and guilt: the focus has shifted to curiosity and the desire to solve the puzzle, to the importance and the power of fantasies.

James Stewart's forced immobility in *Rear Window* makes way for the tremendous mobility and near neurotic hyperactivity of the two amateur detectives. While Rear Window was about

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[4] Norman N. Holland, «Hitchcock's *Vertigo*: One Viewer's Viewing» (*Literature and Psychoanalysis*, Boston, July 1996, Ed. Frederico Pereira, Lisbon, 1997).

glances, looks, images and secrecy, *Manhattan Murder Mystery* focuses on words, literal meanings and the path the two main characters have to cover to find the solution. This path begins in their house and culminates there as well. The open windows have been replaced by corridors (a typical Hitchcock image), staircases and streets. The sweltering heat in *Rear Window* is replaced by the Indian Summer in New York in *Manhattan Murder Mystery*, as an indication of downfall and impending doom.

In both movies the hero is unable to act, and his wife or girlfriend assumes an active role and sneaks into the home of the murderer. Jeffries is physically and literally paralyzed, powerless, impotent; his leg is elevated but only because of the cast. He is even unable to scratch the itch on his leg. Larry is paralyzed by fears about life and death, and his relationship with Carol is more like a friendly brother/sister relationship than a marriage. Here, the roles of the man and the woman are reversed. The murder mystery breaks the daily routine. Carol exclaims: «Isn't this the most exciting thing that happened to us in our whole marriage?» Certainly food for thought... Then the comfortable but sexless relationship continues as usual. Larry lies beside Carol in bed, but nothing happens between the two. Jeffries literally refuses to go to bed. To the nurse's annoyance, he sleeps in his wheelchair and will allow nobody but her to touch his body, to care for him and to massage his back.

This focalization on the woman transfers the role of the mythical hero to her: the hero descends into the hell, where he defeats the monster and retrieves the treasure. In both films the woman is not the object but another independant, free acting subject, who wants to get the treasure: the wedding ring, which for Liza symbolizes the marriage she desires «for better or for worse, till death do us part» (provided the death is a natural one) and for Carol offers protection from the adultery about which she secretly dreams.

The claustrophobia from *Rear Window* recurs in Allen's movie when Larry and Carol are stuck in the hotel elevator, and Larry panics. Larry's obsessive need to talk about everything on his mind, however, prevents the audience from identifying with him and empathizing with his fear. As in all Allen's movies, fear becomes a way to achieve a comic effect.

Thorwald wears glasses, and as Norman Holland points out: «There is something wrong with people with glasses [...] They don't look right. They are not pleasant to look at, and they themselves can't look, and looking is terribly important to Hitchcock.»[5] Larry has bad eyes, as Carol remarks in the beginning of the film, and she wears glasses herself (which she forgets in Mr. House's appartment). In other words: they don't see what is really happening. It's the camera which replaces their eyes, moving around like a person's eyes without focussing on a special object. But there is always a distance between camera and actors, while in Hitchcocks films, the great director, who enjoyed playing all the parts and was all his personages, *was* himself the camera.

Allen's characters walk and ride though New York and enjoy a freedom unknown to L. B. Jeffries. Their journey takes them back where they started, their home, their marriage, but they have learned something: fantasies are good, they make life exciting and infidelity unnecessary. Jeffries associates marriage with dangerous sex; Larry finds that marriage eliminates the need for this activity. Compared to the flamboyant Mr. House, who – like Thorwald – has a young mistress and murders his wife, Larry is a timid man with many fears and is terrified by Marcia's sexually aggressive overtures. Compared to Marcia Fox, Carol is a contented, middle-class housewife. Some people live life to the fullest, while others only imagine things.

Woody Allen's movie also shows that the compulsion to know and to analyze can paralyze the artist, who becomes too much of an intellectual (a man who wears glasses) and appears doomed to endless ironizing. While Hitchcock uses all cinematic means to visualize violent urges, fears and

[5] Holland, 1997.

obsessions, where the interplay between light and dark conveys the transitions between good and bad, Allen's images are subordinate to speech and the auto-fictional construction.

In Hitchcock's movie, the two stories are intertwined and reinforce one another; the primal fantasy explains Jeffries' fear of sexuality and is depicted as a cohesive force between past and present, conscious and unconscious, fantasy and reality. The feelings aroused by the primal scene (doom, fear, helplessness, excitement) are palpable to the audience. What Hitchcock wanted was, in a certain 'tongue-in-cheek' manner, to create fright; this was as he said «the essential part of my job». Allen, who is aware of the fact and toys with it, seems unable or unwilling to impart the underlying affects: he therefore remains stuck in the present and the reality. It seems as he also «makes a mystery where nothing exists».

The primal fantasy is suggested by the killer's last name: Mr. House. Here, the house represents the Lacanian signifier, the inner space, the main basis for everything that happens: never go rummaging in somebody else's house (or unconscious), as you will find uncanny secrets you are better off not knowing. Mr. House also owns a movie house, where at the end fiction and reality get confused, or, as Larry notes: «I'll never say that life imitates art again.» Woody Allen does not allow us inside his house and hides behind humor. Allen's postmodern version both circumvents and deconstructs the primal fantasy, which consequently loses its power as a source of inspiration. Allen refers to other movies where murder fantasies are central (*Rear Window, Double Indemnity, The Lady from Shanghai*) but nevertheless keeps his distance.

Both reality and fantasy change in the light the authors and artists shed on them. Perhaps an excess of self-analysis depletes an artist's creative talent. The dialogues are also more dispassionate. Compare Jeffries' ominous «There's something terribly wrong» with Larry's comic euphemism «This could lead to great unhappiness». Jeffries does not know what is wrong with him. Larry knows all too well and ridicules the problem. As he points out in the elevator: «Claustrofobia and a dead body: this is a neurotic jackpot». The intuitive insights into unconscious processes that made Hitchcock's movie a brilliant vision of mankind and his terrifying fantasies are suppressed by rationalizations in *Manhattan Murder Mystery*, which thus becomes a *metafilm* and a virtually sterile parody.

Translation by Lee Mitzman

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 73-77

On Cordelia's «Nothing»

ROBERT SILHOL (*)

If we accept Freud's conclusion that a dream[1] always «contains indications of the repressed wishes to which it owes its formation», it is not too difficult, I think, to extend this conclsuion to language and accept the idea that the words and sentences we produce, in speaking or writing, contain «indications» about the «repressed wishes» that caused their production. (This, by the way, is what I have been trying to make clear to literary critics and teachers of literature for the past twenty years with, I must say, little or no success at all. Here is the exact «formula» I have been using: «What characterizes speech, human discourse, is that it bears the traces of what caused it to be produced.»)

What I would like to do, then, is take a passage from a well-known work of literature and listen to its words as I would if I had a patient speaking on the couch. I have chosen the first few pages of Shakespeares's *King Lear*, and, of course, there is nothing arbitrary in my choice. Let me simply add, about my choice, that Cordelia's reply to her father is a scene which has always interested me, if only because I find a representation of the failure of the exchange between parent and infant in it, and also because I thought at first that the portrait of Lear as a doting, demanding father might be used as an illustration of what I had recently found in my research on Lacan's «Name of the father». This, I have now come to realize, was nothing but an unconscious «excuse», a «screen», as in «screen memory», but it is quite possible I would not have studied the said scene without such a protection at first.

That was, in any case, my initial response to *King Lear* and to the scene between father and daughter at the opening of the play, part of my response at least, a response I can briefly sum up as a preliminary chapter of my analysis of Shakespeare's discourse: in our scene, a *child refuses* something to a parent, and I find this pleasurable. On the other hand – and on second thoughts –, I also see a *woman* – whom I take to be a possible mother figure – *refusing* something to someone, and I read this, reconstruct this, as a scene in which a child is being refused something. This time, my reading pleasure has something of a masochistic pleasure of repetition. But there is more, and I am not forgetting that the other side of the child's refusal (first layer of my reading as it were) is a

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[1] As for instance in «Some additional notes upon dream interpretation as a whole», *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74, vol. XIX (1925).

parent's dismay in front of a «No» that is not uttered by him, the father, but by someone else: at last, somebody stands up to the family tyrant, and this also is pleasurable.

Having started on a search for an illustration of the law of the «Name of the father» (Lacan), I find myself in the end analysing a passage which tells of rebellion against parental authority (the father) and which also can be said to represent a difficult relationship between mother and infant.

But how can I now go from my own response to an analysis of the scene? How can we proceed from a subjective response to the words of the passage to the necessary «floating attention» of the analyst? This is the difficult – epistemological – question which confronts the psychoanalytical critic. Can we, bearing Freud's conclusion about the dream in mind, go further than the above response and turn to the words on the page in the hope of hearing a «subject» speak? To make total abstraction of one's own response is of course impossible, but one may on the other hand hope that, having acknowledged their own response, the analyst and the psychoanalytical critic find themselves in a better (less bad) position to listen to the text without preconceptions.

All the same, in my search for a more «objective» meaning – an impossible object indeed – I shall start with my own response to the scene, keeping it aside as it were, in the hope it will lead me to a convincing analysis of the words. Such, indeed, is the paradoxical nature of psychoanalysis.

What do *I* hear? And what do *we* hear?

The scene between father and daughter is well known. It is in fact a contest, organised by a parent, in which each of the three children – here three daugthers – must make the demonstration that she loves her parent best. It is a demand for love.

Now, to someone who would say to us: «I dreamt, or I thought of a tale in which, I was asking someone to tell me he or she loved me, and the person said 'No'», I trust we would correctly analyse such a dream, or tale, as the repetition of a refusal, the «jouissance» implied being of a masochistic nature. And to someone who would say: «I dreamt someone asked me to tell him or her how much I loved him/her and I refused to give a proper answer», I suppose we would, correctly again, analyse the scene as an imaginary rebellion, the legitimate bearer of the law, the parent whose role it is to say «No», being confronted with an unexpected «Nothing», a «No» coming from a person whose role is usually one of submission.

Thus, if we analyse – rather than read – the scene, we come to the conclusion that two directions were open to our identifications: either I am a wounded parent feeling unloved or a rebellious child. But we are no longer simply watching or reading the play, I have already insisted on this; our question, you may remember, was: «What is being said in this scene that might throw some light on human behaviour?», which now leads to another question, almost a standard psychoanalytical formula: «Where is the subject here?»

For however true to life they may seem, Lear and Cordelia are not real persons, they have no autonomy, no real history, no real life outside of the pages that constitute the play. And if we really wish «to hold the mirror up to nature», if we wish to study literature as a precise representation of man and woman, we have to find a more suitable object than a mere character.

In a word, and I am sure you know by now what I am driving at, one of the objects of psychoanalysis is language; indeed, this is the only object we can rely on: Shakespeare's discourse.[2] So that whatever our personal identification to the characters of the play (with the child, the parent, or with both in turn), our psychoanalytical, clinical, question will be: «What is the coherence – in terms of unconscious human behaviour – of such a representation, where is the logic in it, and what does it tell me about myself and about man and woman?» Such a coherence of course, when it

[2] The Complete Oxford Shakespeare provides edited texts of both the Quarto and the Folio. Although there are some slight differences between the two versions as far as our scene is concerned, both have the «Nothing my Lord» we are analyzing.

On the question of the two versions, see: Gary Taylor & Michael Warren (Eds.), *The Division of the Kingdom, Shakespeare's two versions of King Lear*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1986.

exists, is the result of a decision of the playwright and/or – and we cannot dispense with the alternative – the result of forces which express themselves through the author without his knowing it or even his consciously wishing it.

Thus can we now say that Lear, the representation of a real Lear we may imagine, will not simply be viewed as a doting old man or a tyrannical patriarch, but as a representation whose discourse might well express – as in a dream – the unconscious feelings and «thoughts» (*gedanken*) of the real and original producer of what we find on the written page. And this other person is naturally someone who has had a proper history, a history where the infant he must have been clearly shows. Which is a way I have of saying that my demand for love always bears the mark of the child I have been, and perhaps also a correct interpretation of this «craw[ling]» we find in Lear's first long speech.

> ...and 'tis our fast intent
> To shake all cares and business from our age;
> Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
> Unburthen'd crawl toward death.

Old persons, it is true, have been known to lose part of their judgment and behave like small children, and we do speak of a «second childhood» (the French say «*retomber en enfance*»), but it is equally true that such a «second» childhood resembles what must have been a first childhood to begin with. «Age», «younger» and «crawl», cannot help attracting the «floating» ear of the psychoanalytic interpreter.

But Lear and Cordelia, as «signifiers», both stand for more things than one, and we must not hasten to restrict each of them to only one symbolic role. As signifiers, they must be read, interpreted, according to the various levels represented in the play. The interest of *King Lear*, its importance, may well come from this mutiplicity of meanings.

Let us begin with what seems to me the simplest «level»: that of a demand for love and of an exchange between mother and infant. Among the words that accompany Lear's demand for love – «Tell me, my daughters, / Since now we will divest us, both of rule, / Interest of territory, cares of state...» –, I think «since» and «divest» must be noticed. It is as a new-born, almost, that Lear now presents himself in front of his «children», and the daugthers, in turn, can be regarded as having something of a composite mother-image. The old man, now a naked baby, has given all he had:

> ...we have divided
> In three our kingdom: and it is our fast intent
> To shake all cares and business from our age;

He must be loved because (since) he is deprived of everything.

The first few lines he utters on appearing in the play, however, contain some interesting information[3]:

> Meantime, we shall express our darker purpose.
> Give me the map here. Know that we have divided
> In three our kingdom:

Yes, it all starts with a division, and I read this as a form of loss; this is why, perhaps, we have this «darker» on the first line: deep and secret, but also sombre.

Confronted with this «loss», Lear imagines an exchange which he hopes will be a compensation for what he has just given. He is going to give his kingdom away, but he nevertheless begins his sentence with a «Give me». Diminished, having lost his... kingdom – and I cannot help thinking of Freud's expression: «his majesty the baby» –, in a word symbolically castrated, he cries for help

[3] And his very first word is: «Attend (the Lords of France and Burgundy)».

and turns to mother: his three daugthers. The exchange between Lear and his daugthers does come therefore as a logical sequence to division and loss: he has given, he expects to receive. To receive what? Love, no doubt; but we can perhaps be a little more specific.

And for this, it is necessary to look at the scene very carefully. Why, for instance, *three daugthers*? And also, why a contest between them? Or rather, to phrase my question in a more scholarly way: why choose such a situation as the one presented in Holinshed's *Chronicle* (which has three daugthers: Gonerilla, Regan and Cordeillla) or in *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1586), *The Faerie Queene*, and even in the tragi-comedy *King Lear*?[4] What cannot be denied is that the myth was well known and that it attracted Shakespeare's imagination. So that, for the psychoanalytic critic, the sources of *King Lear* will simply be considered as a day-remnant, which brings me back to my original question: why «three» and why a «contest»?

As we know, the question of a choice between three options has been dealt with by Freud in «The Theme of the three caskets» (1913). The choice of lead instead of gold and silver, in *The Merchant of Venice*, makes him «suspect a concealed motives behind [Bassanio's] unsatisfying argument». Adding «that we have here an ancient theme, which requires to be interpreted and traced back to its origin», he then goes on to analyse the scene between Lear and his daughters, and comments: «Is not this once more a scene of choosing between three women, of whom the youngest is the best, the supreme one?» (page 246). That *King Lear* should represent man's unconscious attitude in front of death, and the mother as a three-person goddess, can certainly be accepted as a correct psychoanalytic interpretation even though this may seem too general a comment to us. Indeed, it is my opinion that besides this first «layer» of meaning, the signifier «death» may receive another «symbolical» interpretation. In short, death can also be read here as «castration». We remember that in Freud's work also the number 3 is sometimes considered as a representation of male genitality; this leads me to interpret the scene between Lear and his daugthers as an unconscious representation of a choice the difference between the sexes forces us all to make. The child, the infant, must identify with one of his two parents, and Lear's question: «Which of you shall we say doth love us most?» is not without reminding me of the silly, but apparently natural, question parents sometimes put to their offsprings: «Which of your parents do you love best, Mummy or Daddy?». So that it is not only a contest between the three children that we witness, but a contest between parents, or rather a contest between the sexes. What seems at the root of the «contest» is the infant's identification: choose me as a model, do not choose the «other side». This is precisely what is explained in Lacan's «Name of the father», where the child is shown going from mother (whose «phallus» he was) to father (where he/she will try *to have* «it» rather than *to be* «it» [it: the phallus]. Thus does the boy identify will the father, while the girl desires to receive a child-phallus from the father.

So far, the fantasmatic sequence at the origin of Shakespeare's reading of the myth seems to have been: 1) division, loss – which I read also as separation, loss of fusion –, and 2) search for a compensation or, more simply, search for a satisfactory sexual identification: choice.

The following step is Lear's demand to Cordelia. It seems the scene can be considered from two points of view (and there is no contradiction between the two). The simplest interpretation is to see in Lear an infant, a helpless new-born, as we have already seen, which makes a mother of Cordelia: «Love me, the baby says, give me...». But another perspective can also be adopted, according to which Lear is the parent and Cordelia the infant, and this, I think, informs us on the unconscious meaning implied in the relationship between Lear and his daugther.

The first perspective is simple enough, and obvious for the psychoanalyst. In something like a Kleinian point of view, we witness an exchange of love between child and parent, and this exchange

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[4] Studies of the sources of *King Lear* are easy fo find. I have used *Shakespeare, A Bibliographical Guide*, edited by Stanley Wells, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990.

tragically fails: the mother says «No», gives «Nothing». Why such a refusal? Honesty, of course; this is the standard, and acceptable, answer: Cordelia refuses to lie *like her sisters*. She refuses to compete in a contest whose nature will inevitably *devaluate* the meaning of words. But there is more, and we can add to this sensible explanation that Cordelia's may also represent an unconscious repetition of a «cold» relationship with a distant, refusing mother. *Jouissance* would here be at work, I have already alluded to this.

The parent-infant exchange can nevertheless be yet given another, a third, dimension.

For we have been unfair with Cordelia's sisters; in another context, their protestations of love wouldn't probably seem so exaggerated and false. In a way, some of their lines simply announce Cordelia's attitude: both daugthers express their doubts as to the virtues of the words we pronounce, and both seem aware of the limitations of language:

GONERIL: Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter,
.....
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable.

REGAN: Sir, I am made
Of the self-same metal that my sister is,
.....In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short:

In a word, to find them deceitful at this point in the play – as many critics do – is simply to project what the play will only reveal later. Which makes me think that what Lear is asking Cordelia is something else than words. No doubt, he is asking words also, and here the traditional interpretation of Cordelia's refusal interestingly coincides with what modern psychoanalysis has to say about language. For Cordelia knows that words can lie and that a (lacanian) distinction between *parole pleine* (full speech) and *parole vide* (empty speech) must be made. But there is more to it than this, and I think her «Nothing» points to something other than language, or rather, to something which confronts humans even before language and from which, for Lacan, language originates.

In his quest for self-reparation, after division and loss, Lear, the parent, asks the child to reconstruct him; having experienced his «uncompleteness», he wants Cordelia to complete him again. We can also say he is looking for the (impossible) ONE, fusion, which is the same thing as completion. In short, he refuses symbolic castration, and in plain lacanian terms he asks Cordelia to be his «phallus». Where we see that his tragic inability to accept he cannot be «complete» (some would say «have the phallus») makes him lose what he so much wanted, and causes Cordelia's death in the end.

For to his demand, Cordelia could only reply she had «Nothing» to offer. In the scene we are reading, she is the one who embodies the «Name, or No of the father». She says no to fusion, and perhaps also reminds Lear, and us, that we belong to one sex and not to the other. She denounces the illusion of the *imaginaire*.

As any child, she can fanticize she *has* the phallus – which is nothing but a signifier – and, as a daugther, dream she will receive the child-phallus from her father (were she a little boy, she would dream she has the same «thing» as her father has). But what she refuses to do, what Shakespeare makes her refuse to do, is to *be* such a phallus. Indeed, she *has nothing* to offer Lear, no «thing», because offering herself as a substitute for her father's loss would amount to be turned into an object, the very opposite of a subject, would amount, indeed, to become a psychotic.

To me, her silence is the silence of the analyst; she refuses to lie, refuses to pretend that the ONE can ever be attained; and she also refuses to be turned into a psychotic «object». The silence of the analyst is of course not the muteness of the autistic child, but in *King Lear*, Cordelia's «Love, and be silent» can perhaps be read as a warning.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 79-84

Manon Lescaut: The impossible object in literature and opera

ELAINE HOFFMAN BARUCH (*)

Though it was first published in the eighteenth century, in 1731, Abbé Prévost's novel *Manon Lescaut* foreshadowed many of the vicissitudes of love for an impossible object that filled the literary and imaginative lives of the Romantics and the Victorians, our closest ancestors. The story of the young and poor chevalier des Grieux, who encounters a young girl about to enter a convent, falls immediately in love and rescues her only to have her go on to betray him was drawn in part from Prévost's own life. His account of a young man so in love – or so obsessed, which may amount to the same thing – that he keeps returning to the young woman who deceives him, perhaps believing that this time he – or she – will get it right, has had great attraction for men and women alike both as a novel and in its operatic versions, the most famous being Massenet's *Manon* and Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*. (An earlier version by Daniel Auber was enormously popular as well as have been several ballet treatments.)

Why does such a plot continue to exert its fascination even after our so-called sexual revolution? It does so in part because it contains themes, expressed both verbally and musically, that psychoanalysis has uncovered as groundsprings for our action – or inaction: the repetition compulsion, the transitory nature of beauty and the consequent value we place on it, the symbolic importance of money and the pleasure that it can provide, the splitting of the sexual object into idealized and degraded, the male desire for rescue of the mother, and perhaps most important, narcissistic nostalgia, a longing for our early past and the desire for impossible love. I am here combining two of Freud's concepts, narcissism and nostalgia, to refer to the doomed desire to return to that earliest love in our lives, the mother, when we felt ourselves to be omnipotent, a desire that figures even if unconsciously in many operas – certainly it does in Manon – and indeed in much of our affective life.

One connection between Manon and the mother is brought out very forcibly in the French novel. As Naomi Segal in her book *The Unintended Reader: Feminism and Manon Lescaut*

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(Cambridge University Press, 1986) points out, the name Manon not only echoes 'Maman', (mother) it also turns her negative: 'mais non!' (but no). Lacan speaks about «le nom et le non du père», the name and the no or prohibition of the father within the symbolic order, the order of culture, civilization. Prévost's book, says Segal, «is about 'le non de la mère'» (272): the no or the prohibition of the mother.

One aspect of Freud's theory that illuminates the story of Manon and the continued appeal to men of a woman who is not satisfied by one man appears in «A Special Type of Choice of Object Made by Men», in «Three Contributions to the Psychology of Love». Freud there explains the appeal of the degraded sexual object, the fallen woman, as residing in the male's desire to rescue the mother. The mother is like a prostitute in that she belongs to another man, not us, even though she deluded us into thinking we were special. (For *us*, read male child but in some ways the girl child as well.)

One of the most provocative aspects of the Manon story, which speaks to us with special force today, is that Manon, the «astonishing sphinx», who was seen as the essence of femininity in all its mystery, by some early writers, including the poet Alfred de Musset who coined the phrase, is actually more «manly» than des Grieux. Both the hero and the heroine overturn traditional expectations of gender, perhaps because when it comes to love, traditional rules often do not apply, particularly when the love remains outside marriage and therefore does not threaten prevailing institutions.

In the second of his «Contributions to the Psychology of Love», «On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love», Freud writes about the splitting of the sexual object into one woman who is tender and nurturing and another that is sexual. «The whole sphere of love in such people remains divided in the two directions personified in art as sacred and profane (or animal) love. Where they love they do not desire and where they desire they cannot love.» (183) What is fascinating in Massenet (and Prévost too) is that although Freud was writing about men here (despite his adjective universal (*allgemeinste*), this splitting occurs in Manon rather than des Grieux, another gender reversal, except that this time the split is between love and pleasure, rather than love and sexual desire. It is des Grieux who is capable of loving one person only. In contrast – at least until the end of the respective works – Manon loves only partially; she is the libertine, who believes in *carpe diem*, seizing the day, and does not want marriage or permanence. At least so she says – or sings. Actually both figures fear loss and want nurturance. But while des Grieux desires fusion, Manon flees it, an-other frustration of the usual gender codes. One might say that it is des Grieux, at least in Massenet, who acts like the seduced and abandoned heroine.

Massenet's Manon as well as Prévost's allows us to examine bi-sexual possibilities in gender performance (to use Judith Butler's term). The reversal of roles transports us back to a time when the mother was all-powerful in our lives, when we could lie back and she would take charge of everything. Manon as the phallic mother is particularly evident in Prévost. In fact, some contemporary literary criticism, particularly that of Naomi Segal argues that des Grieux in the novel not only wants to rescue the mother, he wants to be a mother. But the gender reversal is not always readily apparent. To a great extent Manon's «masculinity» is hidden or ignored by those on stage and the audience viewing her because of her feminine masquerade, her attention to adornment, appearance. The term *masquerade* was first given currency in psychoanalytic circles through Joan Riviere's influential essay «Womanliness as a Masquerade», published originally in *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* in l929. If Riviere were writing this essay today, she would probably use the term *femininity* rather than *womanliness* to indicate women's putting on of submissive and flirtatious disguises, in a type of gender performance designed to pacify male fears of female power. In both Massenet and Puccini, there is great emphasis on hairdos, makeup, dress, in short, the masquerade of the woman designed to please the man.

One might call this a form of heightened femininity, part of the spectacle of the stage. Still, one might ask why gender reversal is also so important in opera, even when it is covered over.

Opera as theater represents disguise, masquerades of all types, a play space, where everyone can be something of a transvestite – psychologically and emotionally if not physically, and sometimes physically as well, considering all of the trowser roles, i.e., male parts played by women) which were preceded by the castrati, who performed female as well as male parts. A bleak view of opera's ostensible transcendence of gender assignments is that it provides one of the safety valves that allows the society to continue in its bourgeois path. Although it enables the audience to live freely and passionately for the moment, by killing the transgressor and causing the survivor such suffering, opera makes the audience happy to leave the darkened plush of the theater (a substitute womb/tomb?), or at least content that we are not so intense ourselves.

In other ways opera echoes our own experience. Massenet and Puccini's operas are stories of adolescent development of hero and heroine. As the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* notes: «Des Grieux and Werther are boys in love with love, as totally absorbed in their emotions as any girl.» The difference is that such obsession is merely a stage along men's developmental path whereas for women it is often the final point, the destination, at least as far as art is concerned. (But not contemporary psychoanalysis, we might say.) For most men, a type like Manon would represent an adventure on route to a more suitable partnership. Such at least would be Jung's view. There is a sense, however, in which the operatic versions of Manon are like a feminine *Bildungsroman*, or novel of education, in which the heroine changes and grows - through suffering. But her transformation might exist simply as vindication for the hero, the proof to him that he is loved, after all, while her death brings him the ultimate revenge (even if unconsciously) over the betraying mother. Despite the heroine's death, Massenet's *Manon* ends in a major key conveying the meaning that whatever happens to her body, her love will never die.

For many readers and opera goers the story of Manon remains one of romantic love, foiled only by external forces, namely economic deprivation and class difference, in the cruel social world. Yet memory often deludes us when it comes to love, our own and others. As I have pointed out elsewhere (particularly in my book *Women, Love, and Power: Literary and Psychoanalytic Perspectives*, New York University Press, 1991), many of the so-called great love stories of the world are actually about love on one side only. This is true of Prévost's *Manon Lescaut*, at least for much of the narrative, except that this time it is the hero who is in that deserted place which is usually the native land of women.

The chances are that Manon and des Grieux would have been impossible lovers even had she not been done in by illness or thirst or jailors, even had they remained alone in the Louisiana desert, where Puccini in his imaginative geography puts them at the end of his work. What perhaps keeps us from recognizing this fact is that Manon dies. Her death allows us to harbor the bitter-sweet illusion that her reformation was complete and that her love could subsequently have been ideal, had she only been permitted to live. But according to Lacan, there can be no sexual relation. This does not mean that there are no sexual relations but rather that there is no possibility of unity, of returning to the longed-for symbiosis of mother and child. This is another reason for my calling Manon the impossible object.

Clyde Simons Hiss, in an unpublished dissertation entitled «Abbé Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* as Novel, Libretto, and Opera», writes of the novel, «Its one formal fault is the monotonous repetition of a series of breaches and reconciliations between Manon and des Grieux». On the contrary, this is one of the great unconscious appeals of the work, which is not only about the degradation of the sexual object but also about that of the sexual subject as well. Both hero and heroine are suffering from a repetition compulsion. Des Grieux must have Manon because she resonates with his need for the early mother. This compulsion is reflected by Massenet in des Grieux' love theme which does not vary. This is not a defect, a monotonous lack of inventiveness as some critics have suggested. Rather the theme is repetitive because Massenet was aware – whether consciously or not – of the compulsive aspect of des Grieux's love. Compulsion is monotonous, at least to those not subject to its enthrallment. And then there are the rest of us.

Massenet's Manon also suffers from a compulsive need to go back – not to the man she professes to love though she does so at the end, but to others, who she thinks can give her what she so desperately needs and never had as a child: feeding and mirroring. It is not just men who want the lover to be a mirror that enlarges them, to use Virginia Woolf's image. But what satisfies women's narcissistic needs is often not the clear reflecting lake of the Romantic lover's eyes, what the male hero so often wants from women in the nineteenth century. Rather it is the gilded objects of the man with money that she feels enlarges her. Des Grieux as the young son, not yet in possession of his fortune, is too much of a child himself to satisfy Manon's need for material nurturing, which it seems to me is far greater than her need for diverse sexuality.

Much psychoanalytic literature has dealt with men's preoccupation with the fetish, the shoe or the undergarment, for example, that supposedly represents the missing penis in the castrated woman. The preoccupation is with what men fear they will lose – but projected onto the woman. Women too have their fixations on objects that represent loss but they are different ojects and, despite Freud, perhaps different losses. Massenet's Manon sings movingly of the lovers' little table in their Paris apartment but only when she is about to give it up, to go off with her admirer Brétigny. The aria «*Adieu notre petite table*» is one of the few places where Manon does not use precious gem or money imagery perhaps because the table is so strongly associated with food and nurturance.

How down to earth her reference to the quotidienne is, how romantic too her exaltation of simple objects, how different from the opulence promised by des Grieux's rivals that usually enthralls her; yet how rooted in possession. The table as object has become fetishized. It is almost as if Manon is addressing a breast, the breast the two lovers share like brother and sister; (indeed in Prévost, Manon passes off Des Grieux as her brother to one of her lovers.) But Manon is willing to give it up because it is only the bad breast that she has known. Perhaps what Manon is seeking in a man is the missing breast. Her desire for money is in part a displacement of this desire – or its symbolic representation.

Thomas Wiseman in *The Money Motive* suggests some reasons why money plays such a large role in our sexual politics. «The man who throws his money about with élan creates a giving image of himself that women find peculiarly suggestive» (214) claims Wiseman, who equates «Big Daddy» with «big penis». But this is a man's reading. The message that money transmits to the woman is not simply that of its owner's sexual potency. Often he does not have any and tries to use money to take its place. Certainly the representation of old, rich, rather ridiculous characters as would-be lovers in literature and opera, including some who are after the different Manons, takes on a comic aspect that belies any sexual prowess. Most important, money in extravagent gift-giving is a signifier of nurturance through which the male lover acts like the pre-oedipal mother, thereby gratifying the woman's primary narcissism. Insofar as money, an external appendage of the man, can be equated with his genitals, his monetary gifts to her are a substitute for the penis that she has been denied as well as an aggrandizement of his own. But since money helps her to refine her beauty, in face, figure, and dress, *she* becomes a symbolic phallus for the man. If we accept Lacan's distinction that the phallus, unlike the penis, belongs to neither sex, it represents an unattainable perfection, a kind of Platonic idea of a penis, which the beautiful woman, or the actress or singer can symbolize.

Something else that is not usually acknowledged, perhaps because it is not realized consciously, is that gifts such as flowers and jewels are not simply symbols representing the man's offered organ or seeds. They represent worship of the clitoris and vagina also, for their shapes make visible the hidden treasures of women. Naomi Schor, in «Female Paranoia: the Case for Psychoanalytic Feminist Criticism», in *Yale French Studies*, 62, 1981, speaks of a clitoral hermeneutics, a term that has not taken hold – one can perhaps see why – but which represents a theory of clitoral pleasure associated with the traditional trappings of femininity, such as jewels and ornaments. However, the fact is that even though Manon has a purse of her own, her material possessions, the gifts given by

her lovers, symbolic though they may be of her sexual anatomy, are literally only granted by favor and can always be taken away, as indeed they are along with more dire consequences.

Despite her eventually transcendent love for des Grieux, for Massenet's Manon, the best things in life are not free. Even her freedom must be funded for her to escape the convent (the escape route for parents who could not afford a dowery). Furthermore, her song «A nous les amours et les roses», surely one of the greatest musical treatments of the transience of beauty theme, though it sings of the natural pleasures that ostensibly have always been free, equates love and roses with gold. Manon's call for *carpe diem* is a plea for materiality (in order to live life fully in the present) as well as a desire to escape from mortality.

Manon claims that she wants to die in an «eclat de rire», a burst of laughter. Considering how she does die, this is deeply ironic. The burst of laughter that she praises sounds like a depiction of *jouissance*, sexual ecstacy. Critics are opposed in thinking either that Massenet's Manon is terribly sexy or that she is almost asexual. Perhaps it is a male *jouissance* that Manon exhibits, in another example of gender reversal. The «eclat de rire» that she wants when she dies (the French like the English pun on *die*, each sexual act in the Renaissance being referred to as a *petit mort*, a little death) sounds like a typically phallic orgasm, not the diffuse experience of the total body that is the key element in feminine *jouissance*, according to Lacan.

There is another provocative possibility. Unlike Puccini's Manon, Massenet's does not dance; her virtuosity, the allure of her body is revealed mainly through the voice, leaping and jumping through melodic space. As Slavoj Zizek points out, in «'I Hear You with My Eyes'; or, The Invisible Master» (in *Gaze and Voice as Love Objects*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1996, 90). «Voice and gaze are the two objects added by Jaques Lacan to the list of Freudian 'partial objects' (breasts, faeces, phallus)». Zizek writes too of «the moment at which the singing voice cuts loose from its anchoring in meaning and accelerates into a consuming self-enjoyment». This is what happens with Massenet's Manon, at least in some of her flourishes (inspired, indeed demanded of Massenet by the singer Sibyl Anderson). At such moments, she seems to illustrate what Lacan spoke of as the ability to enjoy *jouissance* without a partner.

Much attention has been paid recently, particularly in feminist film criticism to the so-called male gaze, ostensibly a privilege within patriarchy. Laura Mulvey's germinal article «Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema», first published in 1975, argues that the gaze is predominantly active and masculine while exhibitionism is primarily passive and feminine, but that both sexes in the audience identify with the male position. Though this theory has been contested, there is no question that something of this division between active and passive enters into Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, in which the dancing master, at her old lover Geronte's house, encourages Manon to look at her admirers in a spy glass, rather than directly.

Yet one might argue that Manon is the active participant here, and that we are her passive viewers and listeners. What is the source of our delight in watching a lovely creature being taught to dance or to sing, a common motif in opera and one more aligned with the child than the mother? For one, infantilization of the woman is a way to contain our fear of the power of female sexuality (or fear of the early all-powerful mother?) Like the puppet or doll, the performing woman can only go as far as the man/instructor wants her to. Then too both sexes in the audience may here be guilty of voyeurism, with the dance lesson in *Manon Lescaut* representing the forbidden, a disguise of the primal scene. Such staged entertainment may also represent the audience's displacement of its own genital activity, rather than that of the parents. Singing and dancing, after all, are metonymies for sexual experience. In addition, such a scene may satisfy the viewers' desire to incorporate the object who is not reachable any other way. As for the object gazed on, let us not forget that Manon is also gazing, however surreptitiously, at her onstage audience (to say nothing of the one out front) and is encouraged to do so. The dancing master urges her to look at how much she is admired, that is, to gaze not so much at the viewers as at herself as reflected in their eyes. Is the desire for widespread male admiration, the wish to bask in the attention of all rather than one alone, which is

depicted here, the equivalent of male promiscuity? If so, the man, typified by the dancing master, condones this, for Manon is his pseudo possession as well as his prodigy.

Although the heroine is physically active here, she is only allowed to be so through the instruction of the male tutor. Though an adult, she is restricted in her movements. This is a reversal of the mother's position with the child and no doubt gratifying to male viewers for this reason. Women viewers may also want to control the mother and therefore take pleasure in this scene of ostensible male control as well as sanctioned exhibitionism. Furthermore, in Puccini, the public scene of instruction with an old partner who is poked fun of signifies a rebellion against the father for the audience, an indirect way of mocking Geronte, Manon's older lover, who becomes mocked directly later, when Manon forces him to gaze into a mirror. But Geronte nonetheless gets his revenge in the end. He will have her led off to L'Havre for deportation.

Experience is marked on the body of the heroine in ways that it isn't for the hero. Why is there a certain pleasure mixed with pity at seeing Manon in chains in Prévost and Puccini? Lawrence Kramer in *After the Lovedeath: Sexual Violence and the Making of Culture*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, writes: «The point of sexual violence is to punish the victim for vacating the feminine position that ratifies (that masks the dissimulation of) the aggressor's masculine position and at the same time to return the victim to the place she has vacated.» (115)

The punishment is meted out by the social order, not the lover, however, which enables us to retain our sympathy for him. In the final scene of *Manon Lescaut*, in one of the most famous and mournful of arias, «*Sola, perduta, abbandonata*», Manon feels totally alone and forsaken. The theme of the heroine who feels abandoned is compelling psychologically, given that Puccini's des Grieux is the most faithful of lovers. Manon sends him to look for water and shelter, the elemental needs that the mother satisfies both through her womb and her nurturance after the child's birth, an indication that the Romantic lover on some level is meant to fulfill the functions of the early (pre-Oedipal) mother. Once he leaves, Manon feels deserted. Because she is now without his support or any trappings of luxury, she regresses emotionally to her feelings of early deprivation; of course, her deprivation is now physical as well as emotional. Much as he desires to comfort her, des Grieux as protector fails. Part of his feminization lies in this failure. He is the hero as non-savior, a truly modern hero (as is La Boheme's Rodolfo also). In one way, Manon's death represents the most extreme form of abandonment by society as well as the punishment for her former betrayal. But it is also meant to increase our suffering, for Manon not only longs for the mother/lover, she is in some sense the mother/lover for all of us, the impossible object that we cannot retrieve. Insofar as she represents the figure that all of us must lose, however pained we are at her betrayal, we mourn her death.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 85-89

The roles of the unconscious and transference in detection in Wilkie Collins's *The Law and the Lady*

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Wilkie Collins's novel *The Law and the Lady* employs conceptions of the unconscious and transference in order to solve the book's central mystery: how did Sara Macallan, first wife of Eustace Macallan and her accused poisoner, die? Similar to Freud's and Jung's, Collins's ideas of both psychic phenomena do have some unique touches of his own that help the reader solve the crime.

But since *The Law and the Lady* is not one of Collins's more widely known novels, perhaps a brief plot summary will assist readers in following my argument. As the book opens, Eustace Macallan under an assumed name has married Valeria Brinton. He has done so because he did not wish her to know that he had been tried for poisoning his first wife, Sara, in a Scots court whose jury returned the verdict «Not Proven». What the verdict, still current, means is that the accused walks away from the arms of the law but retains the social stigma as if he had been convicted of the crime. Valeria very quickly finds out these facts when first Eustace's mother and later his friends exhibit reluctance to discuss his past life. Rather than abandoning her husband, however, Valeria sets out to establish his innocence and she shows considerable courage in doing so. She reads the transcript of the trial and interviews friends of her husband for clues about the death of Sara Macallan, all in the face of opposition. This search is ultimately successful, Eustace's name is legally cleared, and the poisoner of Sara revealed. She committed suicide.

Uncovering the past thus constitutes the plot of *The Law and the Lady* and stands as a metaphor for how the unconscious affects the narrative. The unconscious announces itself in Collins's preface and in the presentation of one character, Miserrimus Dexter, with whom Valeria has the equivalent of a patient-doctor relationship, or psychoanalytic transference.

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Collins begins his novel with references to the unconscious. His prefatory note to the reader makes a direct reference to the unconscious when he writes «that the actions of human beings are not invariably governed by the laws of pure reason» (Collins «Address to the Reader»). Catherine Peters finds the novel's subject in these lines, but she does not really explore how Collins fulfills his announced purpose. For example, Peters ignores the following evidence of the operation of the unconscious. After the wedding Valeria, Eustace's second wife, mistakenly signs her married name to the marriage register rather than her maiden name, Valeria Brinton. For readers of detective fiction this error ranks as a clue that no one could miss. It is certainly a sign of mystery and possibly of confusion lying ahead. And when Valeria's aunt remarks that it is «a bad beginning» to the marriage that she hopes her niece will not live to regret and her uncle hopes that she will not repent parting so easily with her married name, we know Collins has loaded the narrative.

From the standpoint of classical psychoanalysis, however, Valeria's slip of the pen is an example of that psychopathology discussed by Freud in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. As Freud remarks about such slips they show us that conflicting, hidden forces are at work in the individual. Here Valeria's action is limited to the novel's shape in as much as the unconscious will function as an organizing principle of the novel's action. Collins provides two examples of its use to solve the murder mystery.

The first of the unconscious forces concern one of Wilkie Collins's most bizarre characters, Miserrimus Dexter, one of Eustace's friends and the secret though spurned admirer of his wife, Sara. Kenneth Robinson rated Dexter as Collins's «fullest expression» of «physical deformity and mental abnormality», but he is much more than interesting than a freak show (256). Miserrimus does mean «most unhappy» in Latin, a name given to Dexter by his father because of his deformed shape. From his waist down, Dexter has no body nor genitalia, but he scarcely lacks sexual feelings and ambitions. It is his capacity for sexual love that involves him both in the unraveling of the mystery and in creating some of the hidden mystery in the novel.

As indicated, Dexter admired Sara, but his passion for Sara Macallan was frustrated. She loved Eustace and married him. Yet Dexter also knows how Sara died and he hides this knowledge. Something of an id-like figure, Dexter's memory contains valuable information about the case that only his attraction for Valeria enables us to see. Jenny Taylor argues for Dexter as an unconscious force, but she does not see how Valeria draws information about Sara's death out of Dexter. She acts as psychoanalyst to his unconscious allowing the repressed material to surface. With Valeria, Dexter can say what he will tell no one else. In something resembling the psychoanalytic idea of transference, Dexter sees similarities between Valeria and Sara Macallam. Her posture, voice and manner bring Sara vividly back to life for Dexter. Freud later identified what Dexter and Valeria share as transference. Defined as the reenactment of feelings towards the analyst by a patient concerning a loved one or someone of emotional significance from childhood, transference is a road into the unconscious releasing suppressed or repressed material. Childhood is not the issue in *The Law and the Lady*, but Dexter's particular attraction to Valeria is explained by Freud's comment about unfulfilled romantic feelings surfacing in psychoanalytic treatment in «The Dynamics of the Transference». Freud wrote that «it is entirely normal and comprehensible, expectant and in readiness as they are in those who have not adequate gratification, [that romantic and sexual feelings] should be turned also towards the person of the physician» (313). In other words, Valeria revives the unfulfilled romantic feelings and sexual affection that Dexter felt for Sara unleashing his unconscious memories. Mr. Playmore, Valeria's lawyer, recognizes this when he comments that Valeria helps Dexter to recover his memory. He remarks that «it is not merely possible, it is highly probable that [Dexter] betray [s] himself [to you], if you give him the opportunity» (316).

The examples I have been discussing are ideas associated with Freud's concept of a dynamic unconscious, that an individual represses unpleasant material which can also be unearthed. But the novel also utilizes elements of Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious. Torn in fragments and buried in a dust heap that Valeria's legal advisors have reconstructed is Sara Macallan's

account of her marital misery with Eustace and her confession of suicide by poisoning. Jenny Bourne Taylor argues that Sara's confession functions only as an individual unconscious rather than a collective one. But since the confession continues to live after Sara's death it takes on a life of its own that reflects more than just Sara's misery.

Dexter as both representing unconscious, id-like forces and containing one Collins makes very clear. He paints wild pictures that exhibit passion and destruction. In a series entitled «Illustrations of the Passions», Valeria observes two that dramatize revenge and cruelty. In the picture «Revenge» an «infuriated man» dressed in a fancy costume stands over the fancily dressed corpse of the man he has just murdered with a «horrid expression of delight» while blood drips off his sword in large drops. We can ignore the phallic references in this scene if we want to, but Dexter has called his painting one of the passions.

In the paintings «Cruelty», battered genitalia assert themselves. Valeria sees «a disemboweled horse» and an aged philosopher «gloating» over his dissection of a live cat. In a third painting, two pagans congratulate each other on torturing saints, one on a gridiron and the other, skinned, and hung by his heels from a tree. Although Valeria finds both series of paintings frightening and morbid, she notices a certain suggestive power in them as well as in a collection Dexter calls the Wandering Jew. There he identifies the Flying Dutchman with the Wandering Jew and Valeria finds herself moved by the dark images that Dexter employs to trace his career. Here, perhaps, the empathy that Valeria later feels for Dexter has its beginnings.

Another sign of Dexter's unconscious comes from his fantasies. In order to entertain himself, he imagines that he is Napoleon, Shakespeare and other great historical figures. He tells Valeria that he cannot bear to discuss Sara Macallam's death because «I should lose all hold over myself.... I am not equal to raking up the horror and mystery of the past: I have not courage enough to open the grave of the martyred dead.... I have an immense imagination. It runs riot at all times. It makes an actor of me. I play the parts of all the heroes that ever lived. I feel their characters. I merge myself in their individualities. For the time, I am the man I fancy myself to be» (Collins 218).

Though warned to avoid him because he is mad, Valeria seeks to understand him. She tells the reader that «Little by little, I found myself trying to fathom what was darkly passing in this strange man's mind» (Collins 214). Later that understanding deepens when she comments that we all possess «a common fund of wickedness» (Collins 329). Tellingly, she asks «Is the suppression or the development of that wickedness a mere question of training and temptation» (Collins 329). In other words, Valeria understands that Dexter is all impulse, or id, without the restraint that Freud argued civilization or society demands of people. Put her in his place and she might feel similarly, Valeria thinks. She feels empathy for Dexter remarking «there is something in our deeper sympathies» that acknowledges that we share a bond with the wicked «when we crowd to criminal trials «or if present officially, when we shake hands with the vilest monster that ever swung on a gallows» (Collins 329-330).

The passage reminds one of Heinz Kohut's discussion of how the analyst attempts to work with a patient mirroring his ideas in *The Analysis of the Self* so that empathy can be established between the two. Like a good psychoanalyst, Valeria's empathy for Dexter enables her to tap into his unconscious and bring out of him those facts about the case that he wants to hide. She reflects that Dexter «openly expresses... thoughts and feelings which most of us are ashamed of as weaknesses, and which we keep to ourselves accordingly» (Collins 221). Valeria identifies with Dexter when she recollects that she «often fancied [herself] transformed into some other person» and «felt a certain pleasure in seeing myself in my new character» (Collins 221). Transference is clearly occurring.

Valeria's ability to have Dexter betray what he does not want to say exhibits itself when he hears her married name upon her first visit to his house. Dexter springs out of his chair «with a shrill cry of horror» as if shot. He moans «'Oh pity me, pity me!' dozens and dozens of times over to himself» (Collins 207). Here is a man with a secret and one open to womanly influence. As

Valeria explains to him her motive for pursuing the case, Dexter becomes more agitated. She wonders «What dread and buried remembrance had I brought to life in him in all their olden horror?» (Collins 241). Lawyer Playmore understands Dexter's fears when Valeria later recounts her interview with him: [Dexter] has ideas which are secrets [and] he suspects that he has betrayed them...» to you (Collins 275).

As it turns out, Dexter's hint on this occasion, that Helena Beauly (Eustace's secret lover) poisoned Sara Macallam, is a false clue, one meant to hide other facts that Dexter knows about the case. Prominent among these facts is that Dexter bore unrequited love for Sara Macallam, which he has hidden from everyone, and that he stole into her room and poured kisses on her dead face as she lay stretched out on the bed. In that wonderful Victorian fetish, he also keeps a lock of her hair that he worships. Most important of all to our inquiry, Dexter has read the letter in which Sara Macallam confesses that she used arsenic in an attempt to improve her complexion but increased the amount to a fatal dosage when she could no longer endure her husband Eustace's sexual indifference to her in their marriage. Had this fact been presented to the trial, Eustace would have been declared innocent, if indeed he would have been tried at all.

Readers of Collins recognize with these twists the complicated plots that he is famous for in his fiction. But we must not allow the suspense and sensationalism to obscure our seeing how the unconscious betrays itself. For Dexter has not wanted to reveal this information to anyone. It was only Valeria's presence and the agitation of revisiting the death of Sara Macallam (through conversation) that called the information forth. The unconscious through Dexter's transferential relationship with Valeria has yielded clues to detecting the facts of the crime.

Valeria's last visit to Dexter enables her to gather the final piece of evidence that solves the mystery of how Sara Macallan died. With Playmore's interpretation, she has realized the role that she plays in Dexter's unconscious life and she remains alert to what he says. She even asks her friend Benjamin to take notes about the interview so that nothing will be lost.

Fired by Valeria's presence, Dexter tells the story of «The Mistress and the Maid» reprising the main elements of how Dexter thinks that Helena Beauly and her maid poisoned Sara Macallam. Under the guise of an Italian romance, Valeria hears Dexter's unconscious dig up ideas that he has till now repressed. His powerful regard for Sara Macallam is among them, but also his knowledge of Sara's confessional letter, heretofore unknown to Valeria.

At the utterance of the word «key» Dexter stops speaking as if his memory has failed him. When he resumes, he breaks into «strange» words unconnected with what he has been saying: «The letter. The letter. Oh. my heart! Every word a dagger. A dagger in my heart. Oh, you letter. Horrible, horrible, horrible letter» (Collins 344).

Valeria wonders if Dexter is «unconsciously pursuing his faint and fragmentary recollections of a past time at Gleninch, under the delusion that he was going on with the story?» (Collins 344). Dexter continues to speak strangely of the letter and the fragmented nature of his comments remind one of a patient in psychoanalytic therapy: disjointed, apparently unconnected and unrelated responses - in short, free association. Dexter speaks: «Show him the letter. Must, Must, must do it. No. Mustn't do it, Shan't show it. Stuff. Nonsense. Let him suffer... What about the letter? Burn it now. No fire in the grate. No matches in the box. House topsy-turvy. Servants all gone. Tear it up. Shake it up in the basket. Along with the rest. Shake it up. Waste paper.Throw it away. Gone for ever. Oh Sara, Sara, Sara, gone for ever» (Collins 345).

In these fragmented, apparently unconnected words - words from Dexter's unconscious – Valeria has received the information that will answer the question of who poisoned Sara Macallam, information that will clear her husband, Eustace of the Scots verdict «Not Proven».

Valeria's lawyer Playmore interprets the words «Servants all gone» as evidence that Dexter has unconsciously betrayed in his story facts that illuminate him why Eustace broke up his house at Gleninch (he wanted no servants who knew about his situation should he return to live there). They

also tell Playmore how to locate the letter which by now, given the agitation that it caused Dexter, has assumed enormous significance for solving the case.

Collins leaves the active solution of the mystery to Valeria's lawyer and her friend Benjamin. After Valeria authorizes the expenditure of money, they are the ones who search out the dust heap in which the letter lies and they are the ones who have the torn letter carefully reconstructed so that Sara's painful story becomes part of the narrative.

But what I find striking is how Collins continues his idea of the unconscious as containing the clues to solving the murder mystery. For while Sara's words speak loudly and powerfully once they are unearthed and put back together again, it is the fact that they have been shredded and buried since her death that makes them part of the unconscious motif that organizes the novel.

I consider this part of Collins's presentation of the unconscious a variation of the Jungian collective unconscious. Sara's unconscious lives beyond her life, and her experience with Eustace, while perhaps not representing a primordial myth in the exact Jungian sense, nevertheless invokes the idea of a woman whose love has been spurned. Tearing the letter and discarding it in a refuse heap give the feeling of wanting to conceal the affection that Sara bore Eustace while at the same time opening the possibility that he will be accused of the crime of poisoning. Dare we say the ancestral curse of Clytemnestra?

The *Law and the Lady* thus joins Collins's other great novel in which reconstructing facts from the unconscious play a significant role in solving the case, *The Moonstone*. But unlike that novel which relegates women to sexual victims, *The Law and the Lady* offers a female detective who investigates the unconscious and plays an active role in bringing forth facts that are hidden. Without Valeria's emphatic understanding of Dexter, the disclosures that he makes would not take place and Valeria would not establish her husband's innocence.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 91-101

«Conjuring up a piece of real life»: David Mamet's representation of the compulsion to repeat and its transformation into remembrance by means of transference in his film *Things Change*

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If not for his art, David Mamet remarked, «it's very likely I would have become a criminal – another profession that subsumes the outsider, or perhaps more to the point, accepts people with a not very well formed ego and rewards the ability to improvise» (quoted in Lahr, «Fortress Mamet», 79). He told John Lahr, «I just always assumed people assumed I was gonna come to a bad end» (Lahr, 73). To the extent that Mamet writes frequently about criminals, we may consider that he fulfills Freud's observation about the creative writer: that «he creates a world of phantasy which he takes very seriously – that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion – while separating it sharply from reality» («Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming», 144). The writer's fantasy-on-the-page is a realm between dream and reality. As a writer and director, Mamet wants to evoke as much reality as possible concerning the criminals he depicts while reminding us that they are fantasies: «there are just black marks on a white page ... the character is just a sketch, a few lines on the page...» (*True and False*, 60). Like Mamet, Freud concerned himself at least once (during his meditation on Dostoevsky, «Dostoevsky and Parricide») with imagining the mental state of the criminal.

«Two traits are essential in a criminal», Freud hypothesized, «boundless egoism and a strong destructive urge. Common to both of these, and a necessary condition for their expression, is absence of love, lack of an emotional appreciation of (human) objects» («Dostoevsky and Parricide», 178). During Freud's interpretation of Dostoevsky, he presented a variety of observations that elucidate what has become Mamet's literary «territory»: «A moral man is one who reacts to temptation as soon as he feels it in his heart, without yielding to it» (177) might easily describe a state of grace that Mamet's criminals either yearn for or can never imagine. Freud also perceptively

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noted a theme that Mamet finds consistently intriguing: «it is a fact that large groups of criminals want to be punished. Their super-ego demands it and so saves itself the necessity for inflicting the punishment itself» (186-87). But Mamet is a writer who has read Freud; he is aware of the unreality of his fictive constructions – he knows when he writes about anything, it is nothing less than (and nothing more than) artifice: «the play is a fantasy, it is not a history» (*True and False*, 60).

As a filmmaker, Mamet is devoted to capturing the realm of the in-between: he films imaginary stories with no basis in reality but he works consistently with a company of actors who are his personal friends and uses his personal friends and relatives as actors. While insisting on the imaginary nature of all art, Mamet exposes his own obsessive themes and his highly individual view of American culture. Mamet's movies are, simultaneously, grimly realistic *and* self-reflexive, mimetic *and* symbolic. When he writes about crime and the Mafia, for instance, as he does with Shel Silverstein in the screenplay for his 1988 film, *Things Change*, he is recounting a story, improvising on a myth, and exploring the nature of art itself. His imaginary characters are meant to be real life people who devote a large portion of their time to pretending to be characters other than themselves. In order to achieve a meaningful understanding of Mamet's film, *Things Change*, it is useful to consider it in relation to Freud's 1914 essay, «Remembering Repeating and Working-Through».

Freud presents the compulsion to repeat as a neurotic alternative to memory: «... the patient does not *remember* anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but *acts* it out. He reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he *repeats* it, without, of course, knowing that he is repeating it» (Remembering», 150). Freud stipulates that the neurotic individual «yields to the compulsion to repeat... in every... activity and relationship which may occupy his life at the time – if, for instance, he falls in love or undertakes a task...» (151). The repeating includes «everything that has already made its way from the sources of the repressed into his manifest personality – his inhibitions and unserviceable attitudes and his pathological character-traits» (151).

By means of the transference, the individual is able to achieve a «working-through», a transcendence of neurotic conflict utilizing an «intermediate region between illness and real life» (154). When viewed through the lens of the transference, the compulsion to repeat is seen as a «playground» (154) – a stage on which the individual «acts out» neurotic conflict in a manner that facilitates «working- through» and recovery: «one must allow the patient time to become more conversant with this resistance with which he has now become acquainted, *to work through it*, to overcome it...» (155).

But Freud emphasizes that the dividing line between the compulsion to repeat and the transference is a subtle and elusive one: «... the transference is itself only a piece of repetition, and... the repetition is a transference of the forgotten past... on to all other aspects of the current situation» (151). Should the transference become «hostile or unduly intense and therefore in need of repression, remembering at once gives way to acting out» (151). The difference between repeating and remembering is that «repeating ... implies conjuring up a piece of real life: and for that reason it cannot always be harmless and unobjectionable» (152). The transference is a «new condition [which] has taken over all the features of the illness; but it represents an artificial illness which is at every point accessible to our intervention. It is a piece of real experience, but one which has been made possible by especially favorable conditions, and it is of a provisional nature» (154). For Freud, the transference is a symbolic realm, an «intermediate region between illness and real life», fraught with explosive real life occurrences but with the significant potential of working-through – transcending neurotic conflict and emerging with a sense of identity.

Mamet's film, *Things Change*, concerns itself with the relationship between two principal characters: Gino (played by Don Ameche), an elderly Sicilian immigrant who shines shoes in a Chicago shoe repair shop; and Jerry (played by Joe Montegna), a low level mobster in the Chicago crime organization who is «on probation» (*Things Change*, 13) for previous incompetence. The events begin in Chicago, relocate to Lake Tahoe, and then return to Chicago. For the purpose of my discussion, I would like to suggest that the events in Lake Tahoe be considered as an «intermediate region» – a performative, symbolic realm (in which both characters pretend to be persons other

than themselves) that facilitates their mutual transference and the successful working-through of their individual conflicts. Furthermore, I would suggest that Mamet's familiarity with psychoanalytical themes be utilized in interpreting the events of the film: the relationships among the characters – based on silences, inferences, implied communications, and symbolic actions – evoke the psychoanalytic process within the unlikely setting of organized crime.

When we first encounter Gino, he is under surveillance by two Mafia hoodlums: they seek him out because of his uncanny resemblance to an organized crime associate who is wanted by police for the murder of a man named Aaronberg. They bring him to the ornate home of the Chicago godfather, «Mr. Green»: they offer him an undisclosed sum of money if he will confess to the murder, sign a confession, place his fingerprints on the murder weapon, and serve three-to-five years in prison (6). Cino is from Sicily: he is no stranger to the ways of organized crime. He informs the mobsters that «I just shine shoes» (4) – nevertheless, they insist on his presence. There is an unmistakable threat in the air as the Chicago godfather makes Gino an offer: «you could say you were in a prison now» (6). The mobsters prey upon Gino's fantasies; Mr. Green asks him: «you must have a dream... do you have a dream?» (6). Gino answers that his dream is «a fishing boat... in Sicily» (6). The mobsters intimate that «in three years you could have that fishing boat.... If you stay in your shoe store, what will you have in three years?» (6). Gino hesitates: he knows the deeds of which such mobsters are capable. «What do you have now?» asks Silver, Mr. Green's associate. The clear inference is that Gino has nothing, is nothing. Nevertheless, Gino responds that he will decline their offer.

Immediately, the mobsters initiate a series of insults to Gino's sense of class integrity and social status: the godfather, Mr. Green, lapses into a condescending Italian immigrant dialect and calls on Gino to do his job (if he won't assist the Don, then shine his shoes!): «Shine 'em uppa, Joe...» (7). Silver informs Gino: «You've just made a grave mistake» (7). The mobsters begin frenetic arrangements to find a substitute for Gino – all the while insulting him: Mr. Green reminds him to «watch out for the socks – those are cashmere socks» (7).

The godfather's moll, Miss Bates, enters the room. As a Sicilian, Gino ought to know that Miss Bates is a wornan of dubious integrity. Despite his awareness, his old world traditions impel him to offer to light her cigarette: she turns away in disgust at his lower class status and appearance. Mr. Green hurries Gino: «let's go, let's go, boy. We wanna get you back to your shoeshine stand» (8). Gino has been «hurt» (8) and humiliated: an elderly man, he has been demeaned, referred to as a «boy», and patronized for his working class ethos. In the film, Mamet adds a passage wherein Mr. Green insults Gino in vulgar ethnic terms. This feminization triggers a neurotic conflict in Gino: ought he to do what he knows is right and continue to refuse the offer? Or should he relent and agree to confess to a murder he did not commit? «I do it» (8), he volunteers, and immediately, Mr. Green's demeanor changes. He gives Gino an old «Sicilian coin» and tells him: «The Sicilian people say 'A big man knows the value of a small coin'. My friendship is a small coin, but it is all I have to offer you» (9). The fact that Mr. Green has the gun – the murder weapon – and wants Gino's prints on it (rather than his confession in court) indicates that his offer is insincere. He intends from the onset to have Gino killed – a phony suicide – with the confession and murder weapon planted on him. The three-to-five year term baits «the dream» of the boat. Gino drinks a toast with Mr. Green (10). He is now a friend with the Don. Despite his own integrity and initial negative response, his neurotic class-oriented insecurity impels him to accept an offer he knows is profoundly self-destructive.

When we first encounter Jerry, he is in the kitchen of Mr. Green's mansion. Like Gino, he, too, has been feminized: he is washing dishes when we first see him and wearing an apron (11). He is mocked repeatedly by his mob colleagues: «I thought we sent him down to the Farm team... it seems he can't follow orders...!» utters Frankie, Jerry's immediate superior in the organization. Frankie refers to Jerry as «Cinderella», feminizing him, and alluding to his negative status and prospects. Jerry is given an empty pay envelope and told he is on «probation» (13).

Mr. Green orders that Gino is to be held in a hotel for the weekend while he rehearses his confession: he is told that at ten a.m. on Monday morning, he will appear in court for sentencing. Frankie chooses Jerry to be the guardian of Gino, his nursemaid, so to speak. «Now you do this one

right», Frankie admonishes Jerry. «I'm doing it right. I'm getting off probation», Jerry insists (13). Both men are driven to a modest Chicago hotel. Each has a specific reason to feel ashamed: Gino has violated his knowledge of the mob and his personal morality by agreeing to perjure himself all out of neurotic class-oriented status insecurity; Jerry has been openly humiliated by his Mafia colleagues, referred to as a female character, and given a lowly task to accrue the credits to remove him from his probationary status. Both Gino and Jerry are likely candidates for acting out behavior.

Sequestered in a Chicago hotel room, Gino masters his fraudulent confession quite rapidly. Having acted out by compromising his integrity to counteract his feelings of debasement, Gino submits passively to the rule of the mob. Jerry, on the other hand, is assigned the job of carrying out passively that precise rule. Instead of baby-sitting Gino (with all the emotional baggage that attends to a man in his late thirties watching another man old enough to be his father), Jerry acts out by reneging from his mob responsibility – repeating the charge of disobeying orders that put him on probation to begin with: «What do you want to do?» he asks Gino (14). Gino will do nothing the mob has not permitted in advance. Jerry (who, in a sense, is in an analogous passive position to Gino – both are forced to be «stuck» in the hotel room) typically, rashly, assumes gargantuan authority: «They? There *is* no 'they'. I am they» (15). In transference relation to Gino, Jerry promotes himself and constructs his own fantasy as the head of the mob. Gino, having traded his future for a fetishized fantasy, asks for a wish consistent with his dream: «could we take a walk by the beach? Would that be okay?» (15).

In response to Gino's meekness, Jerry acts out *his* dream of power: instead of working for the mob, he *is* the mob. Jerry will show Gino his power by taking him to Lake Tahoe: «Two days [in Lake Tahoe], you understand, a little fun, a little memory, then back to Chicago» (16) where Gino faces prison and Jerry probation. But Jerry's compulsion to repeat places them both in desperate risk: should anything go wrong, both their lives are in danger. Each man is compensating for his reality situation: having chosen to act against his moral code and falsely confess to murder, Gino now passively stakes everything on his substitute integrity – honoring his agreement with the mob. Jerry, having previously been punished for his disobedience to the mob, now risks everything on his independence from their will and directions.

What is the lure of Lake Tahoe? For each person, there is a peculiar «intermediate region» that serves as a symbolic stage for transference-based acting-out behavior. For Freud, it was Rome. For Jerry and Gino, it is Lake Tahoe – a place of dreams: boats, sex, and gambling. Both men have been emasculated, so Lake Tahoe offers them a fantasy of sex (the advertisement that inspires Jerry pictures a Lake Tahoe showgirl), boating (to vitalize the dream for which Gino rashly traded his future), and gambling. The appeal of gambling is intriguing: they are gambling with their lives by going to Tahoe. But they need an additional symbolic realm that is the «playground» for their reality stakes. Freud interprets the appeal of gambling as follows: «The 'vice' of masturbation is replaced by the addiction to gambling; and the emphasis laid upon the passionate activity of the hands betrays this derivation. Indeed, the passion for play is an equivalent of the old compulsion to masturbate; 'playing' is the actual word used in the nursery to describe the activity of the hands upon the genitals» («Dostoevsky», 193).

In this «playground», on this symbolic stage, Gino can act out his revised image of a man of integrity: a «stand-up guy» for the mob; Jerry can act out his improved image of a Mafia man of power. Jerry says to Gino: «And when I say it, out here, *do* it»; Gino's response is: «... You the boss» (16). But immediately, the gamble fails: Jerry is recognized by Billy Drake, an employee of Nevada mob boss Joe Vincent, and Billy remembers that Jerry had been put on probation for his incompetence in Chicago. Faced with reality testing, yet on the stage of the «intermediate region», Jerry corrects his fantasy of unlimited power: his new wish is not to be godfather, but to be the servant to the biggest godfather! His revised fantasy is to be a more powerful servant/henchman. His new boss is the man he is baby-sitting, Gino Gatto! Jerry says to Billy Drake that if Billy doesn't know who Gino is, «then you *shouldn't* know» (17). As in psychoanalysis, silences, implications, assumptions based on transference materials substitute for actual reality. Jerry's

fantasy is that Gino is «the guy, *behind* the guy, *behind* the guy...» (19). In relation to Gino, however, Jerry clings to his original dream of limitless power: *he* is the guy behind Gino, even as Gino is now mistaken for Mr. Big!

As they are «comped» into a huge suite on the «Criterion Floor» at Billy Drake's say-so, Gino is now induced to play the role of a godfather comparable to the man (Mr. Green) who put him in the squeeze in the first place. He fulfills the dynamics of «identification with the aggressor» as described by Anna Freud in *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense*. Every aspect of their Tahoe experience is, simultaneously, real and a dream: they are in the suite and they are told by their butler: «Your money is no good in this hotel» (24). Gino is now «Mr. Johnson», and Jerry is his personal associate. Even as they are outfitted in elegant new clothes, Jerry clings with Gino to their shared transference fantasy: «But clothes don't make the man. *I* make the Man» (26). Nevertheless, the situation they left in Chicago intrudes: losing at the slot machines, Gino announces, «I never win nothing». Jerry is afire with a new fantasy of control that is, in actuality, a compulsion to repeat: «Well, maybe we can fix that.» Gino replies: «Oh no, Jerry, not even *you* can fix something like that» (29).

Jerry sets up a fix for «Mr. Johnson» (30). He rigs a phony bet with the casino so that Gino (as Mr. Johnson) will win by playing a pre-selected number. Jerry agrees that he will pay back the casino for everything Gino wins. Gino makes a declaration that will have great significance to their relationship: «We partners, whatever happen, we go Fifty-Fifty. Okay?» (31). Gino bets five dollars on number 12 and wins $175. Then, while Jerry is distracted by the house comedian (Jerry's lapse in attention is yet another instance of his compulsion to repeat his failure of responsibility), Gino bets the $1000 that Jerry had borrowed from the casino as a show of affluence for their phony importance but had never intended to wager. The croupier still believes the fix is on: he rigs the game and Gino wins $35,000!

If Jerry admits to Gino that the bet was fixed, he befouls his transference to Gino: he wants Gino to believe he is now lucky and that Jerry's power changed his luck. But he knows that he must return the $35,000. He encourages Gino to bet a different number but Gino responds: «Naaa, we got *enough*... Come on, I buy you a car...!!!» (34). Gino finds his dream in the present, in the «intermediate region»: he has the money for a boat already; happiness, for him, will be playing the role of potent benefactor to *his* benefactor, Jerry. Jerry has to explain indirectly that they have to return the money: «... it's a thing of 'hospitality'... we're 'guests' in their hotel... it's not a question of the 'money'... it's just for the sake of... 'honor'...» Gino learns the lesson: «It's not the 'money', it's 'honor'...» (35) – what's important is precisely what he sold out in order to salvage his wounded ego in Chicago. In Tahoe, however, he «works-through» by repeating the act under the terms of the transference. Gino walks over to a new table – the Wheel of Fortune. This game, with a female croupier, is not rigged: Gino bets $35,000 on the same number 12. Should he win, he would receive $3,500,000. But he knows he will lose since, as he told Jerry, «I never win nothing» (29). When he loses all of his money, he tips the Wheel of Fortune lady and says: «Things change...» (39). He seems cosmically philosophical about the loss of $35,000 but he is playing a role, depicting Mr. Johnson being honorable. In so doing, he is working-through his neurosis: if he «never wins nothing», then he remains true to himself and he retains his original (pre-perjury) honor.

Jerry compliments Gino on his performance. «When in Rome, we do what the Romans do», Gino replies, emphasizing his awareness of Tahoe as a transitional realm. But Mamet emphasizes how risky is this realm (affirming Freud's theme) by having the house comedian mistakenly shine the spotlight on Mr. Johnson: were he to be recognized, their lives would be in peril! That same comedian reinforces Freud's speculation on the criminal mentality during his comedy act: «My theory is – criminals want to get caught. The reporter says eighteen of twenty suspects arrested are known to have organized crime ties. If they don't wanta get caught, don't wear the ties. You know what I'm saying?» (40). The comedian emphasizes Mamet's theme by noting: «there's nothing better than friendship...» (41). Freud remarked (in «Analysis Terminable and Interminable») that «not every good relation between an analyst and his subject was to be regarded as a transference;

there were also friendly relations which were based on reality and which proved to be viable» (222). In the midst of their symbolic Lake Tahoe «intermediate region between illness and real life», Gino and Jerry are constructing a friendship that will not only be «based on reality», it will be the basis for their working-through their neurotic conflicts and returning to health.

The house comedian (in an act of penance to compensate for his lapse of decorum in having the spotlight shine on Jerry and Gino) introduces them to two showgirls, Cherry and Grace. Relaxing with Gino and the two young women in a Roman Bath Hot Tub, adorned with a towel like a toga, Jerry muses: «I always wondered where I was meant to be» (43). Literally, he means *this place* – the tub, with the women, but also with Gino – is where he belongs; but another significant meaning is also possible: Jerry is not meant to be a mobster. What is his true calling? What is his true identity? Jerry grapples with these questions until the end of the film, when he arrives at an answer.

In the same tub, Gino comments: «Is good to *work*, Jerry. Is also good to *play*» (43). Gino, who has worked all his life at menial employment, is «playing» in more than one sense: he is relaxing, certainly, but he is depicting Mr. Johnson relaxing, at «play», rather than himself. His symbolic performance in the role of the sort of thug who would force an elderly shoeshine man to commit perjury and endure imprisonment is an important part of what will become his own working-through. This is evident in his telling the story of «The Ant and the Grasshopper»: «Once upon a time, eh, there's an *ant*, a *grasshopper*. All summer long the ant, he work hard. The grasshopper he, he play the violin. He dance. Winter come... The ant grow fat, the grasshopper is a-*cold*... The grasshopper, he eat-a the ant» (43-44). Does Gino here foresee that, as an «ant», he will be «eaten» by the mob of Mr. Green, the «grasshopper»? Or is he so enjoying his identification with the aggressor, so absorbed in his depiction of a grasshopper, that he becomes one?

Gino is reminded of his reality when the showgirls invite Jerry and Gino to go fishing with them. Gino offers them his regrets: «We gonna be gone for quite a while, dear girls» (45). The following morning, Jerry and Gino have an argument that, lacking any basis in reality, represents the transference as it enacts its effect on the compulsion to repeat. Gino has left the room and is in the hallway, conversing with Randy, the butler, about the proper mode of shining shoes. Jerry awakens to perceive Gino's absence. He realizes that, in a technical sense, Gino has disobeyed him and that he could lose his life if Gino were to run out on him. «Who the hell do you think you are?» He booms at Gino. «I stepped out of channels, I put myself out for you, what did you do for me... I was *your* friend, but you weren't *my* friend» (49-50). Later on, Jerry will be called upon to prove – in unequivocal terms – the true measure of his friendship for Gino. But now, in response to Jerry's accusations, Gino can only assert: «I got no answer. I gave my word» (50). Gino is sincere so Jerry retreats from the confrontation and asks Gino what he wants to do today. «We see those nice girls», suggests Gino (51). Jerry reminds Gino of how artificial their activities in Tahoe have been by questioning whether the girls liked them: «They liked us real good – everybody likes you when you're somebody else» (51).

By performing, by pretending to be «somebody else», Jerry and Gino are living in a symbolic realm «between illness and real life». Connected by transference, both emasculated by events in Chicago, Jerry and Gino in Lake Tahoe are performing in a play-within-a-play. For the benefit of the Nevada Mafia, Gino is Mr. Johnson, a mysterious godfather-potentate, and Jerry is his immediate henchman; within the stage of the suite, however, Jerry is «Mr. Big», merely pretending to be the henchman, and Gino is the underling, merely pretending to be «Mr. Big». Through this device, they begin to work-through their neurotic conflicts. But their contrivances are called into question in the most perilous way possible: Gino is summoned to lunch at the home of the godfather-of-all-godfathers, Joe Vincent!

Now their lives depend upon their successful pretense! On the way to the Don's estate, Gino and Jerry are frantic: Jerry can barely speak – «Let *me* handle it. Whatever it is, I'll, I'll...» is all he can enunciate (53). But when they arrive at Joe Vincent's home, Jerry, as Gino's underling, is confined again to the kitchen, and Gino is alone with the head of the Nevada mob! The Don needs to know Gino, to place him as either friend or foe: if a demonstrated friend, Gino is welcome; if he

is a foe, he and Jerry will be killed. «It's good to know one's family... Tell me some names» commands the Don (56). Gino walks the line: he is Gino, the man who shines shoes, and he names his own personal family members; but in his silences, his innuendoes, he acts out his neurotic dilemma of class – what to say, when the truth will be disastrous? When Gino is unresponsive, Vincent's goon, Kenny, is about to stab Gino with a «dagger» when Gino, in nervous agitation, takes out the old Sicilian coin and utters the slogan the Chicago godfather Mr. Green told him: «A Big Man Knows the Value of a Small Coin» (57). Joe Vincent embraces him as a friend: he shows Gino that the face on the old coin matches a tattoo on Vincent's forearm. Gino has passed the test and now Gino's old world ways are to be taken as the epitome of *La Famiglia*.

Gino, his tension relieved, reverts to the person he was before the perjurious confession – he talks about «shoes», and Vincent believes that Gino is warning him about his mob organization: «You have beautiful shoes.» Vincent replies: «Even the best shoes wear out. Things change.» Gino takes him literally: «With care they last a long time, you watch closely... you watch for the crack.» The Don sees this as a symbolic, cryptic comment: «And then...?» Gino's response: «And then you watch more closely», meant to be about shoes, establishes him as the noblest Roman in Don Vincent's retinue – he is the only person, Joe Vincent believes, who is willing to tell him the truth (59). Vincent experiences an immediate and profound transference toward Gino. Earlier, he was willing to split him off as a non-person who could be killed for the sake of expediency. Now, Gino's credentials established, Vincent allows himself to languish in a sentimental moment that is, above all, safe.

Don Vincent invites Gino to stay at his estate that evening; the invitation is tendered in terms that evoke a distinct erotic overtone: «You'll stay tonight, stay with me, tonight. After dinner we'll talk. Will you stay?» (60). Gino offers Vincent the Sicilian coin in exchange for his hospitality. Vincent gives him a quarter with his private phone number: «And should you ever need my friendship, you put this coin into a telephone. You call this number. Whatever you wish, if it is within the power of your friend, that wish shall be granted» (61). The transference bond is cemented; both men feel free to engage in a regressive jest as if they were little boys (or in psychoanalysis): «Hey, Gino», the Don tells him, «you got grass stains on your best pants! Your momma's going to kill you» (61).

It is at this intimate, homoerotically-tinged moment – when the Don directs that Gino's clothing should be cleaned and his things from the hotel transferred to the Don's estate – that Jerry intrudes to act-out his inner «play»: that he speaks *for* «Don Gino», that he is the power behind the throne! Vincent is «aghast» at Jerry's lack of decorum in attempting to decline Vincent's invitation as if it had been directed to him (61). Here, Mamet dramatizes Freud's concept: he demonstrates how, by acting-out within an «intermediate region», under the structure of the transference, a working-through can occur. Gino salvages the tense situation by *becoming* the role he is acting: he sanctions Jerry and bestows upon him in the Tahoe fantasy the role he has in his actual Chicago life, the role Jerry has been seeking to escape: Gino assures Don Vincent, «I put him on probation» (62).

Jerry is dispensed with Kenny to return to the hotel and fetch «Don Gino»'s personal items. At the hotel, Jerry learns inadvertently why he and Gino were mistaken for mob royalty. What he discovers destroys Lake Tahoe as an «intermediate region between illness and real life»: an international mob summit is about to take place – that evening – at the home of Don Vincent! Jerry sees, arriving at the hotel, the same people (Mr. Green, Silver, Miss Bates) who coerced Gino to falsely confess in the first place! He sees the very people who have put him on probation! Lake Tahoe is now Chicago; the stage is now real life.

At Joe Vincent's estate, a variety of Mafia luminaries arrive, each bearing gifts for the Don. Jerry tries to strong-arm Gino into leaving immediately, but Gino is aglow in his fantasy: he and Joe Vincent will go fishing the next day – in Gino's transference dream, he skips jail and goes directly to the part about the boat and the gratification! It is only when Jerry has already left the house and Gino is walking down the stairs toward the company that Gino sees Mr. Green – and his realm of dreams is broken. Impulsively, Gino grabs a forest ranger hat and uses it to block his face

from the Chicago mob boss. Ordinarily, Gino would be out of the house with Jerry. But he enacts *his* compulsion to repeat: in the presence of the men who have forced him to falsely incriminate himself and go to prison, Gino nevertheless *again* is concerned inappropriately with their good opinion of him! He does not want to offend Joe Vincent by leaving his house precipitously – as if what had transpired between him and Vincent were real life and he was really a godfather! To cement his point, Mamet represents the same situation that transpired at Mr. Green's estate in Chicago happening all over again! Miss Bates, Mr. Green's moll, is introduced to Joe Vincent. In the drawing room, she moves to light a cigarette, just as she had in Chicago when Gino was humiliated at her refusal of his offer of a light. *It is the same moment repeated*. She sees Gino and is momentarily puzzled at his elegant clothing and appearance. She looks back again, *in recognition* – but Gino is gone! He has worked-through his self-destructive need for the good opinion of those who would do him harm.

Outside, Jerry and Gino must flee the premises before the curfew: if not, they will be shot on sight! Jerry, who sees himself as the consummate mobster in his mind's eye, is impotent to steal a car: «Okay, okay, okay... I'm gonna hot-wire the car. How do you hot-wire a car? You, uh... you, uh... you cross the, uh...» (75). Gino, in the car, sees the goons whose job it is to guard the grounds. He resumes his identity in real life; on the dashboard is a plastic Madonna: he crosses himself, picks it up to pray, and discovers the car key! By being himself, he is able to perform competently and decisively.

Jerry and Gino flee the estate and drive frantically to the airport. But the car's tank is empty. Jerry sees that those who would put him on probation are perhaps not as sacrosanct as he might have thought: «What...? We're out of gas. Guy's the head of the Vegas mob, he can't keep gas in his car. What kind of country is this...?» (76). At the gas station, Jerry finds out. Through a miscommunication, he receives more gas than he has money to pay for – he owes the attendant four dollars. He tries to use mobster tactics; he tries to pass off Gino as a godfather; he tries to use influence – but to no avail: the attendant seizes the car keys and calls the sheriff! Desperate, Jerry bargains in real life terms: he will trade the attendant his airplane ticket for a full tank of gas and he and Gino will drive back to Chicago! It is only then that Jerry realizes that his compulsion to repeat has landed him in a truly needy place: he had tossed away his jacket (with the plane tickets) while he had struggled to hot- wire the car! Jerry's world view of power, swagger, and bluff is confronted by the workaday ethos of the station attendant who complains: «... treat a workingman like that... you didn't work for that gas, *I* worked for that gas, I gotta *pay* for it» (79).

At this moment, Gino again intercedes. While Jerry emotes, Gino notices that the two showgirls and the hotel butler – now off duty – are at the gas station on their way to the fishing excursion to which Jerry and Gino had been previously invited. Gino approaches them, in need, and he returns to Jerry with a «fistful of money» (80). Gino is no longer concerned with his contrived identity image. These are his friends, he needs money, he asks, they help him. The comedian at the hotel had stressed it: «there's nothing better than friendship» (41). Gino helps his friend, Jerry: they are «partners, whatever happen, we go Fifty-Fifty» (31).

Jerry and Gino drive off for Chicago, a very long drive that Mamet emphasizes will be fraught with soul-searching: «the car, alone on a desert road, a billion stars above...» (82). This is their new transitional realm – their period of adjustment to return to Chicago. They talk about doing time in prison. Jerry advises: «The time passes, you got the right attitude, the time passes by very quickly.» He is trying to help Gino, but Gino buys the fantasy too quickly: «Hey, I can handle it.» Jerry corrects him: «Don't tell me you can handle it. You never know, until they close that door. And *then* you find out.» Gino is now prepared to return to Chicago: «Well, I'm a-*gone* to find out» (81).

Back in the Chicago hotel, Jerry again acts out his compulsion to repeat: he comes to a realization – «Hey, hey, I ... I wish you didn't have to go. DON'T GO!» (83). Jerry, who assured his superior Frankie that he's «doing it right ... [to] get off probation» (13), is now urging Gino to flee. Jerry admonishes Gino: «The hell with the deal. The deal is they're buying three years of your life for pocket change... You're gonna come out of there an old man, buncha money don't mean shit....

This is not a *deal*... It's a *hustle*... they *hustled* you. Three years for three *days*» (84). Jerry truly cares for Gino: he is giving his friend good advice about the nature of the spurious bargain, but he is still acting-out – run, flee, escape, be «somebody else» (51), but how can one be anyone but oneself?

Gino tells Jerry, «I give my word» (84), but Jerry has come to a realization about the people who put him on probation and about the god-*father* for whom he works to do appropriate acts of penance: «They'd break their word to *you*» (85). Jerry has said it: «there are no human object relations in the Mafia, there is no real love or friendship. Gino, who earlier had traded his sense of right and wrong for being considered a stand up guy in the eyes of the mob, now utters words to Jerry that cement the transference and validate it as an actual relationship – in a sense, he becomes Jerry's true father: both as an ego ideal and an example for identification. He tells Jerry: «Maybe yes, maybe no. What they do no matter. I give *my* word. I give *my* word. I'm going to miss you» (85). Gino is saying that who he is depends on his personal sense of integrity. Despite his past destructive acts, he reasserts his individuality: what the Mafia does is irrelevant; Gino keeps his word. To Jerry, he is saying: *this is how a man behaves*. Then he tells him that he will miss his friendship. Jerry is too angry to hear him. Gino asks: «You gonna miss me, too?» (85). Jerry castigates him for not knowing «when to run», but shows he cares as well because he asks: «do you know what I mean?» (85).

Despite Jerry's sarcastic tone, hás words to Gino reveal his true emotions: «Hey, yeah. I'll miss you all my life» (86). An actual friendship has been formed, throughout the working-through of the transference and the neurotic conflict. Gino modifies his appearance so that he is the exact double of the man accused of the murder: *he is ready for his confession* – not so that the mob will think well of him, not for the approval of an attractive woman, but because he is a man who keeps his word: that is the key to his identity. It is at this point that the two men are astonished by the arrival of Frankie, over two hours earlier than was planned! They all take a «walk by the Lake» which was Gino's original modest desire rather than to go to Lake Tahoe (15). Frankie tells Jerry that they always planned to kill Gino, fake it as a suicide, plant the confession and the murder weapon on him: «We stick the confession in his pocket, life goes on. It's cleaner this way» (90).

Jerry is horrified. Every reason he had given Gino to turn tail and run seems now to be verified: «They never told me this was going to be the thing. He had a deal.» Frankie's response heralds Mamet's theme: «Things change» (90). Jerry sees that Gino's dilemma could be anyone's – including his own: nothing one does makes any difference to this mob; there is no friendship, and no human decency. «You sonofabitch!» he tells Frankie. «What the... who *are* you, all of you... make a *deal* with the man.... You set the guy up, *promise* him this... do the thing.... The guy does it, he stands up.... You're telling me the things you *promised* this guy, lied to him, you're going... to turn around and *kill* him?» (91). Jerry is incredulous that he ever cared what these thugs had thought about him.

But then Frankie reveals to Jerry the sadistic joke that his mob «family» had designed for him from the outset: «I'm not going to kill him.... *You're* going to kill him, pal. You wanted to square yourself. You got off probation...? What do you think, the thing is 'Sit in a hotel room two days order room service,' *that's* going to get you back in? *That's* not the job. THIS is the job» (91). Jerry's identification with Gino is complete: everything they told Gino was a lie, everything they told Jerry was a lie. His labors count for nothing, the «promises» are a «hustle» – the real deal is he has to murder Gino. Jerry's personality is coming into focus rapidly: rather than define himself as a cog in the organizational machine, he views his conflict as an individual. He challenges Frankie: «You can't make me do this» (91). But Frankie is up for the challenge: «Hey, I'm not making you do *anything*. You turn it down, you turn it down. You can't handle it, *I* handle it» (92). For the first time, Jerry perceives the extent of the contempt in which he has been held by his mob brethren: the mob defines itself by killing, if «Cinderella» wants to be a man, he must damn well prove himself by killing. Jerry sees that either he must kill Gino or Frankie will. lf Jerry kills Gino, then he has no human identity left; if he refuses, he has no life.

His reaction is rage at Gino: «Didn't I tell you to *run*?» (92). His habitual neurotic instincts tell him to blame Gino for the injustice of the system – split off his human affection for Gino and do the «thing» (the violence is always repressed, euphemized: «whack» him, «clip» him, etc.). Gino can only repeat: «I gave my word» (92). Gino's human integrity is now the basis for his strength of personality. Jerry is hysterical: his neurotic defense mechanisms are no longer sufficient for him to repress his conscience. While mocking Gino's ethical stance, he adopts it in his response to Frankie: «YOU GAVE YOUR WORD...!! ... HEY FANTASTIC!!... I SAID I'D DO IT, I GAVE MY WORD, EVERYBODY GAVE THEIR GOD DAMN WORD» (92-93).

All at once, Jerry's conflict is worked-through: he sees that his rage ought to be directed properly at Frankie. Gino is his friend. It is Frankie who stands for the brutal organization that is commanding him to be inhuman, robbing him of his integrity and identity. Jerry lashes out in fury, administering a savage blow to Frankie's head with the pistol. *He has made his choice*. Frankie, about to pass out, helps Jerry appreciate the consequences of his decision: «Hey, whaddaya gonna do... now, you gonna shoot *me*...? ... Shoot *yourself*... you're *dead*» (93). Jerry's emergence into health occurs in increments: he has opted for human attachment with Gino, preserving life and friendship, but his immediate response, as usual, is to flee. It is Gino who will concoct a satisfactory state of resolution for their dilemma.

Consistent with Freud's formulation, Gíno and Jerry are now moral men: they have not yielded to the temptation of neurotic impulses. They have, as a result of working-through their conflicts, emerged into real life with a renewed sense of health, identity, and commitment to each other. Their immediate problem is real, not psychological: having defied the Mafia, they will be killed, assuredly and with dispatch. But Gino has a plan: despite the fact that a great deal of their interactions in Lake Tahoe consisted of symbolic performance, transference relations, and acting-out behavior, Gino is willing to make one last wager (consistent with Freud) that «not every good relation... was to be regarded as a transference; there were also friendly relations which were based on reality and which proved to be viable» («Analysis Terminable», 222). Gino believes that something of his friendship with Joe Vincent was real. Just as he believed that about the showgirls and they helped him, so he acts on his beliefs concerning Vincent. He calls the Mafia godfather's private number with the quarter Vincent gave him. He will «call in his marker» – request the Don's friendship based on the formal commitment that each made to each other: «If Ever You Should'a Need My Friendship...» (94).

What has transpired since Gino and Jerry fled Joe Vincent's estate? Presumably, Vincent noticed Gino's absence, the loss of one of his cars. He may have asked Mr. Green about Gino and why Gino would have the old Sicilian coin. He may have been told about the plan for Gino to be killed in order to provide a patsy for the mob. A pragmatic man, Vincent might ordinarily have accepted such practices. But his goon, Kenny, told Jerry earlier: «I never seen the Don pal *up* that close with someone like that before... What are they? Friends from the *Old* country?» (63). Something beyond transference occurred between Vincent and Gino. Was it a shared bond with tradition? Was it a recommitment to the integrity of friendship? Was it a surge of homoerotic emotion, long repressed, that emerged under symbolic, transference conditions? At any rate, perhaps something of his conversation with Gino – about «shoes» – remained with him: what kind of associate (like Mr. Green) would give the Sicilian coin, pledge friendship, and all the while intend to betray his own promise? – would such a man be a «crack» in the shoe that Gino had advised him to watch out for? In any case, when Gino calls him and invokes Vincent's pledge to him, Joe Vincent takes an unusual path.

When next we see Gino, he is in court, along with Jerry, Mr. Green, Silver, Miss Bates. We hear the sentence of the judge: not three to five years, but the «maximum allowed by law, a term of imprisonment of twenty years to life» (95). This sentence – an appropriate one for murder – demonstrates that the deal with Gino, just as Jerry had predicted, was a «hustle», a sham. They told him something palatable merely to obtain his acquiescence: as Frankie confided to Jerry on the beach, «The thing was: Our guy needed two days to get out of town» (90); when Gino fulfilled his

purpose, he would be killed, a phony suicide to wrap up tidily the murder investigation. The judge asks: «Do you have anything to say?» (95). It is only then that the camera reveals not Gino on the stand, but Frankie! – Frankie, «dolled up» in a disguise to make *him* look like the murderer. Frankie then recites the confession that Gino had rehearsed *ad infinitum* with Jerry. Joe Vincent (or, as his friend Gino called him, «Don Giuseppe Vincenzo») intervened: as in so many detective novels and *noir* films, a «fall guy» was needed. Since Joe Vincent's friend Gino could not be that man, a new one must be produced... Frankie: surely, he would understand the splitting-off of affection, it was nothing personal, as Frankie told Jerry: «It's cleaner this way» (90).

The final scene of *Things Change* presents us with Gino's dream: we see «the sea. White houses. A fishing boat» (95). Then we realize that we are looking at a poster. We are back in the shoe repair shop. Gino is shining the shoes of a man reading a newspaper. When that man lowers the paper, we see that he is Jerry. He, too, is now a shiner of shoes. Both men wear the appropriate apron. They work at their labors. Then – in keeping with the nature of psychoanalytic interaction – they exchange an unspoken glance and a «shrug»: Mamet and Silverstein, in the stage directions, paraphrase that shared expression. «It could be worse» (96). Both men return to their honest work and their honest friendship. They are alive, they are living real lives, and they have the basis for a future.

But what is an appropriate expectation for living our own real lives – as fully realized psychic identities? Early on, Freud handed down the goal of psychoanalysis as «transforming your hysterical misery into common unhappiness» (*Studies on Hysteria*, 305). This, I suggest, is what occurs for Gino and Jerry in *Things Change*. The ending of the film is not «happy», in any traditional or satisfying cense, in that characters are returned to a life of menial labor. (But consider, for a moment, their alternative!) They are, like Shakespeare's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, «happy in that we are not overhappy» (*Hamlet*, II, ii, 1. 231). As a result of their working-through of their neurotic conflicts (by means of the «intermediate region between illness and real life» as effected by the transference), they are able to proclaim (along with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) that, for the two of them, at least, *their* «world's grown honest» (Hamlet, II, ii, 1. 240). Gino achieves a satisfactory state of resolution: he is able to forswear his neurotic pact with the Mafia and return to the state of comfortable integrity that previously he had worn like a medal and which had enabled him to live his life with poise and equilibrium. Jerry is able to come to a recognition of «where [he] was meant to be» (43): he is meant to be a friend, to work for a living – in Freud's terms, to develop the capacity for love and the «emotional appreciation of (human) objects» («Dostoevsky», 178). And – unlike Rosencrantz and Guildenstern – they remain alive: their «common unhappiness» is ours, but so is their resolute determination to be fulfilled human beings, their belief in and commitment to friendship and love, and their willingness to pledge their lives to such goals as trust, loyalty, and fundamental human decency. For any and all «common unhappiness», – *things change*: and that is why Gino and Jerry... and all of us... derive what pleasures life provides.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 103-112

Male envy in females: Questions, research and meanings (*)

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1. BEING FEMALE: DEFINITION AND REDEFINITION

In the past, research had demonstrated dissatisfaction with female gender identity. A national survey conducted by Roper in the United States in the 1940's concluded that being 'female' was not as valued as being male. In general, women (41%) thought men had an easier time than women. Gender roles were agreed upon as segregated (e.g., both men and women believed men to be the best lawyers, and women the best stenographers). When asked, 'if you could be born over again would you rather be a man or a woman?' 25% of females said they would rather be born a man, as opposed to only 3% of males saying they would rather be born a woman.

Also, prior to the 1970s, psychological research had described gender-role characteristics as complementary and polar; males were instrumental-competent while females were expressive-empathic. Within these stereotypes, traits connected to masculinity were regarded as more valued (Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz & Vogel, 1970).

Personality characteristics, believed to differentiate males from females, were thought to be not only natural (Freud, 1933), but also, by joining reproduction, sexuality and desire, to be inevitable. Freud's construct of femaleness, his 'ideal of womanhood', was developmentally contingent for females on the shock of 'penis envy'. Females were then psychologically distinguished not only by a weak superego indicating a weaker moral sense but by traits of passivity, masochism and narcissism (1933).

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According to Freud, irregular female development evolves into a 'masculinity complex' in which a girl declines to accept the fact of her castration, and subsequently may be compelled to behave as though she were a man (1959) or to manifest the envy of males in symbolic displacement. Freud believed that even normal females emerge from the phallic phase defensively, with difficulty and incompletely; the longing for a penis persists in their unconscious. Although the wish for a penis is replaced by one for a baby, Freud (1959) connected a predominance of envy in the mental life of women to a lesser sense of justice and fairness in their mental life, leaving women with less capacity for sublimation and a precarious self-esteem.

Dissident theorists such as Thompson (1942) believed that cultural, not biological, pressures produced the picture of womanhood Freud observed. A girl is exposed from birth onward to the suggestion of her inferiority, therefore, according to Horney (1967) penis envy in women arises from developmental factors which should disappear but is continued due to social forces. Horney also suggested that an intrinsic pleasure-oriented feminine sexuality exists in women.

Hostility to and condemnation of both the conventional norms and theoretical idealizations arose from an emerging consciousness that femaleness was the 'other', defined by men to be the negative of men, a lack against which masculine identity differentiated itself (de Beauvoir, 1953). Irigaray (1988) argued that gender struggles have exploited women. Our culture verbalizes in masculine text. With masculine morphology providing the structure, and a language pervasively masculinistic and phallogocentric, women have constituted the unrepresentable or are represented falsely. The unrepresentable became articulated as the 'feminine mystique', i.e. 'woman' as a husband's wife, or as a child's mother. The troubled position of women became 'the problem with no name', a strange discrepancy between the image to which women were trying to conform and the reality of their lives as women (Friedan, 1983).

New theories about gender emerged. Sherif (1982) suggested that gender definitions could be modeled on social stereotypes as in the past, or, more satisfactorily by broader definitions which would encompass everything it means to feel, think, and act like a woman or man. Gender identity should be redefined to refer to one's knowledge with respect to individual categorical schema for gender, and whether the individual accepts or rejects these schema. A relational or contextual theory of 'gender', different from biological prescription, suggests that what the person 'is', and what gender 'is', relates to the constructed relations by which 'gender' is determined (Butler, 1992). Multiple cultural configurations about gender are possible (Geertz, 1973). Many feminists have argued for degendering society so that male dominance would end. Other feminists have claimed that difference need not imply inequality (Dimen, 1988) or asymmetrical power (Unger, 1979). In the 1970's an androgynous ideal was described for both sexes in which an individual could be masculine or feminine, assertive or yielding, instrumental or expressive, depending on the situational appropriateness of the behavior (Bem, 1974).

In research conducted in 1983 with college females as subjects, Solomon, Minton, Calano, Raber and Rapaport-Taylor (1985) concluded that being female was perceived as a more valued experience for women than it had been in previous decades. In this study, 11% of the all-female sample expressed the wish to be reborn male, reduced from the 25% found by Roper in 1946. These females perceived their sex as incorporating the positive aspects of varied dimensions of personality, reflecting a perception of women as more consistent with an androgynous ideal. The improvement in the valuing of femaleness was attributed to the feminist movement, active since the 1970s.

Traditional notions of a woman's place further eroded. Although gender gaps narrowed further (MacFarquhar, 1994), threats to the women's movement took the form of an insidious 'backlash' (Faludi, 1991) directed against the gains of the feminist movement. Opposition to the movement itself appeared to stir women in the late eighties and nineties. 'Feminism', for some, became another 'ism' and therefore oppressive (Baruch & Serrano, 1988). The movement was criticized for being led by a white upper-middle class elite completely removed from the everyday life of women (Paglia, 1994).

Divisions, also, emerged within the feminist movement in terms of approaches to understanding femaleness. Although a belief in the concept of androgyny persisted, other theories arose which

suggested possible differences between men and women (Bohon, 1990). One group, grouped under a rubric of 'cultural feminism' (Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1976) described women as exhibiting traits which are distinctively female and considered equal to, or even preferable to, traits which characterize men. This theory, suggesting a 'reverence' for a superior female, has been challenged (Wolf, 1993), and criticized for encouraging women to think of themselves as victims (Roiphe, 1993), and for implying that men suffer from 'testosterone poisoning' (Crichton, 1994). In response, a new generation of females called 'do-me' feminists emerged in the popular press, who 'enjoy sex on their terms', 'profess agentic sex', 'talk about it' and believe that 'feminism made sex and caring for men shameful' (Friend, 1994).

In the 80's, separate groups also arose around research which hypothesized not a biological determination or centrality of sex difference, but difference which emerges out of the context of the different lives of males and females. Ward (1994) suggested that women's ability to conceive and bear children creates for them a culture separate from that of men. Chodorow (1978) theorized that mothering behavior and fathering behavior are continually reproduced in a traditional nuclear family. Core gender identity for a girl is built upon and does not contradict her primary sense of identification with her mother. Bem (1994) claimed that the difficulties women face stem from the fact that they are different from men in a world still male-centered even in the 1990's; a world organized around the male experience automatically transforms any and all male/female differences into disadvantages for women. For example, a potentially gender neutral theory of 'attachment', converted into a 'political' philosophy, then justifies the lack of high-quality affordable child care (Silverstein & Phares, 1996). The popular press, catering to a female market, maximized this expression of difference and polarization in self help books which have become vast best-sellers (e.g., Gray, 1993; Tannen, 1994).

The present study questioned whether, in the light of the new controversies, there were changes in female identification. Gender satisfaction was operationally defined by asking individuals about their wished for sex if rebirth were possible and was compatible with a broadened definition of gender identity (Sherif, 1982). Since the reasons for a female preferring rebirth as a female were included in addition, a female's schema related to the choice of 'female' were described. If a female preferred rebirth as a male, it suggested dissatisfaction with her biological sex and/or gender. Since the reasons given for preferring rebirth as a male were included, related schema about the choice of rebirth as a male were described. The present study questioned whether changes in gender satisfaction have occurred (since Solomon *et al.*, 1985). The major focus of the present study was to detect change in the gender identity and satisfaction of the female sex by females. The study also questioned whether any change, if it occurred, might be related to particular aspects of family, situation, personality or age.

This is an updated report on urban samples. One included both females at one large coeducational public university (42%) and women employed at various corporations (22%) and financial institutions (35%). The other was at the same single sex institution studied in 1983. This report also includes a comparison with the 1983 sample, from the single sex institution.

2. METHOD

2.1. *Procedure*

A female researcher gave each subject a printed booklet. In each booklet, the subject was first asked questions about her background. She was then asked if she would prefer to be reborn as a 'male' or as a 'female'. She was told to turn to a designated page according to her response (preference to be reborn as a male/or female) and then to check as many reasons for her choice as she wished from a given list (one for male-preference subjects, and one for female-preference subjects). The list included: 1) biological-anatomical characteristics (e.g.men/women do not/do menstruate), 2) social-conventional beliefs (e.g., men/women get away with a lot more), and 3) personality/behavior trait

adjectives drawn from an instrument developed from items differentiating men and women (Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz & Vogel, 1970). In each case, the items were phrased in terms of the «desirable» pole of the dimension (e.g., men/women are self-confident). The male-preference and female-preference lists contained the same items (with the exception of the following: do not/do menstruate; do not/do bear children; masculine/feminine). The total number of descriptors on each list was 50. On the final page of the questionnaire, the subject was asked to respond to the Eysenck Personality Inventory, a self report measure containing 3 subscales; Neuroticism, Extroversion, and a Lie (social desirability) scale. The Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck & Eysenck 1968) has been demonstrated to be valid in discriminating neurotic from normal individuals and was designed to eliminate gender bias (Eysenck, 1970). It relates to negative affect (Watson & Clark, 1984) which reflects pervasive individual differences in negative emotionality and self-concept.

2.2. *Participants*

Subjects in all studies were females. The demographics are presented in *Table 1*. Results of the Chi Square analysis indicate significant differences between the samples in age (1996 is older), ethnicity (all are significantly different) and employment status (naturally more are employed in the business/coed sample).

3. RESULTS

Again over 80% of the sample expressed a preference to be reborn female (*Table 2*). There was no relationship to age, or personality variables (*Table 3*) although there had been in the 1983 sample. There was no difference in race ($\chi^2 = 3.75^{ns}$), or occupation ($\chi^2 = 4.00^{ns}$) between female and male-preference subjects in any of these samples.

Table 4 shows us the qualities valued by the majority of female preference subjects. According to the composite rank order the major reason for female-preference was 'aware of feelings'. The following reasons have also found to be consistently high throughout the years: 'are feminine', 'gentle', 'do bear children', 'logical', 'adaptable to changing life styles', 'express feelings'.

'Do bear children' is the only reason which is high for the female-preference group but not significantly different from the male-preference group. This is because 'do not bear children' is also highly chosen by the group of females who chose to be reborn male.

Table 5 shows us the list of traits valued consistently by the female-preference groups in terms of Broverman's group (1970) of stereotypic items – and whether the masculine-role or feminine-role is more desirable. There is a combination of these desirable traits for female-preference.

It must be remembered that: (1) Broverman's (1970) research from which the different stereotypic behaviors were derived asked for 'typically' masculine or feminine behavior's; (2) our questionnaire may result in differences, not only because ours is from a different era but actually may be a different 'construct' – asking for a more personal point of view. This may contrast (typical) 'reputation' as opposed to 'personal experience.'

Table 6 shows us the descriptors valued by a majority of the male-preference sample. Consistent major reasons for male-preference were: 'higher positions in business' (81%), and 'get away with a lot more' (65%). The descriptor, 'do not bear children' was selected by 59% of the male-preference group. Other descriptors selected by the majority in this recent sample include 'do not menstruate', 'not sexually harassed'.

The results also demonstrate uniformity in the descriptors valued though recent years by females who wished to be reborn male. These descriptors referred less to what males are than to a perception of what females lack. The wish to be reborn male seems to emerge, not from idealization or admiration of males, but rather from envy of the male's presumed social position. Stereotypically 'positive' personality traits of men were rarely given as a rationale for wishing to be reborn male. For example,

TABLE 1
Profile of Participants

Variable			Single-Sex School 1983[1] (N = 150)	Single-Sex School 1990s (N = 170)	Business Corporate Coed-School 1990s (N = 179)	χ^2
Age (Years)	Range		18-55	17-69	18-67	
	Mean		25.174	25.78	27.38	
	'Under 30'		n = 115	n = 130	n = 123	7.8 *
	'30 and over'		n = 32	n = 38	n = 54	
Ethnic/Racial Identification	Caucasian		n = 108	n = 93	n = 80	
	African-Amer.		n = 22	n = 20	n = 30	39.9 **
	Latina		n = 16	n = 29	n = 22	
	Asian		n = 0	n = 14	n = 27	
	Other		n = 4	n = 12	n = 18	
Marital Status	Married		n = 17	n = 28	n = 37	4.7 ns
	Not married		n = 133	n = 142	n = 142	
Parenting Status	Have a child		n = 17	n = 26	n = 26	1.4 ns
	No children		n = 132	n = 144	n = 153	
Employment Status	Employed (Full or Part-time)		n = 96	n = 96	n = 161	43.8 ***
	Not employed		n = 54	n = 74	n = 18	
Mother Employed	Employed (Full or Part-time)		n = 101	n = 118	n = 122	.4 ns
	Not employed		n = 48	n = 49	n = 56	
Siblings	Brothers	No	n = 45	n = 58	n = 60	.1 ns
		Yes	n = 105	n = 112	n = 116	
	Sisters	No	n = 51	n = 68	n = 51	3.2 ns
		Yes	n = 99	n = 102	n = 125	
Education	High School				n = 3	
	Some College		(all)	(all)	n = 73	
	College Graduate				n = 92	
	Graduate School				n = 10	

[1] Because of missing data, some category totals do not add up to the total N for each year.

ns= not significant
* p <.05
** p <.01
*** p <.001

TABLE 2
Percent of Subjects Choosing Rebirth as (Fe)Males

	Single Sex School		Business/Coed School
Subjects Wish to be	1983 %	1990s %	1990s %
Reborn Female	89	85.2	81
Reborn Male	11	14.8	19

TABLE 3
Sex-Preference: Relationship of Scores to Personality

	Single Sex School						Business/Coed		
	1983 Wish to be reborn			1990s Wish to be reborn			1990s Wish to be reborn		
Eysenck Personality Inventory	Female	Male	t	Female	Male	t	Female	Male	t
Neuroticism (Mean)	11.4	15.4	3.14 **	12.39	13.0	.60 ns	11.50	12.15	.74 ns
Extraversion (Mean)	12.6	11.17	1.40 ns	11.61	11.9	.29 ns	11.63	11.76	.19 ns
Social Desirability (Mean)	2.54	2.35	.15 ns	2.3	2.4	.07 ns	3.01	.81	.66 ns

TABLE 4

Qualities Valued by the Majority of Subjects Wishing to be Reborn as a Female

A. Choices of 50% or more of Subjects in 1983 and 1990s

	Single Sex School		Business/Coed School
	1983	1990s	1990s
	%	%	%
Active	68 *	53 **	50 **
Adaptable to Changing Life Styles	76 **	65 **	62 **
Ambitious	59 **	56 **	55 **
Aware of Feelings	87 **	84 **	86 **
Bear Children	55 ns	62 ns	62 ns
Emotional Strength	58 **	60 **	57 **
Express Tender Feelings	76 **	59 **	61 **
Feminine	63 ns	71 **	68 **
Gentle	76 **	69 **	68 **
Independent	66 *	64 **	56 ns
Know how to Take Control	50 ns	50 *	(42 **)
Logical	67 **	64 **	65 **
Self-Confident	62 **	56 **	(47 ns)
Self-Sufficient	69 **	53 **	59 **

B. Choices of 50% or more of Subjects in 1983 **only**

Concern for Appearance	54 *	(39 **)	(47 **)
Worldly	54 **	(49 **)	(37 **)

C. Choices of 50% or more of Subjects in 1990s **only** (either sample)

None

Note: Significance levels refer to the Chi Square comparison of male-preference and female-preference subjects.

ns = not significant
* = <.05
** = <.01

TABLE 5

Comparison of Present Results and Those of Broverman et al.*/Bem (Sex-Role Stereotypes) Focusing on Qualities Chosen by 50% or More of Female-Preference Subjects Consistently*

Results of Broverman et. al. (1970) Qualities for which **Masculine** pole was seen as more desirable	Results of Broverman et. al. (1970) Qualities for which **Feminine** pole was seen as more desirable
Active Ambitious Logical Self-Confident Independent	Aware of Feelings Concern for Appearance Express Tender Feelings Gentle

TABLE 6

Qualities Valued by Majority of Subjects Wishing to be Reborn as a Male

A. Choices of 50% or More of Subjects in 1983 and 1990s

	Single Sex		Business/Coed
	1983	1990s	1990s
Fewer Moral Restrictions	54 **	68 **	(46 **)
Get Away with a Lot More	69 *	59 **	65 **
Reach Higher and More Powerful Positions in Business	77 **	59 **	81 **

B. Choices of 50% or More of Subjects in 1990s **only**

Fewer Responsibilities	(46 **)	59 *	(42 **)
Physically Stronger	(30 ns)	54 **	47 **
Do not Menstruate	(31 **)	(46 **)	76 **
Not Sexually Harassed	not included	(44 **)	59 **
Do Not Bear Children	(41 ns)	(41 ns)	59 ns)

C. Choices of 50% or More of Subjects in 1983 **only**

None

Note: Significance levels refer to the Chi Square comparison of male-preference and female-preference subjects.

ns = not significant
* p <.05
** p <.01

few male-preference subjects wanting rebirth as a man chose 'men are skilled in business', although a majority in all samples chose the descriptor 'men reach higher and more powerful positions in business' as a reason for wishing rebirth as a male. Also the wish 'not to be female' seems to relate to 'not to have a female body'.

4. DISCUSSION

These results are similar to those of the previous studies conducted on female students attending a single-sex institution in the 1980's. Compared to the 1940's there has been an increase in gender satisfaction among females. There is also a common appreciation of females as consisting of both traditionally 'feminine' (e.g., aware of feelings) attributes and what are thought to be traditionally 'masculine' (e.g., logical) attributes. Because the agentic traits are valued contributors to a feminine identity it can be presumed that they need not be hidden, nor masked, nor need relate to conflicts in feminine development as early psycholoanalytic theory claimed (e.g., Riviere, 1927).

Major reasons for male preference continue to be the belief that males have an easier, freer life. The 'epidemic' of male envy in females theorized by Freud (Thompson, 1943) seems more highly related to the social-environmental determinants existing in Freud's time and through the 1940's, rather than the biological determinants postulated by Freud. Penis envy may have functioned in the past not as 'bedrock' but as rationalization, organizing and relating to, not necessarily producing a more generalized experience of low self-esteem and dissatisfaction (Grossman & Stewart, 1990).

Thus male envy could easily emerge from familial/social reality. Horney (1967) suggested that women's desire to be men reflects the different realities in our society for girls and boys, women and men. For instance, even though AIDS affects more males than females, the AIDS prevention programs have made women primarily responsible for safer sex practices because of beliefs that a masculine gender identity is in direct conflict with safer sex practices. Public health efforts have perpetuated traditional beliefs about gender roles, while disregarding gender power relations, and this has served to free men from taking responsibility for their own health and that of their partners (Campbell, 1995).

Although a dichotomy of preference arose from the 'forced-choice' (either as male or female) response, and the choice of male or female-preference may represent different overall preference, an underlying reality is most likely agreed upon, most likely not mutually exclusive or opposing. The preference choice of descriptors connected to each sex could easily co-exist in one psychological reality as they derive from discontinuous spheres of experience with male-preference coming largely from familial/societal experience, and female-preference largely from personality/trait attributes. In other words, a woman who prefers to be reborn female could believe both that 'woman are aware of feelings' and that men 'reach higher and more powerful positions'. A woman who prefers rebirth as a male could believe likewise. This is a legitimate assumption. A recent study found that both sexes perceive males to have more advantages and fewer disadvantages than females (Fabes & Laner, 1986), while a meta-analysis concluded that women still tend to be perceived as manifesting behavior described as socially sensitive, and concerned with other's welfare (Eagly, 1995). A choice for rebirth would then depend on the woman's estimate of the relative value of these percepts to her own life.

In the consistency of qualities chosen by women to represent their gender identity it is clear that most women who identity themselves as females in the years studied, believe themselves not deficient men, nor castrated 'other'. Female gender identity and the sense of being female are experienced consistently and given healthy narcissistic investment in qualities generally agreed-upon as 'being female', which include but reach well beyond, childbearing and its metaphors.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 113-120

The depths of evil – The phenomenology of subterranean spaces

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Gaston Bachelard writes about «topoanalysis», «the systematic psychological study of the sites of our intimate lives» (8). He recognizes that «the house... is a both privileged entity for phenomenological study of the intimate values of inside space» (3) and «one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories, and dreams of mankind» (6). He believes the cellar represents «the subconscious» and says, and says, «In the cellar darkness prevails both day and night, and even when we are carrying a lighted candle, we see shadows dancing on the dark walls» (19). To Bachelard the cellar «is first and foremost the *dark entity* of the house, the one that partakes of subterranean forces. When we dream there, we are in harmony with the irrationality of the depths» (18).

Although much evidence supports his general assertion that the cellar is the «dark entity of the house» which «partakes of subterranean forces», the evidence from much fiction does not support his claim that it is there that one is «in harmony with the irrationality of the depths». And only a reader with a very negative view of humanity indeed would argue that the cellar represents «the subconscious». Theoretically, Bachelard is persuasive, but when the cellar is depicted in fiction it is all too often a place in which evil is manifest.[1]

Again and again the events which take place in subterranean places are manifestations of evil.[2] The ancient Greeks located hell in the underworld. Dante shows that those guilty of the worst sins will

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[1] One example in literature does support Bachelard's theory. *The Manticore* (New York: Viking, 1972), the third novel in Robertson Davie's *Deptford Trilogy*. But in that novel, Davies is not as interested in presenting an underground cave realistically as in making sure that it symbolizes a womb. In the novel the protagonist – at the end of three novels – finally reaches a kind of wisdom and understanding by descending into and returning from the cave.

[2] Obviously there are many examples in fiction in which evil is not acted out in cellars. Some obvious examples are Shakespeare's *Othello*, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, James M. Cain's *Mildred Pierce*, Wallace Stegner's *The Spectator Bird*, Graham Greene's *The Tenth Man*, and much of Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child*. But my primary purpose here is not to do a thorough analysis of evil in fiction but to explore the phenomenological implications of cellars in fiction.

be cast down into the lowest depths of hell. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton Satan and the rebel angels are «Hurld headlong» (1.45) from heaven into the lowest depths of the universe.

Many philosophers and theologians who write about evil define it only vaguely. They give only vague definitions of evil, (1) calling it merely the opposite of the good,[3] (2) equating it with bad things that happen to people, (3) linking it to sin, and (4) theorizing about why God allows evil to exist.

The philosopher Colin McGinn provides a specific and thoughtful definitions of evil. He begins with the assumption that some people (the virtuous) take pleasure in seeing other people experience pleasure and that others (the evil) take pleasure in seeing others experience pain. He says that an evil person «derives pleasure from [the] pain [of others] and pain from pleasure» (62), and says those who are «*pure* evil» enjoy «malice for its own sake». In contrast «*instrumental* evil» is «a means of achieving some other goal» (63). McGinn also explains that «the notions of pleasure and pain must be taken broadly» and «not [be] restricted to bodily sensations». He also explains that «[t]he evil person can be either agent or spectator of the suffering he relishes» and calls the former «active» and the latter «passive evil» (66).[4] The evil person takes «pleasure in [inflicting or witnessing] violence», especially «sadis[tic]» violence. The pleasure spectators take in witnessing «public executions, inquisitions, bear-baiting» and even «violent sports» is passive evil. Although McGinn is ambivalent about revenge, I will treat it as pure evil because the seeker of revenge takes pleasure in seeing his or her enemy suffer.[5]

Similarly, F. Scott Peck defines evil as «that force, residing either inside or outside of human beings, that seeks to kill life or liveliness» (11). An evil person exhibits the following traits:

(a) consistent destructive, scapegoating behavior,

(b) excessive, albeit usually covert, intolerance to criticism,

(c) pronounced concern with a public image and self-image of respectability, and

(d) intellectual deviousness, which becomes schizophreniclike [sic] in times of stress (129).

There is also a «subtlety and persistence and consistency» of the evil person's actions (49).

An *evil person* acts out his or her desire to cause suffering to another human being or other sensate being – (1) to reduce that person to something less than human or (2) to make that person or creature give up one of his deepest values, his desire for life and to prefer death to life (McGill 77).

Nevertheless a remarkable amount of the time the events which take place in cellars involve evil. Sometimes the actions which occur in cellars does not fulfill the definitions of evil that are presented in this paper, but those events may be *called* «evil» by characters or narrators. One such example is the druidistic explorations of the body which occurs toward the end of Toni Morrison's *Paradise* and which the speaker calls «evil» ((New York: Knopf, 1998, p. 273).

Also sometimes the events which take place in cellars are not particularly harmful to anyone but involve an attempt to demean or coerce another person, as is the case with Harrison Mack, Sr.'s, stipulation in his will that unless all of his excrement was stored in pickle jars in the cellar his son could not inherit his fortune in John Barth's *The Floating Opera* (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1956, pp. 90-98).

[3] St. Thomas Acquinas, after vaguely defining evil as a «something» which is «contrary to good» (1), spends nearly all of the rest of his 550-page book entitled *On Evil* discussing sins. And many philosophers and theologians, rarely define evil, except in general terms such as «the opposite of good» or «bad things that happen to people».

Paul Ricoeur, equates evil with «defilement or sin» (5) in his *The Symbolism of Evil*, in which he is interested not in individual symbols but in the symbolic implications of the plots of various myths.

[4] Since McGinn is interested in defining the evil person, he is also interested in that person's experiencing pain when observing another person's pleasure. But my purpose here is primarily to explore the phenomenological implications of cellars. And cellars are linked only with a person's desiring and enjoying another person's pain.

[5] McGinn, however, considers both revenge and rivalry to be «ambivalent», the first because it may involve some justice and the second because in the purpose of rivalry is for one person or team to defeat another.

McGinn recognizes that «A culture dominated by sports is to be one in which this danger [the danger of encouraging pleasure at the pain of others and hence evil] is routinely courted» (69).

Such actions cause a «victim to renounce even the value of his own life. McGill calls this *pure evil*». Peck, utilizing the ideas of Martin Buber (*Good and Evil* 39-40) calls such evil «radical evil» (47).

Such seems to be the motivations of many evil characters in literature, such as Satan, Iago, Captain Claggart, the Marquise de Mertuile in *Dangerous Liasons*, and Alex, the protagonist of *A Clockwork Orange*.

1. EVIL IN CELLARS

1.1. *Pure Evil*

Although examples of pure evil are fairly rare in literature, they are present in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Lessing's *The Fifth Child*, March's *The Bad Seed*, de Laclos's *Les Liasons Dangereuses*, Harris's *Silence of the Lambs* (in the character Hannabal Lecter), and Tim Krabbe's *The Golden Egg* (and the movie which was based on it *The Vanishing*). In all of these, either evil actions or evil characters are located in cellars.

In western civilization, the epitome of evil is, of course, Satan, whom myth locates in the innermost depths of the earth. And in *Paradise Lost*, the source of many of our images of hell, Milton shows Satan as motivated by the desire to cause God and Adam and Evil suffering. Satan descends below the earth's surface in order to enter Eden and successfully tempt Eve.[6]

In Doris Lessing's novel, *The Fifth Child,* a fifth child is born into a happy well-adjusted family. From the time that the child quickens in the womb, his mother is aware that this child is different. As soon as he is born, «the house was not the same; there was a constraint and a wariness in every body» (60). He seems motivated only to do harm, to make others unhappy. As a small child, he kills the family dog, and his parents realize he cannot be left alone with other small children. When his mother tries to imagine where he would at home, she concludes, «Ben's people were at home under the earth she was sure deep underground in black caverns lit by torches» (122) or «in caves underground» with «dark subterranean rivers» (130). She realizes that he would end up in «the caves and caverns... of the big cities» (131).

William March's villain, Rhoda Penmark in *The Bad Seed*, an elementary school child, commits her most horrible murder in a basement, by setting a fire in and barring the door to Leroy Breedlove's living area and leaving him there to burn to death, as he screams «Unlock the door, Rhoda» (147) while Rhoda eats her ice cream and laughs (148).[7] In Thomas Harris's *The Silence of the Lambs*, Hannabal Lecter, who defines himself as «evil» (21) and may outrank even Iago as the most evil character in literature, is housed in an innermost basement cell of prison, which can be reached only by

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[6] Satan, before he compounds his sins by seducing Eve, recognizes his situation, saying:

> Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell;
> And in the lowest deep a lower deep
> Still threatning to devour me opens wide,
> To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n. (4.75-83)

and, just before he decides «Evil be thou my good» (4. 110), he declares, «The lower still I fall, onely supreme / In miserie» (4.91). As if underground, Satan remains in darkness throughout *Paradise Lost*, except during his second – successful – temptation of Eve. First seen in the darkness of hell, he travels mostly by night to the earth, tempts Eve at night, orbits the earth and remains in darkness for nine days and nights, and, before his return to Eden, travels subterraneously from the Persian Gulf to Eden (at the source of the Tigris River) (9.70-73). He «Descend[s] through Darkness» (10.394) back to «utmost Hell» (10.437).

[7] In March's book, the cause of Rhoda's evil is attributed to heredity and linked to murderers in her mothers' family.

«[d]escending through the asylum... toward the final keep» (142). Although, Lecter takes gastronomic pleasure is eating various of his victims' organs, his primary pleasure is in committing evil and causing pain. In Tim Krabbe's novel, *The Golden Egg*, (the source of both a Dutch and an American film, both entitled *The Vanishing* and directed by George Sluizer), the murderer, Raymond Lemorne, buries his victims alive in a coffin. After killing and burying Rex Hoffman's girlfriend, Saskia Ehlvest, alive, he then recounts to Hoffman how he kidnapped her. He exacerbates Hoffman's suffering by not only burying him alive, but by, in so doing, letting Hoffman know that she had endured a similar fate. Alex, the protagonist in Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, uses a basement milk and drug bar as the base from which he plans his cruel escapades.

Since revenge seeks to cause pain, it seems to me to fall into the category of pure evil. Two examples are Edgar Allan Poe's «The Cask of Amontillado» and Scott Turow's *Presumed Innocent*. In «The Cask of Amontillado», Montresor's buries Fortunato alive in «the catacombs of the Montresors» (275) in a crypt whose walls are «lined with human remains» (277). Here, behind one wall of bones, Fortunato is sealed in «a still interior recess» (277). Also the villain in Scott Turow's *Presumed Innocent*, Barbara Sabich, is at least as malevolent in her revenge – especially as she is presented in the conclusion of the movie version, in which her husband discovers the murder weapon, with the blood and hair of her victim still on it, in the cellar. In confessing her crime to her husband, she gloats that he «will always know it was her» who killed his mistress and caused him to tried for murder.

1.2. *Instrumental Evil*

Victims' pain is also caused by *instrumental evil* (McGinn 63) actions that result from the pursuit of one's selfish desires. Such evil is presented in M. S. Lewis's *The Monk*, John Fowles's *The Collector*, and Thomas Harris's *Silence of the Lambs* (in the character Jame Gumb).

In M. G. Lewis's *The Monk*, the abbot, Ambrosio, first drugs his innocent victim, the beautiful young virgin, Antonia, in order to ravish her in her sleeps. His plan fails when her mother enters the room. After killing her mother, Ambrosio, despite Antonia's screams, tears, and resistance, then administers a drug to simulate death to Antonia and seals her body near «three putrid, half-corrupted bodies», (303) in an underground crypt in a cold, «gloomy, dungeon» (295). There, Ambrosio «dishonours» her (307), blames her for seducing him (309), and stabs her to death.

Other novels also locate also evil not just in a cellar but in either a sealed off back room of a cellar or in a sub-basement. In Barbara Michael's ghost story *Ammie, Come Home*, evil is located behind a barricaded back room in a «dark, spidery corner» of the cellar. And Fortunato is buried in a «still interior recess» of the catacombs (277).

In *Silence of the Lambs*, the site of Jame Gumb's evil actions is his «basement [which] rambles like the maze that thwarts us in dreams». In the cellar, «[t]here are rooms in the farthest corners... that Gumb hasn't opened for years» (203). After he kidnaps young women and before he kills and flails them to «gather» their skins, Gumb incarcerates them in an «obliette» (204), a pit in the sub-basement.

In John Fowles's *The Collector*, Miranda is kidnapped by Fred Clegg – whom she recognizes to be «evil – and incarcerated in an inner-cellar[8] which is only by ten by twenty» (132). Clegg keeps her imprisoned there in the «crypt-room» (123) with an «iron door» (124) until she dies of pneumonia. Her diary recounts the mental and physical torment she endured. In contrast, Clegg's diary shows only his pleasure in having captured her. Poised to become a serial murderer, Clegg, at the end of his diary, says that he is «drying out» the damp cellar which caused Miranda's illness, in preparation for his next victim, Marian, whom, fortuitously, Miranda's «clothes would fit» (255).

A common denominator among people who commit acts of evil is their insensitivity to their victims' ability to feel humiliation, fear, and pain After locking Miranda, in her cell, Clegg says, «My

[8] After locking Miranda in her cell, Clegg retreats to an «outer-cellar» (28).

feelings were very happy because my intentions were of the best. It was what she never understood» (29), even though he reports that Miranda has told him «what a bad thing [he] did» (27).[9] In the last paragraph of the novel, even though he lets her die of pneumonia rather than take her to a doctor, he insists that her death came «unexpectedly» and that he «thought [he] was acting for the best and within [his] rights» (120). The perpetrators demonstrate what Sartre calls «sadism» - the desire to turn the Other into a thing or an «it». For example, although Jame Gumb refers to a death's head moth as a «her» (205), he is so insensitive to his human victim that he describes her merely as «the material» from which he will construct his next skin (205) and her skin merely as «the hide» (206). Regardless of how much the victims plead, cry, scream, or show other signs of excruciating physical pain and mental anguish and regardless of their motivations, the perpetrators show no more sympathy than does Poe's Montresor as he says sarcastically of the buried-alive Fortunato, «*in pace requiesat!*» (279).

1.3. *Evil justified by prejudice*

Instrumental evil is often demonstrated by people who believe another group of people to be less than human or to be, themselves, evil.[10] In «The Pit and the Pendulum» (another cellar with a sub-cellar) the inquisitors torment the protagonist because they believe enemies of the church need to suffer in order to be purged of and punished for their heretical beliefs and alliances. This story includes all the typical horrors associated with cellars. There is «the blackness of darkness» (246), «stone floors» (248) in a «dungeon» whose walls are «smooth, slimy, cold» and whose floor is «moist and slippery» (249). On the walls are «figures of fiends in aspects of menace» (251). The dungeon is «swarming with rats» (265), and at its center is a deep «circular pit» (250), described as «typical of hell» (252). These details produce in the narrator/victim, first, «a vague horror in my heart» (247) and, then, a fear that intensifies until he «grew frantically mad» (253). But the inquisitors are indifferent to his sufferings.

The protagonist of Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man* explains that he has retreated to live in a cellar as an invisible man because a person with black skin consistently met in the United States with nothing but evil treatment.[11] He says that he had chosen to «descend[ ], like Dante, into... [the] depths» (9) to an «underworld» (12).

1.4. *Madness*

Since madness has long been linked with evil in Western Civilization,[12] it is not surprising to find

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[9] In contrast to Clegg, Miranda has a powerful sense of moral integrity. After planning to and then not killing Clegg, she exclaims, «I hate myself. I nearly became a murderess tonight. I shall never be the same again» (207).

[10] Elaine Pagel's explanation sounds more benign; in *The Origin of Satan*, she says that «evil stems from a failure to accept difference and otherness».

[11] The treatment was evil because, no matter what the whites who perpetrated it believed, it exemplified Sartre's definition of sadism, by trying to reduce blacks to less-than-human objects. The novel, like the writings of Richard Wright, amply documents such treatment. Consequently, the invisible man decides to withdraw from society, and live out his live «rent free» in a «basement that was shut off and forgotten during the nineteenth century» (9) and describes his condition not as a complete life but merely as «a state of hibernation» (9). He has retreated from a society that refused to recognize his humanity, and, as he says, «to be unaware of one's form is to live a death» (10), which blacks had been forced to do for 200 years in America.

[12] In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, «clinical theories [of madness] were ingeniously interwoven with considerations of sin and the Author of all Evil» (Zilboorg and Henry, quoted in Feder 110). In *Malleus Maleficarum*, the German Domican Jacobus Sprenger and Heinrich Kršmer intermix theories of psychopathelogy with «detection, exorcism, and punishment» of evil (Feder 110). And the Inquisition associated madness with witches, who, because they were usually female, were «particularly susceptible to corruption and thus an instrument of evil» (111). And «[b]y the fifteenth century the assumption that insanity resulted from sin was... widely accepted» (112).

madness linked with underground spaces. Even the title of Doris Lessing's novel about a man's terrifying bout with psychosis is entitled *Briefing for a* Descent *into Hell* (emphasis mine).

In Ingmar Bergman's film, *Through a Glass Darkly*, as Karin regresses into madness, she retreats below water level to the Bare, rib-like hold of an old abandoned ship, where she huddles «haunted up in a corner like an animal» (49).

In Doris Lessing's *Four-Gated City*, no one has deliberately tried to make Lynda Coldridge suffer, but, when she suffers from psychotic episodes, she retreats to the basement. Although no one sought to harm her, she believes that most of her suffering has been caused by the chemical and electroshock therapies and by her doctors, who incarcerated her in mental hospitals in which people were «strait jacketed, forcibly fed, kept in padded cells, beaten (in fact, the central fact, had had their wills broken), and were now derelict» (308) and could look forward only to death. Just as previous centuries had «burned and drowned witches» doctors today «used every kind of degradation, moral and physical» (497) and forced them to believe they were wicked. And whether or not the mad were ever thrown into a pit with snakes, the movie *The Snake Pit* certainly transformed that idea into an urban myth.

1.5. *Dread*

Unlike writers who define evil in terms of the motivations of the perpetrator or of the actions themselves, C. Fred Alford defines evil in terms of the experience of its victim and calls it «an experience of dread» (3) and believes that «[e]vil is both a psychological and moral problem» (15). Insisting that evil is «filled with doom» (14), he also defines it in terms of its perpetrator as «the impulse to malevolent destruction» (142).

Sometimes fiction does not show evil actions, but merely presents characters who end up in cellars as a result of errors, but whose terror is no less than that of the victims of evil. Such is the case for those buried alive in Poe's «The Premature Burial» and «The Fall of the House of Usher».

In P. D. James's *Original Sin*, Frances Peveral is irrationally terrified of walking through a perfectly ordinary tunnel under the Thames, because ever since she was a child walking to school, she has hallucinated that the seepage there «weren't drops of water, but of blood» (222). Her horror is without explanation, but for the reader the blood is linked to the murder of his wife by a Peveral who wanted to use her money to build and maintain The Peveral House (378-79).

Similarly, David, the young protagonist of Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep*, is terrified of the cellar in the building in which he lives. He thinks «[I]t bulged with darkness» (19). And when other boys tell him that rats are «comin' f'om de cellah. Dot's w'ea dey live innut cellar – all rats», David realizes that «[h]e would be doubly terrified now» (59).

2. EVIL IN SEWERS

In fiction, evil is also located in sewers, which most people find frightening. Indeed people, especially children, are occasionally swept down and drowned in them. In large cities they constitute a dark underworld which threatens to drag us to the depths. It is hardly surprising, then, that many adults harbor both conscious and subconscious fears of sewers. We fear both the literal and the figurative vortex.

In *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925), Lon Chaney compounded our horror at the violence and psychosis of the phantom by showing him traveling unseen through the sewers of Paris to attack his victims.

In Lessing's *Memoirs of a Survivor*, as conditions deteriorate in London and all social structures break down, there emerges «a gang of new kids» (170) who are much younger (four to nine-years old) and far worse that the teenage street gangs that had taken control of the above-ground city streets. These new «kids» lived in the Underground, (172) and «were living like moles or rats in the earth»

(170). They were perceived to be «wicked» (173) and become «everyone's problem» (171) because «[t]hey would be hunting in a group one hour and murdering one of their [own] number the next» (173). Lessing sums them up by saying, «Nothing *under* the earth could be alien to these children» (176, italics Lessing's).

Both Carol Reed's film *The Third Man* (1949) and the novel by Graham Greene from which it was taken closely link the evil Harry Lime with the sewers of Vienna. Both film and novel play on our fears and revulsion at the isolation and vulnerability of both hunter and hunted in the sewers of Vienna. Lime, whom Greene linked with Christopher Marlowe's devils and specifically described as «evil» (136) profiteers by stealing, diluting, and selling penicillin on the black market, with the result that many men «lost their legs and arms» to infection and many children who were given the diluted drug died or «went off their heads» and are permanently consigned to a «mental ward» (107). Although wanted by the police, Lime moves freely among the four post-World War II occupied zones of Vienna by traveling underground in the city's sewer system, emerging at will through manholes or kiosks. Lime has no qualms about the suffering and deaths he causes, asking rhetorically, as he and his friend from childhood are stopped at the top of a giant ferris wheel and looking down on the tiny people below, «Would you really feel any pity if one of those dots stopped moving – forever?... If I said you can have twenty thousand pounds for every dot that stops» (136-37).[13] Lime, who tries to evade the police by disappearing into the sewer, dies in his element. after running through the sewers and «jump[ing] into the deep central rushing stream» of waist-high sewage (152), trying to lift a manhole cover and escape.

3. EVIL IN BATHROOMS

Likewise, toilets and plumbing drains seem abhorrent to us, not merely because we associate them with excrement. They are sometimes associated with evil acts – acts designed to humiliate or terrify. We seem to believe, at least subconsciously, that all plumbing leads to an ultimate vortex like that depicted in Poe's *The Adventures of Arthur Gordon Pym*.

Various films have also utilized toilets and plumbing to generate horror in their audiences. An early example and a extremely chilling scene is the death scene which shows both a dead body and blood in bathtub in Henri Georges Clouzot's *Diabolique* (1955). And what many people believe to be the most terrifying sequence in film is focused is on plumbing – when Janet Leigh is stabbed in a bathtub while showering Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). The camera alternates its focus on her face and on the blood and water flowing down the drain. Not only her vulnerability, but the fact that water flowing down the shower drain will obliterate the evidence of her murder, intensifies the horror of the scene.

One of the last scenes of *Fatal Attraction* (Directed by Adrian Lyne, 1988) emphasizes the vulnerability one has when lying in a bathtub filled with water. Because he is nude and cornered in a slippery bathtub, the male protagonist (Michael Douglas) becomes more vulnerable than his female attacker (Glenn Close). Here again the bathtub intensifies the viewer's terror.

Another film, *The Conversation*, utilizes similar imagery. In it, Gene Hackman, who plays an electronic bugging expert, is convinced that a murder has taken place in an adjoining hotel room. Later he enters the room and finds it immaculate. He carefully examines the bedroom, then the bathroom, taking particular pains to examine the drains and the toilet – even running his finger around the

[13] It is interesting that Lime takes Martins high above ground to the top of Vienna's giant ferris wheel in order to try to get his approval of his activities. But once there, Lime, whose natural habitat is underground, admits, «I never feel quite safe in these things» (136).

recessed upper portion of the toilet bowl for evidence of blood, but finds nothing. He then pushes the flush lever. The toilet starts to flush, then, because it is stopped up, backs up and overflows. The pinkish and then red liquid that overflows indicates that not only was blood flushed down the toilet but so too were the pieces of the butchered body of the victim.

In the final scene in «Furious Seasons», Raymond Carver pulls those fears together into a powerful combination of sewer and maelstrom imagery. After Farrell has returned home to face arrest for murdering his sister, Raymond Carver concludes the story with the sentence, «The gutter water rushed over his feet, swirled frothing into a great whirlpool at the drain on the corner and rushed down to the center of the earth» (42). In this image, Carver states overtly what many of us may feel subconsciously – that all plumbing leads to sewers which in turn lead ultimately to the center of the earth to a hell from which demons may come to destroy us and into which we ourselves may be swept.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 121-128

Hamlet's hysterical form

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«[F]railty, thy name is woman» – Hamlet's first soliloquy

1. ELIOT, ROSE, AND SHOWALTER

In 1917, on the eve *des Années Folles*, when the Surrealists championed the poetics inherent in hysteria, T. S. Eliot declared Shakespeare's most famous play deficient in unified form, for it contains «unexplained scenes», such as those involving Polonius and Laertes, and Polonius and Renaldo. Previous critics failed to notice the play's formal defects, according to Eliot, because they focused on Hamlet the character and his revenge rather than looking at the play in its entirely qua work of art. The excessively emotional character of Hamlet, in Eliot's opinion, attracts creative minds keen to make him over in their own images because some weakness in creative power in them seeks vicarious artistic existence: Hamlet, a play about frustrated expression, attracts critics whose artistic instincts are in a state of frustration. Eliot claims Hamlet-the-character is suffering from an inarticulate emotion in excess of the facts as they appear in the play, and that Hamlet's buffoonery, his antic disposition, is less than mad but more than feigned, and, moreover, a projection into the play of Shakespeare's own bafflement before his artistic problem. Eliot says that in *Hamlet*, «Both workmanship and thought are in unstable position».[1] The play's inconsistencies and instabilities are due, in Eliot's reading, to the superimposition of the dominant concern of the play – a son's «inexpressibly horrible» feelings of disgust for his mother's guilt – upon «cruder» revenge material which persists even in the final form. Shakespeare himself had failed to understand Hamlet and therefore could not design a formally-controlled tragedy out of the son-mother pathology centered on erotic disgust.[2] Hamlet's imperfections can in this reading be regarded as the effect of

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[1] T. S. Eliot (1919), «Hamlet and his Problems», *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1932), p. 124.

[2] Lionel Abel argues that because Shakespeare was unable to make tragedy out of the revenge material, he made another kind of play – a play about rival playwrights – in which Claudius is a melodramatist; Polonius, a sentimental dramatist; and Hamlet, a would-be tragedian. Because the tragic impulse is frustrated in the play, Shakespeare made his problem philosophical by inventing a new dramatic form, metatheatre, founded on the ideas that 1) life is a dream; and 2) human beings are self-conscious roleplayers. See *Metatheatre: A New View of Dramatic Form* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1963), pp. 40-58.

Shakespeare's inability to create tragedy out of the revenge materials at his disposal because the playwright, like his character, was under the power of intense, inexpressible emotions. Thus, concludes Eliot, Shakespeare created not a work of art in *Hamlet*, but an enigmatic «Mona Lisa» of literature.

lf we believe Eliot, we may say that the play known as a key to Freud's discovery of the oedipus complex and his articulation into theory of the unconscious lacks the mastery required for cultural success; the play is an artistic failure in Eliot's reading because its psychic material - disgusted eros - remains formally uncontrolled.

Lacanian feminist Jacqueline Rose has noted the extraordinary resonance for postmodernism of terms that figure negatively in Eliot's critique – buffoonery, ecstasy, the excessive, instability, the unexplained, the unknowable – all terms that at least since Freud we recognize as necessarily present in any act of writing, which only orders them into form at the price of suppression and transformation. In dismissing *Hamlet*, Eliot has pointed to the ways in which the play dramatizes the unconscious, the unexplained, and the inexpressible in Hamlet's responses to his mother. Eliot identifies a defect of the drama in Shakespeare's characterization of Gertrude – she is too insignificant to be an objective motive for Hamlet's state of mind. «Gertrude is not an adequate equivalent for the disgust which she evokes in Hamlet, which 'envelopes and exceeds her' and which, because she cannot adequately contain it, runs right across the fabric of the play.» Gertrude is disgusting, observes Rose, «but not quite disgusting *enough*». Eliot did not ask, however, for a stronger woman character in the play, notes Rose, precisely because Hamlet's problem resides in how inadequate Gertrude remains to her son's disgust for her. It is *because* her character is so negative and insignificant, in Eliot's view, that Gertrude arouses in Hamlet feelings «which she is incapable of representing», for which the play provides no «objective correlative».

On the evidence of his seeing Gertrude on the side of negativity and insignificance, together with his characterization of the play as a literary Mona Lisa, cultural icon of «the enigma of femininity», Rose argues that Eliot's modernist version of formalism shows a harsh and repressive superego looking to repress the feminine as dangerous excess. Eliot's aesthetic criticism, in emphasizing unity of form, argues Rose, «repeats the moment of repression when language and sexuality were first ordered into place, putting down the unconscious processes that threaten the resolution of the Oedipal drama and of narrative form alike». In its dismissal of the dramatic effects of female sexuality, Eliot's critique demonstrates both how linguistic expression and gender are interdependent and how their interdependency is central to the ordering of literary form. Rose writes, «Hamlet poses a problem for Eliot at the level of both matter and form. Femininity is the image of that problem; it seems in fact to be the only image through which the problem can be conceptualized or thought. Femininity thus becomes the focus for a partly theorised recognition of the psychic and literary disintegration which can erupt at any moment into literary form».

Remarkably, neither Eliot nor Rose mentions Ophelia, presumably another of the play's superfluities for Eliot, perhaps as well for Rose, who thinks the problem of the play is what happens to the sexuality of a widow, whose dead husband is no longer there to hold her potentially dangerous excess within the bounds of social constraint».[3] But if any character in the play stands out as a sign of linguistic disintegration it is Ophelia, whose «speech is nothing», says Horatio. Elaine Showalter has written in her summary of Lacanian feminism, «Ophelia might confirm the impossibility of representing the feminine in patriarchal discourse as other than madness, incoherence, fluidity, or silence», for «the feminine... is that which escapes representation in patriarchal discourse».[4]

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[3] Jacqueline Rose, «Hamlet – the 'Mona Lisa' of Literature», *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* (London: Verso, 1986), pp. 125-127.

[4] Elaine Showalter, «Representing Ophelia», *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, eds. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York and London: Methuen, 1985), p. 78.

2. PSYCHOANALYTIC FORMALISM

Freud taught us to see hysteria as an expression of double-genderedness; Lacan taught us to think of it as an address and challenge to mastery – hysteria undermines authority by baffling its representatives; the hysteric seeks the master's gaze in order to subvert his verbal power. By analyzing the discourse of fluidity, superfluity, and femininity that surrounds and pervades Hamlet's characterization and culminates in the drowning of Ophelia, and the way in which the play is shaped around Laertes and Ophelia's rage and grief while Hamlet is away at sea, we may see how the design of the drama acts as a vehicle for the psychology of hysteria as histrionic mourning and theatricalized self-division. *Hamlet* can serve as a model for the splitting and theatricalization often noted in the clinical and cultural history of hysteria, demonstrating the relationship between a particular psychology and a particular dramatic form.

In psychoanalytic literary criticism written since the 1980s, the diagnostic category of hysteria has proven an interpretive tool for narratives characterized by internal contradictoriness; preoccupation with castration; gaps, incoherencies, multiple perspectives, gender ambiguity, and repressed femininity. These narrative characteristics are also the preoccupations of deconstructive techniques and the postmodern condition, which sees human subjectivity as a state of lack or inner emptiness, a nothingness upon which are superimposed a series of roles and changing identifications, the most prominent of which involves gender masquerading as sexual difference. Postmodernism has made us more self-conscious about how our senses of reality and fate are comprised of the mapping upon us of scripts written by our predecessors and enforced by dubious authorities.

By reading *Hamlet* in light of postmodern psychoanalysis and feminist critique of gender as masquerade, we can see Hamlet's hysteria as a struggle with his repressed feminine identification, which is ultimately managed in the drama via Ophelia's madness and Hamlet's forced appropriation/absorption of masculine roles. The drama deploys Ophelia as a vehicle for warding off Hamlet's identification with his mother as a woman, which he regards as «frailty».

Using psychoanalytic formalism, we can unpack the psychic significance of the play's multiple plotting, its gaps and inconsistencies, its oral and gender imaginaries, and its disguised expressions of castration. Far from extraneous as Eliot claimed, the scenes involving Polonius and Laertes, and Polonius and Reynaldo demonstrate how the play centers not only on a son's disgusted love for his mother but also on how fathers spy on their children and use them for their own purposes, especially to re-member or re-phallicize them by upholding paternal honor.

I think Hamlet's character and the form of his drama together express this psycho-logic: Because I identify with both a mother whose love is poisonous and a dead father who kills, to consummate love and fulfill my fate, I must suffer a poison death with her in order to fulfill paternal desire. My alternatives are to attack with words or play the buffoon with splits or doubles of my grieving, poisoned, vengeful selves. Ophelia, Laertes, and Fortinbras act out variations on this identity and fate. The play's imaginary world consists of mirroring relationships and a proliferation of doubles suggesting the rivalry between ego/body image and the inner incoherence that characterizes the stage of development Lacan called «*le stade du miroir*».[5] The image of the man-in-armor represents the masculine imago Hamlet must assume in order to effect his revenge. Ophelia and Laertes embody inchoate alternatives on the way to the alterego of himself Hamlet will be.

Surprisingly enough, considering Lacan's contempt for American ego psychology, his view of the ego as a set of internalized images and identifications accords with Erik Erikson's observation that in analyzing a dream, one never knows whether to view the configuration on what he calls the

[5] Jacques Lacan (1949), «Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la function du Je», *Ecrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), pp. 93-100.

«dreamer's stage» as a «microcosmic reflection of his present or past social reality or as a 'projection' of different identity fragments of the dreamer himself, of different roles played by him at different times or in different situations».[6] If we think of the play as analogous to a dream, we may see that as a survivor in mourning for his dead father, Hamlet splits into the configuration of bereaved children comprised of young Fortinbras, Laertes, and Ophelia, who play out variations of Hamlet's desire and his fate. After Hamlet's final soliloquy, in which he compares himself unfavorably to Fortinbras as a warrior, Laertes and Ophelia for a time take over stage center of the drama; in the following scenes they appear to alternate and then refuse Hamlet's previous two roles of madman and raging revenger.

In the opening of what is conventionally marked as Act IV, we see Ophelia in the first of her famous mad scenes, in which, having demanded and been only reluctantly granted an audience with the Queen, she upstages the King's lame attempts to contain her grief within the bounds of his interpretive authority and departs with the implicit threat that her brother will know of their father's death. Then, upon her abrupt departure, in comes the rebellious, raging Laertes, who responds to attempts to calm him down by exclaiming, «That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard, / Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot ... between the chaste unsmirched brow / Of my true mother» (4.5.114-117), an implicit insult to Gertrude as well as to King Hamlet and the Prince for anyone who recognizes that Laertes's cause, as Hamlet says in Act V, is a «portraiture» of Hamlet's own (5.2.79).[7] Just as Hamlet had been commanded by the Ghost, «If thou didst ever thy dear father love ... remember me», Laertes's filial identity and phallic honor depend on his role as avenger. After his burst of aggression toward Claudius, Laertes allows his anger to be deflected; but upon Ophelia's entrance for her last scene, he is overwhelmed to see that she has become mad. So first we see her sorrowful grief, then we see his angry grief, then the two combined in the «Good night, ladies» scene in which Ophelia seems to take on the role of mad entertainer, upstaging the royal couple who hold only putative authority for her. Then, Claudius having deflected Laertes's rage into venomous revenge on Hamlet, they are confronted in a royal chamber to which Laertes has been admitted as an equal and even apparently an advisor, with the news of Ophelia's drowning, announced by Gertrude in her longest speech of the play, moving Laertes to tears:

QUEEN GERTRUDE
There is a willow grows aslant a brook
... down ... [she]
Fell in the weeping brook
... endued
Unto that element ....
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink
Pulled the poor wretch ...
To ... death ....

LAERTES
Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will.

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[6] Erik H. Erikson (1949), «The Dream Specimen of Psychoanalysis», *Psychoanalytic Psychiatry and Psychology: Clinical and Theoretical Papers*, eds. Robert P. Knight and Cyrus R. Friedman (New York: International Universities Press, 1954), p. 152.

[7] *Hamlet* citations are from *The Norton Shakespeare*, eds. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean Howard, and Katharine Maus (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1997), with the exception of the last lines of Laertes speech responding to his sister's death, in which I cite *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

[*He weeps*]

When these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord.
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it (4.7.134-163).

When next we see Laertes, in the graveyard scene, his unbounded grief is such that it attracts a kind of parody and rebuke from Hamlet, who jumps into Ophelia's grave to outrant Laertes. Histrionic grief can be said to be marked feminine in so far as it is embodied by Ophelia while raging revenge is embodied by her brother. But her death moves him to what he takes to be womanly tears and then to an unseemly display at her funeral.

Meanwhile, though not explained until the opening of the final act of the drama in the scene where he reports to Horatio, Hamlet himself has moved beyond grief and madness. The graveyard scene shows how the display of grief that marked his opening appearance in the play belongs to a role now transcended. Having discovered the device for Rosencrantz and Guildenstem to escort him to death in England, Hamlet has sealed his own murderous identifications by taking as divinely inspired his impulse to finger the diplomatic packet aboard ship; he then changed the message by imitating Claudius's style and forging the king's handwriting to send Rosencrantz and Guildenstem to their deaths «[n]ot shriving-time allowed» (5.2.47). This latter detail marks Hamlet's identification with his «mighty opposite» Claudius in so far as the original crime, the Ghost had specified, was the more heinous for having sent King Hamlet to his death with all his sins upon his head. So Hamlet has identified with both God-the-father, the «divinity that shapes our ends» (5.2.10), in following the impulses that kept him awake, suspicious and «rash» on shipboard; and with Claudius in devising not only death but death without spiritual preparation for the victims. In changing Claudius's letter, Hamlet also sealed his identification with his actual father, old King Hamlet, whose ring he used to close the forged letter sending Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to the fate intended for the Prince. Hamlet's three paternal identifications – with God-the-father, or «heaven ordinant» (5.2.49); with Claudius, the stepfather and assassin who sends his victims to their death «not shriving time allowed»; and with King Hamlet, whose seal of authority closed the death warrant – appear to equate Hamlet in his own mind with his due kingship and at the same time, to close off his role as a melancholic drowning in grief and self-hatred. Accordingly, when Hamlet energetically and confidently confronts the mourners in the graveyard scene, he declares, «It is I, Hamlet, the Dane» (i.e. «Hamlet, the King»), proceeding to mock, imitate and rival Laertes's histrionic grief. Laertes and Ophelia can be said to have done what Hamlet feared for himself after his first scene with the ghost – coupled hell (Hamlet: «[S]hall I couple hell?») – Laertes, by pursuing a poisoned revenge; Ophelia, by drowning in grief. Hamlet has played mad; Ophelia has gone mad. Whereas Hamlet speaks of self-slaughter in the early and middle parts of the play, Ophelia, for some interpreters at least, acts it out.[8] The coincidence of Ophelia's drowning and Hamlet's return from his death-fraught sea voyage to announce himself «Hamlet, the Dane» [i.e. King], suggests that the submersion of a feminine aspect of Hamlet allows him to assume the mas-

[8] Juliana Schiesari emphasizes that although certain critics declare Ophelia's death a suicide, Gertrude actually describes it as an accident. See *The Gendering of Melancholia: Feminism Psychoanalysis, and the Symbolics of Loss in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992). For Schiesari, «Ophelia is pivotal for our understanding of the gender politics of melancholy, most notably in its Lacanian version. Hamlet's rejection of Ophelia is both an explicit sign of his putative madness and a representation of traditional Western misogyny. Thus it works... to produce a certain kind of eros predicated on a self-production through the fetishistic exploitation of an other, that is, woman» (p. 260).

culine role of avenger, as if he had been reborn at sea. Thus he describes himself to Claudius as set «naked» and «alone» on Denmark's shore.[9]

The determined Hamlet of what is conventionally thought of as Act V appears different from the character we have seen in the first four acts of the play. He no longer soliloquizes. He no longer must «like a whore» unpack his heart with words, his complaint in the middle of the pivotal «rogue and peasant slave» soliloquy at midplay (3.1.585). He scorns the talkative Osric, who did «comply with his dug» before he «sucked it» (5.2.140). Though he is troubled by the invitation to the duel with Laertes, Hamlet dismisses his misgiving as «but foolery... a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman» (5.2.153-154). Whereas Hamlet's first soliloquy expresses his identification with a sullied mother, his last looks in admiration at Fortinbras, an image of a man in armor, like the ghost.

3. THE PLAY'S ORAL AND GENDER IMAGINARIES

Hamlet initially wishes his solid/sullied «flesh would melt». He calls his fallen world «an unweeded garden», and recalls Gertrude hanging on King Hamlet «[a]s if increase of appetite had grown / By what it fed on». Why would Hamlet wish to melt, unless he feels implicated in Gertrude's unseemly, overhasty marriage? He must feel identified with her – the identification here imagined as a dissolving and a kind of greedy feeding. If we read the unweeded garden image as evoking a lost Eden, we may conclude that Hamlet's oral stage maternal identification has been degraded.[10] The mother with whom he has identified now seems to him less than «a beast», her funereal grief having evidently been feigned. At his funeral, she followed her husband's body «Like Niobe, all tears» (1.2.129-149). Because Gertrude's tears have proven to have been theatrical only, a masquerade, Hamlet himself resorts to hypertheatricalization to put her to shame.

But Hamlet cannot, he says in the opening Act, maintain a paternal identification either. When Hamlet says he has that within which passes show, the trappings and the suits of woe, he seems to mean a well of grief, histrionic in its need for further ritual display than his mother provided when the funeral baked meats did furnish forth her marriage tables. Hamlet calls his dead father an «excellent» King, who was to Claudius like «Hyperion to a satyr». The debased, goatlike Claudius is to Hamlet's mind no more like old King Hamlet than Hamlet himself is like to Hercules: «My father's brother, but no more like my father / Than I to Hercules.» These two sets of analogies: Hyperion is to a satyr as Hercules is to Hamlet, place Hamlet and Claudius on a par as inferior versions of masculinity. Whereas old King Hamlet was in his son's eyes a sungod and a Titan, an idealized image of male strength, Claudius is half a man, half goat; as Hamlet himself, who must impotently hold his tongue in the play's first act, is no Hercules.

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[9] In *The Tradition of the New*, Harold Rosenberg argues that since the essence of drama is action, the soliloquizing Hamlet of Acts I-IV is undramatic; therefore, Shakespeare had to kill off the introspective character of Hamlet and return him to the fifth Act an identity – that is, a more one-dimensional entity that/who can act (New York: Grove Press, 1961), pp. 135-153.

[10] In *Childhood and Society*, Erik H. Erikson writes, «It is, of course, impossible to know what the infant feels, as his teeth 'bore from within' – in the very oral cavity which until then was the main seat of pleasure, and a seat mainly of pleasure; and what kind of masochistic dilemma results from the fact that the tension and pain caused by the teeth, these inner saboteurs, can be alleviated only by biting harder. This, in turn, adds a social dilemma to a physical one. For where breast feeding lasts into the biting stage (and, all in all, this has been the rule on earth) it is now necessary to learn how to continue sucking without biting, so that the mother may not withdraw the nipple in pain or anger. Our clinical work indicates that this point in the individual's early history can be the origin of an evil dividedness, where anger at the withdrawing mother, and anger with one's impotent anger all lead to a forceful experience of sadistic and masochistic confusion leaving the general impression that once upon a time one destroyed one's unity with a maternal matrix. This earliest catastrophe in the individual's relation to himself and to the world is probably the ontogenetic contribution to the biblical saga of paradise» (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1950), p. 79.

Claudius, in Hamlet's eyes revealed «a King of shreds and patches», is not only a drunkard and a satyr, but also a dissimulator, a «damned smiling viliain». This dissimulation leads Hamlet to simulation. When he hears that the players have come to court, he remarks, «He that plays the King shall be welcome». The pivotal «rogue and peasant slave» soliloquy enacts Hamlet's gender vacillations as well as his sense of being less expressive than an actor, who cries «all for nothing / For Hecuba!» while the Prince himself mopes like «John-a-dreams, unpregnant» of his cause for revenge. He imagines himself unbearded and low born, a «villain» who must «like a whore» unpack his heart with words and «fall a cursing like a very drab, / A scullion». Deciding to deploy a play to see into the conscience of the King, Hamlet seems to be moving toward his revenge. He will become a playwright and a director, a stager and observer of the king's hidden crime. But when we see Hamlet next, he has stalled on the question of whether to be or not to be, still contemplating self-slaughter.

His apparent contradictoriness here suggests a lapse of memory as well as how much Hamlet's melancholy is a kind of philosophical roleplaying.[11] Hamlet's dilemma over whether it is nobler in the mind to suffer or to take arms gives to the gender vacillation in his rogue and peasant slave soliloquy 50 lines earlier in the drama a philosophical, more universal, dimension. He asks whether it is nobler, in general, to be passive or to be active, a binary opposition associated with the opposition feminity vs. masculinity in Hamlet's culture. Hamlet's role as noble melancholy philosopher who conspicuously comes reading through the halls of the palace and questions whether to be or not to be, turns into his role as dubious lover of Ophelia; and then, when he realizes he has been watched as in a play during their scene together, he begins to perform his madman role for the benefit of his enemies hiding as unobserved observers. Though Claudius recognizes at the end of this scene that Hamlet's lunatic antics are «not like madness», the King takes their threats, deciding to send Hamlet to England because, he tells Polonius, «Madness in great ones must not unwatched go» (3.2.186). This rationalization shows 1) that Claudius is playing a role to counter Hamlet's – a kind of reversal of Hamlet's simulation undermining Claudius's dissimulation; and 2) that Hamlet's madness, feigned or real, commands the gaze – it must not go unwatched.

Authority in this play is a matter of performance. Hamlet initially challenges the Queen and King's positions by refusing to give up ritual mourning, ostentatiously remaining in suits of inky black, then humiliating them at the play-within-the-play by publicly confronting them with evidence of hypocrisy and guilt, driving them from the public space of the court theater.

While Hamlet is away from court, Ophelia's mad songs interrupt the speeches of the Queen and reduce the King to «How do ye, pretty lady», «Pretty Ophelia –», and «Conceit upon her father» in response to Ophelia's devastating remark, «They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but not what we may be» (4.5.40-54). When she calls for her coach, bidding them «good night, sweet ladies», she seems to feminize Claudius along the lines of Hamlet's calling him a peacock after the rout at the play-within-the play» (3.2.261),[12] and then, upon departing for England, bidding him, «Farewell, dear mother» (4.4.51). After Ophelia's first mad scene, one can hear the King's guilt and fear of reprisal, a response at least in part to Hamlet's

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[11] Juliana Schiesari characterizes English Renaissance melancholy as «imitative conduct», «feigned behavior», «essentially theatrical», «a kind of Italian masquerade» associating the sufferer with a tradition of nobility of spirit, *op. cit*., pp. 233-236. Along the same line of thinking, in «Frankenstein in the Age of Prozac», A. C. Goodson notes the notorious association of melancholy with men of learning and influence, quoting Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), which reports how «melancholy so frequently rageth, and now domineers almost all over Europe amongst our great ones». See *Literature and Medicine* 15.1 (1996) 16-32 (*http://128.220.50.88/jounals/literature and medicine/v015/15.1goodson.html*).

[12] As Norman Holland pointed out on the internet list PsyArt, the peacock is sacred to Juno, Queen of the Gods; thus Hamlet mocks Claudius as the pet of Queen Gertrude. «Peacock» also suggests a cock the size of a pea, a tiny penis.

stagecraft and its aftermath, announcing itself in Claudius's line, «This is the *poison* of deep grief!» and in his description of Laertes who «wants not buzzers to infect his ear / With pestilent speeches of his father's death; Wherein necessity ... [w]ill nothing stick our persons to *arraign / In ear and ear*» (4.5.73, 86-90, my italics). As the result of the capacity of Hamlet, Ophelia, and Laertes to make scenes, Claudius is forced into passivity, and ultimately becomes the receiver of poison.

As in the play-within-the-play, an instrument to attack Claudius's mind and authority with Gertrude and the court, Hamlet uses writing and feigning to outwit his nefarious and hypocritical enemies on the ship bound for England. Describing the envoy device to Horatio, Hamlet says, «Ere I could make a prologue to my brains / They had begun the play» (5.2.31-32). Hamlet revises this play by rewriting its ending. What remains of superfluous and ostentatious speechifying in the play is left to Osric, an object of ridicule and repudiation, and, as Robin Williams's performance in the (1997) Kenneth Branagh film, effeminate. Though false and painted faces are linked to femininity throughout the drama in Hamlet's various misogynous remarks, masculinity in *Hamlet* is no less a masquerade. The ghost died while sleeping in his arbor; he first appears to Hamlet dressed in armor. When Hamlet's Sr.'s martial avatar Fortinbras appears in the last scene of the drama, he stages for the scholarly Hamlet a soldier's funeral: «For he was likely, had he been put on / To have proved [i.e. acted] most royally» (5.2.341-342). Thus masculine power in this drama is an act or play.

4. HYSTERIA AS FANTASY AND FAILED DEFENSE

Norman Holland has taught us to think of literary form as defense.[13] lf we can say that the form of *Hamlet* is hysterical, then perhaps we might conclude that hysteria in this play is a defense against depression. In his own reading of *Hamlet*, Holland identifies the informing idea or structural principle of the drama as demonstrating how a shadow (the unconscious) falls between intentions and actions, splitting words from actions.[14] This division is consistent with hysteria as somatization of the unspeakable.

But we must note that the hysteria taking the form of splitting and multiple identifications in *Hamlet* is as much a part of its unconscious fantasy as it is of its form. That is, *Hamlet* stages sorted-out versions of father-son-lineage-as-consubstantiation (King Hamlet-Prince Hamlet; Polonius-Laertes; King Fortinbras of Norway-Fortinbras Jr./King Hamlet redux); and mother-son relations as poisoned fluidity (Gertrude-Hamlet, with Ophelia as a displaced version of the fluidity of both mother and son). These shifting, problematic, split gender identities are not only at the core of what could be called the play's unconscious fantasy, they also define what could be called its structuring design.

Perhaps we may conclude, that hysteria as a defense (against depressive identification with a loved/hated poison mother-as-death) fails in *Hamlet*. Substituted for this failed defense we can see a willed identification with paternal vindication in a poisoned, theatricalized death accepted with resignation of the voice to others – to Horatio, whom Hamlet wills to survive to tell his story; and to Fortinbras, who has Hamlet's «dying voice» (5.2.298). The feminine as self-destructive fluidity in the play is not so much killed, as warded off but then reinternalized to function from within (as Laertes) to destroy one self (Hamlet) while a reborn, mirrored-armored self (Fortinbras) survives.

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[13] Norman N. Holland, *The Dynamics or Literary Response* (Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 104-133.

[14] Norman N. Holland (1964), *The Shakespearean Imagination* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), pp. 178-179.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 129-134

Smilla's oedipal journey (*)

ANNELIES VAN HEES (**)

Peter Høeg's novel *Smilla's Sense of Snow* owes its immense success partly to its sophisticated mixture of thriller and novel, partly to its exotic setting in a wintry Denmark and an even colder Greenland, totally devoid of people or any other sign of life.

Smilla. The main protagonist, combines two countries in her personality, since she has an Inuit mother and a Danish father. But as she has been living in Denmark for thirty years, she is aware of her being spoilt by the comfort and luxury of Denmark, calling herself a «luxury-Greenlander».

The novel tells the story of Smilla's endeavour to protect the vulnerable Greenlandic nature from violent Danish technology, in other words to protect the threatened maternal body from the father. In fact, Smilla's mother has been dead for thirty years. She disappeared on a fishing trip and as her body was never found, it must still be there somewhere under the ice. After her mother's death Smilla was brought to Denmark by her father, an extremely wealthy and successful anaesthesist. Smilla presents him either with a syringe or with his golfclubs, an outstanding example of the threatening male.

In spite of her contempt for Danish technology Smilla makes use of it in every way she can to attempt her goal. In totally divergent situations Smilla knows how to get the better of it: she always seems to be prepared for any impending danger. Anything, from screwdrivers to a charwoman's broom will do as weapons. But what Smilla uses most intelligently, is her sense of snow, or more exactly her both scientific and intuitive knowledge of ice and snow.

Apart from her cleverness Smilla is equipped with mythical power. She seems to be able to walk on water and go through closed doors. Even after she has been inflicted massive wounds through her fights with the enemy on a ship, she is still able to outsmart a whole group of strong males. In this respect Smilla is her mother's daughter, combining beauty and tenderness with an enormous toughness. The mother too seemed to be able to perform things that are fysically impossible, like nursing a five year old, but only in special moments, with «milk that kept being there».

Smilla's longing for her mother's milk and her mother's silk skin, in pursued on the one hand in her obsession for fine fabrics, as she dwells on the silk lining in her chamois trousers, her sealskin

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jacket and her brocade hat lined with fur. On the other hand Smilla has an obsession for food, which, curiously enough, she never prepares herself. She has men doing this for her, which in fact means that her helpers in the project of trying to find her way back to the lost mother, have motherly, nourishing qualities.

The mechanic, who becomes her lover, is mostly described by the exotic tea. coffee and fish soup he prepares. If at all erotics are discused, it is in a picture of Smilla straddling him or her again, trying to use clitoris as a substitute penis.

The other male helper is the ship's cook, whose delicious food, home made bread and hot chocolate milk are extensively and sensuously described. Then there is Sonne, the first mate who, of course, in his function is unable to take on the nourishing role. In stead his mother's delicious meatballs are described. They all are round, fat, curly men, the motherly type. In her interesting article Lise Præstgaard Andersen remarks that there is some confusion of sexroles here.

Smilla herself is tiny and skinny. The only time she is seen preparing food is for her little friend Isaiah, who eats her cooked mackerel from a newspaper on the floor, using his fingers and eating the whole fish, including eyes, brain and entrails. This of course is the Inuit way of eating fish.

Isaiah is killed at age six, thus representing the little lost Inuit girl Smilla, who was «killed» at the age of six when she lost her mother and was forced to move to Denmark.

My understanding of Smilla's psychological identity with Isaiah is stated directly at the first mentioning of him in the novel. The boy is already dead, having fallen off the roof of a six storey building:

> Isaiah is lying with his legs tugged under him, with his face in the snow and his hands around his head, as if he were shielding himself from the white spotlight shining on him, as if the snow were a window through which he has caught sight of something deep inside the earth.

There is a fine parallel to this situation at the end of the novel, where Smilla in Gela Alta is standing on the ice having «caught sight of something deep inside the earth». In Smilla's case it is a meteor stone, which, as we shall see, represents the womb.

Smilla intends to both understand and revenge Isaiah's death. Little by little she sees what she is up against: an immensely powerful, wealthy and ambitious group of people as well as a long history of cover-ups.

She discovers that an expedition is planned to Greenland and for some reason is kept a secret. She also discovers that this is already the third expedition in its kind. What the scientists are after, is an enormous meteroic stone – weighing 50 tons – lying under the ice in Gela Alta, a fictional island near the westcoast of Greenland. The stone ought to be hidden in ice, considering the temperature, while in fact it is lying in water, the ice around it being melted by its warmth. But when it is warm it must be alive, which in a way it is. It seems to be surrounded by a mythical creature, the «polar worm». This polar worm, besides being a deadly parasite, is a reminiscence of the *Midgardsormr* of Nordic mytology, the snake encircling earth. The consequence of this reminiscence giving the novel its extra dimension, must be intentional. This is a novel about mother earth being destroyed by modern technology.

Smilla's project now seems to be threefold, to revenge Isaiah's death, to understand her mother's death and to save mother earth. However successful the former two could be, the latter is doomed to fail, as idealism always will fail in its confrontation with reality. There is, however, also a psychological reason for the project's failure. To understand it, we will need Lacan's theory of the Imaginary vs. the Symbolic Order.

Smila is oscillating between her nostalgia for the imaginary, motherly world of Greenland and the symbolic, fatherly world of Denmark, science and technology, as she in reality has been travelling to and fro Greenland on her childhood escapes and her adulthood expeditions.

She is aware of being the product of two countries, but in fact she is more Danish than Inuit. She mostly calls herself Smilla Jaspersen, by the Name of the Father. Only once in her narration does she

use her full name, including her Greenland middle name: Smilla Qaanaaq Jaspersen. At a certain point, being aware of this, she even asks herself: «Am I my name?»

Smilla seems to never have fully accepted her father, as she speaks of him, his riches and his authority in contempt. But on the other hand does she use him, his medical knowledge, his money and his house as a hiding-place. The only thing she never seems to want from him is food: no mothering here. In a way Smilla understands her own importance to her father, as she is the only thing to remind him of her dead mother, the love of his life. But she hardly grants him the pleasure of her company, and when she does, she is not very pleasurable, but tough, unkind and demanding, like a stubborn teenager.

The world of the father is represented by the ice, both cold and beautiful. For Smilla as a glaciologist ice represents knowledge and science. Ice is the Symbolic Order: it lacks the round softness of the mother, but it strangely enough also protects her from the dangers of the Imaginary Order. After all, ice is frozen water and water seems to be the only thing in the world that Smilla is afraid of.

> I've always been afraid of the sea. They never got me into a kayak, even though it was my mother's greatest wish. One of the reasons I'm fond of ice is that it covers the water and makes it solid, safe, negotiable, manageable. [...] On the open sea there are no landmarks, there is only an amorphous, chaotic shifting of directionless masses of water that loom up and break and roll, [...] (p. 255)

Glaciology, its fascination and its formula's are Smilla's defense against the uncanny world of the water. Life is not in water, but in ice: «I mean that ice and life in many ways are connected.» Smilla remembers how she already as a six year old began to feel estranging from nature and how she tried to find her way back by understanding: «to try to understand is to try to get something back that we have lost.» (p. 39)

What Smilla of course has lost, is the immediacy of her contact with nature, the wordless being part of it, being part of the mother. What she has lost, is what we all have lost, the objet «petit a». Wanting to get it back with the help of words and science, i. e. by symbolizing, is by definition a hopeless project, paradoxal as it is. Smilla's suffering is the suffering all humans share, so eminently named by Freud *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*. In a way Smilla knows that the Symbolic Order by necessity denies the Imaginary:

> To understand a phenomenon is to distance yourself from it. When I begin to speak about Qaanaaq, to myself or to others, I am at the verge of again having lost, what really never was mine. (p. 184)

Here is an understanding of the «objet petit a» and of the desire to retrace in language, in symbolizing, what by definition escapes language, the manque.

As long as Smilla is living in Denmark, combining her nostalgia for the Mother-land with her stay in the Father-land, she is o. k. But as soon as she is trying to go back to the Mother-land, she is in mortal danger. Total regression equalls death and so Smilla's attempts to regress are punished by threats of incarceration, of burning alife or of drowning in icecold water. After these threats and her narrow escapes Smilla ought to know better, but she continues her quest, even defying her most dreaded element, the water.

Not only in space is Smilla oscillating between Denmark and Greenland, but also in her mind and in her language. In the beginning of the novel, just after Isaiah's death, when her sorrow is at its peak, Smilla loses her sense of time. The novel starts at the boy's funeral, in the second chapter Smilla finds herself three days earlier, the day of the child's death. In the third chapter Smilla visits her father and while she sits and talks and thinks, her thoughts oscillate between her father and her mother. The thoughts about the mother are in the present tense, with an effect as if the mother were in the room with her and her father.

As Anne Thornvig Jensen remarks, time is circular in the whole forst part of the novel, since it

begins and ends with the boy's funeral (ch. 1 and 11 of part One, called The City). In the world of regression there is no sense of time.

Linear time is back as soon as Smilla starts her quest. She then has returned to the Symbolic Order, since she is pursuing a goal, i. e. understanding the death of the little boy as well as her mother's.

How does this pursuit end? The meteor is found, hidden in the ice: «A shape approximating a circle, curving around an opening. Like a five-week-old fetus, fishlike, curls around the gills.» (p. 338)

It is a fetus, but also a womb, alive and warm as it is. But then it is also life-threatening, since it contains a killer-parasite. Smilla with her male helpers, the cook, the captain and the mechanic prevent the stone from being removed, leaving the maternal body intact, while at the same time the return to it is made impossible, since it will be lethal.

Smilla is forced to go back to the ship and return to the Fatherland, in the meantime leading the main enemy, Tørk Hviid (in translation: Dry White) to his certain death on the ice. At that point the novel stops and we shall never know if Smilla really finds her way back to the ship:

> Tell us, they'll say to me. So we will understand and be able to resolve things. They'll be mistaken. It's only the things you don't understand that you can resolve. There will be no resolution. (p. 453)

This ending has frustrated many a reader and many a critic, who regard it as a failure. But I think there is no reason for frustration, on three grounds:

Firstly, as the stories and myths of the Inuit have no clear ending, it might also be missing in a story about the return to the Inuit.

Secondly this is an apocalyptic ending, as the Polar worm is comparable to the Chaos-animal in the Apocalypse. Several allusions to the Book of Revelations in the novel lead to this conclusion. Elsa Lübing, Smilla's female helper, is clad in white wool, her hair is a shining casket around her head. She is the Angel, and Smilla recognizes her as such. When Elsa Lübing is still considering whether she should help Smilla or not, she opens the Bible – a Blixen-reminiscence – and of course what she finds is a quote from the Book of Revelations. The enemy, Tørk's, hair is shining white as well, and he is clad in white too. He is the Lord, bringing about the Apocalypse or total destruction.

Finally the novel's ending is postmodern, the hole in the earth where the meteor stone is lying, is filled with water in stead of ice, which, according to glaciology, should be impossible. Both the hole in the earth and the open ending are postmodern gaps, a fact confirmed in the last sentence's refusal of certainties. In the end it is up to the reader to draw a conclusion. Here is a suggestion.

The reader, who makes this story into a transfer-phenomenon, thus projecting his or her wishfull fantasies into it, will irrevocably be frustrated.

The contrast this novel creates between technology and nature, Denmark and Greenland, strength and weakness, personified on the one hand in the quarry, the father with the syringe, in Loyen the scientist, Verlaine, Mauritz, Claussen, the scoundrels, and the scientific equipment on the ship – not incedentally called Kronos, Time – and on the other hand the vastness, the persistance, the warmth, the smell, the air and the space of Greenland, personified in the dead mother, Isaiah, Isaiah's father and his comrades, all dead, are the signs of an underlying phantasma, that is also found in nature-movements and even in Nazi-ideology. The phantasma takes the form of a wish to protect the threatened Mother of Nature against the threatening Father of Technology. It is a phantasma that may be recognized in all three of Peter Høeg's novels.

In *Borderliners* it took the shape of a wish to protect the natural, intuitive and weak children against the power of time, as it is used by pedagogues. In a way the wish underlying this phantasma is fullfilled in this novel, since the child-narrator wins with the same ruthlessness as Smilla.

In *The Woman and the Ape* nature is wiser, better and stronger than culture, but gives up and returns to its sanctuary to await better times. One could say that only in *Smilla* does the Symbolic Order win.

The phantasma makes Smilla – and the reader with her – move. But paradoxically Smilla has to make use of all the fatherly phallic equipment to protect the mother. To this end any means are admissible, even using the enemy's weapons. The mythical superwoman Smilla succeeds on her own to save Greenland and the world with it. What a wonderful wishfullfilling dream for both her and the reader, identifying with her. And what a disappointment then this open ending must be. Is she really winning? Will Tørk, the enemy, really die? Will the mechanic survive and find his way back to the ship? Will Smilla return on the ship to Denmark, the fatherland? And why at all should she want to return? In the past she always tried to escape to Greenland, trying to find «home». Why shouldn't she stay in the motherland now?

She is too much of a Dane, too fond of comfort and raspberry cakes to content herself with cooked whale and seal-skinclothing. Smilla depends on science and on her father's money. Besides, she always was afraid of water, of fishing, of catching and killing animals, things she would have to confront in her mother's realm.

We, the readers, stay behind in the uncertainty of the fullfillment of the mission. This was a mission that could not succeed, since its failure was given from the beginning, in the narrative as well as in the psychological construction. In a psychological sense the return to the mother equals the refusal to enter into the Symbolic Order or a regression to the Imaginary Order, in the end leading to death. This death is written into the novel from the beginning. First and foremost the original Inuit culture hardly exists any longer. The special form of survival in and with nature stopped to exist definitely in the fifties when the Americans chased the Inuit ou of Thule by founding a military base there. Smilla could – theoretically – have lived the very end of it in Qaanaaq, north of Thule, in the early sixties. Qaanaaq is the dwelling the inhabitants of Thule were forcibly moved to in 1953. It is, however, presented as the locus of Smilla's nostalgia, the irony of it being that there was nothing traditional about Qaanaaq at all. The Inuit life and hardships had stopped before Qaanaag really.

Secondly, all the characters who represent Greenland, are dead. Smilla's journey and her fight were a fight for and a journey to the dead mother, the threatened maternal body under the ice, here in the shape of a meteor stone. The meteor stone was meant to be frought «home» to Denmark, as Smilla would want to bring her dead mother home to Denmark with her.

That project has failed, as, in fact, the mother never wanted to be brought to Denmark, when still alive. Paradoxically Smilla's project thus was identical with the enemy's project. And yet she is fighting it with the enemy's very arms.

That is the novel's postmodern paradox. Smilla wants and wants not at the same time. She has to come to terms with death, Isaiah's, her mother's, the Inuit-life's and her own six year old self's death. The wishfullfillment dream is impossible, as Smilla in a way must know. Her journey is a journey of grief, of mourning, hence all the inflicted wounds: that is what mourning does to the sense of self.

Smilla did not skip Oedipus, as Janne T. Jensen proposes. On the contrary, her journey is the acting out of the oedipal drama. And it does the same to the reader. The reader's utter disappointment at the novel's ending is the disappointment in the mother, who is not only a living meteor under the ice, eternally longed for, but also a killing parasite. The mother is no longer giving life, but death.

A novel creating this living paradox, will construct its own failure. It will not end, since there is no solution to this paradox. The solution is up to the reader. Will he/she be able to stand the frustration and take the next step, just as Smilla now has to do?

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 135-143

The eternity of the same: Human cloning and its discontents

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Human beings have always felt a strong fascination with copies, duplications and doubles as extensions of themselves and hence as narcissistic replicating mirrors. Cloning here touches on the profoundest sources of life, on deeply-rooted archetypes and ontological structures of our collective mind make-up. This obsession with copies, pervasive throughout the centuries, appears to achieve a peak in contemporary society, punctuated by the culture of imitation, images and simulacra, in which the attraction exerted by human clones is inscribed. Inherent in the strong appeal of the concept of cloning are such manifestations as twins, doubles, automata, mannequins, cyborgs and a whole array of creatures which purport to imitate the human form, from the Golem to marionettes. Indeed, the literature dealing with imitation human beings goes back many centuries, finding some of its foremost manifestations in myths and legends. The allure of this centenary narrative of copies and simulations, of the «artificial» creation of a double, raises the vexed question: is a human clone «natural» or fabricated, in the sense of being «artificially» manufactured by biotechnology and not a result of traditional sexual reproduction? Indeed, the proliferation in the twentieth century of cyborg fantasies, the development of genetic engineering and the great impact of biology in the explanation of the workings of the human body have made of this apparently «natural» object, the human organism, a privileged crossroads of interdisciplinary enquiry. In the sense that clones can be seen as «artificially» created, as the offspring of technology, they also fit to a certain extent Donna Haraway's influential definition of a cyborgian ontology.

In this scenario, where cloned people will potentially become an integral part of our society, several questions need to be pressingly asked: will there still be a form of «Oedipus complex» as defined by Freud as the founding stone and deep structuring device of societal coexistence? Will Lacan's «symbolic» still carry the same weight in this putative post-patriarchal society? Will the advent of human cloning mean an even greater exacerbation of narcissism in an era already haunted by the figure of Narcissus?[1]

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[1] According to Gray Kochhar-Lindgren «the figure of Narcissus haunts the twentieth century» (*Narcissus Transformed: The Textual Subject in Psychoanalysis and Literature*, 1).

Indeed, a topic that needs to be addressed in an investigation of the ramifications and reverberations of the idea of human cloning, crucially imbricated in all the social relations in an era of the Clone, is the role of Oedipus in such a society. Will Oedipus survive human cloning? How will the functions of authority be restructured in a post-Oedipus society with a no longer clearly located paternal authority figure? How will these new post-Freudian familial configurations be redefined?

Would cloning mean the end of Oedipus? Cloning would effectively do away with the need for both father and mother since only one cell from one person is necessary. In that sense, both Victor Frankenstein's creation of a being without a biological mother and the parthenogenesis scenario where women reproduce without a biological father, as in for instance Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* (1915) become feasible with obvious implications as far as the sexual politics of reproduction are concerned.

Baudrillard, whose fascination with human cloning permeates his work, addresses this issue in his *Simulacra and Simulation*, where he comments with respect to cloning and in words that shed light on the disappearance of the Oedipal plot:

> Cloning radically abolishes the Mother, but also the Father, the intertwining of their genes, the imbrication of their differences, but above all, the joint act that is procreation. The cloner does not beget himself: he sprouts from each of his segments. One can speculate on the wealth of each of these vegetal branchings that in effect resolve all oedipal sexuality in the service of «nonhuman» sex, of sex through immediate contiguity and reduction – it is still the case that it is no longer a question of the fantasy of auto-genesis. The Father and the Mother have disappeared, not in the service of an aleatory liberty of the subject, but in the service of a matrix called code. No more mother, no more father: a matrix. And it is the matrix, that of the genetic code, that now infinitely «gives birth» based on a functional mode purged of all aleatory sexuality (96-97).[2]

This leads to a related question. Will the cloned person feel threatened by the knowledge that he/she will have exactly the same genetic make-up as his/her parent and might thus grow up to be an almost exact copy of that person? Where then is room for individual growth, recreation, self building? The biological determinism versus social constructionism argument, however, suggests that in spite of the same genetic material two or more people sharing that same biological make-up brought up in different environments will show appreciable distinct personality traits. Pamela Sargent's *Cloned Lives* (1976) actively participates in this debate, as does Fay Weldon's *The Cloning of Joanna May* (1989). Here I will concentrate on *Cloned Lives* as well as Kate Wilhelm's *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* (1976) in order to analyse how some of the issues mentioned above are dramatized in these two novels.

> «We're incubating monsters, you know. Dr. Frankenstein will be here on the next train» (*Cloned Lives*, 63)

Both Sargent's *Cloned Lives* and Wilhelm's *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* take place in a post-apocalyptic world, which has been destroyed by ecological disasters and is in the process of being rebuilt. In *Cloned Lives* Pamela Sargent narrates the first attempt at creating human clones grown in ectogenetic chambers. The father, Paul Swenson, is a famous astrophysicist who, having lost his wife, accedes to the invitation by a geneticist friend, Dr Hidey, to have his genetic material used in this unique experiment. Out of six embryos, five come to term: four boys and a girl. The story re-

[2] But doesn't the very word «matrix» inevitably suggest the maternal feminine?

volves around the difficulties faced by the clones in coming to terms with their singular situation and the media attention, tracing their distinct biographies and following their search for individuation. The Swenson clones, Edward, James, Michael, Kira and Albert are extremely sensitive to their different genesis, and constantly interrogate their identity as separate individuals, fearing other people's reactions and often deliberately isolating themselves to avoid suffering. The novel raises many important questions. Who exactly are Paul's children in relation to him? He muses: «They were his children, yet closer to him than children. They were his twins, his brothers, and a sister too, separated from him only by age» (*Cloned Lives*, 77).3

The vexed question of the individual's uniqueness is a pivotal concern in the novel. As Jim reflects about himself and his brothers and sister: «Jim saw them as they must appear to others - identical, a closed group, undifferentiated, and inaccessible. *We're components, interchangeable parts*, he thought. Even their different pursuits were probably accidental» (*Cloned Lives*, 122). Jim experiences his body as a «prison, forcing him to live and struggle» (*Cloned Lives*, 125). He imagines himself writing a report about the cloning experiment, his own feelings of bitterness, his excruciating doubts that lead him to contemplate suicide:

> The experiment with cloning has failed. One of the experimental subjects can no longer live with himself; the others are only four bitter people, denied even the small pleasure of feeling like unique individuals. He knew they had wanted a team, a Paul Swenson multiplied by five, working together, synthesizing what they learned in different fields, minds so alike they could see connections where others might not (*Cloned Lives*, 125).

Interacting with others is a major problem for most of the Swenson clones. When they drop their social misgivings against each other, due to their fear of regimentation and of depersonalization, the clones are depicted as enjoying a fulfilling mental and spiritual harmony:

> They had been sitting with Ed on the front porch, talking about one of Jim's poems, listening to Ed play the violin, discussing some of the work Kira had done with Dr. Takamura. They talked for a long time, their minds drawing together, communicating ideas, disagreements, and feelings with perfect understanding (*Cloned Lives*, 140-141).

For society in general, they are looked upon as duplicates of Paul Swenson, as «peas in a pod» (*Cloned Lives*, 101). As Paul points out: «They don't view them as kids right now, just as something to fear. Some of the stories I've seen talk about mass minds, or mental telepathy among clones. One even said they might be condemned to doing the same things at the same time» (*Cloned Lives*, 66). They represent what society perceives, in Baudrillard's words, as a disturbing and vaguely grotesque «renewal of the Same» («Clone Story», 101).

Baudrillard's proposition of «The Hell of the Same» is thus aptly dramatized in Pamela Sargent's *Cloned Lives*, where the five clones have to come to terms with their similarity which makes for perfect adjustment and consonance in their relationship amongst themselves, but also simultaneously gives rise to complex inner frictions. Can they find such rapport and compatibility with anybody else? Can they (are they willing to) put up with second best when they embody to each other the perfect twin soul, the Platonic Other whom humans can spend their whole lives trying to find and always be disillusioned, when in their case the Other that completes them is their brother/sister?

Cloning will inevitably reshape many of society's deepest underlying myths. For instance, how

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[3] Thomas J. Morrissey argues that the clones, «although they have the same cellular donor and are therefore identical to one another genetically (except for the lone female, whose gender is the only difference), and although they are raised as siblings, they are not in fact siblings, nor is the genetic donor their father» («Pamela Sargent's Science Fiction for Young Adults: Celebrations of Change», 184). I, on the other hand, believe they are very much brothers and sister together with a very real father, who in this case is their sole progenitor, Paul Swenson.

do incest taboos apply to a family of cloned brothers and sisters? The narrator in Pamela Sargent's *Cloned Lives* meditates: «the old codes and ancient prohibitions could not apply to them, had not even allowed for their existence» (146). In turn Kira muses: «Some people would look at us and talk about incest taboos, and others would probably find it strange if we loved anyone else but the other clones» (*Cloned Lives*, 149). Significantly, the sexual encounters between Kira and Jim, a pair of cloned brother and sister, are described in the terms used by Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*:

> She was his female self ... He saw himself as a woman, receiving a man ... and knew that she was seeing herself as a man....
>
> *This has never happened before ... Never before. He saw generation after generation evolve, becoming more differentiated, genetic structures changing and mutating.* ***He saw millions of men and women seeking mates, trying to find those who would complete them, make them whole again****, yet always separated from them by the difference passed on to them by eons of change. He saw Kira and himself, reflections of each other, able to move along their individual paths and yet move in perfect communication. She was no longer his sister, but his other self, closer to him than a sister could have been, merging with him so completely and perfectly that they were one being* (*Cloned Lives*, 145. The emphasis in bold is mine).

Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) starts precisely with a description of the sexual instinct as it appears in the «poetic fable which tells how the original human beings were cut up into two halves – man and woman – and how these are always striving to unite again in love» (2). For Kari Weil,

> Aristophanes' myth ... identifies the androgyne with an ideal, even an Edenic, state of being, a state of wholeness in which nothing is lacking. Visually, his story represents androgyny as perfect symmetry between two united halves. Structurally and thematically, his story recalls the separation of Eve from Adam (described as androgynous in certain versions of Genesis) and the biblical fall into disunity. Both in Genesis and in Aristophanes' account, sexual division is regarded as the punishment for the fall. For Aristophanes it is also its remedy – the union of the two sexes through divinely inspired love is the route toward regaining salvation (*Androgyny and the Denial of Difference*, 18).

In *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, Jacques Lacan puts forward an alternative interpretation of Aristophanes' myth of the androgyne, in Plato's *Symposium*, suggesting that the search for one's complementary party, the Other, is really at bottom a search for immortality. Thus, according to Lacan:

> Aristophanes' myth pictures the pursuit of the complement for us in a moving, and misleading, way, by articulating that it is the other, one's sexual other half, that the living being seeks in love. To this mythical representation of the mystery of love, analytic experience substitutes the search by the subject, not of the sexual complement, but of the part of himself, lost forever, that is constituted by the fact that he is only a sexed living being, and that he is no longer immortal (205).

Cloning can thus be seen as articulating the longing for immortality that the idea of the Other Half evokes, as well as the yearning for perfect harmony in love.

The clones' often felt nostalgia for a supposedly lost authenticity constitutes the main driving force behind their actions. The genetic commodification of their bodies marginalizes them, turns them into curious rarities. Indeed, the clones are often described as freaks, grotesque creatures who have to negotiate their acceptance into society or else remain amongst themselves, giving up the outside world. The groups of cloned brothers and sisters, who behave like one sole organism, can also be likened to automata, a figure which, incidentally, is one of Lacan's main metaphors for narcissism (*The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*). Jim Swenson, one of Paul Swenson's five

cloned children, muses: «*I'm living Paul's life*. He felt paralyzed. He saw himself as a **puppet**, walking an ever-repeating cycle. *I'll go through it again*, his mind murmured, *I'll go on feeling the way I do, acting the way I do, and I won't have any choice. It's all happened before and I have no way of changing it*» (*Cloned Lives*, 139. Italics in the original; bold is my addition). The seeming inevitability of this apparently deterministic fate imposed on him brings to mind the Nietzschean concept of Eternal Return, an aspect also noticed by Baudrillard. In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche muses: «Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?» (274).

Even when they are middle-aged, the old feelings of «being trapped» (*Cloned Lives*, 298) in a relationship with «these parts of himself» (*Cloned Lives*, 297), as Mike, one of the Swenson clones, muses, are still as strong and disturbing: «Every meeting and conversation with them threatened his sense of identity, every family gathering erased years of effort and made him an awkward boy again, part of them yet alienated from them» (297-298). Indeed, Mike feared that they «would infect his life again» (298). Significantly, instead of growing closer as they grew older, the brothers and sister «grew more distant every year. Oddly enough, their similarities seemed to aid in driving them apart, as if each resented the part of himself he saw reflected in the others...» (225). The stress here is on the fear of engulfment, of incorporation into the other(s), of loss of individuality, of being perceived as a part and not a whole, unique person, a fear which also pervades Kate Wilhelm's *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* (1976).[4]

Wilhelm's novel offers a useful comparison and contrast with Sargent's one. The dilemmas and contradictions faced by the clones in Wilhelm's story duplicate to a certain extent those experienced in Sargent's tale, while extending in other directions the problematics inherent in the politics of reproduction of the society of clones, as well as the power games necessarily inscribed in the propagation of the species.

Wilhelm borrowed the title of her novel from a Shakespearean sonnet, Sonnet 73, whose images of a cold, autumnal landscape and empty ruins, as well as deeply disturbing intimations of impending death, evoke the post-apocalyptic scenery that dominates most of *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang*. As a consequence of the alarming spread of pollution and all manner of abuses perpetrated on the natural world, the global cataclysm that ensues decimates world civilization almost completely, destroying the global economy and ecological equilibrium, while the populations, culture and agriculture of entire countries are totally obliterated. The patriarch of the Sumner clan decides to try and preserve his family with recourse to a programme of human and animal cloning, perceived as the only answer to the alarmingly decreasing rate of fertility, in an isolated Virginia valley. Indeed, the global catastrophe is only barely avoided in the secluded Shenandoah valley, where the narrative follows the lives of three generations of the same family. The third generation, however, is so far removed from the first cloned individuals that they are explicitly described as «inhuman», while the older «humans among them will be pariahs» (53). Indeed, one of the main issues addressed in the novel is the crucial question of what it means to be human: are the clones «inhuman» (42), as David, a character who belonged to the original clan, wonders, watching a group of cloned boys?

The clones, developing a society of their own, gradually shun the elders who still maintain a certain control over the valley and progressively create their own organizational rules that completely disregard the old values the original members of the Sumner clan are striving to keep. Classified according to letters and numbers, the clones are D-1, F-4, W-1 and so on, in uncanny and exact correspondence to Baudrillard's vision of «the Hell of the Same».

Molly, one member of an identical group of sisters, undergoes a radical transformation during an exploratory trip to compile and retrieve information about other parts of the country which had been obliterated by pollution, radiation and disease. She realizes that no matter how hard she tries

[4] *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* has been reissued in 1998 by Tom Doherty Associates Book, New York.

«something had died» (86), that «that other self» (86) she had found during her journey, which she attempts to «submerge ... and become whole again with her sisters» (86) will not go away and that in fact she wishes to cling to it, to recover it. This other self, however, «frightened her and isolated her in a way that distance and the river had not been able to do» (86). Her sisters, on the other hand, «would never permit her to be alone again. Together they made a whole; the absence of one of them left the others incomplete» (87). Banished to the old Sumner house, in the Shenandoah valley, Molly feels happy in her solitude, with her paintings and books, and gives birth to Mark, Ben's son. Ben, who had also been a member in the exploratory expedition, had undergone similar transformations to hers, although not to the extent of wishing a complete severance from her brothers. When Mark is five, they are found out and taken back to the compound. Molly is kept imprisoned with the other breeders, women whose only function is to bear children and who are kept incarcerated in a special hospital, while Mark grows up with the other boys, although he often tries to be alone. His difference makes him precious to the rulers, who see in him qualities that have been lost through generations of cloning. He held clues, for instance, «about how man lived alone» (129), how to survive in the woods and not be afraid of them, «without danger of mental breakdown through separation» (130) from the other brothers or sisters: «that was well known, the fear of the silent woods» (136). Apart from these characteristics which made him useful for the community, there were «no common grounds for understanding. He was an alien in every way» (131).

His artistic bent was another feature which set him apart and made the gulf between him and the others even more unbridgeable. Mark's sculptures, for instance, were completely meaningless to the clones. As he muses: «they learned everything they were taught, he realized, everything. They could duplicate what had gone before, but they originated nothing. And they couldn't even see the magnificent snow sculpture Mark had created» (155). Psychoanalyst Marie-Louise von Franz addresses the role of art in words relevant for our discussion. According to her, a «civilization which has no creative people is doomed.... The person who is really in touch with the future is the creative personality».[5] This insight is consonant with the narrative drift of the novel, which suggests that the new clone society is condemned to gradual decline and annihilation. Mark is the only one with the creative capacity to survive, to go on producing culture and art.

LOST AURAS AND SIMULACRA

This persistent problematization of identity is one of the main leitmotifs in these clone narratives, crucially structured around concepts of wholeness and lack, of individuality and standardization, of a nostalgic yearning for a society before asexual reproduction and genetic engineering set in and became the norm. A character in Kate Wilhelm's *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* believes that «psychology is a dead end» for their society of families of clones because «it revives the cult of the individual» (100). Indeed, «singular» and «individual» are of course key terms in any discussion of cloning, as are such words as «original», «whole», «complete», «authenticity», words which frequently recur in Baudrillard's comments on cloning.

What Baudrillard mainly objects to in cloning is the endless, mechanical reproduction of the same, a duplication which inevitably entails the disappearance, or at least the dilution to extreme, homeopathic doses, of a supposed original, unique, authentic first being or object. Walter Benjamin is of course an indispensable reference in any discussion that deals with copies and reproductions. With reproduction, the «aura» of the object, to take up Benjamin's term, is lost, an insight that can be

[5] Quoted in Suzi Gablik's *The Reenchantment of Art*, 24.

profitably applied to the analysis of the behaviour of the societies of clones in Sargent and Wilhelm's novels.

The influence of Walter Benjamin's ideas reverberates throughout Baudrillard's work. Baudrillard openly acknowledged his respect for Benjamin, about whom he said he «is someone whom I admire deeply» («Revenge of the Crystal», 21). In *Seduction*, Baudrillard explicitly links Benjamin's comments about the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction, which, by dint of that very system of reduplication, loses its «aura», to cloning. As Baudrillard, engaging with Benjamin's ideas, maintains, the work of art, having relinquished

> the unique quality of its here and now, its aesthetic form ... is no longer destined for seduction but reproduction ... The extreme form of this process is to be found in our contemporary mass media, where there never was an original, things being conceived from the start in terms of their unlimited reproducibility.
>
> This is exactly what happens to human beings with cloning. This is what happens to the body when conceived only as informational stock, or as data to be processed. Nothing then prevents its serial reproduction in the same terms Benjamin used when speaking of industrial objects or images (171).

The cloned brothers and sister in *Cloned Lives* are deeply fearful of having lost their «aura», what made them unique human beings, a distinct genetic patrimony. Similarly, Mark feels himself to be the only person in the society he moves in to have the combined genetic information of a mother and a father, a circumstance which in turn makes of himself a singular and solitary creature. As Baudrillard comments, with reference to cloning: «The original is lost, and only nostalgia can restore its 'authenticity'» (*Seduction*, 171). It is precisely this nostalgia for a different past that did not contain groups of cloned people that drives Mark to search for his genealogy, to preserve the memory of his family and of his own past.

In «Subjective Discourse or the Non-Functional System of Objects», Baudrillard, in a Benjaminian register, again addresses the question of origins, of authenticity and, by extension, of the past. A sense of the past, not just a personal, genealogical past but also a historical past is what is at stake for Mark in *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang*, a family past which he not only wants to reconstitute and keep as a memory, a trace, but also recover and reinvent, in the shape of a new nuclear family of his own and the implementation of a new agrarian, self-sustaining society away from the serial reproduction and automatization of the other valley. Mark's attachment to the old house where he grew up, to his books, paintings and to the statue representing his mother constitutes a clear index of the importance of old objects, valuable tokens of a family past which he wants to preserve. According to Baudrillard, the

> need that bygone objects fulfil is that of a definitive being, a *complete* being. The time of the mythological object is the perfect tense: it is that which occurs in the present as having previously occurred, and which by this very fact is based on an 'authentic' self. The bygone object is always, in the full sense of the term, a «family portrait» («Subjective Discourse or the Non-Functional System of Objects», 36. My emphasis).

Thus, and pursuing this line of argument, Mark's objects, acquiring an «aura» of mythological objects in line with Baudrillard's analysis, become «complete» («Subjective Discourse or the Non-Functional System of Objects», 37). For Baudrillard, this «complete event that it [the object] signifies is birth» (37). According to the French thinker, «I am not the one who is here right now, as this is anguishing – I am the one who has always been, according to an inverse link with my birth for which this object is a sign, a regression plunging me from present into time. Thus does the bygone object present itself as a myth of origin» («Subjective Discourse or the Non-Functional System of Objects», 37). In search for his own myths of origin, Mark is described as desperately clinging to old objects which can stand for primal scenes and thus provide him with a past.

It is precisely this dimension of a sense of time in the past extending to the present that Mark

does not want to forego, a dimension the other clones are totally unaware of and so do not even miss, although for Mark it represents a fundamental lack. Baudrillard goes on to emphasize that

> we need to distinguish two features in the mythology of bygone objects: a nostalgia for origins and an obsession with authenticity ... the older are the objects, the closer do they bring us to an earlier time, to an original 'divinity', nature, wisdom ... The demand for authenticity ... expresses an obsession with certitude – about the origin of a work, its date, author or signature («Subjective Discourse or the Non-Functional System of Objects», 37)

precisely the kind of knowledge that is denied to the clones, who have no father or mother in the traditional sense. Mark, on the other hand, has a «conventional» father and mother, a situation that sets him apart, that makes of him, in the society of clones, a collector's item, in the sense that Baudrillard connects the «taste for the antique with the passion for collecting – since, in their narcissistic regression, in their systematic elision of time, and in their imaginary command over birth and death, there is a deep affinity between the two» («Subjective Discourse or the Non-Functional System of Objects», 37). Indeed, as Baudrillard points out, the «search for *the creator's mark*, from actual impressions to the signature, is also the search for filiation and paternal transcendence. Authenticity always stems from the Father: he is the source of value. What the bygone object evokes in the imagination is this sublime filiation at the same time as the degeneration to the mother's womb» («Subjective Discourse or the Non-Functional System of Objects», 37).[6]

At the end of the novel, Mark, having managed to escape and having taken some women with him, settles down in a fertile valley where he starts a new life, as the new patriarch of this emerging society, where there was no more cloning and no two of the children «were alike» (206).

CONCLUSION

Wilhelm's novel, then, is a powerful cautionary tale which forewarns about the potential dangers a misguided use of the biological sciences might lead to, roundly criticizing the emergence of a society of cloned people, in a Baudrillardian vein. Sargent's narrative, on the other hand, attempts to assess the pitfalls that lie in wait for the cloned people, in terms of patterns of socialization and ego-development, but seems to suggest that the emergence of cloned humans as well as their successful social integration are possible.

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[6] Here, of course, I have many reservations about Baudrillard's discourse, tinted with a patriarchal rhetoric which he makes no effort to disguise. This is also often the case in *Seduction*, where many of his pronouncements betray an androcentric bias.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 145-149

Psychoanalysis in Cyberspace

TAMISE VAN PELT (*)

Sadie Plant begins her feminist exploration of digital women in the new technoculture with a portrait of Ada Lovelace, the mathematical genius who tamed Charles Babbage's errant inventiveness. Lovelace's intellectual contributions to the «difference engine» insured the success of her male mentee's invention, netting Babbage a place in cultural history as the inventor of one of the first digital computers. Plant's fascinating historical account of Lovelace is punctuated by a philosophical aside on difference, an aside whose positional impulses seem wildly at odds with the fluidity of the digital medium. The engine of Plant's differential imaginary is difference itself, married to the kind of analogic thinking the digital ought, logically, to replace. But it is one thing to think *about* the digital; quite another to think digitally. Here is the passage in question:

> Whether they are gathering information, telecommunicating, running washing machines, doing sums, or making videos, all digital computers translate information into the zeros and ones of machine code. These binary digits are known as *bits* and strung together in *bytes* of eight. The zeros and ones of machine code seem to offer themselves as perfect symbols of the orders of Western reality, the ancient logical codes which make the difference between on and off, right and left, light and dark, form and matter, mind and body, white and black, good and evil, right and wrong, life and death, something and nothing, this and that, here and there, inside and out, active and passive, true and false, yes and no, sanity and madness, health and sickness, up and down, sense and nonsense, west and east, north and south. And they made a lovely couple when it came to sex. Man and woman, male and female, masculine and feminine: one and zero looked just right, made for each other: 1, the definite, upright line; and 0, the diagram of nothing at all: penis and vagina, thing and hole… hand in glove. A perfect match. (34-5)

Plant's analogical listing slips from the performative zeros and ones of machine code to the culturally burdened signifying differences of natural language – leaving behind a manic-depressive microprocessor flung from elation to despair in the nanosecond gaps between the plenitudes of the 1s, the voids of the zeroes. In Plant's uneven accounting, concrete referential images (1 the upright penis, 0 the vaginal void) align themselves promiscuously with abstract spatial significations (north/south, here/there), institutionalized moral positions (good and evil, health and sickness), and legalized distinctions (right/wrong; sane/mad), oblivious to the register-shifting such naïve affiliations involve.

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Once the gendered agenda of Plant's dichotomous world reveals itself, psychoanalytic differences cement the cornerstone of Plant's foundationalism. Thus Plant concludes her explication of the feminine 0 and masculine 1 with a brief construction of «Lacan» composed of snippets from Irigary, Mitchell and Rose: «Lacan lays down the law and leaves no doubt: 'There is woman only as excluded by the nature of things,' he explains. She is 'not-all,' 'not-whole,' 'not-one,' and whatever she knows can only be described as 'not-knowledge.' There is 'no such thing as *The* woman, where the definite article stands for the universal.' She has no place like home, nothing of her own, 'other than the place of the Other which,' writes Lacan, 'I designate with a capital O'» (35). The substitution of the entified Other of oppositional feminism here for Lacan's decentered Other of radical alterity echoes a now-standard misreading of Lacan. Plant's identity politics by the numbers centers the Other as object, a "nothing" denied the status of a "one"; her differential tropes of anti-patriarchal discourse add woman as Other to the subject as political entity, their sum a *person* subjected to the absolute law of digital distinction where person equals liberal humanist subject.

The digitizing of gender is Plant's, not Lacan's. When Lacan exemplifies symbolic difference, he chooses red/black in the deck of cards (he might better have used roulette where this difference signifies) and day/night, *not* male/female. Nor is signifying difference at issue in the Lacanian source texts of the Plant pastiche. Fleshing out Lacan's citation with the missing bits Plant has carved away reveals, instead, a discussion of *jouissance* and the Other that would better align itself with Beaudrillardian ecstasy of communication than Plant's politics of informatics. Had Plant seriously wished to debate the implications of Otherness in cyberspace, she would have engaged Lacan's Seminar Two, the seminar devoted to the Other, the symbolic order, the digital, cybernetics, and an assortment of computers and machines.

Though his second Seminar is nominally devoted to the ego in Freud's theory, Lacan's anti-humanist critique of knowledge here foregrounds the decentering of the subject, the distinctions between the registers, and the symbolic nature of language. His explanation of the Symbolic leads Lacan to employ the many mathematical examples drawn from computational machines. Aptly, the seminar includes a lecture «Psychoanalysis and cybernetics, or on the nature of language» delivered to the Société Française de Psychanalyse June 22, 1955. Though he acknowledges Norbert Weiner as the father of cybernetics, Lacan's interest is not in engineering but in the social sciences as «conjectural sciences». Thus, he points out that «To understand what cybernetics is about, one must look for its origin in the theme, so crucial for us, of the signification of chance» (296). When the science of numbers «becomes a combinatory science… the more or less confused, accidental traversal of the world of symbols is organized around the correlation of absence and presence. And the search for the laws of presence and absence will tend towards the establishing of the binary order which leads to what we call cybernetics» (300). Here, Lacan's investment in presence and absence suggests that these terms are prior to, or evocative of the cybernetic universe of zeros and ones, essentially folding the computational universe back into Lacan's symbolic universe of signification.

Lacan's sense of the digital zero and one, of absence and presence, is tied to one of his most frequently cited definitions of signifying difference in the symbolic order: «Everything comes back to 'to be or not to be,' to the choice between what will or won't come out, to the primordial couple of plus or minus. But presence as absence connotes possible absence or presence. As soon as the subject himself comes to be, he owes it to a certain non-being on which he raises his being. And if he isn't, if he isn't something, he obviously bears witness to some kind of absence, but he will always remain purveyor of this absence, I mean that he will bear the burden of its proof for lack of being capable of provoking the presence» (192). Lacan's emphatic alliance of the symbolic order with the presence/ absence distinction here is unequivocally reiterated in terms of the digital later in the same Seminar when he emphasizes that «by means of your 0 and your 1, that is, the connotation of presence-absence, we are capable of representing everything which presents itself» (285).

A reasonable feminist might protest, here, that Plant's analogic alliance of the 0 and 1 with feminine and masculine hardly differs from Lacan's connotational insistence that 0 and 1 signify absence and presence. The political representation at issue in the former seems no farther from the computational universe that the signifying re-presentations of the latter. However, presence and absence do not map quite so neatly onto the zero and the one once Lacan gets down to the discussion of new media, and two examples – the first a discussion of the digital image and the second a discussion of machine intelligence – show Lacan's more sophisticated sense of the issues that computing environments raise for a linguistically-based psychoanalysis that positions the unconscious as the discourse of the symbolic Other.

Given that Lacan delivered his second seminar in 1954-55, his grasp of the implications of the digital medium is impressive. He points out, for instance, that the unified perceptual gestalt so easily formed in the imaginary is extremely complex for the machine: «With the machine, we never produce an effect founded on a simplicity of the same order - it is always through the most complex, the most artificial composition, by a point-by-point sweeping of space, a scanning, and by means of formulae which are in consequence very complicated, that one recomposes what one could call the sensitivity of the machine to a particular form» (316). Here, Lacan clearly notes the complexity of generating a pictorial image via digital distinctions alone. This computational image gives Lacan an opportunity to tie the machine to his own theory of the registers: «In other words, good forms do not constitute the simplest formulae for the machine. Which is already a sufficient indication in experience of the opposition between the imaginary and the symbolic» (316).

Not only does Lacan use the digital domain to reinforce his hypothesis of the three orders, he seems prescient in his use of artificial intelligence to critique the Cartesian subject of humanism. «Once we have the possibility of embodying this 0, this 1, the notation of presence and absence, in the real, embodying it in a rhythm, a fundamental/scansion, something moves into the real, and we are left asking ourselves… whether we have a machine that thinks», he writes (303). In subsequent discussion, he answers his own question: «The machine is simply the succession of little 0s and 1s, so that the question as to whether it is human or not is obviously entirely settled – it isn't. Except, there's also the question of knowing whether the human, in the sense in which you understand it, is as human as all that» (319). Though Lacan's off-hand comment here intends to reinforce his theory of the registers against those theories dependent upon the Subject supposed to know, Lacan's question regarding whether the human «is as human as all that» allows for a response that threatens to decenter the antihumanist project… for Lacan has opened the door to its posthuman alternative.

Aptly, N. Katherine Hayles's genealogy of the posthuman engages Lacan's second Seminar as an object of critique. For Hayles, the Lacanian commitment to a paradigm of presence/absence renders his work inadequate to the theorizing of a posthuman subject of electronic mediation. According to Hayles, Lacan's theory of the symbolic depends on his hypothesis of «floating signifiers», signifiers that float above their signifieds with no fixed relationship between the two. For Lacan, meanings are not determined by the marks on the page; rather, meanings emerge from webs of signification. As Elizabeth Grosz points out, Lacan's dictum that «the signifier represents a subject for another signifier» inverts the humanist model of communication in which «the self represents a sign for another self» (411). Whereas the humanist subject uses language expressively, Lacan's antihumanist subject is used by language, is surprised by meaning rather than deliberately constructive of it. In contrast both to expressive control and to Lacanian signification, posthuman interactivity presents a different relationship to the sign altogether. For Hayles, the verbal and semiotic markers that represent the body in the computing environment are «flickering signifiers», signifiers whose relations to their signifieds are fixed by the codes essential to their generation. The generation of layers upon layers of signification in the computing environment organizes itself into *randomness and pattern*, the informatic alternative Hayles proposes to the distinction between presence and absence underwriting desire in print texts and Lacanian theory.

Not only does Hayles offer an alternative to the Lacanian signifying order, she presents an alternative genealogy of the subject with an alternative origin myth in place of Freud's Oedipal ur-

drama. To paraphrase Freud's famous dictum regarding the id and the ego, where Oedipus was, there Turing shall be. Alan Turing's famous conundrum asks an interrogator to determine which of two concealed individuals is male and which is female by posing questions to them and analyzing their mediated answers. Though the second version of the Turing test (which asks the interrogator to distinguish a human respondent from a machine) is more widely discussed, Hayles rightly insists that the parallel constructions of gender distinction and posthuman difference must be read together. Thus, Hayles's and Turing's alignment of gender with mediation make their arguments central to a posthuman alternative to the anti-humanist, psychoanalytic subject of the unconscious.

In the preface to her discussion of how we became posthuman, Katherine Hayles situates the Turing test on the faultline between humanist assumptions about knowledge and the idea of the posthuman. Hayles counters those critics of Turing who attempt to dismiss the first, gendered version of the Turing test, pointing out that their resistance reveals the wish for a safely embodied identity with boundaries sustained by gender difference – a wish exposed by Turing's doubling of distinctions between the male and the female, the human and the machine. This double distinction gives Turing's essay its transgressiveness vis à vis the liberal humanist subject:

> [The Turing test] made the crucial move of distinguishing between the enacted body, present in the flesh on one side of the computer screen, and the represented body, produced through the verbal and semiotic markers constituting it in an electronic environment. This construction necessarily makes the subject into a cyborg, for the enacted and represented bodies are brought into conjunction through the technology that connects them. If you distinguish correctly which is the man and which the woman, you in effect reunite the enacted and the represented bodies into a single gender identity. The very existence of the test, however, implies that you may also make the wrong choice. Thus the test functions to create the possibility of a disjunction between the enacted and the represented bodies, regardless which choice you make. What the Turing test «proves» is that the overlay between the enacted and the represented bodies is no longer a natural inevitability but a contingent production, mediated by a technology that has become so entwined with the production of identity that it can no longer meaningfully be separated from the human subject. (xiii)

Hayles's conclusion here is worth emphasizing, since the assimilation of identity-production by technology is at the heart both of her definition of the posthuman condition and of her critique of Lacan. The paradigm shift suggested here in the move from the liberal self-representing subject to the posthuman subject of electronic mediation does not restate the paradigm shift from the humanist Cogito to Lacan's anti-humanist critique of it. Rather, Hayles's use of the pattern/randomness distinction means to liberate the computational Subject from the presence/absence distinction informing Lacanian analysis.

One possible consequence of Hayles's analysis is that the antihumanist Subject as Lacan and others have defined it has little purchase in the territory of cyberspace. Consequently, media theorist Espen Aarseth prefers the term «user» to better describe the subject who interacts with the electronic medium. *User*, Aarseth writes, «suggest[s] both active participation and dependency, a figure under the influence of some kind of pleasure-giving system» (174). Aarseth, like other new media theorists who want to retain the concept of desire, offers a position that conflates agency with dependency under the rule of the pleasure principle. Though Aarseth's User has a certain cyberpunk appeal, its implication of addictive immersion in a medium evokes the repetition that psychoanalysis places beyond the pleasure principle, not within it. The active dependent figure Aarseth describes resembles Freud's playful infant immersed in the Fort/Da game as Frederico Pereira rereads the scene in his plenary address to the 14th International. Whereas for Freud, the Fort/Da signifies only the child's attempt to control, through symbolization, the mother's absence, for Pereira the scene is a good deal more complex. Noting that the reel in question is thrown into and retrieved from the baby's own bed, Pereira hypothesizes that the baby identifies itself with the

reel that is o-o-o-o «gone» and da «back». «Evidently, this game is possible to the extent that the baby is present to the world by starting to be present to himself», he says; Fort/da's baby requires the «background of presence of himself to himself and from himself to the World» (11).

Complicating Lacan's vision of the signifier creating the subject for another signifier, Pereira suggests «Maybe it is possible to say: it would not be I who is being carried by the symbol in its facet as signifier towards another signifier, but rather (or also) I who carry the symbol while being a thing that, whilst signifying, is the same thing as what the symbol means» (11). If this seems perilously close to the communications model of intersubjectivity, Pereira adds an additional complication: «what can be found in Fort/Da is the thickness of a relationship and not the fracture of an absence» because Fort/Da is not a binary but a quadrangle: Mother Fort - baby Fort - Mother Da - baby Da; mother is present to baby and baby to mother. Thus, «under a background of presence, then the symbol is, and it is only because firstly it is that it can then represent» (11). Though Pereira's example here commits analysis even more heavily to the axis of presence and absence, I believe it is a fruitful example because it argues powerfully for a combination of agentic play, symbolization, and representation. Such representation is both the upshot of the Fort/Da game and one aspect of the Turing test – the pattern half of the pattern/randomness axis.

I do not want to suggest that this rereading of the registers to accommodate the idea of pattern reconciles Lacan's model of subjectivity with Hayles's critique of it, or that it reconciles analysis with either information theory or the posthuman. In part, such a reconciliation is unnecessary since Hayles herself employs the presence/absence distinction in her reading of literature, setting presence/absence in a dialectical relationship with pattern/randomness. Since informatics has to do with the study of information, and since information has nothing to do with meaning, Lacan's paradigm of subjectivity as a meaning-making process clearly has something to offer to theories of the posthuman. It may be that presence/absence runs beneath the informational flow like DOS beneath Windows.

The question arises, in conclusion, what the posthuman has to offer analysis. When we think of the Lacanian analysis of representation in print texts, we know that Lacan instructs us to tease apart the imaginary and the symbolic, analyzing the work each register performs in the discourse at hand. In his analyses of print texts, Lacan brackets off the real as that which resists representation absolutely. In cyberspace, however, resistance is futile - as hypertext theorists, not unlike the Borg, are fond of pointing out. As the flickering signifiers of new media come more and more to pattern subjectivity, the formerly ineffable real may make itself «effable» as randomness. And the opportunity to rethink the real as randomness may lead the analyst to abandon her position in the Other for the position occupied by that famous cyborg psychoanalyst Eliza. Think of it! *L'analyste à sa place*: the interface.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 151-155

Angel in the Underworld

Aspects on a love story

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«Downfall» is the English title of a strange novel by the Swedish author Per Olov Enquist. It is the story of a man found in a dirty mine shaft deep under ground. His head is wrapped in filthy rags, to hide a shameful tumor, protruding like a huge bud from his forehead and transforming him into a monster. The disfigured man is brought to the light, the rags are unwrapped, and the growth on his forehead is revealed to be a woman's face. She is what makes him a monster. But when the man, called Pasqual Pinon, for the first time meets his image in a mirror, he is moved by love for the woman in his forehead. He gives her the name Maria and soon considers her his wife.

This story of a male who has a woman's face growing out of his forehead has a documentary background. His image can be seen in a book on monsters, where it is told that he spent his tragic life touring with a circus and shown to people for mere pennies.

But «Downfall» (or «Fallen Angel») is not a documentary novel, it is a poetic narrative that can be interpreted on several levels. My intention is to make a combined mythical and psychoanalytical reading of it.

The image of the man, Pasqual Pinon, is extremely powerful. It has that sensuous quality that raises an almost physical identification within the reader: you can feel that shameful thing bursting forth from within, it will be seen by everyone if you don't manage to hide it. From a psychoanalytical point of view you acknowledge an anxiety about the return of the repressed. But what is repressed? And why is it incarnated as a female?

To capture the subtle and fundamentally meaningful characteristics of a literary text, one must focus on «key words, favourite images and fetishes», on visual and acoustic effects, on forms and movements that give a text its distinctive character, says Jean-Pierre Richard, the French phenomenologically-oriented literary critic. You should look for images, motives, metaphors that stand out both against its context and against other texts. Their degree of deviation and originality, as well as their frequency, indicate their significance, and they constitute the special *topological* elements that characterize an author.

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The man with the double face really is such a topologically outstanding image. But the context makes him still more remarkable. He is said to be an angel, thrown out of heaven, as was the rebellious Lucifer. In several ways he is associated with Satan: He is at home in the underworld, and, like the Devil himself, he is half beast, half human being. He is an «it», not a «he». The narrator says:

> It was a creature, with a kind of a head, eyes that shined in the midst of the blackness. The head was covered for the most part by hair. Under the head was a body, like the brisket of a horse, and the extremities looked almost like arms that ended with – hooves, or maybe they were hands. It was impossible to see, but suddenly he became aware of the stench, the heavy piercing stench that made it practically impossible to breathe.[1]

This creature is hairy and stenching; he is a hybrid of man and animal. His «speech» is nonverbal, it is a *pre-* or beyond verbal speech, it is a «guttural moan, as though from an animal in the agony of death». What makes him human is his sense of shame. Shame causes him to hide in the mineshaft, shame makes him cover his head and conceal his face.

But there is also a special movement characterizing the story: the downfall. It is a double fall: first from heaven, down to earth. Then, after being captured («We caught him when he fell»), he is brought down to the Underworld. This descent is followed by another one: someone called «the guide» – like Virgil in the Divine Comedy – takes the anonymous protagonist down to the grotto and the realm of shades: «They climbed down the wooden stairs in a half hour, meeting anonymous shadows now and then on their way up».

We can see how several classical mythic structures meet: the fall from the celestial light, the descent to Hades, the realm of shadows and shades, then the ascent and return to the world. The text reverberates from a number of other literary falls and descents: the fall of Milton's Lucifer that lasted for nine days (which, according to Bachelard, is a way of expressing the unfathomable depths of the abyss: «He could just as well have fallen for a century»); the descent of the Aenid, where Virgil and Aeneas – like in Enquist's novel – meets this piercing stench that comes from the abyss.

The title of the novel alludes to the biblical myth of Lucifer, but this «love story» comes closer to the classical myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. (As you remember, Orpheus lost his beloved Eurydice when she was bitten by a serpent; he was allowed, though, to descend to the shades to bring his beloved back to life, if only he promised not to tum around and look at her as long as they were still in the Underworld.) As often with the Orphic theme in western literary tradition, the transformation – metamorphoses – is the most central: the retrieval of the lost half, the abolition of the split and the merging of the separated or conflicting parts into one unity. In a psychoanalytic terminology the Orphic theme often represents the striving to unite the conscious and the unconscious, to bring up from the «underworld» the repressed and denied so as to achieve a new integration.[2]

Many critics consider the Orpheus myth to be the most adequate expression of the fusion of the Dionysian and the Apollonian dimensions of life. The Dionysian can be interpreted in a literary context in several different ways. It can be seen in terms of the nocturnal aspects of human life: instincts, sexuality, irrationality. It also is connected with the concept of separation and thus represents the state *before* separation. In a psychoanalytic reading (according to Klein, Mahler et al.) it means the phase of symbiosis, before the child experiences itself as being separated from the body of the mother. Julia Kristeva uses the concept *semiotic* to mark this preverbal and pregenital phase, before the separation and the entering into what Lacan has called the *symbolic order*. The

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[1] All quotations are taken from «Fallen Angel», unpublished translation by Sue Anne Moody, which I find more adequate than Downfall. A love story, translated by Anna Paterson, London: Quartet Books, 1986.

[2] See Strauss, Walter A.: *Descent and Return. The Orphic Theme in Modern Literature*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971.

«semiotic» continues to be a primal and creative level of the psyche and of language, representing chaos and flow. From the *chora*, the vessel for the semiotic, comes the language of music and poetry, characterized by rhythm, sound and images, forming itself into patterns other than the abstract, rational and logically structured language that belongs to the symbolic order and the «Law of the Father».

In a mythical reading and in a religious context, the Dionysian dimension can be interpreted as a state of still being dependent on God or the gods, before the split between Man and God. It also can refer to the paradisian state before the fall of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The reverse Apollonian dimension stands for man's independence, through reason.

In a Jungian reading, Orpheus' journey through the underworld and his search for his lost Eurydice is a metaphore for the process that Jung calls *individuation*. Jung's concept of «individuation» stands for an inner process whereby the pendular motion between progression and regression are part of the struggle to settle the tragic rift between Man's conscious and unconscious. This rift – and efforts to unite and reconcile – have both an intrapsychic and a religious dimension in Enquist's work. Both can be followed throughout the body of his writings. Efforts toward reintegration are depicted in parallel analogies and a development can be perceived over time.

In their description of the fundamental dynamic between the conscious and unconscious I find the similarities between Freud and Jung of much greater interest than the differences. In fact, they both describe a dynamic interaction that seems to have been known by mankind for thousands of years, but retold in a mythic language.

Of course, these theories give an interpretative structure, both mythical and psychological, for the reading of the novel «Downfall». They do not, however, supply the instruments to grasp the meaning of this specific text. For my interpretation, I have made use of methods from French thematic criticism, developed primarily by critics as Jean-Pierre Richard, Georges Poulet and Jean Starobinski.

Understanding and interpretation of a literary work starts with the empathic reading, according to Georges Poulet and Jean-Pierre Richard.[3] The empathy should be as deep as a total identification with the work, and intense as a fusion of subjects. But to find out the essential structure, of the work each text of an author should be seen as a part of his or her whole work, his or her *oeuvre*, the totality of his or her writing. In the work of Enquist, there can be found several variations of this movement of transcendence, and of connection between heaven and earth. The most powerful is the image of the heavenly harp.

Himlaharpan, the heavenly harp, is a recurrent image of Enquist's «imaginary world». It can be said to constitute his metaphysical universe. The heavenly harp is a mythical world pillar, what historians of religion call an *axis mundi* that binds heaven and earth. It also is a Northern version of the Aeolian harp: it enables the night to resound with powerful cosmic music, as though «someone out there in the dark had stroked a giant bow across the strings.»

The heavenly harp literally consists of telephone wires attached to a wooden house in Vãsterbotten, a region in the far north of Sweden. Their other ends are said to be «out in space». They are hung on «black dead stars», attached to «a black spot of anti-materia». Compressed in this image is – as I read it – the experience of a cosmos that is just as affected by God's presence as by his absence. In one of the plays by Enquist, it is said that it is the singing of God that can be heard in the heavenly harp. In *Rainsnakes*, another play by Enquist, the image recurs and it is said about the stars: «They've been dead for thousands of years. But their light still needs more time. So I see their light, before they died, though they themselves are black and dead.»

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[3] Jean-Pierre Richard gives a presentation of his theory and method in the introduction to his work *L'Univers imaginaire de Mallarmé*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1961.

God is dead, but it takes a long time before his light is extinguished. His absence is just as tangible and determinant as his presence was before: it creates an equally determinant transcendent structure. It is as though the black hole had become a line extended between heaven and earth and the world is a cosmos ordered in accordance with the negation of transcendence.

The sound – the roaring – of the harp is not only an acoustic image of a celestial connection; it expresses also an emotional state: the heavenly harp is a metaphysical embodiment of melancholy. And the extinguished black star is, just like the black sun, an image of melancholy, absence and loss[4]. The absence is experienced as having existential and metaphysical dimensions. God is dead - but the light still emanating from Him keeps its frightening attraction.

In the work by Enquist, one can find a number of images expressing a state of melancholy. In my paper last year in St Petersburg, I discussed one of them: the image of a man frozen in ice. In the novel «Downfall», melancholy has its human embodiment in Maria, the wornan's face, imprisoned in the forehead of Pasqual Pinon. Her eyes are said to be the most alive in her face, «moving from side to side, following everything». She has vivid eyes, but she has no voice. She can see, feel and think, but no words can express her thoughts and feelings:

> It was like seeing a captive deer with anxious or helplessly blinking eyes; that her eyes were trying to say something, everyone gradually understood that, but what – no, it was impossible to understand.

Like the man caught in the ice, the image of Maria tells us of a state of being stunned and walled off, of isolation and depression. Although she literally is a part of a symbiotic relationship, her existence is doomed to one of utmost loneliness. Her pain is expressed in her soundless singing. It can be heard by no-one except Pasqual Pinon. He can hear the «song» as an aching in his head:

> It was like one long moaning and groaning, a kind of everlasting wailing that went round and round in his head day and night. /---/ He couldn't love one long desperate lament. lt was unbearable.

He used to say: «She's singing evil now.»

But «Downfall» is a story about the striving for reconciliation. It is not a coincidence that the imprisoned «woman» has got the religiously charged name Maria. She represents the longing and the mourning, she is the lament over the loss of faith and the world of childhood.

The loss has existential dimensions: it is the loss not only of a childhood but also of a metaphysical world order. It is connected to the breaking up from a life drenched in religious tenderness with erotic overtones and to the loss of a metaphysical universe marked by unity, wholeness and meaning.

In several novels and plays we can find depictions of this very special religious environment, marked by Low Church religiousity. If the world outside is characterized by coldness, control, silence and manliness, then the chapel is a maternal world, warm and enveloping. Within the walls of the chapel one is allowed to express emotions in a way that otherwise is forbidden. Here you find a very special blend of pietism and herrnhutian (Moravian) religiosity, overflowing with blood and bride mystique and visions of an almost erotical, mystical union with Christ. Even the image of Christ carries maternal traits: the wound in Jesus' flank is described as the opening to a womblike cave, where the soul can huddle up for protection.

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[4] See Julia Kristeva on Gérard de Nerval in *Soleil Noir. Dépression et Mélancolie*, Paris: Gallimard, 1987, pp. 151-184. Eng. translation *Black Sun*, translated by Leon S. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

This is the world of the Mother; here she is the ruler. The protagonist of most of the novels and plays is a boy or a young man, or a grown-up man looking back at his childhood. To grow up and become a man means breaking up from the mother, who cannot be separated from this «womb» of religious belief and belonging. To leave the religious sphere behind becomes a necessary stage in growing up, a part of freeing oneself from the maternal dependency. It coincides with entering an urban, manly, intellectual and «political» culture, where confession is named rationalism. The attraction of religious faith and of the Christian «ritual» therefore constitutes a threat of falling back into the dependency of the mother, of becoming both childish and feminine.

Maria in the novel «Downfall» is the silenced voice of lament over this lost world, of the sense of meaning and belonging, of yearning for a lost spiritual universe, where *agape*, unconditional forgiveness, gives existential relief. But this voice is doomed «feminine»; it is an unacceptable part of a male identity. The protruding presence of «Maria» is what turned Pasqual Pinon into a monster. She has become the *abject*, the «thing» that has to be rejected with disgust.[5] She has to be hidden, buried, denied.

In Jungian terms this could be described as a conflict between *animus* and *anima*. From a Lacanian or Kristevan perspective it tells about the primal and existential separation: from an intrauterine-like emotional, embracing world of unity and wholeness, into a world of Law and Symbolic Order. Words being the knife of separation, the male – the Father – being the executer...

But «Downfall» has got a subtitle; it is called «A Love Story». Shame and denial is the starting point, melancholy and depression its aching undercurrent. But the journey goes downwards towards acceptance and reintegration. The *abject*, Maria, becomes the beloved. Together they search for a faith that will include an alternative ritual and the rejection of the traditional God. They join a satanic cult, a church for «monsters» – deformed and despised people – who have replaced God with Satan, the fallen Angel, the greatest of the condemned, to whom they give their confession. This confession to Satan is in fact a «humanistic credo» and its central message coincides with a central Christian one: to give rehabilitation to the outcasts and condemned.

The image of Pasqual Pinon and his Maria, reconciled and united in the same body, but also in their confession to Satan, seen as the saint of the rejected and condemned, becomes an image of the religious synthesis. It represents a solution of a conflict that is both intrapsychic and religious. Together they stand for hope: united in a creed that denies God but also reveres him in the despised and contempted Human Being.

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[5] Julia Kristeva presents her concept «abject» in her book *Pouvoirs de l'horreur. Essai sur l'abjection*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1980.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 157-165

Abject bodies and disseminated remains in *Titus Andronicus*

ELENA BONELLI (*)

«... there is a Play in Mr. Shakespeare's Volume under the name of *Titus Andronicus* (...). 'tis the most incorrect and *indigested* piece in all his Works; it seems rather a heap of Rubbish than a Structure.»

(E. Ravenscroft, 1687, my emphasis)

In his sharp commentary on *Titus Andronicus*, the seventeenth-century playwright Edward Ravenscroft seems to interpret the sense of unease caused by reading or seeing this tragedy. The observations written by scholars of the following centuries reveal a clear-cut rejection of the play, usually based on an image of *Titus Andronicus* seen as «barbarous»; nevertheless, in this essay I intend to insist on Ravenscroft's use of the term «indigested», because it evokes an association of corporeality and disgust that characterises one of the topics of the tragedy.

In spite of the critics' reaction, *Titus Andronicus* was very popular with the Elizabethan audience, perhaps because it combines sensational incident with high-flown rhetoric of a kind that was fashionable around 1590. It tells a story of double revenge. Tamora, Queen of the Goths, seeks revenge on her captor, Titus, for the ritual slaughter of her son Alarbus; she achieves it when her other sons, Chiron and Demetrius, rape and mutilate Titus' daughter, Lavinia. Later, Titus himself seeks revenge on Tamora and her husband, Saturninus, after Tamora's black lover, Aaron, has falsely led him to believe that he can save his sons' lives by allowing his own hand to be chopped off. Though he is driven to madness, Titus achieves a spectacular sequence of vengeance in which he cuts Tamora's sons' throats, serves their flesh baked in a pie to their mother, kills Lavinia to save her from her shame, and stabs Tamora to death.

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Whereas certain physical characteristics, such as Falstaff's corpulence or Othello's blackness, convey coded meanings that confer on the character distinctive qualities, the numerous mutilations and the presence of severed limbs in *Titus Andronicus* produce a dissemination of the body – the body of the characters, the body of Rome, the body of the text – that reaches its climax in the final banquet scene in which Tamora unwittingly eats the bodies of her sons. This final incorporation, which is the last of a series of metaphoric and physical incorporations I intend to examine, gives this tragedy a sense of corporeality based on abjection and disgust.

In particular, the concept of «incorporation» tends to be associated with the spectre of a devouring mother, perfectly impersonated by Tamora: her body contains, feeds, swallows other bodies, and its destiny is to be eaten by beasts and birds and never receive a burial, thus constituting one of the residues of the play.

PERVERSE RE-FRACTIONS OF THE MATERNAL BODY

In her first speech, Tamora identifies herself as a mother who sheds tears for the sacrifice of her son Alarbus, and later in the same scene, when Saturninus with an unexpected decision asks her to be the new Empress of Rome, Tamora promises to be «a loving nurse, a mother to his youth» (I.i.337). Whereas her words introduce a positive image of motherhood, in the following scenes her maternal characteristics will be represented as extremely threatening.

Numerous critics have linked in Shakespeare's plays female sexuality – and in particular the womb – to corruption, castration, and death.[1] In *Titus Andronicus* there is a long succession of metaphors and similarities that suggests a concept of the maternal body as dangerous: the symbolic identity of Tamora's womb with the «detested, dark, blood-drinking pit» (II.ii.224) that kills Bassianus is only one of the examples that causes anxiety among the characters. Shakespeare's early tragedy has often been interpreted from the psychoanalytic or symbolic point of view: in particular, Tamora's behaviour is read as «the catastrophic enactment of maternal malevolence» (Willbern, 1978:166), while her mouth is imagined as a «*vagina dentata*» (Marshall, 1991:208);[2] David Willbern argues that the horrific descriptions which cross the play express «highly sadistic fantasies of sexual attack and matricide», while the «abhorred pit» will soon assume its central and over-determined symbolic significance as vagina, womb, tomb, and mouth, and all those «snakes» and «urchins» (...) and «swelling toads» may plausibly be imagined as grotesquely distorted phallic threats» (1978:169)[3].

Nevertheless, what distinguishes *Titus Andronicus* from the other plays is that the devouring mother is not only a metaphoric image associated with a character through literary examples: when Tamora eats her own sons, the metaphor becomes uncannily *real*.

Before confronting the episode in which Tamora literally devours her own sons, I would like to explore how the threat represented by the Queen of the Goths is also based on the other characters' imagination, and is associated with either her motherhood or her sexual appetite.

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[1] See, for example, the psychoanalytic point of view of Willbern (1978) and Adelman (1980); see also Barber and Wheeler (1986) and Wynne-Davies (1991).

[2] This metaphor is also associated by Wynne-Davies with the cave, that she imagines as a «vagina, the all-consuming sexual mouth of the feminine earth, which remains outside the patriarchal order of Rome» (1991:135).

[3] In 1978 David Willbern lamented that «few [essays] (...) have discussed the manifest sexual, symbolic, and sadistic elements of the play in serious terms, perhaps because of that discomfort which often accompanies the explication of the obvious» (159-160). After that date, some articles have been published on the symbolic representations of *Titus Andronicus*, and in particular of the female characters (cf. Marshall, 1991 and Wynne-Davies, 1991).

Tamora's body has, like the earth, the power to generate and at the same time to destroy. Her womb is described by Aaron as a prison from which his newborn baby is «enfranchised and come to light» (IV.ii.127);[4] moreover, when Lavinia tells Chiron and Demetrius that they sucked their nature from their mother's breast, she adopts a suggestive image:

> When did the tiger's young ones teach the dam?
> O, do not learn her wrath: she taught it thee.
> The milk thou suckst from her did turn to marble;
> Even at thy teat thou hadst thy tyranny.
> (II.ii.142-145)

The image of the milk becoming marble is very similar to that evoked by Lady Macbeth, who asks the «murth'ring ministers» to «take [her] milk for gall» (I.v.48): both Lady Macbeth and Tamora can be described as powerful and threatening women, whose ability is to create and destroy suddenly even their own children. But whereas Lady Macbeth's motherhood is only presumed, Tamora gives birth to a blackamoor child in the middle of the play, and her maternal characteristics, although negative, are often evoked by the other characters. In particular, the descriptions of Tamora's womb and milk anticipate a series of transgressions that will reach its apex with the banquet, when she violates the taboo on cannibalism and at the same time eats those she once fed, as Titus exclaims:

> Why, there they are, both baked in this pie,
> Whereof their mother daintily hath fed,
> Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred
> (V.iii.59-61)

The Queen of the Goths is a threat to the other characters because she reverses the commonplaces that usually connote a positive image of motherhood: the protection of a mother's womb is a prison for Tamora's little baby, and the nurture her sons once received from their mother retorts, at the end, against them. The image of the feeding mother who becomes a cannibalistic, devouring mother gives me the opportunity to compare Tamora with Kristeva's definitions of the «abject».
In *Powers of Horror*, Julia Kristeva explores different aspects of abjection, not only from a purely psychoanalytic point of view, but in order to identify the relationship between physical repulsion and some literary texts; in particular, what characterises the *abject* is strictly connected with the experience of «borders», or «margins»,[5] and it is perhaps worth noticing the numerous associations between this play – and in particular Tamora – and a strong sense of rejection. Kristeva writes:

> It is not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite. (...) Abjection (...) is immoral, sinister, scheming, and shady: a terror that dissembles, a hatred that smiles, a passion that uses the body for barter instead of inflaming it, a debtor who sells you up, a friend who stabs you... (1982:4)

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[4] A similar comparison can be found in *The Winter`s Tale*, when Paulina says «This child was prisoner to the womb, and is/By law and process of great nature thence/Freed and enfranchised.» (II.ii.62-64), and Shakespeare often associates the womb with the earth, tomb, and death (cf. *Romeo and Juliet* II.ii.9-14, V.iii.45-48; *Richard II* II.i.73-83; *Richard III* IV.i.52-55, IV.iv.353-356; *I Henry VI* IV.v.34-35, and of course King Lear`s tirade against women is full of these connections.

[5] In *The Powers of Horror*, Kristeva considers Mary Douglas' brilliant analysis of purity and defilement as a fundamental work. See Douglas (1969).

The element that best associates Tamora with Kristeva's definition of the abject is the character's ability to disturb identity and order. When the tragedy begins, the Romans have just captured some members of the Goths, and the opposition between the two cultures is eloquently described by Marcus' words to Titus: «Thou art a Roman, be not barbarous» (I.i.383). Rome is imagined as a «glorious body» (I.i.190) that needs a new head,[6] but Saturninus' unexpected decision to marry Tamora gives rise to a kind of «contamination» of the body of Rome. The first words pronounced by the new Empress are consistent with the metaphors adopted by the other characters: with Tamora's sentence «Titus, I am incorporate in Rome» (I.i.467) the tragedy opens up to a *mise en abîme* of incorporations/rejections of which the queen is one of the protagonists.

Tamora is contained inside the body of Rome and, at the same time, she physically «contains» the baby who is supposed to be the Emperor's son. Her pregnancy not only creates confusion in the difference between Romans and Goths, but introduces a further element of *contamination*: the child, defined by the nurse «Our empress' shame and stately Rome's disgrace» (IV.ii.61) is Aaron's son. Tamora transgresses the threshold that at the beginning of the play separated the Romans from the barbarians; she is «abject» because her body slowly becomes the territory in which this boundary disappears: it becomes, to adopt Kristeva's terminology, «a world that has erased its borders» (1982:4).

If the body of Tamora contains a complex alternation of incorporations, even her name participates in this peculiar aspect of the character. Whereas in the probable source of *Titus Andronicus*[7] the Queen of the Goths is called Attava, Shakespeare christens her «Tamora», a name that he may have derived from Tomyris, a Scythian queen famous for her cruelty. Nevertheless, in the analysis of a tragedy in which words and bodies are intertwined, I am tempted to ignore the explanation based on sources and meanings, in order to play with the graphic sign of Tamora's name, which seems coherent with her body. Her name becomes an icon – Ta-mora – that *contains* the moor,[8] as if the destiny and the secret of her pregnancy were already there, in those letters that usually constitute the arbitrariness of the proper name, but that in the realm of fiction create a network of meanings. In his essay «Proust et les noms», Roland Barthes points out the richness of interpretations carried by the names of the characters in *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, and makes an interesting distinction between the name in the fiction and the common noun:

> As sign, the proper Name offers itself to exploration, to deciphering (...) The Name (...) is a sign, a voluminous sign, a sign that is pregnant and full of meaning; the use cannot reduce it nor flatten it, contrary to the common noun, which can release only one of its meanings per syntagm. (Barthes, 1994:1371, my translation)

By a curious coincidence, Barthes uses the term «*gros*» (pregnant), to define one of the characteristics of the proper name, and Tamora's name is undoubtedly «pregnant». Later in the play, in order to deceive Titus, Tamora disguises herself as an allegoric character, and decides to be called «Revenge»: Tamora changes her name after she has delivered her baby; perhaps, once the little moor has left her mother's body, there is no reason that justifies her name-icon.[9]

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[6] After the immolation of a Goth prisoner, Marcus asks Titus, on behalf of the tribunes, to be *candidatus* for emperor, and «help to set a head on headless Rome» (I.i.189); to this statement Titus replies by associating the physical body with the metaphonical body politic: «A better head her glorious body fits/Than this that shakes for age and feebleness» (I.i. 190-191).

[7] The prose narrative «The History of Titus Andronicus» is generally accepted as the source of Shakespeare's tragedy. This is a single copy of a mid-eighteenth century chap-book, now stored in the Folger Library.

[8] The Italian word *mora* is the feminine equivalent of *moro*, moro.

[9] Proper Names in *Titus Andronicus* constitute a large issue that merits independent analysis, especially in Lacanian terms (Lacan, 1966). For instance, at the end of the tragedy, the «Name-of-the-Mother» incorporates the «Name-of-the-Father»: the baby cannot come to exist in language because Aaron loses the right to let it enter the symbolic order.

The sense of chaos created by Tamora has consequences that go beyond her previsions. The baby she delivers during the play clearly shows that Aaron, and not Saturninus, is the father, and Tamora's immediate reaction is to reject the infant. The neat separation of Tamora from her child is an important element in the play not only because it poses the question about the baby's destiny, but also because it confirms her double nature as mother and seductress, a Janus-like ambiguity that, Kristeva argues, is the enigma of femininity, and a source of fascination for literary heroes such as Oedipus:

> Jocasta (...) is Janus-like, ambiguity and reversal in a single being, a single part, a single function. Janus-like perhaps as any woman is, to the extent that any woman is at the same time a desiring being, that is, a speaking being, and a reproductive being, that is, one that separates itself from its child. Oedipus has perhaps done nothing more than marrying the splitting of Jocasta – the mystery, the enigma of femininity. (1982: 85)

In the first act, Tamora is a mother who implores Titus' piety for her sons, and in the following act she invites Aaron to enjoy their love and follow the example of Dido and Aeneas, «when with a happy storm they were surprised/And curtained with a counsel-keeping cave» (II.ii.23-24). But the multiple personalities of Tamora are not separate, because she is a sexually seductive mother, and the words she uses to invite her sons to «deflower» (II.ii.191) Lavinia are eloquent:

> Revenge it as you love your mother's life,
> Or be ye not henceforth called my children.
> (...)
> Therefore away with her and use her as you will:
> The worse to her, the better loved of me.
> (II.ii.114-115; 166-167)

With these words, Tamora persuades Chiron and Demetrius that there is an association between their filial love and a violent sexuality; the blackmail adopted by Tamora threatens the two brothers' manliness[10] to the point where in response to Demetrius' fear that Lavinia might carry her chastity «unto her grave», Chiron exclaims, «And if she do, I would I were an eunuch» (II.ii.128). But the Goth brothers have already assimilated their mother's link between sexuality and violence, and they show it from the first act, when they consider the sword a criterion to judge their virility: Demetrius mocks Chiron's youth and refers to his brother's inability to use the rapier properly, but Chiron is convinced that the rapier – which he has received from his mother – can prove he deserves Lavinia.[11] The weapon-phallus that Tamora gives to his son is a suggestion that he commit a rape: the term «rapier» – which uncannily evokes the imminent rape – seems to condense the concepts of sexual violence and war.

THE UPSETTING BANQUET

I have pointed out how Tamora is at the centre of a complex play of incorporations: she is metaphorically incorporated into the body of Rome, and a series of descriptions imagine her as a devouring mother. But the final banquet, in which the Empress unwillingly eats her sons, is particularly frightening because the figurative image becomes *real*, and with it Shakespeare puts on

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[10] The persuasion adopted by Tamora is not very different from Lady Macbeth's manoeuvring of her husband: Macbeth's refusal to kill Duncan would inevitably show he is lacking in manliness and, above all, lacking in love for her.

[11] I am as able and as fit as thou/To serve, and to deserve my mistress' grace,/And that my sword upon thee shall approve,/And plead my passions for Lavinia's love.» (I.i.532-535)

stage the last of a long series of dramatic experiments based on the prophetic literalness of the metaphors.

The cannibalistic banquet with its grisly climax is perhaps one of the episodes on which critics of Shakespeare tend to centre their analysis, especially because of an evident link with a similar episode in the *Metamorphoses*. In Ovid's work, Procne revenges the rape of her sister by killing Tereus' son, whom she cooks and serves to her husband. The narration focuses on Procne's cooking practices:

> She [Procne] struck him [Itys] with a knife
> Below his ribs, and never even looked
> Away; one wound sufficed to seal his fate.
> And Philomela slit his throat. Alive,
> And breathing still, they carved and jointed him,
> And cooked the parts; some bubbled in a pan,
> Some hissed on spits; the closet swam with blood.
> (Book VI. II.648-651)

The culinary strategy followed by Procne echoes one of the variants or elaborations of the myth of Dyonisus: the Titans caught the young Dyonisus and tore him into seven pieces; then they boiled the pieces in a cauldron and finally roasted them.[12] Titus does not imitate the example of Procne in all the details, perhaps because the revenge he excogitates must follow a pattern that is coherent with the rest of the play, and that involves even a particular method of cooking.

First of all, whereas Ovid does not specify what dish Procne is going to serve at Tereus' banquet, Titus seems to know his menu very well: he wants to make a pie, and the ingredients he chooses are the Goth brothers' bones, blood, and heads. The bodies of Chiron and Demetrius constitute the whole culinary universe of Titus: not only do they supply the meat for the filling, but their bones are a metaphor for the flour, and their blood a metaphor for the water. In particular, Titus plays a game of *inversions*, because he intends to use the most *internal* substances of the body (blood and bones) in order to prepare the *external* crust of the pie, whereas the heads will be used to make the filling.

Chiron and Demetrius are at the same time contained by and containers of their own bodies, and the mirror effect created by this uncanny Chinese game of incorporations reaches its climax in the last scene, when Titus serves the pie to Tamora[13] and exclaims:

> Why, there they [Chiron and Demetrius] are, both baked in this pie,
> Whereof their mother daintily hath fed,
> Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred.
> 'Tis true, 'tis true, witness my knife's sharp point.
> *He stabs the empress*
> (V.iii.59-62)

Tamora re-incorporates her sons, and the horror of cannibalism is reinforced by a pathological inversion of childbirth, in which the mother takes the child back into her body; Marjorie Garber associates Titus' words with the image – evoked by Lavinia – that transforms Tamora's milk into marble, and she suggests that «when they [Chiron and Demetrius] are horridly reingested by their

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[12] A similar culinary operation occurs in the first book of the *Metamorphoses*, when Jove narrates the story of the «loathsome feast» (I.164) of Lycaon: «He slew a hostage sent/From far Epirus, slitting his throat, and boiled/ Part of the flesh, scarce dead, and roasted part/And bade me eat.» (II.227-230).

[13] The *coup-de-scène* in which the ingredients of the dish are discovered is preceded by the evocation of Chiron and Demetrius made by Saturninus, who says «Go, fetch them hither to us presently» (V.iii.58); something similar happens in the myth of Procne, in which Tereus, during the meal, exclaims «Bring young Itys here to me!» (Book VI.650)

mother, they complete the pattern of inversion that her malign nurturance began» (1981:152). The incorporation of the Goth brothers is perhaps not only an inversion of their childbirth, but also an evocation of the birth-giving scene of Tamora's baby, which happens off stage. The birth scene, Kristeva argues, is the place where the French writer Louis Ferdinand Céline locates the ultimate of abjection,[14] because the fantasy it involves is

> something *horrible to see* at the impossible doors of the invisible – the mother's body. The scene of scenes is here not the so-called primal scene but the one of giving birth, incest turned inside out, flayed identity. Giving birth: the height of bloodshed and life, scorching moment of hesitation (between inside and outside, ego and other, life and death), horror and beauty, sexuality and the blunt negation of the sexual. (1982:155)

Tamora's birth-giving scene is perhaps the supreme moment of ambivalence and abjection in the tragedy, and for this reason it occurs off stage. The baby is on the threshold between the inside and the outside of his mother's body, and this «hesitation» ends when he is finally expelled, abjected from it. The baby himself is an «ambiguous» creature, because he is the issue of two different races: he is the «in-between, the ambiguous, the composite» who «disturbs identity, system, order» (Kristeva, 1982:4).

In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid describes the sense of disgust felt by Tereus immediately after the banquet, when he would «tear himself apart to vomit back/That frightful feast, that flesh of his own flesh» (Book VI.664-665).[15] Food loathing, Kristeva argues, is perhaps the most archaic form of abjection: «food becomes abject only if it is a border between two distinct entities or territories. A boundary between nature and culture, between the human and the non-human» (Kristeva, 1982:75).[16] This seems to be the case in *Titus Andronicus*: whereas in the banquet of Tereus the victim is still recognisable – Procne shows her husband Itys' head – Titus' culinary preparation of the Goth brothers eliminates the differences that constitute a human body, and confuses the internal with the external. The moment of abjection is therefore marked by Titus' revelation: the pie made with flesh, bones and blood represents a moving boundary between human and non-human, as well as a confused distinction between the internal and external parts, of the cooked bodies, which is even more abject for Tamora, who re-incorporates those she once generated.

After revealing the secret of his recipe, Titus stabs Tamora: he *opens* her body, and exclaims that his «knife's sharp point» is a «witness» (V.iii.62) of the horrific incorporation; Titus puts on stage a simulation of the birth-giving scene that nobody has seen, and with the coldness of an anatomist, he shows what is inside Tamora's body.

At the end of the tragedy, Titus' revenge has finally followed its pattern, and the death of Chiron and Demetrius echoes the incorporation of the first scene, when the coffin containing Titus' dead sons was placed in the family tomb; the metaphoric association between death and Tamora, and in particular between the tomb and her body becomes *literal* when the Goth brothers are placed in another coffin – this time made of pastry – and swallowed by their mother-tomb.

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[14] The novel referred to by Kristeva is *Rigodon*, written by Céline in 1969.

[15] Tereus is prevented from regurgitating the cannibal meal, because he is immediately transformed into a hoopoe.

[16] «Loathing an item of food, a piece of filth, waste, or dung. The spasms and vomiting that protect me. (...) Along with sight-clouding dizziness, *nausea* makes me talk at that milk cream, separates me from the mother and father who proffer it. "I" want none of that element, sign of their desire; "I" do not want to listen, "I" do not assimilate it, "I" expel it. But since the food is not an "other" for "me", who am only in their desire, I expel *myself*, I spit *myself* out, I abject myself within the same motion through which "I" claim to establish *myself*» (Kristeva, 1982:2-3)

When Edward Ravenscroft defined Shakespeare's tragedy as «rather a heap of Rubbish than a Structure» (Vickers, 1981:239, vol. I) he emphasised – although critically – the numerous elements of fragmentation typical of *Titus Andronicus*. In the course of the play, bodies and texts experience a series of lacerations: chopped hands, heads, and tongues, together with fragmentary quotations from classic books, remain suspended without a location, until Marcus, in the final lines, tries to teach the people of Rome «how to knit again/This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf,/These broken limbs again into one body» (V.iii.69-72).

The idea of fragmentation also contains an element which cannot be controlled, nor located: the residue. There are, at the end of the tragedy, residues of questions that will not find an answer, such as the destiny of Tamora's baby and of his changeling; and there are even remnants of bodies:[17] the body of Rome cannot assimilate the corpses of Aaron and Tamora, whose particular burial, at the end, is excogitated as the exact antithesis of the typical Roman funeral, with which the tragedy begins.

Lucius' last words at the end of *Titus Andronicus* concern the punishment of the enemies:

> Set him [Aaron] breast-deep in earth and famish him;
> There let him stand and rave and cry for food.
> If anyone relieves or pities him,
> For the offence he dies. This is our doom,
> Some stay to see him fastened in the earth.
> (...)
> And for that ravenous tiger, Tamora,
> No funeral rite, nor man in mourning weed,
> No mournful bell shall ring her burial,
> But throw her forth to beasts and birds to prey:
> Her life was beastly and devoid of pity,
> And being dead, let birds on her take pity.
> (V.iii.178-182, 194-199)

The bodies of Tamora and Aaron constitute the unassimilable elements of the play; whereas for the Andronici the burial ceremony is part of an important tradition which requires them to remember their ancestors, Tamora and Aaron are not accepted inside the «sacred receptacle» (I.i.95), but are destined to be eaten and dismembered by beasts and putrefaction, so that they will never be re-membered.

The modality of Aaron's punishment constitutes a further moment of «abjection» in the play:
first of all his destiny is similar to the death he caused to Bassianus and Titus' sons, because he is half- eaten by the the swallowing earth; moreover, he occupies a painful threshold between air and earth and, above all, between life and death. The ambiguous space of the threshold seems to characterise the life and death of Tamora, Aaron, and their baby; David Willbern finds an interesting association between. Aaron's death and a baby's birth:

> He [Aaron] is indeed like a baby, half-born and half-buried and half-devoured by the earth, cryIng for food. Anyone who would dare serve as a mother to him will be killed. Matricide pursues even those who would only act the part. (1978:181)

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[17] The notion of food remains associated with cannibalism is particularly important for Brahmanism. Kristeva writes that «the remainder appears to be coextensive with the entire architecture of non-totalizing thought. In its view there is nothing that is everything: nothing is exhaustive, there is a residue in every system – in cosmogony, food ritual, and even sacrifice, which deposits, through ashes for instance, ambivalent remains.» (1982:76)

In the death of Aaron there is a condensation of the three characters: perhaps the image of the Moor as a baby crying for food evokes the birth of his own child, and his location on the threshold evokes the birth-giving scene in which the maternal body of Tamora represents the gateway between life and death.

The description of the unburied body of Tamora closes the tragedy, and with it the long succession of íncorporations comes to an end: the character that dominates the alternation of ingestions and repulsions is finally rejected by the body of Rome, only to be immediately swallowed by beasts and birds. But this cruel ending is at the same time a reversal of the Ovidian myth of Procne, Tereus and Philomela, with which *Titus Andronicus* has so much in common: whereas in the *Metamorphoses* the tale ends with the transformation of the three protagonists into a nightingale, a swallow and a hoopoe, Tamora is eaten by birds.

At the end of *Titus Andronicus* there is neither catharsis nor the restoration of the patriarchal empire on which the Andronici base their power. Too many questions are left unresolved, and the disseminated remains of the enemies' bodies haunt the «household's monument» (V.iii.193) in which Lavinia and Titus are buried. The text, instead of asserting its meanings, remains suspended and opens up to new perspectives: it is a maternal, «pregnant» text, full of potential new plots.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 167-172

Winnie: The woman who is not-all? Beckett's *Happy Days*

YANA HASHAMOVA (*)

The boundaries between theatrical images and a dramatic text blur in this text, which attempts to produce meaning from the darkness of the stage laced with edges of light and filled with words. First I saw a production of *Happy Days* and then read the play and my reading here is influenced by the theater productions of *Happy Days* I've seen for the last several years. Fortunately, first I saw the French production (*Oh les beaux jours*) directed by Roger Blin with Madeleine Renaud and Jean-Louis Barrault.

In the middle of a broad stage a woman was disappearing, sinking into the earth in front of our eyes. Madeleine Renaud was admirable and astonishing in her performance which greatly bewildered me. Her expression was profoundly tragic and at the same time she was content with her situation. She even delighted and rejoiced in her daily activities. Winnie's disappearance in the mound deeply distressed me. Yet, there was something in the text and in her performance, which gave me hope. After all, Winnie (Madeleine Renaud) in her wretched condition did not go mad, she took pleasure in playing with her toothbrush, hat, revolver, stories and dreams.

What happens and more importantly what does not happen to Winnie and how Winnie's happy day came into being is the main concern of my presentation.

The situation of *Happy Days* is perhaps the most ironic and absurd in the history of theater. In Act 1 a middle-aged woman confined to her waist in a mound of earth holds a more or less continuous monologue addressed supposedly to her husband whose head is hardly visible above the slope. Willie, the husband, barely articulates several phrases. When he does so, she exclaims, «Oh you are going to talk to me today, this is going to be a happy day!» Winnie has some supplies, which carry her through her day: a music-box, a revolver, a parasol, a toothbrush alongside memories, dreams, stories, and quotations. Willie is there, too, to listen to her talk. In Act 2 Winnie has sunk into the mound up to her neck. She has only her eyes and voice.

How is it possible for Winnie not to go mad?[1] Or is she mad?

It is impossible to describe what happens in the play without paying attention to Winnie's occupation with the objects, with her stories, and dreams. These things construct a happy time and reality of her own.

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Critics fill many pages arguing whether the play is comedy or tragedy.[2] There are studies of the timeless time in this drama.[3] Others discover gender issues and find Beckett not very feminist.[4] All sexual references and connotations in the play have been thoroughly deciphered.[5]

Winnie starts her day awakened by a bell and exclaims, «Another heavenly day». The audience is perplexed, for it has not noticed anything especially heavenly. Winnie is immersed in the earth up to her waist and seems to be unable to change her situation. She reaches for her bag and finds there a toothbrush and a tube of toothpaste which, she discovers, is running out, but this does not upset her, «It can't be helped». Soon she brings out a small mirror and examines her mouth. Much to the audience's surprise she continues, «-no better, no worse, -no change...» How long has she been there and what is it that has not changed?

Winnie occupies herself with the revolver, the parasol, her hat, and an ant with the genuine curiosity of a discovery, and with the feeling of complete fulfillment. In her meticulous involvement with her possessions, Madeleine Renaud irradiated delight and equilibrium, which spread on the stage and in the house. Her situation did not bother her and the audience began to learn patience, which challenges time and transcends it. Her perfect contentment with the props created a different, timeless reality, hitherto unknown to the audience.

Why is Winnie so happy and do we know her happiness?

In Act 2 when the bag is gone Winnie resorts to her stories. «There is my story, of course, when all else fails.» First it is Willie, then the bag, and last the words that might fail. Winnie employs words in her daily activities as she uses the objects. She is terribly afraid of running out of words as if words could be of limited quantity and one can use all of them and then have nothing more to say. «Something says, Stop talking now, Winnie, for a minute, don't squander all your words for the day, stop talking and do something for a change, will you?» Objects, words, and memories blend together to construct Winnie's equilibrium despite the wretched situation in which she finds herself, caused perhaps, by her denial of time and death. Once after a pause she discovers that her words have failed.

> What now? (Pause.) Words fail, there are times when even they fail. (Turning a little toward Willie.) Is that not so, Willie? (Pause. Turning a little further.) Is that not so, Willie, that even words fail, at times? (Pause. Back front.) What is one to do then, until they come again? Brush and comb the hair, if it has not been done, or if there is some doubt, trim the nails if they are in need of trimming, these things tide one over. (Pause.) That is what I mean.

Doesn't this remind us of psychosis? But where is the pain? Why is Winnie's day so happy?

We find her discoveries absurd and at the same time touching in their sincerity. Winnie is concerned about her words as one would be concerned about air and water but without panic or despair. She confesses that sadness overcomes her after finishing a song. «The sadness after song» puzzles her. Winnie knows «sadness after intimate sexual intercourse» but she is surprised by «sadness after song». «It does not last of course. (Pause.) That is what I find so wonderful.»

Winnie often turns to Willie with questions or for affirmation. She likes to feel Willie's presence, for to speak in the void, to speak to nobody, is delirium. «Ah yes, if only I could bear to be alone, I mean prattle away with not a soul to hear.» She thought she would learn to talk alone, that is, to no one. «But no. (Smile broader.) No, no. (Smile off.) Ergo you are there. (Pause.) Oh, no doubt you are dead, like the others, no doubt you have died, or gone away and left me, like the others, it doesn't matter, you are there.» Willie is really there because we see him at the end but she

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[1] The critique on *Happy Days* is exhausting and yet there has not been an answer to this question.

[2] See Katherine Worth, pp. 47-55.

[3] The work of Stefano Genetti is especially interesting. See also Ruby Cohn, pp. 177-193.

[4] See *Women in Beckett*, particularly Benstock's «Transformational Grammar of Gender in Beckett's Dramas», pp. 172-187.

[5] Read Sidney Homan, pp. 79-96.

does not know it and it is her conviction that she cannot talk in the void which makes him present. Winnie admits in the middle of Act 2 that «There is my story of course when all else fails. (Pause.) A life. (Smile.) A long life.» All powerful words which come from memory create and control reality and existence. Winnie will overcome her situation even if everything else fails, that is, the bag and Willie. At the end of Act 1 and Act 2 Winnie exclaims «Oh this is a happy day, this will have been another happy day». In this exclamation time fuses in no-time and eternity, and the power of words reign.[6] The use of the present tense as well as the future perfect obliterates any distinction between past, present, and future. Future perfect is used for an action, which at a given future time will be in the past. Winnie asseverates her satisfaction in a statement, which blends past, present, and future. Is death possible in such a time structure? Does Winnie ever think or see her own death? Does she know she is mortal? If she does not know it, is she not psychotic? Or is she?

* * *

According to Lacan, for a normal psychic structure of the subject the three registers, the Imaginary, the Real, and the Symbolic, have to be in a sort of equivalent relation. They should be connected to each other not in a chain but in a *borromeen knot*. If any of the three elements of the *borromeen knot* fall, away from the others the psychic structure could be called psychotic, or borderline. This knot, or the relation of the three orders, helps clinicians understand delusional constructions and inventions. Lacan also came to an understanding that any element, object or a device can bind together the three orders. A fortunate psychotic system could be viewed as a knot, which keeps the three orders together. Not all people with psychotic structures experience the pain of the classic symptoms, such as hallucinations and others. These people do not become victims of their psychosis. The concept of this element, which knots the three orders, addresses the old psychiatric question of non-triggered psychosis. Lacan suggests with it that there are subjects who can find a way of knotting the three registers.[7]

Can we say that Winnie is one of them?

Lacan studies the symptom as a possible element, which can bind the three orders. The symptom arises where the word fails and it is addressed to the Symbolic which should give it meaning. It is there to be explained. However, sometimes after an interpretation the symptom still persists. Lacan provides a reason for this through his idea of jouissance. Jouissance is anything, which is too much for the organism to bear, that is, too much pleasure, too much pain. Usually it is suffering. One of the goals of human life is to regulate jouissance. To discharge jouissance from the body into language appears as a new formulation of castration. The symptom, according to Lacan, could act as a way for the subject to organize jouissance. That is why even after an interpretation, the symptom can reappear. In studying the symptom Lacan considers the notion of fantasy which unlike the symptom resists interpretation. Fantasy is a source of pleasure and simultaneously a source of shame, especially, if the fantasy is shared with others. The road to travel here goes through analysis of the symptoms to the level of fantasy and goes through the fantasy itself. Fantasy must be reached in order to continue the movement of interpretation. But often even on this stage of analysis the symptom still persists. Here Lacan coined the concept of the 'sinthome' (a word game of symptom, saint, and Saint Thomas) which is a formation charged with enjoyment, a

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[6] Genetti discusses the use of future perfect tense but has a slightly different take at it, that is, as «un processus de perpetuation rituelle du passe...» (p. 80).

[7] Lacan, *Joyce avec Lacan*.

formation between symptom and fantasy. It is a signifier courier of jouissance, and becomes jouissense, enjoy-meant. The sinthome supports the subject and gives him her consistency. The sinthome is the element which keeps the three registers together. Through it the subject avoids madness. The sinthome enthuses, comforts, and guarantees our endurance of the implausibility of life.[8]

Si vouz trouvez quelque part – je l'ai déjà dessine – ceci qui schématise le rapport de l'imaginaire, du symbolique et du réel en tant que sépares l'un de l'autre, vous avez déjà, dans mes précédentes figurations, mises à plat de leurs rapports, la possibilité de les lier – par quoi? Par le sinthome.[9]

* * *

Why doesn't Winnie go mad? Clearly, there is a certain distortion in the *borromeen knot* of her psychic structure. The Imaginary is violated through her buried body. The distraction of her body points to deformity of the Imaginary, since it is connected to an image, bodily image. The Real, the presence of death in human life, is also ignored. Winnie persistently denies linear time and therefore death. She does not age; she has not changed; she ignores mortality. There is a certain dissonance in the relations of the three orders, the Imaginary, the Real, and the Symbolic. The Symbolic appears to rule but sometimes Winnie's words fail. The bag is always there even when the words fail. The symptom emerges when the word fails. Yet in Act 2 Winnie is able to go on without her bag only with her stories. It appears that she exists in a well-built circuit between objects, words, and Willie. I will call your attention to Willie's presence in the circuit later on. Her stories and her dreams augment her fantasies. Thus, Winnie exists in a delightful balance between symptoms and fantasy, where the sinthome is located, in a pleasurable endurance of the absurdity of the world through enjoyment of the sinthome and through the symptomatic discharge of jouissance. If Winnie's jouissance is seen to be located only in the register of the Imaginary, it could bring misery and suffering. Winnie's permanent switch from objects to words and her «sadness after song» which she compares to «sadness after intimate sexual intercourse» lead to a supposition that in this case jouissance is successfully discharged from the body into language. We find sadness after intercourse a clear manifestation of bodily discharge of jouissance whereas «sadness after song» suggests a passage of jouissance into language. In this switch resides her sinthome, her purposeless and timeless game with objects and words, which attests to the ultimate inanity of the world. In her game Winnie condenses this inanity which helps her to maintain herself in the midst of it. The game is the only constructive support of her being.

Madeleine Renaud shared her experience of working on *Happy Days*. She said that everything was very simple because she let the role take hold of her. Beckett and she paid great attention to each item, for all objects serve to punctuate the rhythm of the phrase, accompany the gestures, and complement the thoughts. «I worked on these lines, refining and purifying them. I make no distinction between the words, the gestures, the objects... For me it's a whole; it's the inner state that counts. And what reigns over all is joy, a total gift of self.»[10] Aren't these words another way to express the reign and the pleasure of the sinthome?

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[8] Zizek offers a good explanation and an illustration of sinthome in the chapter «Love Thy Sinthome as Thyself» in *Looking Awry*, pp. 130-140.

[9] Loc. cit., p. 45.

[10] The interview is published in *Women in Beckett*, p. 17.

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What is the gender significance behind Willie and Winnie's position on the stage? Are their roles interchangeable? Can we see Willie in Winnie's part and vice versa? Even at first glance the roles emerge as gender significant. Winnie is surrounded by typical female accessories while Willie is occupied with his newspaper. Surprisingly, not following the traditional gender roles, Winnie is deprived of mobility whereas Willie loses his ability to speak.

The play could be misread as a cliched feminist interpretation which connects Winnie with woman's place in Western civilization – stuck in the mud. Such an interpretation would compare Winnie's position with the situation of housewives who survive by not questioning the givens of their existence but focusing on daily chores.[11] Following Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's feminist view of the function of the mirror which reflects only the patriarchal simulacrum of the image one could presume that Winnie tests her own image in the mirror but the answer actually comes from the masculine, patriarchal structure of society.[12]

A Lacanian reading of Beckett's drama will overturn these interpretations despite the play of details.[13]

We have already noted that Willie is there because Winnie needs him, because to speak in the void is delirium and she is not deranged. Her speaking to him and her thinking that he is still there makes his presence and his existence possible. In a sense, Winnie is there before Willie and he is a function of her. «I say I used to think that I would learn to talk alone. (Pause.) By that I mean to myself, the wilderness. (Smile.) But no. (Smile broader.) No, no. (Smile off.) Ergo you are there.»

We have been offended by Lacan's statement, 'woman is a symptom of man'. This would position woman as a manifestation of man's fall. If we, however, read closely Lacan's idea of the symptom and its connection to jouissance and the sinthome, then the picture appears quite the reverse. If the symptom disappears and there is no sinthome, there is nothing to support the subject's being; the subject loses his or her ontological consistency, that is, man can exist only through woman, only through his symptom. On the other hand woman does not only exist because there is something in her existence which escapes the relation to man. Woman is 'not-all'.[14] Winnie's jouissance is non-phallic, it is infinite; something in her existence escapes the relation to Willie, ignores linear time, and denies death. Isn't Winnie a symptom of Willie and doesn't he exist through her? And isn't Willie a function of Winnie? Isn't Winnie the woman who is 'not-all'? She is the woman who is trapped in the Imaginary, denies the Real and tries to escape the Symbolic but she has found a way of knotting the three of them in this absurd world laced with darkness and light, silence and words, madness and sanity.

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[11] James Knowlson has commented, «Winnie substitutes pattern for purpose». Quoted in Shari Benstock article «The Transformational Grammar of Gender in Beckett's Dramas» in *Women in Beckett*, p. 174.

[12] Gilbert, Sandra, and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.

[13] Shari Benstock, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-184, argues against such «standard» feminist interpretation and insists upon the idea that the play reverses the traditional roles or writes «a double script». She points out, «Willie exists because Winnie claims he exists». However, there are a few imprecise and questionable statements in her article. She writes, «She (Winnie) is not his other (in the existentialist notion of self and other) nor is she his Other (his unconscious) as certain feminists have suggested in rewriting Lacan...» Anyone with better knowledge of Lacan can notice the discrepancy here, that is, the big Other has nothing to do with the unconscious. From the sentence above it is not clear whether this is a misuse of «certain feminists» as Benstock puts it or her own.

[14] See Mitchell, Juliet, and Jacqueline Rose, eds., *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the Ecole Freudienne*, trans. Jacqueline Rose, London: Macmillan, pp. 162-171.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 173-182

The tragic trajectories of three surrealist sphinxes: Frida Kahlo, Kay Sage and Unica Zürn

GEORGIANA M. M. COLVILE (*)

«I wish (---) I could do whatever I liked – behind the curtain of madness.»
Frida Kahlo[1]

«Then who am I?»
- «I don't know.»
Kay Sage[2]

«Each person has to deal with his two animals, and the three of you rarely get on in the long run...»
Unica Zürn[3]

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Much has been done since 1977[4] to rehabilitate the numerous women writers and artists who participated in the Surrealist movement and yet they still remain somewhat of an enigma. In a

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[1] *The Diary of Frida Kahlo*, Facsimile. Translation by Barbara Crow de Toledo & Richard Pohlenz. New York: Abrams, 1995, p. 242.

[2] Kay Sage. *China Eggs/Les Oeufs de porcelaine*. Charlotte/Seattle: Starbbooks/Editions de l'Etoile, 1996, p. 302.

[3] Unica Zürn. *The House of Illnesses*. Translated by Malcolm Green. London: Atlas Press, 1993, p. 21.

[4] Date of publication of *Obliques* 14-15 «La Femme Surréaliste». For a complete list of publications by and on women surrealists see the bibliography («Bibliographie sommaire»), compiled by Georgiana M. M. Colvile, at the end of *La Femme s'entête: la part du féminin dans le surréalisme*, proceedings of the conference held at Cerisy-la-Salle, August 1-11, 1997, edited by Georgiana M. M. Colvile and Katharine Conley. Paris: Lachenal Ritter, Collection Pleine Marge, 1998.

recent article[5], I used both psychoanalysis and myth to define their double position as subjects and objects. Here I will use these tools again to examine the parallel cases of the Mexican Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), the North American Kay Sage (1898-1963) and the German Unica Zürn (1916-1970). These three women were all connected with the surrealist movement at some point of their lives, were both painters and writers, had difficult childhoods with problematic mothers, each chose a major painter as her partner, produced an autobiographical text as well as hybrid interdisciplinary work and finally committed suicide. I will begin by examining the bio-bibliographic elements in the light of psychoanalytic theory and in a second part, using the myth of the Sphinx, I will attempt to interpret these three extreme cases of the «enigma of woman».

In the beginning was the mother. «A woman is her mother, that's the main thing»[6], wrote Anne Sexton, another case of suicide. What if the mother was a monster or simply wasn't there? French Psychoanalyst André Green explains the repercussions of the second configuration in his theory of the (emotionally) «dead mother»[7], referring to withdrawal of cathexis at the birth of a child, following an experience of loss, frequently of another child on the part of the mother; the neglected child will tend to express his/her trauma through symptoms including hatred of and guilt towards the mother, self-hatred, exacerbated narcissism, intense creativity (often narrative) and relational ambiguity. Green further asserts that the father is usually of no help to the child, so that «the subject is caught between a dead mother and an inaccessible father» (231). Sometimes, if the child is cured, a reversed pattern of dependency sets in and the «dead mother becomes the child's child» (244).

The simplest case is that of Frida Kahlo, who appears dressed as a boy in early family photographs and whose mother, Matilde Calderon Kahlo had wanted a son, since she already had several daughters and took little interest in Frida. She almost never visited her daughter in hospital after her terrible 1925 streetcar accident and Kahlo's youthful letters to her boyfriend Alejandro Gomez Arias reflect guilt over her absent mother's various illnesses[8] and an unrequited longing for her presence. Her later famous paintings *My Nurse and I* (1937) and *My Birth* (1932) express the lack of maternal affection Kahlo suffered from as a child. Salomon Grimberg has pointed out that the cold-looking nurse holding an uncanny baby Kahlo with an adult head «...was probably inspired by a Jalisco funerary figure, owned by Kahlo of a nursing mother» (c.100 BC-AD 200)[9], thus clearly representing a «dead» stone or clay maternal substitute. Grimberg's analysis of *My Birth*, in which a dead woman with a shrouded torso is horrifically giving birth to the semi-adult head of an equally dead-looking Kahlo under the gaze of Our Lady of Sorrows, provides an important key to Kahlo's psyche:

> ...*My Birth* may condense a fear and a wish, an understanding that Kahlo apparently held about the relationship between herself and her mother: that her coming into the world had been a kind of death to her mother; that she could have been born only after her mother died; that the experience of bonding between them never took place; that she never fully separated from her mother... (Grimberg: 8-9).

The picture was painted in Detroit, shortly after both her mother's death and her own tragic miscarriage in 1932. A letter to her friend and medical adviser Dr. Eloesser (*Cartas*: 45) shows that she

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[5] Georgiana M. M. Colvile. «Filles d'Hélène, soeurs d'Alice: mythes de la femme surréaliste, mis(e) à nu par elle-même». *Pensée mythique et surréalisme*. Edited by Jacqueline Chénieux-Gendron et Yves Vadé. Paris: Lachenal & Ritter, Collection Pleine Marge, pp. 245-262.

[6] Anne Sexton quoted by Pamela Daniels in *Working It Out*. Edited by Sara Ruddick & Pamela Daniels. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977, p. 67.

[7] André Green. «Le mère morte» (1980). In *Narcissisme de vie, narcissisme de mort*. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1983, pp. 222-253. The translations of quotes are all mine.

[8] See *The Letters of Frida Kahlo/Cartas Apasionadas*. Compiled by Marta Zamora. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1995 (pp. 28-30). Ref.: «Cartas».

[9] Salomon Grimberg. Essay for the Catalog of the *Frida Kahlo* exhibition at the Meadows Museum, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas: Feb. 17 - April 19, 1989, pp. 10-11. Ref.: «Grimberg».

couldn't make up her mind whether to have the child or not. According to her biographer Hayden Herrera «...The year of her death she told a friend she had lost three children and her painting became a substitute for them»[10]. It now seems obvious that her own lack of affection from her mother made her afraid of taking on the maternal role herself.

Interestingly, Kahlo had a good relationship with her father whose favourite child she was. He, being a painter and a photographer, taught her his trades and brought his paintbox to the hospital for her after the accident, which proved to be her saving grace. Hence, Kahlo's lifelong neurotically obsessive devotion to her husband, the famous muralist Diego Rivera, 21 years her senior, sought to compensate her lack of both a mother and a child, rather than a father. Frida often painted Rivera, for example as an introjected medallion on her forehead or as a large infant in her arms. Her poems to or about him and the essay she wrote for his 1949 exhibition (*Cartas*: 142-154) all express boundless adoration: «...He shines alone like a sun avenging the gray color of rocks...» (*Cartas*: 154) or:

> «Diego beginning/ Diego builder/ Diego my child/ Diego my boyfriend/ Diego painter/ Diego my lover/ Diego «my husband»/ Diego my friend/ Diego my mother/ Diego my father/ Diego my son/ Diego=*me*=/ Diego Universe/ *Diversity within* unity» (*Diary*: 235).

Rivera, with whom Kahlo shared «a bond encompassing art, love and revolution»[11], encouraged her as an artist but on a personal level he was a philanderer and said himself that «If I loved a woman, the more I loved her, the more I wanted to hurt her. Frida was the most obvious victim of this disgusting trait» (Grimberg: 16). In the double 1931 portrait *Frida and Diego Rivera*, she represents him and not herself holding an artist's palette and brushes.

The 1994 publication of Kahlo's diary has confirmed the theory of her suicide. In its final verbal message (followed by a few last sketches) she thanks all her doctors and concludes: «I hope the/leaving is joyful-and I hope/ never to return-/ FRIDA» (*Diary*: 285). The painful amputation of her right leg at the knee in August 1993 was the beginning of the end and that mutilation seemed like a physical manifestation of her psychological pain, an insatiable pre-oedipal longing for osmosis with her mother, later transferred onto Rivera. She loved him to death, her own death and according to Grimberg, she «used her physical symptoms... as a last resort to touch Rivera» (39-40). Kahlo's creative narrative survival drive is not to be found in her diary but in her numerous stylized self-portraits. Although these were not produced in chronological order, they recreate every stage of her life, her origins, birth and childhood, her accident, her marriage to Rivera, her abortions and miscarriages, her Mexicanidad and Tehuana costumes, her stays in the USA, her fantasy world, her love of animals, her exploration of Mayan and other myths, her divorce and remarriage, her illnesses and fear of death, her Communist fervor etc... As in the case of French photographer Claude Cahun, Kahlo's proliferation of self-images expresses all at once symptomatic narcissism, self-hatred, androgyny and an endless attempt to fill the identity void created by the absent mother.

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At the beginning of her autobiography *China Eggs*[12] Kay Sage declares on one hand: «My mother was a morphine addict» (26) and on the other: «I loved my mother passionately» (28). She

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[10] Hayden Herrera. *Frida A Biography of Frida Kahlo*. New York: Harper & Collins, 1983. My quote is a re-translation from the French version. *Frida biographie de Frida Kahlo*, traduit de l'anglais par Ohilippe Baudouin. Paris: Editions Anne Carrière, 1996, p. 198.

[11] Renée Riese Hubert. *Magnifying Mirrors/Surrealism, Art & Partnership*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1994, p. 345. Ref.: «Hubert».

[12] Kay Sage. *China Eggs/Les Oeufs de porcelaine*. Edited and with an Introduction by Judith Suther. French translation by Elisabeth Manuel. Charlotte & Seattle: Starbooks/Editions de l'Etoile, 1996. The next was written in 1995, shortly after Yves Tanguy's death. Ref.: «Sage».

suggests sexual ambiguity not far from abuse on her mother's part: «As to her feelings for me, they were patently abnormal and surely sexual. I have no doubts about the fact that she was in love with me... She always kissed me on the mouth and told me I should kiss everyone else on the mouth» (28). Sage's stuffy conventional father was from «a family of newly wealthy American merchants»[13] and her unconventional mother from a more modest background and «had married him for the money and social standing it would give her» (Sage: 40). Sage was only eight when her parents parted company and from then on lived with her mother, whom Suther refers to as «...the only constant in Katharine's mobile life» (4), with occasional visits to her father's rigidly ordered household. Both Kay and her sister preferred the freedom afforded by their mother's bohemian life-style. As a child, Sage felt protective of her mother's social outcast status in the States and like her felt more at home in France and Italy, where they lived most of the time. Sage's later reserve, misanthropy and misogyny were obviously rooted in her early relationship with her mother. Though a constant, the latter was an example of what Green calls «becoming the child's child». She traumatized Kay at a young age by making the child give her her morphine shots: «It was with the utmost horror and loathing that I gave her the first Hypodermic... My horror never ceased until, in the end, I had the courage to refuse» (Sage: 68). Sage wrote her autobiography late in life, the passage of time having made her lucid about her mother's selfishness, hypocondria, nymphomania and abusive clinging to her favourite daughter. Sage was almost forty when she finally broke her «Symbiotic relationship» (Suther: 33) with her mother, whom she never saw again after 1937, Ann Ward Sage died in 1945. The result of her mother's stranglehold dependency was that as an adult, Kay Sage rejected her mother by disliking women in general:

> «...I couldn't talk to women. I didn't like women and I had nothing to say to them. I wonder how many women enjoy making love. I have never talked to any woman about it. I can only talk to men about such things and they don't seem to think many women enjoy it. Not the way I do. I don't know what's the matter with women» (Sage: 178-179).

As Suther puts it «...she allied herself with men at every stage of her life and did not seek out women as artistic or intellectual equals» (71). About children, Sage showed none of Kahlo's guilty ambivalence: «As I never really wanted to get married, I also passionately did not want children» (Sage: 280) and: «Children have always bored me and I have a particular horror of precocious children» (Sage: 32). The last statement smacks of self-loathing as she tends to describe her childhood self as precocious. Sage's father gave her little support other than financial, which explains her seeking out of men as friends to fill that gap. Her choice of two childish and dependent husbands, first Prince Ranieri di San Faustino and then Yves Tanguy, appears however, to emulate her relationship with her mother, which was her only security as a child, however precarious. According to Suther:

> ...Having established a premature pattern of caretaking responsibilities for her mother, which she then extended into adulthood with both her husbands, Sage may have had quite enough children for a lifetime» (251)

Sage adored Tanguy almost as madly (in Breton's sense of «mad love») as Kahlo did Rivera. Suther writes: «She idolized a chauvinistic and abusive husband who did not encourage her work» (252). Tanguy undoubtedly went on dangerous drunken binges, was jealous of Sage's talent as a painter and may well have married her for her money, but he stayed in New England with her after WWII instead of returning to France with the other surrealists, never left her side for the fifteen years of their marriage, chose her over his close friendship with Breton who disliked Sage and refers

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[13] Judith Suther. *A House of Her Own Kay Sage Solitary Surrealist*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, p. 1. Ref.: «Suther».

fondly to her in his letters to his old pal Marcel Jean[14]. They seem to have both thrived on their competitive mutual independence as artists. Sage obviously needed Tanguy emotionally as much as he needed her materially. She lived with him in a cocoon and kept everyone else at a distance; ironically, the only group she passionately wished to be a part of, the surrealists gathered around Breton, never fully accepted her. When Tanguy died unexpectedly of a brain haemorrhage in 1955, she was devastated and no praise for him was too lavish: «Yves was my only friend who understood everything» (Suther: 177); «He was the purest artist I have ever known and the greatest man ... I think there has never been a man so pure, so true, so honorable» (ibid. 163). After his death, she saw that his paintings were appropriately distributed and drew up a thorough catalogue raisonné of his work. Her health and eyesight began to fail and she never got over her loss, as her last painting *Le Passage* (1956), plainly shows. She chose to remain in isolation and derived her only comfort from writing *China Eggs* and three volumes of poetry in the crude gutter French idiom she and Tanguy had enjoyed conversing and joking in. These texts are all full of self-irony. As Suther puts it «The last years of her life would be a struggle against deteriorating health and despair» (159), much like the ailing Kahlo, for whom Rivera was never present enough. After an unsuccessful suicide attempt in 1959, Sage finally shot herself in the heart in 1963, also leaving a note in her journal:

> The first painting by Yves that I saw, before I knew him was called I'm *Waiting for You* – I've come. Now he's waiting for me again – I'm on my way – I would have liked to have waited because of my friends but I can't hold out any longer (Suther: 207).

At Kahlo's funeral, Rivera ate a handful of her ashes, Sage had hers scattered at sea, off the coast of Tanguy's native Brittany.

Sage's painting echoes her general distrust of people. Under the influence of de Chirico, it is deeply dehumanized, privileging cold colors and semi-abstract geometric constructs over biological matter, as in *In the Third Sleep* (1944). The two voices of *China Eggs* express the fundamental conflict between a passionate, individualistic woman and artist and the controlled, ivory-tower persona she had created as a defense.

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While Kahlo has become an international cult figure, Sage and Zürn have been rediscovered more recently, mostly in their own countries, the USA for Sage and for Zürn her native Germany and her adopted France. As Unica Zürn's friend and translator Ruth Henry points out: «'vivre' s'identifie chez elle à 'dire'» (Living and telling amount to the same thing) and «...elle n'a jamais... écrit une seule ligne qui ne fût pas identique à sa vie par les signes, par l'image ou par les faits»[15], so we can consider all her writings as autobiographical, while the content of her drawings and paintings remains far more latent. At the beginning of both her novels (I will refer here to the French editions), *L'Homme-Jasmin* and *Sombre Printemps*[16], Unica Zürn describes her mother as a perverse monster. The same scene is described in both, so I will only quote *Sombre Printemps*:

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[14] See Yves Tanguy. *Lettres de loin* (1935-1955). Paris: Le Dilettante, 1993.

[15] Ruth Henry. «Postface» to Zürn's autobiographical novel *Sombre Printemps* 1971 (see note 16), pp. 109 and 120. Ref.: «Henry».

[16] Both novels, translated by Ruth Henry and Robert Valençay, were published in France in 1971, a year after Zürn's death. *Sombre Printemps*. Paris: Belfond and *L'Homme-Jasmin*. Paris: Gallimard. The original *Dunkler Frühling*, was published in Germany by Merlin Verlag, Hambourg in 1969, with three drawings by Hans Bellmer but *Der Mann im Jasmin* was not published in Germany till 1977, by Ullstein, Frankfurt.

Zürn also published several books of anagrams in both French and German, two in her life-time and her *Gesamtausgabe* (complete works) were published by Brinkmann & Böse, Berlin in 1988. Ref. to *Sombre Printemps*: «SP».

> Un dimanche... elle va se fourrer dans le lit de sa mère et est effrayée de ce grand corps épais qui a déjà perdu sa beauté. La femme insatisfaite saute sur la petite fille, la bouche ouverte, humide d'où sort une langue frétillante, nue, longue comme l'objet que son frère cache dans son pantalon. Epouvantée, elle se précipite hors du lit et se sent profondément mortifiée. Une aversion insurmontable pour la mère, pour la femme s'éveille en elle (15-16).
> (One Sunday she went and nestled in her mother's bed and took fright upon seeing the large, heavy body that had already lost its beauty. The frustrated woman pounced on the little girl, out of her mouth protruded a long, naked, quivering tongue, as long as that thing her brother kept hidden in his pants. Horrorstruck and deeply mortified, she rushed out of bed. At that precise moment, an insurmountable aversion for her mother and for women in general arose in her) (My translation).

She goes on to describe her parents' broken marriage, her aversion for their respective lovers, her rape by her brother, which furthered her precocious sexual awakening and frenetic auto-erotic activity such as characterizes neglected children and «dead mother» victims. She admits to occasionally turning to her mother for affection prompted by loneliness:

> ...mais celle-ci la repousse comme une chose. Elle commande à l'enfant de lui enlever ses cheveux gris à l'aide d'une pince à épiler. C'est une occupation fastidieuse et l'enfant ne le fait que lorsque la mère lui donne cinq pfennigs par cheveu arraché (SP: 55).
> (But the latter pushed her away like an inanimate object. She then ordered her child to pluck out her grey hairs with a pair of tweezers. The task turned out to be so tedious that the child would only perform it if her mother gave her five pfennigs per hair she pulled out) (My translation).

Here the mother appears to combine Matilde Kahlo's indifference with Ann Ward Sage's exploitation of her daughter. Where Kahlo's frustrated love for her mother led to lesbian relationships in later life, Zürn, like Sage, became a woman-hater.

Surprising as it may seem, Zürn also referred to her childhood in an old Berlin house full of exotic artefacts as marvelous (Henry: 110). This was undoubtedly connected with her adoration for her frequently absent father, whom she describes at great length and with sensual details in the opening paragraphs of *Sombre Printemps*:

> ...Une moustache qui la pique quand il l'embrasse. Un parfum de cigarette, de cuir et d'eau de Cologne. Ses bottines craquent, sa voix est sombre et chaude. sa tendresse est à la fois violente et comique. Il s'amuse avec la petite chose couchée dans le berceau. Elle l'aime depuis le premier jour.... Bientôt, en grandissant, elle remarque avec une douloureuse surprise qu'il n'est presque jamais à la maison (SP: 11-12).
> (...A moustache that felt prickly when he kissed her. He smelt of tobacco, leather and eau-de-Cologne. His boots ceaked, his voice was warm and husky. He was both comically and violently tender. He enjoyed toying with the little creature lying in her cradle. She had loved him from the very beginning... Soon, as she grew older, the realisation that he was almost never at home came as a painful surprise) (My translation).

Zürn married young in 1942 and unlike Sage and Kahlo had two children, a daughter and a son. However, when she divorced in 1949 and her husband obtained custody of Katrin (aged six) and Christian (aged four), she put up no fight (Henry: 111). She saw them regularly until 1953, when she met her mate for the rest of her life, the artist Hans Bellmer and followed him to Paris, never looking back, like Sage.

Zürn and Bellmer have frequently been referred to as a «couple maudit». They could live neither apart nor together. From 1957 on, Zürn was as handicapped mentally as Kahlo was physically and was in and out of psychiatric institutions till her death in 1970. She and Bellmer were certainly both almost equally emotionally disturbed. Nancy Huston provides one of the most

pertinent analyses of the «fearful symmetry» of their psychological structures[17]. Bellmer's childhood mirrors Zürn's: he adored his mother and he and his brother were brutalized and dismissed as «girls» by a pre-Nazi father. Hence the endless Sadean disembowling and dislocations of little girls in his art, epitomized by «the Doll» («Die Puppe») in 1934, which was first and foremost an image of himself. Zürn as a child had punished her mother and herself by gouging out the eyes and ripping open the stomach of a doll she had been given by her father's mistress. She would later recognize the hated female figure that was both self and (m)other in Bellmer's Doll. As Katharine Conley puts it:

> «Zürn walked into Bellmer's life and animated his vision of the doll, triggering what appears to have been the most appropriate of surreal responses, according to Breton's rhetoric: a troubled but seemingly genuine case of reciprocal love»[18].

Bellmer was forbidden to see his twin daughters from his second marriage by a divorce court in 1946, much as Zürn was to lose both her children (Huston: 212-213). Like Kahlo and Rivera and Sage and Tanguy, they became each other's child.

Before meeting Zürn, Bellmer had worked with anagrams both on his own and with Nora Mitrani. He encouraged Zürn's remarkable talent for that form of expression, which she adopted enthusiastically. Alain Chevrier stresses the analogy between the verbal dislocations of Zürn and Bellmer's anagrams and Bellmer's plastic deconstructions of the female anatomy[19]. Of the three partners discussed, Bellmer was undoubtedly the most supportive and devoted, indeed his love, in spite of occasional perverse exploitation of her body for artistic experiments (Huston: 217; Hubert: 159), seems to have been as strong if not stronger than Zürn's, as Conley confirms (85-86). Bellmer and Zürn's *Lettres au Docteur Ferdière*[20] are most interesting in this respect. Hers are childish little notes with drawings and messages for the cat (118) for example, while his are long missives confiding his anxiety about Unica's illness and his own sick mimeticism (78); he also at times feels rejected and abandoned by her like her children (85). Zürn frequently ran away from Bellmer and the appartment they shared, she seemed to experience their relationship as an on-going *fort-da*.

Ruth Henry describes her as:

> «...fidèle à ses 'noces d'enfant', à l'idée du partenaire 'pur', du vis-à-vis mâle passif, voire paralysé, 'blanc'. Fidèle à l'idée d'un élément non agressif et non physique, le contraire de l'incarnation. Fidèle à l'idée d'un autre à distance, d'un père absent» (113).
> (She remained faithful to the love of her childhood, to the idea of a "pure" partner, a passive, even paralyzed, immaculately white male counterpart; faithful also to the idea of a non-physical, non-agressive, disincarnate element; faithful to the idea of a distant other, an absent father) (My translation).

Her imaginary friend the Jasmine Man represented this ideal. The desired blankness or whiteness also pointed to an elimination of herself, culminating in her throwing herself out of one of Bellmer's windows in 1970. The strange, fragmented, hybrid creatures of her usually untitled drawings, with a proliferation and repetition of detail characteristic of the «art brut» of schizophrenics, express an imperfectly achieved sense of self and a vision of her body as deformed or unformed: «Incompleteness of the body, void and absence are counterparts of Bellmer's doll as well as of her own duplications, her excuses, her protrusions» (Hubert: 170).

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[17] Nancy Huston. *Journal de la création*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1990, pp. 204-220.

[18] Katharine Conley. *Automatic Woman / The Representation of Woman in Surrealism*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, p. 85.

[19] Alain Chevrier. «Sur l'origine des anagrammes d'Unica Zürn», «postface» to Hans Bellmer & Unica Zürn *Lettres au Docteur Ferdière*. Paris: Nouvelles Editions Séguier, 1994, pp. 125-140.

[20] Hans Bellmer & Unica Zürn. *Lettres au Docteur Ferdière*, réunies, annotées et présentées par Alain Chevrier. Paris: Nouvelles Editions Séguier, 1994.

II

To recapitulate so far, Kahlo, Sage and Zürn present cases of stunted emotional growth and incomplete ego-formation, due to flawed relationships with their mothers and the fairly consistent absence of their fathers. They all projected their frustrated desires onto a much admired male partner, refused the maternal role and reconstructed hybrid synthetic selves through their art and writing.

As psychiatrist Yves Thoret points out, when he encountered the Sphinx, Oedipus found his identity but later lost it just as fast and «...il découvre en lui un être inconnu, monstrueux»[21]. In other words, after meeting the monster and solving her riddle, he ends up becoming a monster too. The Greek Sphinx, as opposed to the Egyptian one, was considered as female, since it was represented with a woman's head and torso, a bird's wings and a lion's body[22], and as well as a strangling predator has also been considered as a possible salvatory animal mother for Oedipus in the woods (Thoret: 78), much like the later figure of the Roman she-wolf. Thoret furthermore attributes three complementary roles to the creature, that of a messenger of death, that of asking questions and setting riddles and that of a seducer «avide de sang et de plaisir érotique» (80). We know from Freud and his successors that the child's first object of desire, whether it be male or female is the mother.

On their oedipal quest, Kahlo, Sage and Zürn each encountered the Sphinx in the guise of their mother: a messenger of death as represented by the origynal womb, an enigma and riddle-maker evocative of «adult» behavior which is at first incomprehensible to the child, who then learns how to decode and manipulate it and, in the case of Sage and Zürn an erotic threat. The nurturing animal-mother aspect sought after by the child, however insufficient, was also a component of these hybrid mothers.

Since women tend to emulate their mothers in the long run, Kahlo, Sage and Zürn also saw themselves as hybrid monsters, which became apparent in their art. In The Little Deer (1946):

> ...Kahlo portrays herself as a wounded stag. She fuses her head with the body of a deer and portrays herself as half-male, half-female, half-human, half-beast. She is standing in the woods... She is crying: her body has been pierced by nine arrows.[23]

The picture translates Kahlo's sexual ambiguity, and the wounds due to both health and marital problems indicate the proximity of death. Sage's face in *Small Portrait* (1950) is reminiscent of Freud's «Uncanny» and Hoffman's doll Olympia: a female head, neck and shoulders have been made fleshless and apart from the hair the woman's organs have been replaced by inanimate materials and drapery, geometrically arranged within the frame of the face, creating an impression of automatism and blankness. Some of Zürn's grotesque creatures deny and/or deform her body. One colored ink drawing (1955)[24] creates a female monster with multiple heavy asymmetrical breasts, four arms with claws, uneven bulging eyes and bird's feet. She/it looks lost and top-heavy and female seems to equal ugly. It is worth mentioning Bellmer's double portrait of himself and Zürn, *Cephalopod for Two* (1955), which turns their couple into a hybrid monster: Unica's head, shoulders and one breast emerge from her open wounded body and Hans's head can be seen through a film covering her womb, the whole thing shaped like a swollen foot or «oedipus»[25]. In a different spirit, forever

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[21] Yves Thoret. *La Théâtralité*. Paris, Dunod, 1993, p. 73. Thoret devotes a very interesting chapter of this book to the Sphinx. Ref.: «Thoret».

[22] See Jorge Luis Borges and Margarita Guerrero. *Manuel de zoologie fantastique*. Paris: Julliard, 1965, pp. 84-85.

[23] Salomon Grimberg. *The Little Deer*. Essay and catalog for an exhibition organized by Miami University. Oxford, Ohio, February 17-March 21, 1997.

[24] See *Approche d'Unica Zürn*. Paris: Le Nouveau Commerce, 1981, no pagination, last illustration. This drawing was used as a postcard by the Galerie Sydow in Frankfurt, 1955.

[25] Hubert quotes Unica's own description of the painting: «... She is painted in the likeness of a cephalopod. Wounded in the neck by her rose-purple genitals, he has taken cover in her lower body among the pleats of her blouse.» Op. cit., p. 158.

seeking pre-oedipal osmosis, Kahlo painted the double portrait *Diego and Frida* (1929-1944), by juxtaposing half of each of their faces, prolonged into a combination of branches and shells, creating an uncanny, somewhat disturbing effect. Hybrid creativity extends further to the three women's double talents as writers and painters and to specifically interdisciplinary works, such as Kahlo's surrealist diary with its strange mixture of doodles, sketches, wordlists, poems, coded messages etc..., Kay Sage's last visual creation was the catalog *Your Move* for her 1961 exhibition of objects, collages and assemblages at the Catherine Viviano Gallery in New York, after she had become too blind to paint. In the catalog: «the reproductions of words and games are accompanied by titles... and verbal statements...» (Hubert: 174). Finally, in Zürn's strange delirious text *The House of Illnesses*[26], the meticulous, annotated pen and ink drawings are part of the message rather than illustrations.

As a tentative conclusion, I'd like to focus on that specific turning point of the Oedipus myth, when the subject encounters the Sphinx, before the taboos, transgressions and punishments materialize, for which the myth is better known. Feminists have wondered why the Sphinx commits suicide in the myth[27], prefiguring Jocasta's gesture and today, in a post-feminist age, we may wonder why Oedipus' hybrid opponent keeps coming to mind as we reflect on the cases of these three surrealist women. When Oedipus meets the Sphinx, she appears to be both human and animal, mother and non-mother, desirable and petrifying like Medusa's head as described by Freud[28], in short a riddle, the answer to which is man.

For Oedipus, the male subject, discarding the mother-Sphinx means countering her animal power with the power of language. Finding an answer to the riddle signifies self-identification achieved through separation, self-representation and nomination. The father remains absent but the fear of castration still operates. This pattern depends sine qua non upon the salvatory animal mother aspect of the Sphinx. The illusion of osmosis has to have prevailed in order to be broken.

When the subject is female, her visual recognition of the Sphinx as an image of self and other, self and mother, mother and other, of course creates further complications as we all know. When Thomas Pynchon invented an «Oedipa»[29], her quest petered out into entropy, Freud's solutions remain unsatisfactory to women and the various myths which have been proposed as equivalents, such as Electra or Persephone, seem to fit into totally different patterns. Like Oedipus, the female subject recognizes a monster mother in the Sphinx, rejects her and like him she sees herself in a mirror but not the same one: he sees himself in/as the answer to the riddle, she sees herself as a female monster and a perpetuated unsolvable riddle. She settles for his solution, the other's desire: «the answer is man», but it doesn't work for her. When she tries to recreate her identity, she keeps coming up with a female monster.

As Teresa de Lauretis and Marianne Hirsch have pointed out, the answer could perhaps just as well be «woman»[30] but this alternative still doesn't create a workable identification pattern, especially in cases like the three in point. For Kahlo, Sage and Zürn, the illusion of osmosis was never really achieved, whether the mother was cold like Kahlo's or a perverse clinger like the other two.

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[26] It was written shortly after Zürn's meeting with Bellmer in 1953 and was first included in *L'Homme-Jasmin*, without the illustrations. These were restored to the English translation, that was published as a separate book by Atlas Press, London: 1993, translated by Malcolm Green.

[27] See Teresa de Lauretis. *Alice doesn't*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982: 110 and also Marianne Hirsch. *The Mother Daughter Plot*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989: the introduction.

[28] Sigmund Freud. «Medusa Head» (1922) in *Sexuality and the Psychology of Love*. New York: Collier Books, 1963, pp. 212-213.

[29] Oedipa is the heroine of Thomas Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49*. New York: Bantam Books, 1966. See also Georgiana M. M. Colvile. *Beyond and Beneath the Mantle/on Thomas Pynchon's 'The Crying of Lot 49'*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988.

[30] In the previously mentioned introduction to *The Mother Daughter Plot*. Hirsch also refers to two feminist poems by Muriel Rukeyser, «Private Life of the Sphinx» (1948) and «Myth» (1968), which sympathize with the Sphinx and emphasize her femaleness.

An unsatisfactory mother-daughter relationship often prompts the daughter to turn away from her mother to a male partner. At this point, «the answer is man» means catering to the other's desire, without the young woman's ever being able to detach herself from the maternal womb. The subsequent quest for osmosis with the male partner on one hand and the androgynous pursuit of artistic creativity on the other, may well further lead to the rejection and suicide of the Sphinx-self. The answer in such cases is neither man nor woman, but death.

Thoret provides more definitions of the Sphinx as both harbinger of death and avid for love (Thoret: 80), as well as a creature in pain (ibid.: 79). In pain and in paint, one might add... caught in a web of latent and/or manifest self-portraiture.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 183-196

Deconstructing the muse: Surrealism's child-woman and Hans Bellmer's Dolls

NANCY BLAKE (*)

My only grudge against nature was that I could not turn my Lolita inside out and apply voracious lips to her young matrix, her unknown heart, her nacreous liver, the sea-grapes of her lungs, her comely twin kidneys.

V. Nabokov, *Lolita*.

Hans Bellmer's controversial position in the history of Surrealism may be attributed to his unequivocal commitment to a single theme throughout his mature career: the doll. The creation and re-creation of the doll occupied Bellmer for over a forth of a century. Even the Pope of Surrealism, André Breton, was moralistically reluctant to embrace Bellmer at first, noting that his expressions of sexuality were puerile and perverse. And yet Bellmer's devotion to the doll is founded on a Surrealistic premise: «the body like the dream is able to capriciously displace the center of gravity of its images».[1] Bellmer saw the doll as the materialization of dream, the incarnation of desire, the proving ground of metamorphosis and of metonymy, condensation and displacement, since the doll is constituted as a language and it functions as such.

Bellmer consciously practiced verbally as well as visually the game of displacement and permutation characteristic of the anagram: «the body can be compared to a sentence that would entice us to disarticulate it in such a way that its true content might be recomposed through an endless chain of anagrams.»[2]

The Surrealists extolled heterosexual love and proclaimed with Aragon that «Woman is the future of man». Surrealism's child-woman has been the object of many studies. Bellmer's doll, on

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[1] Bellmer, H. (1949). Notes sur la Jointure à boule. In *Les Jeux de la Poupée*. Paris: Les Editions Premières.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 109, Unica Zürn, Bellmer's companion for seventeen years until her death exploited the anagram in her writing as analyzed by Renée Hubert in *Magnifying Mirrors*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1994.

the other hand, illustrates the obsession with the young girl as an *uncastratable other*. In the doll the fetish becomes presence in the space of a feminine body doubling as a penis. Around the central ball joint of the doll, body parts double as anything: breasts become buttocks, arms or legs multiply as innumerable pointers indicating the place of the sex. Freud speaks of the mechanism of the fetish as «the to and fro between disavowal and acknowledgment».[3] And perhaps most scandalously, the whole body turns itself inside out like a glove so that the internal organs participate in the metamorphosis. Yves Bonnefoy notes that Bellmer's doll reserves a possibility which is an essential component of sadism: that of reducing a living body to the exhaustibility characteristic of an algebra.[4]

The artist is however more likely to link transformation to liberation: «The object which only resembles itself has no reality», writes Bellmer in his Anatomy of the *Image*.[5] This could not be more faithful to Surrealist dogma.

In Berlin before the War, German critics saw his work as «degenerate» and pornographic. Yet when Bellmer came to Paris in 1938, his problems with censorship followed as the Nazis came to occupy France.

Born in 1902 in a German town that would be annexed by Poland after World War I, Bellmer grew up in a typical middle-class home with an authoritarian father who insisted that his son attend a technical school and pursue a career, like his own, in engineering. Once he arrived in Weimar Berlin, Bellmer neglected his studies for the company of revolutionary Dada artists and developed his drawing throughout the twenties while earning a fairly comfortable living as a designer.

He married Margarete, a fragile child-woman, became interested in Freud and psychoanalysis and found himself moved by the literary works of Kleist, Sade and Lautréamont.

As these influences came into play, Bellmer began to feel that his mastery of drawing technique was somehow limiting. Like Picabia and Man Ray, during the same period, Bellmer become interested in the mediumistic possibilities of photography as a form that could be used in the plastic arts, with a new kind of image potential. Ironically, it was photography – not drawing – that offered him an initial introduction to the Surrealists in Paris.

The years 1932-34 present a turning point for Bellmer. The political climate of Weimar Germany made him feel increasingly marginal, while his father predictably had aligned himself with Hitler and the Nazi party. Bellmer's wife Margarete was seriously ill with tuberculoses. With food rations low and heating problematic, Bellmer undertook the construction of his first Doll. In later years, Bellmer was to insist that it was no coincidence that he began working on the doll in the same year that Hitler rose to power in Germany. In 1933, he announced that he would «give up all work which, even indirectly, could be in any way useful to the State».[6] While the doll obviously becomes an obsession with her creator, his art is concentrated, not in the object itself, but in the series of photographs documenting his activity. Bellmer took photographs of the various stages of the doll's evolution and published ten of them in a small book which he called *Die Puppe* (1934). He had read Breton and the Surrealists and was anxious to make contact. But it was not to Breton, but rather to Paul Eluard that the photographs of the Doll were presented and they received an enthusiastic reception, eighteen of them being published in the Surrealist journal Minotaure in December 1934 with the title «Doll – Variations on the Assemblage of an Articulated Minor». Bellmer then traveled to Paris to meet the Surrealists. Although Breton was somewhat reluctant to accept him, and at one point even denounced Bellmer as a pedophiliac, other Surrealists were most supportive.

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[3] Freud, S. (1975). The Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence. *S. E*., v. XXIII. London: Hogarth Press, p. 278.

[4] Bonnefoy, Y. (1975). De la corruption des lois. In *Hans Bellmer* (pp. 39-40). Paris: Obliques.

[5] Bellmer, H. (1957). *L'Anatomie de l'Image*. Paris: Le Terrain Vague.

[6] Webb, P. (1985). *Hans Bellmer*. London: Quartet Books, p. 27.

Upon his return from Paris, Bellmer set to work on his second doll, which he again photographed in a series called *Les Jeux de la Poupée*, completed in 1936-37 and published in 1949 with a suite of poems by Eluard. Bellmer took greater visual, and dramaturgical liberties with the second doll: she is given settings that ask the viewer to create a narrative. Each of the photographs is hand-tinted. Figures 1 through 4 illustrate attitudes of the second doll. When his wife died in 1939, Bellmer left Berlin to live in Paris.

FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2

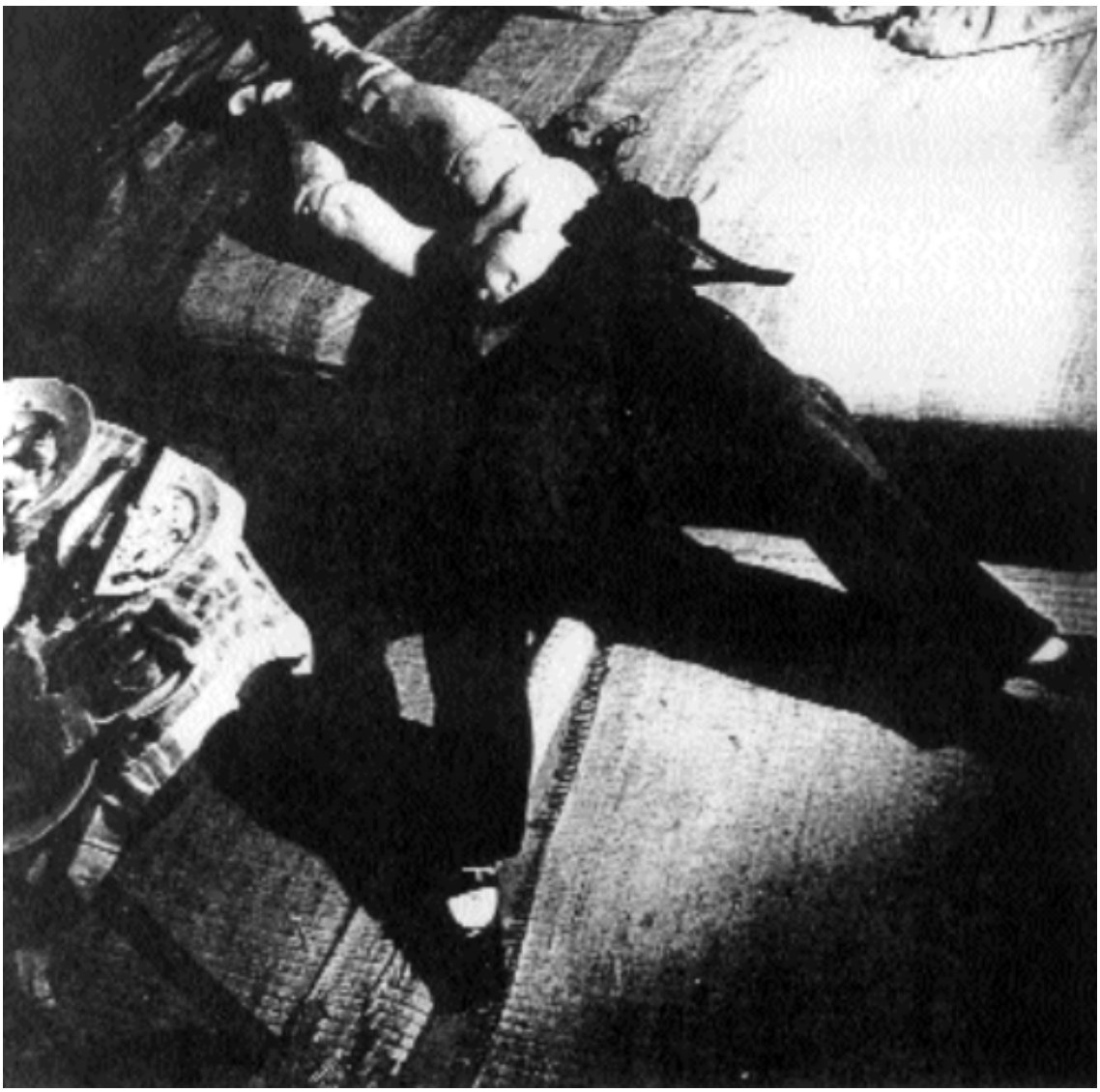


FIGURE 3

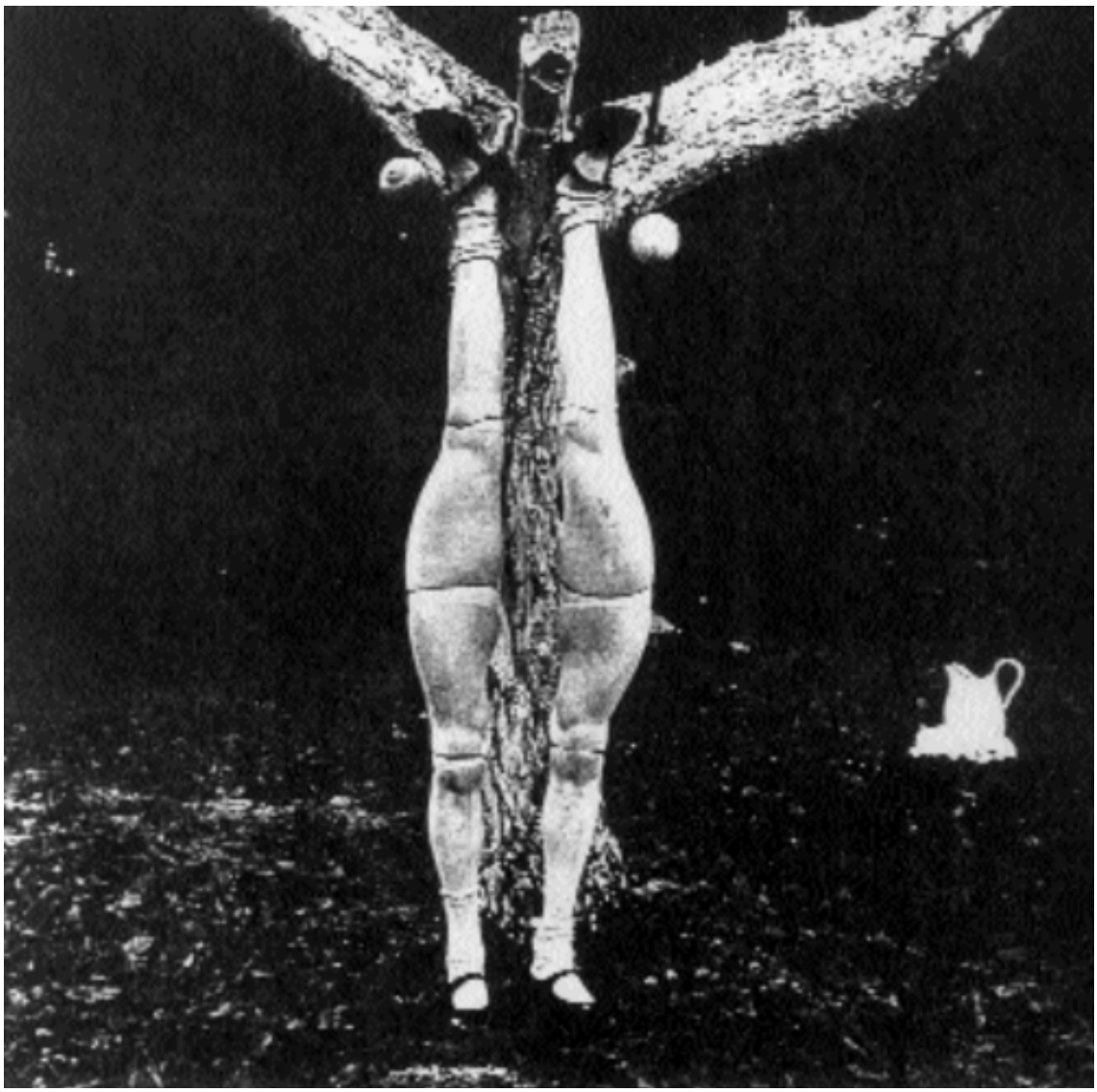


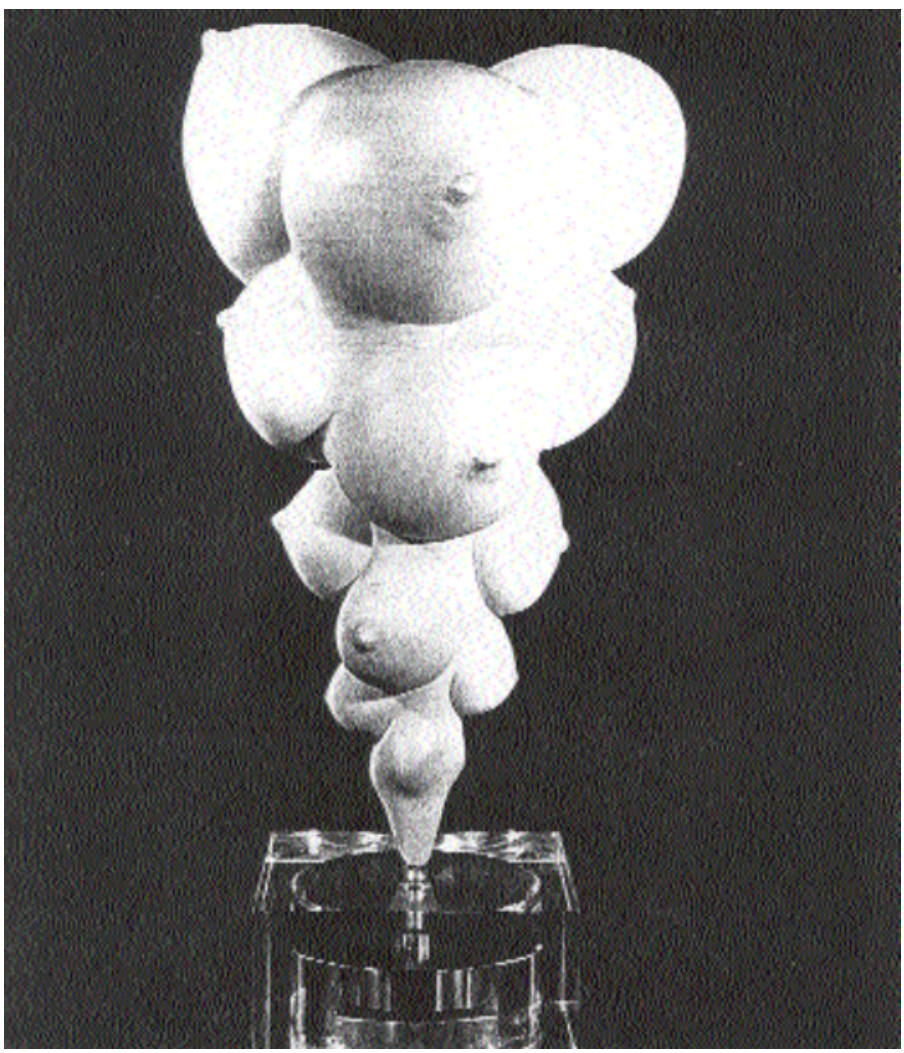
FIGURE 4

Although *Les Jeux de la Poupée* was scheduled for publication in Paris in 1939 the war intervened and Bellmer was incarcerated at Camp les Milles in the south of France, along with another Surrealist of German nationality, Max Ernst, who had also been living in France. After his release, Bellmer continued his work remaining in southern France drawing and preparing a major text, *L'Anatomie de l'image*, which was also delayed in its publication.

Throughout the forties and fifties Bellmer became increasingly involved in articulating and disseminating his theories on art and eroticism. He discovered a kindred spirit in Georges Bataille and did a series of illustrations for Bataille's erotic works.

Always questioning the concept of limit, whatever the term may refer to, and, as he does so, dislocating the framework of rational thought, Bellmer is one of the purest of Surrealist artists. Figure 5, «La Toupie» or the top, which exists in several versions, illustrates the elegance, the mechanical mastery, which Bellmer brings to the embodiment of his obsessions. The artist insisted that la toupie was inspired by mythological representations of the multiplication of breasts such as the Diana of Ephesus or various renditions of Hindu divinities. In this way Bellmer claims a universal component to his idiosyncrasies.

FIGURE 5



Taking Bellmer's notion that, first «the body, like a dream, can capriciously displace the center of gravity of its images», and secondly that «the object which only resembles itself has no reality», we will consider Bellmer's metamorphosis of the doll in terms of the double: duality being a constant in Bellmer's experience.

The first instance of this duality is in the hand that writes informing the hand that draws. As a writer, Bellmer is much less well known than as a plastician, yet his texts represent a major contribution to Surrealism. This double inspiration leads to a conflict and the interpenetration of genres is part of Bellmer's message as it is in the case of other artists influenced by Surrealism like Pierre Klossowski or Henri Michaux.

Both in his graphic work and in his texts, Bellmer exploits the photographic technique of the double exposure. In writing Bellmer superimposes a text for seamstresses on one devoted to the surgeon's art, or a manual for pastry chefs on an erotic text and obtains the interpenetration of two realties. Inserting the uncanny into the everyday so that the former will contaminate the latter, as in the anagram, is the first of Bellmer's techniques. In one of his texts on the anagram, Bellmer notes that the practice allows for the intervention of something resembling an exterior subjectivity which is more problematic in the case of automatic writing. It is the freedom to express a message that is, at the same time, rigorously predetermined by the letters which provide the material of the verse which Bellmer appreciates in the anagram.

Secondly although Bellmer is first and foremost the creator of the doll, much of his artistic activity centered around another axis: portraiture and self-portraiture. This work provides us with the authorization to advance the hypothesis that Bellmer's creative output is organized according to two means of knowledge: on the one hand the image of the objective body, and on the other, the specular image transformed by the addition of the theory of the unconscious and in particular by the elaboration of the theory of the mirror stage, a stage which, in Lacan's words, is «a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation – and which manufactures for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of fantasies that extends from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopedic – and, lastly, to the assumption of the armor of an alienating identity, which will mark with its rigid structure the subject's entire mental development.»[7]

While pondering the relations between ego formations and defense mechanisms, Bellmer questions the principle of identity sacred to Western logic noting that the living being constantly brings into play a principle of false identity through which the organism meets any stimulation with a displacement to a site of virtual stimulation. If a person tightens his hand into a fist in response to the pain of a toothache, for example, he doubles the pain in order to displace it and thus obeys the principle of false identity.

Bellmer had always been interested in double exposure photography as a means of inserting the creator into the space of the doll as illustrated by Figure 6. Influenced to some extent by Picabia and the Italian Futurists, he later developed a type of double-exposure drawing to accompany his double exposure photography, using the contour line as a means to create veils of transparent visual effects. He gives a psychological depth to this interplay between figures in which the appendages extend into and through one another. Thus one figure dissolves into another and continuity overcomes discontinuity. This is for Bellmer, as for Bataille, the essence of the erotic experience.

Bellmer's doll teaches us that every self extends beyond the envelope of its skin. This insight explains Bellmer's comment in his 1938 essay on the Games of the Doll, where he notes the graphic condensation between the doll and a chair in one of his photographs: «an amalgam must be

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[7] Lacan, J. (1966). *Ecrits*. Paris: Seuil, p. 97. In English, *Ecrits, a selection*, New York: Norton, 1977, p. 4.

FIGURE 6

formed of the objective reality which is the chair and the subjective reality which is the Doll, an amalgam gifted with a reality which is clearly superior because subjective and objective at the same time.»[8]

Overcoming the dichotomy between subjective and objective is only one aspect of Bellmer's desire to pursue unity. «We are discontinuous beings, says Bataille, individuals who perish in isolation in the midst of an incomprehensible adventure, but we yearn for our lost continuity.»[9] Where there is no capacity to dissolve oneself into another, there can be no sustaining eroticism. Bataille proposes that «the transition from the normal state to that of erotic desire presupposes a partial dissolution of the person as he exists in the realm of discontinuity».[10] In figure 7 the play on words «Rose ou verte la nuit» allows itself to be read in two ways while the drawing illustrates a third signification, permitting a vertiginous multiplicity of transformations.

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[8] Bellmer, H., preface to *Les Jeux de la poupée*, in *Obliques*, p. 83.
[9] Bataille, G. (1986). *Erotism: death and sensuality*. San Francisco: City Lights, p. 15. (Original Paris 1967).
[10] *Ibid*, p. 17.

FIGURE 7

Bellmer, in *The Anatomy*, discusses his notion of the primordial Androgyne, not in the familiar terms of mythology which signify the desire to transcend incompleteness and achieve tranquillity, but in terms of an exacerbation of desire, the accent is on splitting and a «traumatic dissolution».

Bellmer's Surrealism rejoins the insight of Artaud for whom there is no surface which is not ruptured, for no surface of the body is without continuity with the internal structures. Thus Bellmer's visual art can only serve its purpose if it goes beyond the visual. In doing so it questions the validity of all dichotomies. Bellmer's own words express the ambition of his work: «It is a question of the peculiar hermaphrodite interconnection between the male and the female principles in which the female structure predominates. What is always vital is that the image of a woman must have been "lived" by the man in his own body before it can be "seen" by the man.»[11] Beyond the opposition of masculine and feminine, what is being challenged is the opposition between self and other: «The you is unrealized in favor of an image assimilated to the I; from the interior and at a prenatal level, one becomes the woman, one is about to possess.»[12] Here we begin to distinguish what Bellmer calls his anagram: the fluidity in which all bodies, with appendages and internal organs form a new language.

In agreement with Bataille, the body becomes a language of desire. According to Bellmer: «The body can be compared to a sentence that would entice us to disarticulate it in such a way that its true content might be recomposed through an endless chain of anagrams.»[13]

Bellmer's doll does not figure the sieve-like body of psychosis however, where all difference disappears, where there is no longer a distinction between body and word. With Bellmer the phenomenon is mastered as can be seen in the serenity of the gesture, the perfection of the line in his drawing. I would propose that it is this very impression of mastery that allows us to define the structure exhibited here as perverse, rather than psychotic. In drawing and engraving, Bellmer displays a technique comparable to that of Dürer, he owes much to tradition and his doll; like some of Leonardo's drawings, describes an anatomy of fantasy with all the precision of hallucination.

Freud's ego is a corporal entity created by the eye of the other (Lacan's small o other of the mirror stage). The erogenous body of Bellmer's drawings, on the other hand, bears witness to archaic and anarchic projections; it is firstly constituted by partial drives and its being is perverse. The multiplicity of partial erogenous zones are unified in a phallic whole close to that described by Deleuze in *Logique du sens*.

The doll was born of the encounter of her creator with the Olympia of Offenbach's ballet «Tales of Hoffmann». In Hoffmann's «The Sandman», Nathaniel falls in love with the daughter of the sinister Professor Coppelius never realizing that Olympia is only a mechanical doll. When he discovered the ballet version of the story, Bellmer recognized «confirmation by objective chance», eagerly appropriating the Surrealist belief in the necessary manifestation of personal obsessions in exterior events.[14]

The doll Olympia, forerunner of that of Bellmer, incarnates for Freud, the feminine attitude of Nathaniel before the feared image of the castrating father. This is the Sandman of Nathaniel's childhood who threatened to steal his eyes. In the doll, the horror of masochistic pleasure shows its triumphant side as she offers the spectacle of her wound. «In the sex of the dead woman was the blue eye of God», wrote Unica Zürn, the companion of Bellmer's later years till her death in 1970.

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[11] Bellner, H. (1957). *L'Anatomie de l'image*. Paris: Le Terrain Vague. Translated by Webb and Short, in Hans Bellmer, London: Quartet Books, 1986, p. 169.

[12] Bellmer, H. (1957). *L'Anatomie de l'image*. Paris: Le Terrain Vague.

[13] Bellmer, H., Notes sur la jointure à boule, *loc. cit*.

[14] «That which is not confirmed by chance has no validity», Hans Bellmer, *Kleine Anatomie des Korperlichen Unbewussten oder die Anatomie des Bildes*, Paris: Le Terrain Vague, 1957.

In more ways than one, Bellmer's initiative is comparable to the eroticism of D. H. Lawrence, Henry Miller and Anaïs Nin; it is a political statement in a period of authoritarianism and reflects a fundamental anarchy of mind. Today expropriations of theory and «political correctness» – whether feminist, post-colonial, or multi-cultural, follow a different path as they search for answers, ways out, alternative positions after the deconstruction of repressive cultural formations. Artists ranging from Dali to Duchamp, on the other hand, face the same risk of misappropriation as Bellmer does in today's academic discourse. One cannot ignore the possible influence of Bellmer's Doll on Duchamp's final work, Etant donné (1946-68), permanently installed at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Figures 8, 9 and 10 are photos of Unica Zürn tied with thin string which has the effect of creating breasts everywhere on the body, a transformation deemed worthy of the cover of *Le Surréalisme même*.

FIGURE 8

If contemporary critical discourse often makes unfortunate value judgments about the work of Bellmer and others like him, today's artists themselves are continually looking to him as the creator of an artifact capable of making an impact on the viewer. There are several important statements on the contemporary art scene that appear to owe lineage to Bellmer (who lived until 1975) and to his doll – the sculpture of Manuel Neri, the early «body art» castings of Bruce Nauman, the photographic self-studies of the late Hannah Wilke, the terrifying leather heads of Nancy Grossman, the elegant photographic studies of Robert Mapplethorpe and the work of Kiki Smith to mention a few.

The artists who remind us of the debt they owe to Hans Bellmer bear witness to the embrication of the aesthetic and the erotic. In exploring eroticism, these creators indicate that art is not a supplement, decorative or other, to existence, that it is a sign of humanity's difficulties in assuming it's condition. Their eroticism, like that of Bataille, is an affirmation of life which does not hesitate to embrace death.

FIGURE 9

FIGURE 10

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 197-205

Deconstruction of a lady's portrait: Configurations of gender in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*

ASTRID LANGE-KIRCHHEIM (*)

«This likeness is enchantingly beautiful, as yet no eye has ever seen.» Tamino's enchantment from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Magic Flute* also belongs to Hans Castorp.[1] The «glassy present» (389)[2] he carries with him at all times in his breast pocket over his heart also affords him a view of a woman the likes of whom a lover's eye has not previously known. Thomas Mann's thematic allusion, however, follows decidedly subversive paths. For the picture of Madame Chauchat in question – «das Innenportraet»[3] –, is an x-ray, a work of art in the age of technical reproducibility. While its treatment remains that of an icon – placed as it is, on a carved easel – it represents not only a double cliché of the feminine devotional image, but, in a literal sense, a «photographic negative» (437), for it negates gender difference and also the tradition of feminine portraiture.[4] The exposed skeleton no longer permits specific categorization with respect to gender. The function of the photographic slide is determined on the one hand by its relationship to Behrens' oil painting of Madame Chauchat and on the other by its relationship to the x-rays Behrens produces of Joachim and Hans Castorp in his x-ray laboratory.

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[1] Mozart's *The Magic Flute* belongs in the large number of intertexts present in *The Magic Mountain*, cf. Settembrini who compares Behrens, the Hofrat, to a «Vogelfänger» à la Papageno.

[2] Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain. With a postscript by the author on the making of the novel*. Translated from the German by H. T. Lowe-Porter (London: Vintage, 1999). All quotations in the running text are from this edition (page numbers in parentheses).

[3] That is, a portrait of her inside, an 'inner portrait'. Lowe-Porter has no translation for 'Innenportraet' except 'x-ray portrait'.

[4] In this picture head and face are missing and that which should signal femininity, namely the rounded forms of the body, is always called uncertain, vague, nebulous, shadowy, etc. «It was Claudia's x-ray portrait, showing not her face, but the delicate bony structure of the upper half of her body, and the organs of the thoracic cavity, surrounded by the pale, ghostlike envelope of flesh» (348). This glass diapositive (slide) corresponds with «the reddish-brown shavings» treasured by Hans Castorp long ago after his meeting with Hippe, and this also calls into question the femininity of the keepsake portrait.

I will attempt to demonstrate in the following how Thomas Mann brings the patriarchal gender system based on the order of representation to a collapse using the paradigm of *painter and model* and opposing the traditionally visible (external) portrait of the woman with the programmatically higher esteemed inner portrait, the x-ray. This comparison draws its strength from the hierarchical semantization of external and internal according to the pattern of the figurative and the literal, appearance and being (*impropie dictum* and *propie dictum*).[5] Consequently, the confrontation of the two portraits repeats the asymmetrical semantization of the dichotomy of gender, in which the woman acts as a metaphor of the man. As a result, Madame Chauchat in oil becomes a metaphor for the metaphor *woman* as a metaphor of the man – an infinite regression and a reversal of the opposition between the figurative and the literal arises, which brings the traditional fixation of gender in a dual mode to naught.

To the same extent that the novel grants its hero an awakening to his homosexual inclinations, or has him experience a 're-homosexualization'[6] in the form of a *Bildungsroman*, it also highlights the boundaries of the heterosexual gender order. While a cultural taboo forces to camouflage the return of Hans Castorp's repressed love for his friend Hippe as Chauchat-love, the homosexual desire itself strives to undo the masquerade and make itself known. Carrying out this double agenda – veiling and signalling homoerotic love – calls for an especially deft installation of the woman as *screen-woman*, calling her into service at a meta-level, as it were, where she functions as an allegory of the *screen-woman* and so becomes transparent.[7] It is exactly this instructive contouring which results as an effect of a discourse of love made intricate by being subject to the threat of exclusion. It is the view of the outsider that stages Madame Chauchat as an object of heterosexual desire, and in so doing makes visible the dimensions of the prevailing gender matrix. Thomas Mann's *x-ray* of pre-war society reveals – behind a facade of heterosexuality – a melancholy homosexuality that arises out of a single, monopolizing masculine principle, whether it is Settembrini's truth, belief as terror as put forward by Naphta, or the libido whose overarching validity Krokowski proclaims in an imperialistic manner: «all disease is only love transformed.» «No one knew save him, but it was plain that he did» (128).[8]

In the scenes centering on the two types of portraits, i.e., the *artistic production*, so to speak, of the photographic slides (in the chapter: «Sudden Enlightenment») and the *aesthetic appreciation*

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[5] For the asymmetry of the gender order and the logical priority of one term in a given pair of terms see Cornelia Klinger, «Beredtes Schweigen und verschwiegenes Sprechen: Genus im Diskurs der Philosophie», in Hadumod Bussmann/Renate Hof (Eds.), *Genus. Zur Geschlechterdifferenz in den Kulturwissenschaften* (Stuttgart: Kroener, 1995), pp. 34-59.

[6] I take this term from Karl Werner Boehm, *Zwischen Selbstzucht und Verlangen. Thomas Mann und das Stigma Homosexualitaet. Untersuchungen zu Fruehwerk und Jugend* (Wuerzburg: Koenigshausen & Neumann, 1991), p. 359.

[7] To mask and signal are the terms Marita Keilson-Lauritz has given to the strategies used by writers to communicate their homosexual desire, see her book *Von der Liebe, die Freundschaft heisst. Zur Homoerotik im Werk Stefan Georges* (Berlin: Verlag Rosa Winkel, 1987). Heinrich Detering has taken up these categories in his extensive analysis of homoerotic writers since the 18th century *Das offene Geheimnis. Zur literarischen Produktivitaet eines Tabus* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994). I will also talk of camouflaging and signalling, less however with respect to the author, but rather from a cultural point of view as a sort of performance, a way of doing gender. This veiled performance of homosexuality also discloses the performative quality of heterosexuality. Cf. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990) and *Bodies that Matter. On the Discoursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993). The term *screen-woman* is taken from Shoshana Felman, «Rereading femininity», *Yale French Studies,* 62 (1981), pp. 19-44.

[8] The last chapter of the novel contains decisive hints to read World War I as a «homoerotic orgy», see also Claus Sommerhage, *Eros und Poesis. Ueber das Erotische im Werk Thomas Manns* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1983), p. 107. Violence seems to be the only way out of the double bind of Western culture which, as a result of phallic monism, installs homosexuality at the same time that it fordids it. War turns into the apocalyptic crisis of masculinity.

of the oil painting (in the chapter: «Humaniora»), a triad of men is involved each time, a widower and two youths. The discourse about Madame Chauchat in oil with Behrens and Hans Castorp as interlocutors – Joachim is as verbally absent as the woman in the picture – stands in a long tradition of eroticized art discourse in which (usually) the painter and lover/sponsor enter into rivalry as to who is the true connoisseur of the portrait as they seek to analyze it, talk it to death and otherwise use it as a projection surface of their own fantasies.[9] That the relation painter-brush-model is equally phallicly connotated as the relation between the act of beholding and being beheld turns the scene into a paradigm of patriarchal gender ordering, in which the role of the subject is masculine and that of the object is feminine.

As a prelude to the discussion of the painting, Hans Castorp and Behrens engage in an animated and suggestive exchange of cigars (a kind of travesty of the culture-generating exchange of women à la Lévi-Strauss[10]) that reveals the divergent sexual preferences of the two discussants. What gets exchanged is masculine and feminine, a Maria Mancini for a St. Félix Brasil. Out of the tension between the orating father figure Behrens, who advocates the norm at the price of melancholy, and daring young Castorp, who challenges the norm while honing his rhetorical skills, there arises an overall effect that casts irony on and subverts the established gender ordering. No sooner has the appealingly painted décolleté in the portrait been tentatively addressed by the two than it becomes almost exclusively an occasion for a lecture about anatomy and physiology that Hans Castorp elicits from Behrens. It deals mainly with the nature of the *skin* and the *lymphatic system with the secretion of the breast milk*, both alluding to the feminine but at the same time gender neutral. As Behrens puts it, «stimulation is stimulation», and «the sensuality of the skin knows no distinctions» (264).[11] In the ongoing medical-erotic language, Hans Castorp finds spaces in which to express his homosexual desire. «The flow of the breast milk – the lymph of the legs – all this interests me very, very much» (265), he emphasizes. Here, breast milk secretion represents – metonymically – a screen, a protective female cover, so to speak, in whose shadow the masculine preference for the members, the legs, can be indulged in. Hans Castorp enacts this *displacement* also as *spatial metonymy* by taking down the nearly life-sized painting placing it next to the leg of his stool and positioning it on his knee. Thus, he succeeds in illustrating how a *bust-length* can be transformed into a *knee-length* – all the while demonstrating, more generally, how he is able to master the *termini technici* of portrait art, and with it the rules of the discourse itself, in the service of his desire.[12]

In their remarks about the *screen-woman* in the portrait, the two men (each of whom leads a different kind of single life) characterize themselves reciprocally. Hans Castorp sketches out Behrens, the representative of heterosexual order, in whom homophobia and misogyny come together. Hans' praise for what in his eyes is an amateur portrait, «Wie sie leibt und lebt!» («The very image of her!» [257]), unmasks Behrens as a typical constructor of femininity, and at the same time recalls the submission of women through their immobilization on canvas we know so well from Edgar Allan Poe's story, «The Oval Portrait», which ends with the painter's exclamation upon completing a painting of his wife, «While he yet gazed, he grew tremulous and very pallid, and aghast, and

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[9] For a well-known example see Frank Wedekind's *Lulu*-drama, *Erdgeist* (*The Spirit of the Earth*).

[10] For a stringent critique of Lévi-Strauss see Gayle Rubin, «The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex», in Rayna R. Reiter (Ed.), *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (New York: Montly Review Press, 1975), pp. 157-210, p. 180 f.

[11] This is my translation (A. L.-K.). Lowe-Parker has: «Oh», Behrens said, «tickling is tickling. The body doesn't give a hang for the content of the stimulus» (264).

[12] Hans Castorp's first question concerning the portrait of Madame Chauchat was «ob es ein Kopf-oder ein Kniestueck sei» («whether it was a head or a knee-length», this translation by Lowe-Porter is not quite correct [208]).

crying with a loud voice, 'This is life itself!' turned suddenly to regard his beloved: – She was dead!»[13]

The transformation of the living woman into artistic form runs parallel to a moral idealization and aesthetic transfiguration. These various strategies to exorcise a postulated demon in the female through *dis-animation* converge in the motif of the dead woman. The expression, «Wie sie leibt und lebt!» presupposes the presence of a female corpse, and is the merely apparent positive version of the negative on the glass slide, the skeleton. «To kill women into art» – this is Gilbert & Gubar's phrasing[14] –, becomes an apt way of describing the tradition in which women are relegated *in toto* to the status of representation. To the extent that she should represent the other of man and consequently become an allegory, Behrens' attempted «likeness» of the feminine portrait proves to be self-contradictory. Consequently and ironically, *amateurish clumsiness* and *true bodily resemblance* coincide. The physician's coarse language hints that painting stands for the aggressive wish to extinguish in a literal sense – «fertig werden mit einer so vertrackten Visage» («to come to terms with such an intricate face»).[15]

> You might think she would be easy to capture, with those hyperborean cheek-bones, and eyes like cracks in a loaf of bread. Yes, there's something about her – if you get the detail right, you botch the ensemble. Riddle of the sphinx [...]. Well, I know her under her skin – subcutaneously [...]. Have you ever noticed her walk? She slinks. It's characteristic, shows in her face – take the eyes, for example, not to mention the complexion, though that is tricky too. I don't mean their colour, I am speaking of the cut, and the way they sit in the face. You'd say the eye slit was cut obliquely, but it only looks so. What deceives you is the epicanthus, a racial variation, consisting in a sort of ridge of integument that runs from the bridge of the nose to the eyelid, and comes down over the inside corner of the eye. If you take your finger and stretch the skin at the base of the nose, the eye looks as straight as any of ours. Quite a taking little dodge [in the German original however: «Eine pikante Mystifikation»/«a piquant mystification»] – but as a matter of fact, the epicanthus can be traced back to an atavistic vestige – it's a developmental arrest (258).

Sphinx, trickery, deceit – the stereotypical attributes of the *femme fatale* are gathered together here. Madame Chauchat's portrait can be read as a displacement from the below to the above as in the manner of René Magritte's painting, *Le Viol* (*The Rape* [1935]). It seems to be precisely the feminine genitalia that is to be exorcised by the picture. The recurrence of *oblique* and *slanted* [in German «schief und geschlitzt»] in Behrens' word choice calls forth well-grounded associations with Jack the Ripper [in German: 'Der Schlitzer']. Against the uncontrollable otherness, the physician calls his entire medical knowledge into service, also deploying an intimacy-extinguishing *look under the skin*. Without a doubt, this is a case of woman as *dark continent*: penetrated, examined, colonized and mapped. This discourse of exclusion places the feminine on the borders of symbolic order, identifying her with the geographic other (*hyperborean cheek-bones*), the primitive (*atavistic vestige*), the racial other (*the epicanthus - their kind* versus *our kind*) and finally the animal-like (*skin/hide, slinking woman*). It is a discourse of invalidation and self-invalidation. The French *piquer*, with its literally phallic meaning speaks trenchantly of Behrens' perturbed preoccupation with his own masculinity. Beginning with a phallic interpretation of the eye, the epicanthus can be construed as a metaphor for difference. The *piquancy* seems to lie in the possibility of being able to cause the difference to vanish, to extinguish femininity as difference. «If you stretch their skin taut,

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[13] Edgar Allan Poe, *Tales, Poems, Essays*, (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1961), p. 184.

[14] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic. The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 18 and p. 36.

[15] My translation (A. L.-K.). Lowe-Porter's version is not correct: «What can you do with a rum sort of face like that?» (257).

their eyes look just like ours.» (In the German original we have: «Ziehen Sie die Haut ueber der Nasenwurzel straff an, und Sie haben ein Auge ganz wie von unsereinem» – «Stretch the skin taut and you'll get an eye that looks just like ours»). In the German version the conditional form is identical to the imperative. Is this command a call for a game involving presence and absence – a here-again, gone-again fetishist's game? Is the epicanthus a metaphor for the theorem of the mother's phallus?

Behrens' reflections on his painting represent male fantasies of femininity. The self-referential formula, «You must add illusion to illusion» (258) holds even truer of them because Madame Chauchat *literally* is a screen-woman, a metaphor for a man – namely, Hippe, the school friend of Hans Castorp. All the characteristics that have been discussed up until now under the rubric of femininity, from the obliqueness and slantedness of the eyes to the cheek-bones belong essentially and originally to a man and consequently would constitute a travesty of masculinity. In this sense, a man is made into a *screen* for the *screen-woman*; the man, Hippe, in analogy to the killing of the feminine in the masculine myth of godlike creation, is made into a «beautiful corpse».[16] Behrens finds his kind in his deprecated feminine study. The fact that a transposition of gender characteristics is at issue here is signaled by the name Hippe, which equals death.[17] When this subtly staged *gender trouble* has the effect of removing everything from view except the *a priori* of the phallocentric order itself because the existence of a single gender is assumed monistically – «the referentialization and substantialization of the penis as phallus [...] and with it the repression of difference»[18] –, then all talk of masculine and feminine as two genders is confusing indeed.

Hofrat Behrens' x-ray room can be seen as a metaphor for the gender-constructing institution of culture (chapter: «Sudden Enlightenment»). In this laboratory, the artist and inventor workshops of an array of geniuses aspiring to godliness, from Daedalus to Prometheus and from Faust to Frankenstein, are quoted and parodied. If the presence of Jehovah was revealed in thunder and lightening,[19] then the God-in-white, the physician Behrens, can merely trigger a «parlor thunderstorm» (in German: «Stubengewitter»).[20] Comparable to Kafka's story «In the Penal Colony», the conversation here overlaps art and aesthetics, science and technology, myth and religion, law and – represented in printing and photography – modern media. All of these are presided over by the phallus, Behrens astride his footstool. Correspondingly, the cultural space turns into a brothel, with red lamps and dim lights, and in which voyeurs, transvestites (all three men are turned into feline copies of Madame Chauchat)[21] and fetishists (peeping at a gallery of body parts) all meet for a tryst. With Behrens at the switch, the patients Castorp and Joachim – Joachim personifying topical feminine passivity – are made into objects of technical and scientific investigation, that is, women. The production of the image on the fluorescent screen is even compared to a birth. It seems that womb envy, pervasive in the patriarchal order, turns Hans Castorp, Joachim and Behrens into *master* and apprentice *lab technicians* who – one recalls Frankenstein's monster –, *in labour* give birth to a man.

The three men, each two representing a pair, play man and woman so to speak. Sexuality becomes fiction, invention and construction quite in the manner of the equipment. The expression,

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[16] For the trope of the beautiful feminine corpse see Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over her dead Body. Death, femininity and the aesthetic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1992).

[17] The name Hippe denotes 'scythe', metonomically scytheman, that is Death.

[18] Barbara Vinken, «Dekonstruktiver Feminismus - Eine Einleitung», in Barbara Vinken, ed., *Dekonstruktiver Feminismus. Literaturwissenschaft in Amerika* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992), pp. 7-29, p. 13 (translation mine, A. L.-K.).

[19] One has to recall Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's hymn *Fruehlingsfeier* here, see *Klopstocks gesammelte Werke in vier Baenden*, ed. by Franz Muncker (Stuttgart: Cotta [no year]), vol. 3, pp. 80-83.

[20] Lowe-Porter has: «our little private thunderstorm» (216).

[21] «We must get big pupils, like a cat's, to see what we want to see» (216).

«x-ray anatomy» (215), literally thwarts the penis-envy affirming *dictum* that *anatomy is destiny*[22] and discredits every ontology of gender. For gender is constituted rather via perception, perspective and imagination and becomes visible as performance. This theory advanced by Judith Butler is reinforced here by the predominantly ocular use of imagery at hand. Additionally, the scene takes on the character of a rite of initiation; the novice Hans Castorp is introduced to sexuality. To this rite of initiation belongs the gesture of hugging, here of the equipment. «Embrace the board – pretend it's something else, if you like. Press your breast against it, as though it filled you with rapture» (215 f.). This instruction on the part of Behrens runs counter to the normative of sexual behavior and introduces a variable, context-dependent choice of sexual objects. Freud characterized the object as the most variable aspect of the sex drive, without, however, challenging the taboo of homosexuality or creating something – beyond the heterosexual opposition – that would not have been categorized as *deviant*. – «Pretend it's something else, if you like»: this instruction targets readers as well, prodding them to be on the uptake for allegory and subtext. This is part of the deconstruction of phallicism via play, parody and travesty in Thomas Mann's novel.

> «I expect, Castorp, you feel a little nervous about exposing your inner self to our gaze? Don't be alarmed, we preserve all the amenities [in the German original, however: «es geht ganz aesthetisch zu»/«it's all quite aesthetic»]. Look here, have you seen my private picture-gallery?» He led Hans Castorp by the arm before the rows of dark plates on the wall, and turned on a light behind them. [Here, in the German version, is added: «Da erhellten sie sich, zeigten ihre Bilder»/«Then they were illuminated and showed their pictures»]. Hans Castorp saw various members: hands, feet, knee-pans, thigh- and leg-bones, arms and pelvises. But the rounded living form of these portions of the human body was vague and shadowy, like a pale and misty envelope [...] (215).

These limbs encourage a double reading. If one regarded the phallus, as Lacan does, as pure difference, then masculine and feminine roles would arise according to the measure of *having* the phallus (= man) or being the phallus (= woman). In the context of *aesthetics* and *private gallery*, the members become metaphors for the phallus which the woman has to be. Consequently, the private gallery parodies galleries of women's portraits such as the one belonging to Ludwig II of Bavaria: so many likenesses, so many women, so many phalloi. The personification of the «glasses», that show their pictures awakens the impression of wax figures that in some eerie way take on life with the turning on of the light switch. As limb-puppets and *corps morcelés*, the x-rays also recall E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Olympia* in his novella «Das Unheimliche»[23] and anticipate Cindy Sherman's photographic work. Finally, the gallery of phalloi reflects Jack the Ripper's collection of uteri. Consequently, in the glass photographic slides, the functionalization and mortification of femininity is made literally *transparent*, pointing out the function of the inner portrait in relation to the external *solid* feminine portrait in oil.

From the perspective of homosexual love, the limbs represent equivalents of male genitals, functioning as objects of the displacement of «unchartered love» (128). On the other hand, the fragments evoke the beautiful and youthful male body as a whole through synecdoche. They appear associatively in connection with the desired body parts of Madame Chauchat that together form a leitmotif complex, such as her back, nape of the neck, breast, and upper and lower arms. The veil that surrounds the limbs like a fog or dull shine removes from them any gender-specific qualities. The fragments of the human body reappear specifically as arms through the use of metonymy and

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[22] Cf. for instance Sigmund Freud: «Die Anatomie ist das Schicksal», in «Beitraege zur Psychologie des Liebeslebens», in *Gesammelte Werke* (vol. 1-18) ([London 1940-52], Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1968), vol. 8, p. 91.

[23] Cf. Sigmund Freud, «Das Unheimliche», in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 12, pp. 227-258.

synecdoche even on inanimate objects, in particular, the arm supports of all kinds of chairs: «Frau Chauchat seated herself [...] in a little round easy chair with stumpy, as it were, rudimentary arms. She leaned back, crossed one leg lightly over the other, and stared into space. She knew she was being looked at [...]» (211). In this lackadaisical *femme fatale* performance, the stumpy, rudimentary arms hearken to the theory of the woman as anatomically deprived or castrated. Simultaneously, however, the sculpture *Apollo of Belvedere* that Hans Castorp recalls, and which also serves as an iconographic intertext of the novel, is present. Thomas Mann uses an abundance of stumpy arms in order to create a perfect camouflage for impermissible love in the midst of the permissible, so to speak. Consequently, when the x-ray machine calls forth Joachim's form out of the darkness and makes it visible, it is tantamount to a macabre exhumation of *Apollo*: «[es] zeigten sich [...] das Schulterskelett, [und] der Ansatz von Joachims Oberarmknochen» («there appeared [...] the framework of the shoulder, [...] and [...] the beginning of the bone of Joachim's upper arm»).[24]

Thus, the experience of beholding the *inner portrait* of Madame Chauchat that Hans Castorp carries over his heart is combined with the «seeing» experience from the medical examination room together with Joachim. The fluorescent *screen* and the photographic slide neutralize the shield of homoerotic love via the screen woman. Madame Chauchat's rounded back is made transparent by the x-ray apparatus, so to speak, and reveals Joachim's rounded back. The gender neutral «glassy present» preserves the masculine in an illusory way. This becomes especially apparent at the high point of the visual experience:

> Hans Castorp's attention was taken up by something like a bag, a strange animal shape, darkly visible behind the middle column, or more on the right side of it – the spectator's right. It expanded and contracted regularly, a little after the fashion of a swimming jelly-fish. «Look at his heart», and the Hofrat lifted his huge hand again from his thigh and pointed with his forefinger at the pulsating shadow [the German version has: «auf das pulsierende Gehaenge»/«at the impending, pulsating mass»]. Good God, it was the heart, it was Joachim's honor-loving heart, that Hans Castorp saw! (217).

The masculine view – itself hypertrophied into a kind of x-ray machine – sees its objects as phallic here too. The highly charged, sexual-linguistic context defigures the heart into the male genitalia, renders the medical examination a special kind of peep show and distorts phallocentrism *avant la lettre* to the point of recognizability. At the same time, the tremendous need for forbidden love is shown, which searches everywhere for reflection and echo. This analogy between the heart and the sexual organs has a long cultural-historical and iconographic tradition.[25]

«Joachim's graveyard shape and bony tenement [the bare scaffold and his very slight *memento mori*]» (217) which becomes visible by looking through the fluorescent screen refigures a further iconographic tradition and identifies it as heterosexually determined. I am reminded of the image motif of *Der Tod und das Maedchen* (*Death and the Maiden*).[26] The contrast of the external and internal (view) of *one* figure which is suggested by Joachim, develops into a contrast of two distinct figures with Hans Baldung Grien, for example: the beautiful young girl in the foreground and death in the form of a male skeleton in the background. The feminine figure partially conceals the figure of death, allowing one to infer the function of the woman as screen, as defense against and representation of the threatening reality of death. Death takes the girl and not the man. The phantasm of masculine immortality comes to the fore and reveals the one masculine figure,

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[24] Translation mine (A. L.-K.). Cf. Lowe-Porter, p. 217.

[25] See Esther Fischer-Homberger, *Hunger – Herz – Schmerz – Geschlecht: Brueche und Fugen im Bild von Leib und Seele* (Bern: eFeF-Verlag, 1997), pp. 137-184.

[26] Hans Baldung Grien, *Der Tod und das Maedchen* (1517), a reproduction can be found in Christa Rohde-Dachser, *Expedition in den dunklen Kontinent. Weiblichkeit im Diskurs der Psychoanalyse* (Berlin/Heidelberg/New York: Springer, 1991), p. 146.

Joachim, as a figure both of defense and of that defended against. Joachim's figure returns the man, that which is represented, back into the foreground. At the same time, the beautiful form of his body substitutes for the beautiful woman and turns him into a screen-woman. A double effect results from this subversion of heterosexually determined visualization. The *memento mori* calls attention to a double exclusion, that of the woman and that of the homosexual lover, from the symbolic order – and calls attention to the death threat hanging over *forbidden love*.

The character of Joachim unfolds feminine traits throughout the novel. When he dies in the end, his beauty increases. His ritualized wake is reminiscent of those given young women in literature.[27] Was Joachim something like a mignon?[28] When he begins to smile on the third day after his death, he becomes the one truly beautiful corpse of the novel, the corpse that «*leibt und lebt*» ('embodies and lives'). Christ-travesty seems to be implied here, too. In the malapropism of Frau Stoehr on the occasion of Joachim's death, there is a calculated joining/deconstruction of masculine and feminine myths. «'A hero, a hero', cried she, and demanded that Beethoven's *Erotica* be played at his grave».[29]

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[27] For examples cf. Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over her dead Body. Death, femininity and the aesthetic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1992).

[28] As Joachim is loved by everybody he is a 'mignon'; and this seems to be an allusion to the figure of Mignon in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, who is adressed as a 'she' as well as a 'he', as a boy and a girl.

[29] P. 539 (translation mine, A. L.-K.).

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 207-211

Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* – Cross-dressing and poetics

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Currently, a lot of research is done to track down Butler's cross-dressers in literature, film, and opera[1]. But it is often ignored that the scenes, in which the diverse forms of travesty actually take place, are happening within works of art. The aspect of the medium is frequently neglected and consequently a fundamentally complex dimension of this phenomenon too. To rectify this shortcoming, the relationship between poetics and gender-crossing will be the prime focus of the following reflections, particularly since these two areas appear to have a special affinity. Let us suppose that the binary gender matrix presents a fundamental principle of reality, much as Freud, for example, emphasized in his lecture about femininity when he said that, «[b]eing male or female is the primary distinction that you draw when you are together with other human beings, and you are accustomed to making this distinction with unquestionable certainty.»[2] But if the binary gender matrix functions as the essential principle of reality, then it can be reasoned that literature, which is able to transcend and question the discourse of reality, can be linked with the rejection of the reality principle of binary gender. If literature questions the mechanism of reality structures, irritation about can become a genuine form of expression in poetics; the gesture of transvestitism can be analogized with poetic language.

These links, between poetics and crossing-over in the gender matrix, are presented vividly in Woolf's fictive biography *Orlando*, a novel that emphatically analogizes language and gender. On one hand, Woolf's novel discloses the fact that clothing, gestures and facial expressions create gender, which becomes evident when the gender boundaries are repeatedly transgressed. In the prime of life, Orlando becomes a woman at the age of thirty and from this initiation on he or she can take on both rolls – male and female. On the other hand, language itself is a central theme of

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[1] Compare, inter alia, Andrea Stoll, Verena Wodtke-Werner (Eds.) (1997), *Sakkorausch und Rollentausch. Männliche Leitbilder als Freiheitsentwürfe von Frauen*. Dortmund; Gertrud Lehnert (1997), *Wenn Frauen Männerkleider tragen. Geschlecht und Maskerade in Literatur und Geschichte*. München.

[2] Sigmund Freud: Weiblichkeit. Neue Folge der Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse. XXXIII. Lecture. In the same: *Complete Works*. Vol. XV (pp. 119-145, here pp. 120-121). London, 1940.

the novel and becomes distinguishable a transvestitism. Language, like changing clothes, is presented in such a way as to suggest that everything can be different than it appears to be. Pamela L. Caughie argues that «[w]e see that identity is as variable as language, language as vulnerable as identity. [...] Both are based on making distinctions, yet these distinctions are not fixed by reference to anything stable outside them.»[3]

The idea of *Orlando* came to Virginia Woolf in March 1927, after finishing the novel *To the Lighthouse*, perhaps as a reaction to Sackville's novel *Passenger to Teheran*.[4] It was supposed to be a vagabond journey, an escapade, a respite from her otherwise rigidly-conceived literary works. She writes the fictive biography of the author Vita Sackville-West, who was Virginia Woolf's lover at that time. But in an entirely different way from the biographical tradition she creates a life story which begins in the Elizabethan period, continues on into the reign of Jakob I, through the restoration period, to the period of Charles II and into the 20th century.[5] The biography's discourse is dismantled and satirized in the humorist tradition à la Sterne. Woolf, for example, attaches a name list to the first edition, which was, however, incomplete and an obvious attempt to parody the concept of a «name register». Additionally, she inserts pictures into the text, which are meant to present the described characters as vividly as possible, and yet the pictures never correspond to the character being dealt with at that moment. Woolf's fantastic biography is certainly inspired by Shakespeare's comedy *As you like it*.[6] This revolves not only around a protagonist with the same name complete with the central theme of inheritance that is pivotal in Woolf's text, but also shows different forms of cross-dressing. Never the less the name Orlando is also significant with regards to the gender theme. The name Orlando can be separated into two parts: «or» plus «and». As Rachel Bowlby points out, the name implies simultaneously the binary system of gender-representation, just like «and» exceeds this system with its androgynous gesture.

First of all, *Orlando* can be interpreted as a splendid fantasy of omnipotence,[7] as the lifestyle of a figure with access to all the possible levels of available experience, above all that of being male and female at the same time, because gender proves to be an act of dressing in Woolf's novel. Orlando loves to change from one outfit to another, and changes consequently the desire of one sex or the other, like slipping in and out of a different skin. Wearing a «black velvet suit richly trimmed with Venetian lace» (O, 165),[8] she approaches, for example, a women, and to «feel her hanging lightly yet like a suppliant on her arm, roused in Orlando all the feelings which become a man» (O, 166). She lustfully takes on the roll of both sexes and, depending on what the situation is, throwing herself into another dress or another suit from her vast array of masquerading treasures: «So then one may sketch her spending her morning in a China robe of ambiguous gender among her books; then receiving a client or two (for she had many scores of suppliants) in the same garment; then she would take a turn in the garden and clip the nut trees – for which knee-breeches were convenient; then she would change into a flowered taffeta which best suited a drive to Richmond and a proposal of marriage from some great nobleman; and so back again to town, where she would don a snuff-coloured gown like a lawyer's and visit the courts to hear how her cases were doing» (O, 169). Feminine as well as masculine modes of behavior and her varying desires are all at hand with this multitude of available costumes. She also transgresses entire epochs like passing from one

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[3] Pamela L. Caughie (1991), *Virginia Woolf and Postmodernism. Literature in Quest and Question of Itself*. Urbana/Chicago, p. 78.

[4] Compare Leslie Kathleen Hankins (1997), *Orlando*. «A Precipice Marked V». Between «A Miracle of Discretion» and «Lovemaking Unbelievable: Indiscretions Incredible». In: Eileen Barrett, Patricia Cramer (Eds.), *Virginia Woolf. Lesbian readings* (pp. 180-202, inter alia p. 191). New York/London.

[5] Compare Willi Erzgräber (1993), *Virginia Woolf. Eine Einführung*. Tübingen/Basel, p. 120.

[6] This parallel, not followed up any further, was presented by Erzgräber, *ibid.*, p. 124.

[7] In the same manner as was done in American research. Compare Majorie Garber (1993), Verhüllte Interessen. Transvestismus und kulturelle Angst. Frankfurt a.M., pp. 194-195.

[8] *Orlando* is quoted from the edition: Virginia Woolf (1995), *Orlando. A Biography*. London.

room into another; lives in the East as well as in the West. Additionally, life and death are merely separated by a permeable boundary. Healing sleep and trance take their place. But above all, Orlando has access to the traditionally male-dominated world of literature. A model is designed which is contrary to the usual exclusion experienced by a woman, especially from the sphere of language, literature, and the alphabet, much as is described in Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, her famous essay, which was written at almost the same time. She describes there the renowned scene of how she tries to enter the library at «Oxbridge» to look up a poem: «It was thus that I found myself walking with extreme rapidity across a grass plot. Instantly a man's figure rose to intercept me. Nor did I at first understand that the gesticulations of a curious-looking object, in a cut-away coat and evening shirt, were aimed at me. His face expressed horror and indignation. Instinct rather than reason came to my help; he was a Beadle; I was a woman. [...] Only the Fellows and Scholars are allowed here.»[9] In *Orlando*, Woolf makes literary traditions available and rewrites the history of literature. She writes her own library.

At the same time, however, this fantasy about destroying boundaries provides very precise information about sexual boundaries and their construction. Precisely the crossing of boundaries makes the cultural strategy of sexual differentiation comprehensible, as Orlando discovers primarily on her trip to England after becoming a woman. She wears women's clothing on the ship, which significantly is called «Enamoured Lady», and this results in the following considerations: «'Lord,' she thought, when she had recovered from her start, stretching herself out at length under her awning, 'this is a pleasant, lazy way of life, to be sure. But,' she thought, giving her legs a kick, 'these skirts are plaguy things to have about one's heels. Yet the stuff (flowered paduasoy) is the lovliest in the world. Never have I seen my own skin (here she laid her hand on her knee) look to such advantage as now. Could I, however, leap overboard and swim in clothes like these? No! Therefore, I should have to trust to the protection of a blue-jacket'» (O, 119). A little bit later, she has already realized which parts of her body she has to keep covered. «[A]rms, she had learnt already, have no such fatal effects as legs» (O, 123).

Orlando experiences the erotization of her body caused by the clothing and begins to reflect about the virtue of chastity, as it advances to the exclusive value of a woman in the epoch of Richardson, who promotes a rigid moral of virtue in his epistolary novels *Pamela* and *Clarissa*. In *Orlando*, the erotic effect caused by the dress is a continual reminder of the possibilities of seduction; it encourages while simultaneously licensing the woman with the moral doctrine of innocence in every deed and gesture – a doctrine that Woolf considers with cutting irony. Chastity is for women «their jewel, their centrepiece, which they run mad to protect, and die when ravished of» (O, 118). Richardson's Clarissa actually dies from the act of stolen innocence. On the contrary, in *Orlando*, the only threat is that of the sailor falling from the mast – presented as Man's Fall from grace – as she inadvertently «showed an inch or two of calf. A sailor on the mast, who happened to look down at the moment, started so violently that he missed his footing and only saved himself by the skin of his teeth» (O, 121). Clothing produces a type of channeled and taboo desire, reduces a woman's scope of deed and movement, and places the man in charge of the woman as his protectorate.

The fact that clothing creates gender, in other words, «real femininity», is also rethought.[10] Step by step, Orlando as a woman takes on «typical feminine characteristics»; she becomes vain,

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[9] Virginia Woolf (1954), *A Room of one's own*. London, p. 9.

[10] In an abstract sense, this explanation also makes the possible connection between psychoanalytical discourse and gender theory comprehensible. The former also describes the processes of projection that allow a woman to be a *container* – according to Rhode-Dachser (Christa Rhode-Dachser (1992): Expedition in den dunklen Kontinent. *Weiblichkeit im Diskurs der Psychoanalyse*. Berlin/Heidelberg/New York) – to be a screen – according to Felman and Weigel, inter alia. In this manner, gender theory incorporates the terminology of psychodynamic projection mechanisms, and yet attempts to gain non-pathologized leeway by exceeding the limits of these. The passive stance of projected attributions becomes the subversion of behavioral expectations.

anxious and renounces her poetic work. She becomes more modest with respect to her powers of comprehension, and it all results from her new way of dressing. As stated: «The change of clothes had, some philosophers will say, much to do with it. Vain trifles as they seem, clothes have, they say, more important offices than merely to keep us warm. They change our view of the world and the world's view of us» (O, 144).

But it does not remain solely on this level in which the words spew cleverly from the mouths of renowned philosophers, also a masquerade. A discussion is started in which the diverse standpoints are developed and summarized about gender as being an anatomical fact or a social construction. A correction is made to the preceding lines: «That is the view of some philosophers and wise ones, but on the whole, we incline to another. The difference between the sexes is, happily, one of great profundity. Clothes are but a symbol of something hid deep beneath. It was a change in Orlando herself that dictated her choice of a woman's dress and a woman's sex» (O, 145). Admittedly, the «female sex» can be selected, but it appears that an certain inner determination, a «deep beneath» cannot be resisted. But then after this ironical reestablishment of the essential characteristic of gender, it is said: «In every human being a vacillation from one sex to the other takes place, and often it is only the clothes that keep the male or female likeness, while underneath the sex is the very opposite of what it is above» (O, 145). In this passage, Woolf describes the mechanism of transvestitism, which demonstrates the constructive elements of gender identity.[11] If the «above» be any different than the «below», then the relations between «above», gender, and «below», sex is obviously random, and the hierarchical relationship between anatomy and cultural gender is eliminated. On the one hand, the argumentative parallelism in the use of «and» and «or», of representation and construction, reinforces the borderline between the two sexes. On the other hand, it also crosses this border in the act of transvestitism.[12] Transvestitism is dependent on the appearance, that clothing represents one's sex, in order to subvert it – this seems to be the clue of Woolf's argumentation.

But Virginia Woolf not only establishes gender as an effect of costume, but she also presents writing as a game of metaphors and a masquerade of style. The narration itself repeatedly takes on different literary roles only to dismantle them. For example, a Shakespearean discourse on love is ironically undermined when the lyrical form of an emphatic love poem is laconically recapitulated. As stated: «And what the poets said in rhyme, the young translated into practice. Girls were roses, and their seasons were short as the flowers'. Plucked they must be before nightfall; for the day was brief and the day was all» (O, 22). Additionally, well-known topics of literary tradition are taken up, but then are dropped again out of boredom after a brief variation. The poet is the one who destroys illusions, but «[i]llusions are to the soul what atmosphere is to the earth. [...] Life is a dream. 'Tis waking that kills us. He who robs us of our dreams robs us of our life – (and so on for six pages if you will, but the style is tedious and may well be dropped» (O, 156). Writing becomes equivalent to the wearing of costumes. The gesture of *drag*, which is put in scene with Orlando's masquerading, becomes very explicitly a poetics of *rags* and costumes. Clothing becomes the central metaphor of an immanent literary theory that bids farewell to the discourse of identity as well as to language as a system of reference and denotation. Language is not defined as describing reality, not as referring to a «significat», similar to the way transvestitism undermines the concept of essentially determined gender. The narrator, who also repeatedly changes poses and does not maintain traditional biographical neutrality,[13] reflects about the inner passion of human beings: «[N]ature, who has so much to answer for besides the perhaps unwieldy length of this sentence, has

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[11] This expression reformulates the gesture of transvestitism, as Butler describes it; Judith Butler (1991), *Das Unbehagen der Geschlechter*. Frankfurt a.M., p. 202.

[12] Although Orlando physically becomes a woman, which is actually more transsexual than transvestite, this physical transformation is principally used to illustrate sex as a performance. Incidentally, Woolf showed a lively interest in sex change; Erzgräber, *ibid.*, p. 123.

[13] This is pointed out by Bowlby, *ibid.*, p. 50.

further complicated her task and added to our confusion by providing not only a perfect rag-bag of odds and ends within us – a piece of a policeman's trousers lying cheek by jowl with Queen Alexandra's wedding veil – but has contrived that the whole assortment shall be lightly stitched together by a single thread. [...] Thus, the most ordinary movement in the world, such as sitting down at a table and pulling the inkstand towards one, may agitate a thousand odd, disconnected fragments, now bright, now dim, hanging and bobbing and dipping and flaunting, like the underlinen of a family of fourteen on a line in a gale of wind» (O, 61). Nature is revealed as an ideological argument that should make up for the disproportion of the literary construct, for the excessively long sentence. Additionally associations and digressions, a random collection of scraps of life appear in the place of coherent life. The biographical writing and the gender discourse are interlocked by the metaphors of rags and costumes. Correspondingly, the rhetorical tradition has used the clothing metaphor to describe the strategies of metaphors themselves since the time of Aristotle.[14]

However, the image creator and the image receiver are repeatedly interchangeable in Woolf's novel, so that the «hierarchy» of literal and figurative meaning is suspended on the same level as that of the clothing hierarchy of «above» and «below».[15] Correspondingly, language is repeatedly shown as exclusively metaphoric in *Orlando*; it can transform everything into something else but supplies no referential link like gender does not refer to a anatomic essence. The variations of metaphors are on the one hand due to the fact, that a lot of them have become tedious and problematic. But, on the other hand, these variations of metaphors, in a positive way, mean that everything can be transformed into something else. When Orlando for example lives with the gypsies, she contemplates the landscape with her own poetic view: «There were mountains; there were valleys; there were streams. She climbed the mountains; roamed the valleys; sat on the banks of the streams. She likened the hills to ramparts, to the breasts of doves, and the flanks of kine. She compared the flowers to enamel and the turf to Turkey rugs worn thin. Trees were withered hags, and sheep were grey boulders. Everything, in fact, was something else» (O, 110). The metaphoric description eliminates the hierarchy between *proprie* expression and the figurative (in the above passage, the rocks can transform into animal and vice versa) in the same way as the transvestitism eliminates the supposed hierarchy between sex and gender and thus the essential definition of anatomical sex.

I conclude: In the same way as the referentiality of language in which everything can only be described approximately and remains figurative, cross-dressing disturbs the binary gender matrix, which seems to be based upon anatomical facts. Although language, like clothing, creates the appearance of an essence, of «below», the significat, the essence, the pre-cultural, anatomic sex is, as Woolf's novel show, a result of language games and costumes, of dressing and metaphors. Androgyny, which demonstrates the constitutional mechanism of gender as a cultural product, equals linguistic ambiguity, which reveals the supposed referentiality to be a deception.[16] Androgyny, according to Roland Barthes in *S/Z*, tears down the wall of the antithesis. In her essay, *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf elevates these thoughts into the poetics of androgyny.

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[14] Compare Alexander Demandt (1978), *Metaphern für Geschichte. Sprachbilder und Gleichnisse im historisch-politischen Denken*. München, p. 6 et seq.

[15] Compare Elfi Bettinger (1993), *Das umkämpfte Bild. Zur Metapher bei Virginia Woolf*. Stuttgart/Weimar, p. 56.

[16] Caughie summarizes her convincing interpretation as follows: «Androgyny reflects the basic ambiguity, not only a sexual ambiguity, but a textual one as well.» Caughie, *ibid.*, p. 79.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 213-220

«Girl of my dreams»: Harry Angel's epiphany from Johnny Favorite's «Haunting melody» in Alan Parker's *Angel Heart*

MARCIA GREEN (*)

«What is it that listening, then, seeks to decipher?»
Roland Barthes

If it is true that the devil has all the good tunes, then in Alan Parker's film, *Angel Heart*, the devil also knows how to use these tunes to his advantage. In the film, based on the novel, *Fallen Angel*, by William Hjortsberg, the private investigator Harry Angel is hired in 1955 by Mr. Louis Cyphre to find a singer named Johnny Favorite. Apparently the entrepreneurial Mr. Cyphre had helped out Johnny Favorite at the beginning of his singing career and now it seems Johnny has reneged on his contract with Mr. Cyphre. On his way to their initial encounter, Harry, as he enters the building, is inundated by a voice that alludes to his being Johnny. «Permit me to be transmittable! Permit me to be reincarnatable! Permit me to be reproducible!» are the words Pastor John preaches to his congregation as Harry enters the building on his way to meet Louis Cyphre. These words would be music to Johnny's ears since he was permitted to utilize these techniques of transmutation to change his identity. However, for Harry, who has repressed his Johnny-ness, these words fall on deaf ears.

When they first meet, Cyphre asks to see Harry's identification. Harry, in turn, asks why Cyphre chose him for the case. Of course, Cyphre cannot answer the question because he would have to say,

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«You are Johnny Favorite. You killed Harry Angel. You ate his heart in order to change your identity. You thought that by doing this you could get out of your contract with me, Lucifer. But I found you, Johnny. And now, I want your soul». Instead when Cyphre doesn't immediately answer, Harry infers that the reason Cyphre chose him was because his name begins with an «A» and it was listed first in the phone book and since that is how he got his other clients, he thought perhaps that was how Cyphre went about choosing him. But after Harry finishes his nervous chatter, Cyphre responds with only two words – «Johnny Favorite». The mention of this name elicits no response. So far it seems Harry really doesn't have a clue about Cyphre's secret motive for choosing him. Unfortunately for Mr. Cyphre, Harry Angel doesn't really handle «people» cases and to complicate matters even more, Harry claims never to have heard of the famous crooner Johnny Favorite; in fact, he claims he has never even heard one of Johnny Favorite's tunes. It is obvious that Harry is not a music lover and consequently would not be motivated to take this case but Cyphre's eccentric manner and perhaps the special bond that both Harry and Johnny share – both were wounded in the war – induces Harry to agree to at least «check it out».

Cyphre, himself, at the end of the film, gloats that he played a significant role in personally guiding Harry throughout the investigation and he began doing this at their initial meeting. Cyphre, through his cryptic demeanor, pretentious speaking voice, and, in particular, his menacing parting words, «It's funny: I have a feeling I've met you before», presents himself as chimera – this, in and of itself, will haunt Harry. But words alone aren't the only things that will haunt Harry. There will be haunting memories of a New Year's celebration in Times Square, a staircase, a singular red window shade, rotating fans, descending elevators, bloody walls, a figure veiled in black, Harry's fear of chickens and even his own reflection. As they steadily increase and invade more of his conscious thoughts, these haunting verbal and visual memories begin to perturb Harry.

Cyphre does not stop here. He shrewdly incorporates auditory memories as well, to haunt Harry into reaching the realization that he is Johnny. Multiple times Cyphre's voice is heard whispering the names Johnny and Harry in succession accompanied by the sound of a beating heart and the voices of a chorus singing the words to the opening phrase of the *Requiem* Mass – the Mass for the Dead. But one of Cyphre's most ingenious methods of having Harry experience a Johnny memory is by introducing into Harry's unconscious a tune that was a favorite of Johnny's. And the first time Harry encounters this tune is immediately after his initial meeting with Cyphre.

As Harry drives his car towards the Sarah Dodds Harvest Memorial Clinic, he begins recalling Cyphre's words. «Do you, by chance, remember the name Johnny Favorite? His real name was Liebling. My interest in Johnny is only in finding out if he's alive or if he's dead.» Harry has already admitted that he has never heard of Johnny Favorite and that he doesn't know any of his songs. Yet Harry's own actions betray him. While he is driving, he whistles one of Johnny Favorite's tunes. His whistling is accompanied by a piano (an instrument which he has already heard accompanying Pastor John's service) and a saxophone (an instument whose sound is often likened to that of a human voice). At first we might think that Harry is listening to his car radio but this is not the case. However, the sound from the instruments is not exactly a musical sound, that is, a professional-sounding arrangement which would be more conducive to being played on the radio. Instead, the two instruments sound as if their players were playing inside Harry's head, amateurs like Harry who are trying to pick out, one by one, the notes of the Johnny Favorite tune. Harry, on the other hand, is oblivious to the tune he is whistling. In fact, he is even oblivious to the fact that he is whistling. For the average day to day whistler, the act of whistling is an unconscious act. Whistlers, when interrupted, often respond with the claim of not realizing that they were whistling or, when asked what tune they were whistling, cannot remember either whistling or the tune. Since whistling is such an unconscious act, Louis Cyphre's technique of using this melody to reveal to us the actual identity of Harry is quite sinister – even brilliant. If Harry claims never to have heard a Johnny Favorite tune, how can he suddenly be whistling one? «Psychology asserts that tone images are grasped earlier than word images, and that the memory for the first is more tenacious than for the latter. It is likely that this is one of the factors responsible for the fact that our memory frequently retains a melody after we have forgotten the text

of the song» (Reik 22). At least at this point in his investigation, Harry's repressed Johnny-ness must be doing the whistling for him.

Even more portentous is the manner in which this tune is used in the film. It invades the film's score in multiple ways. Sometimes fragments of the tune waft in and out during particular scenes but, as with this first example, there are germane scenes during which the entire tune is heard. Not until Harry's postcoital scene with Epiphany near the end of the film do either the audience or Harry realize the significance of the tune belonging to Johnny as well as the reason this particular tune is used to haunt Harry. We, the audience, along with Harry, must both trace and experience the ramifications of this haunting melody throughout his investigation. And Cyphre is assured that Harry will remember his Johnny-ness since «remembrances of certain places and persons... are connected with compositions of mediocre value or even cheap tunes» (Reik 105). But even though this haunting melody may be thought to be «trifling and insignificant... the emotions and problems expressed in its emergence are always meaningful. They reflect the concealed basic demands of the drives and fears of the person and seek to convey his most important interests and impulses» (Reik 167). And it seems that Harry/ Johnny's basic drive and fear is that the remaining accomplices who had witnessed Johnny's transformation may reveal his identity and they must now be eliminated. It will be Harry's curiosity – like Oedipus – that will propel him «to undertake a voyage of discovery into that dark continent, the self» (Reik 219). And he begins with Dr. Fowler.

Dissatisfied by Dr. Fowler's responses to his questions, Harry uses a skeleton key to lock Fowler inside his bedroom. Harry does this in the hopes that Fowler will be more forthcoming with some answers after being separated from his morphine cocktail. Harry spends this time at a diner sitting at the counter. He extinguishes a cigarette and examines his cigarette pack, finding it empty. Next to the empty pack is the skeleton key that Harry used to lock up Fowler. His finger moves to the base of the key and as he touches it, we hear a low supplicating exhalation, sounding suspiciously like Cyphre's voice. Harry picks up the key and fondles it in his hand as the piano plays the haunting Johnny Favorite tune. Since we, the audience, are privy to all of Harry's verbal and visual recollections of the Johnny-ness inside him, then it is reasonable to believe that the tune on the piano that we are hearing is precisely what Harry, himself, is hearing in his head at that very moment. Further, by having Harry fondle a key while he is hearing the tune creates the association which will be revealed at the end, that the tune holds the key to the question, «Where is Johnny?» When the tune is finished, Harry leaves the diner and goes back to Fowler's room and finds him dead – shot in the eye with his own pistol. As Harry begins to wipe his fingerprints off the premises, fragments of the tune are heard being played on the sax.

When Harry ventures out to Coney Island to investigate the Madam Zora/Margaret Krusemark/ Johnny Favorite connection, a curious auditory moment occurs. Izzy's wife (who is wading in the ocean's cold waters for medicinal purposes) offers to sing a Johnny Favorite tune for Harry. As she begins singing, «I cried for you...», Harry bristles, lifts his coat collar up around his ears and hastily retreats. Why doesn't he want to hear a Johnny Favorite tune? After all, it might help with his investigation. But perhaps Harry has no control in the matter since it may be Johnny, the crooner with the «golden tonsils», who is cringing at the sound of Izzy's wife unmusically singing one of his tunes. Or it may be that after hearing a bit of the tune, «I cried for you», Harry realizes that it is not the tune that has been haunting him and he is not interested in hearing it. However, even if Harry was consciously trying to avoid hearing this Johnny Favorite tune, when he travels to New Orleans to continue his investigation, an intrumental version of the tune, «I cried for you», is haunting him as he arrives at the train station.

In the uncanny atmosphere of New Orleans, Harry not only remains haunted by Johnny Favorite's hit tune, but he will be virtually ensnared by the sounds of the «devil's music» – a euphemistic reference to the blues. His unconscious mind will be accosted by the voices of blues singers who are rumored to be «associated with the Devil because they celebrate those dimensions of human existence considered evil and immoral...» (Davis 124). Louis Cyphre, maestro of the blues, sees to it that his music – «the devil's music» – continuously wafts in and out of Harry's consciousness. Cyphre's meth-

od is to use blues singers as the sirens who, through their enticing voices, reveal Harry/Johnny's «compulsively self-destructive tendencies» and represent through their songs the «worldly and satanic temptation» that seduced Johnny Favorite in the first place (*Herder* 174). Harry hears Bessie Smith sing «Honey Man Blues» – perhaps referring to the honeyed «golden tonsils» that Johnny Favorite was said to have possessed. As Harry interviews blues singer Toots Sweet at the Red Rooster club, a female blues singer takes the stage and in the background sings a telling song, «The Right Key, but the Wrong Keyhole». Could this tune be indirectly communicating the suggestion that Toots is not the right person to know the answer to the question, «Where is Johnny Favorite?» Perhaps Harry needs to find Cyphre's answer by following his female leads? Before Harry goes to the Red Rooster, Epiphany tells him that her mother, Evangeline Proudfoot (Johnny Favorite's secret love) had a «lot of boyfriends». Inside the Red Rooster, Harry listens as Toots Sweet is heard singing «Rainy Rainy Day». The song evokes Toots' feeling of being jilted by his «jivin'» female lover. Harry listens to the song Toots sings: could Evangeline have jilted Toots for Johnny? Or could it have been the other way around, since Toots practiced voodoo with both Epiphany and her mother? In any case, later that night (after following Toots to a voodoo ceremony where Epiphany serves as the mambo priestess and listening to the rhythmically charged sounds of the voodoo ritual) a possessed Harry/Johnny returns to Toots Sweet's residence and castrates him. The listening that Harry/Johnny has been doing is beginning to speak volumes about his identity.

Harry has come to New Orleans to find Johnny Favorite's fiancee, Margaret Krusemark. When he sees a woman matching her description, he follows her onto a trolley car. Harry takes a seat a few rows behind and watches her. We, the audience, know Harry is on the right track and that the woman he is following is in some way involved with Johnny because the entire ride is accompanied by the sound of the piano playing Johnny Favorite's haunting tune. Later, when Harry enters Margaret's apartment under the pretense of wanting his fortune told, he sits on the piano bench. He turns around towards the piano and reaches for a sheathed dagger. He inspects the dagger and as he turns back around to return the dagger to its place at the top of the piano, his fingers brush the low keys of the piano and he begins to pick out the notes of the first part of the hauntingly familiar Johnny Favorite tune that up until now he has only whistled or heard in his mind's ear. This prompts Margaret to ask, «You play the piano?» «No, not exactly», he responds. «Sing?» she asks. «Well, I can carry a tune, but not really.» The tune which Harry kept internalized has for the first time become externalized. Harry has transferred the tune from the inside to the outside of himself. He made the tune audible and created a concrete external sound played by him on an actual piano. Does he do this to find out if Margaret knows the tune and could clue him in to its meaning? Or is Harry's manipulation of the piano keys designed to illuminate the correlation between the tune and its function as the ultimate key to the mystery of «Where is Johnny?»

Even when Harry isn't being haunted by the sound of the tune, it is by now so ingrained in his consciousness that he makes allusions to it. Harry walks into a bar where a piano and sax combo are playing music and proceeds towards the phone booth to dial Margaret Krusemark's number. The saxophone player begins walking around and passing the hat. The camera focuses on Harry as he looks into the mirror and begins to have a rapid series of the visual images which have been haunting him. Eerie sounds accompany theses scenes of the descending elevator; Times Square on New Year's; Harry's reflection; a red window shade and revolving fan; another shot of the descending elevator with Harry as a passenger; back to Times Square. The camera now begins to close in on the scenes of the red window shade; a sailor and a woman kissing in Times Square; Harry's reflection; and a soldier in Times Square. Harry is concentrating on his reflection in the mirror and is unaware of the saxophonist approaching him from behind. He has therefore placed himself in the same position as the soldier in his flashback. We next see a black hand reaching towards Harry's back as a white hand reaches and taps the soldier's shoulder. The soldier slowly begins to turn around and reveals a portion of his face. Suddenly, the camera shifts back to the black hand tugging at Harry's back. As a startled Harry turns around, the saxophone player asks, «Hey, man! Ya wanna tune?» A cynical smile sweeps across Harry's face as he answers, «Yeah, I gotta tune for ya!» And for the first time, Harry is consciously

acknowledging the existence of the haunting melody; he is aware that it has some significance, but as yet he cannot put it into any kind of context. As Reik notes, «[music] does not emerge from the flow of conscious thought, but from the stream of preconsciousness.... [T]unes appear... either as still unformulated thought germs or as heralds of thoughts that [are] still on the preverbal level» (15). As a musical obsession, Johnny's hit tune is illuminating in many ways. As with all haunting melodies, it «invade[s] and usurp[s] the mental sphere against resistance, and occup[ies] its realm.... The victim does not know and cannot tell us why this particular melody is pursuing him. He often cannot even identify the tune that at a certain time came unasked and unwanted into his thought and behaved after its intrusion as if it were there to stay, exactly as do obsessive thoughts» (Reik 166).

Fallen angel that he is, even Cyphre is haunted by melodies from his own past and he generously shares them with Harry. Already we and Harry have heard voices singing the words to the beginning of the *Requiem* Mass. «*Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine: Et lux perpetua luceat eis.*» [Lord, grant them rest. And let perpetual light shine upon them.] Harry hears this music and text during his series of flashbacks as well as during his incestuous encounter with his daughter, Epiphany. The *Requiem* is being used to eulogize Johnny's murder victims. And when we hear that this *Requiem* is often played concurrently with the saxophone's rendition of Johnny's tune, then there is no doubt that Johnny Favorite is the murderer. Alas, Cyphre continues to be nostalgic for the music he remembers from his former life as an angel. This is especially evident during the scene where Harry meets with Cyphre in a New Orleans church. Harry enters through a side door near the front of the church. He walks past a religious service in progress and proceeds directly to the back of the church where Cyphre, illuminated from behind by the flickering fire of the candles, is waiting for him. «I'm so glad you could come», says Cyphre – extending his hand towards Harry as if Harry is being welcomed into Cyphre's home. (Since the church where they meet is St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans, then perhaps Louis Cyphre can claim it as a nominal home. After all, in Goethe's *Faust*, Mephistopheles goes directly into heaven to have a conversation with the Lord about a particular bet they will be making for Faust's soul.) The choir is singing a Latin hymn known as *Pange Lingua*. This hymn is primarily associated with Holy Week – especially Holy Thursday and Good Friday, and with the celebration known as *Corpus Christi* – Body of Christ.

During all of these solemn services, the words and music of the *Pange Lingua* are sung and serve to remind the faithful of the events of Christ's life beginning with his being born of a Virgin and more importantly, to remind them of the events of the Last Supper. On Holy Thursday it is sung as a processional hymn commemorating the events of the Last Supper where Christ offers his own body and blood as food to be eaten by his disciples. If it were indeed Holy Thursday, then Cyphre might be using this hymn to stimulate Harry to remember his Johnny-ness. (We recall that Johnny, in a desperate attempt to escape from his pact with Louis Cyphre, had eaten the still beating heart of the soldier, Harry Angel, and assumed his identity.) On Good Friday the hymn is sung at the ceremony of the Adoration of the Cross – once again, recalling the events of Christ's life, including the eating of his body and blood. From Good Friday through Holy Saturday, in order to signify the death of Christ and his absence from the life of the Church, the tabernacle door – the sacred residing place of the host – is left open, revealing an empty space where once Christ's body resided. This certainly would provide an explanation for why Louis Cyphre (the devil) could meet with Harry inside a church – technically, Christ would not return until Easter morning. But, frankly, I don't think it matters to Louis Cyphre whether Christ would be in residence or not since, during his conversation with Harry inside the church, Cyphre freely quotes from the Scriptures to illustrate his penchant for «old fashioned ideas about honor. You know – 'an eye for an eye.' Things like that.»

The impish, impudent Cyphre chooses his religious services wisely. The actual service being commemorated is the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. We know this because the priest is vested in a white cope and the choir sings a particular section of the *Pange Lingua* – the *Tantum Ergo*. The *Tantum Ergo* – a special hymn within the *Pange Lingua* – is formed by using only the last two stanzas of the *Pange Lingua*. The Latin text of the *Tantum Ergo* calls on the faithful to adore the Body of Christ; to have the old law surrender to the new; and to keep the faith of their convictions when even

their senses may deceive them. Of course, Cyphre knows that Harry's senses are deceiving him and that Harry will eventually surrender to the law of identity – that he is Johnny Favorite.

The second verse begins with the words, *Genitori, Genitoque*, and during this verse, God, the Father, and God, the Son, are to be honored and praised equally for all the ages since they are to be recognized as being one and the same. (Here, too, the words signify a striking resemblance to Harry's situation. If the Father and Son, two seemingly separate beings, are to be conceived as one being, then it is certainly only a matter of time before Harry realizes that he, too, is harboring Johnny, a second being inside of himself.) Cyphre seems to be using the music and words of the hymn to create «musical associations... with ideas *in statu nascendi*, with thought embryos or vague images» (Reik 91).

This sacrosanct meeting is reminiscent of a confession. Harry confesses to Cyphre that there have been three murders and that he believes that Johnny is committing these murders. The problem for Harry is that if he isn't careful, the police will accuse *him* of all of these murders and he will be executed. Harry's use of foul language in the church is twice reprimanded by Cyphre and after a second reprimand, Harry confesses that he doesn't like churches because they give him the creeps. Cyphre cynically asks, «Are you an atheist?» «Yes, I am. I'm from Brooklyn», responds Harry as he turns away from Cyphre and looks at the front of the church. He sees the priest leave after finishing the service. And the only item which remains on the altar is the gold encrusted, ornately jeweled monstrance containing the «Body of Christ». Louis Cyphre (who, because of his former close association with being at one with the «*Genitori*», has long ago recognized his own identity outside of his heavenly Father's) is now, once again, in the Lord's presence, «betting» that Harry will acknowledge the identity he has repressed – resulting in Louis Cyphre getting Johnny's soul.

As we have seen, Cyphre does not limit himself to the use of one haunting melody. He is particularly clever in his application of another tune which triggers memories of places and persons at a particular moment in time. As Harry flashes back to Times Square and the New Year of 1943, a saxophone accompanies the action, playing a different but very conspicuous tune – «Auld Lang Syne». The tune is so familiar to everyone that we, and perhaps even Harry, can automatically recite the words: «Should auld acquaintance be forgot,/ And never brought to mind?/ Should auld acquaintance be forgot,/ And days o' lang syne?» (Robert Burns, 1796). But it is highly unlikely that Harry would recognize the significance of the tune – especially as it relates to his own – that is, the real Harry's – death. It is quite clear that the first two lines of the song work in opposition to Harry's investigation. His «auld acquaintance» must be «brought to mind» or else he will never know that he is Johnny. But this time the haunting melody is not meant to recall Johnny. Instead, it is used to keep the real face of the sacrificial Harry Angel repressed. Since the song poses the question, «Should auld acquaintance be forgot,/ And never brought to mind?» The answer for Harry and us is yes. For neither we, nor Harry, ever see the face of the young unfortunate soldier, named Harry Angel, who loses his life on New Year's 1943.

Johnny – via his haunting hit tune – seems to be more steadily and aggressively emerging from Harry's repression of him. When Epiphany arrives unannounced at Harry's rooming house door, the conversation ultimately turns into a blood dripping, orgiastically orchestrated, «Bloodmare» – as the credits on the soundtrack refer to it. But there are a number of musical associations going on during this evocative scene that will culminate in a startling revelation for Harry. The rhythm and blues tune, «Soul on Fire», is playing as Epiphany turns the radio on in Harry's room and it provides Cyphre with another opportunity to use his «devil music» to transfer Harry's focus onto Johnny's existence. The first words we hear are, «Tom, Dick and Harry aren't for me... You're the only one». Since Harry is one among the three men who are not capable of setting a «soul on fire», then the only one who is, of course, is Johnny. And if Cyphre catches up with him, Johnny's «soul [will be] on fire» for eternity. The lyrics of the song proclaim, «No more heartache/ No more heartbreak.../ Have my soul, my love, my heart.../ You set my soul on fire/ And I really had my fun».

Johnny, as Harry, has one more fling left in him before his soul will be set on fire in earnest. The sex between Harry and Epiphany is wild, frenetic, furious, and violent. It ends with Epiphany screaming for her life as Harry begins strangling her. Disturbed by his actions, Harry leaves the bed; he walks

over to the mirror and with his fist shatters the glass along with his reflection. The two New Orleans cops who are investigating the deaths of Toots Sweet and Margaret Krusemark knock at the door and Harry leaves his room to talk with them. After their conversation, Harry steps back into the room and hears Epiphany, now soaking in his bathtub, singing a song. «Girl of my dreams, I love you. / Honest, I do. / You are so sweet. / If I could just hold your charms, /Again, in my arms. / Life...» Epiphany stops singing as Harry comes near the tub and asks, «What's that tune you're singin'?» «You don't know it?» she says. «It's one by Johnny Favorite. My mom used to sing it to me all the time.» Harry's vacant expression causes Epiphany to ask, «You okay?» Harry starts moving slowly away from her, and she again sings the lines, «If I could just hold your charms, /Again, in my arms». Harry nears the shattered mirror, and just as he sees his fragmented reflection in the shards of shattered glass, Epiphany finishes the last line of the song, «Life would be complete». Harry, for the first time, hears the words to the tune that has been haunting him throughout his investigation. We know that Epiphany is the daughter of Johnny Favorite and so Harry has just committed incest. Things are starting to come together for Harry's investigation and as they do, Harry as Johnny continues to try to repress them – perhaps even to the point of attempting to strangle Epiphany before she could reveal the content and context of the tune. Harry's identity is shattering and soon the riddle of Johnny Favorite will be complete. But it will be Louis Cyphre who will introduce Harry to his own true voice.

«I know who I am! I know who I am!» is what Harry Angel's voice agonizingly screams over and over as he fondles the dog tags which bear his name. He perhaps thinks that by repeating this phrase the inevitable truth that he is Johnny Favorite will not prove correct and that he may yet continue to be Harry Angel. His reflection in the mirror confirms that he is still the person he believes is Harry. But Louis Cyphre is there to witness Harry Angel's epiphany and tauntingly offers the following words of wisdom from *Oedipus Rex*; «'Alas, how terrible is wisdom when it brings no profit to the man that's wise,' Johnny.» Harry continues to examine his reflection in a mirror while repeating the phrase, «I know who I am!» Sensing Harry's trepidation about accepting his real identity as Johnny Favorite, Cyphre offers one last documented source to reveal to Harry his Johnny-ness. Cyphre reaches for a Vocalion recording of Johnny Favorite singing his big hit song, «Girl of My Dreams». Why does Louis Cyphre play one of Johnny's records? Is it because of his devilish nature? Or is it because Cyphre always knew that this melody was so ingrained as a part of Johnny that even in his alternative identity as Harry, Johnny's melody would remain as a preconscious thought? Harry is still seeing the face he knows as Harry's in the mirror. But it is his hearing of his own real voice – the voice of Johnny Favorite – that causes his dissociation. As he listens to his voice, Harry – now, once again, Johnny – is at long last conscious of murdering all of his accomplices – the only people who were witnesses to the murder of Harry Angel. But there is more to this scene than meets the ear.

Cyphre's vocation, as the devil, necessitates his being an expert in the fine art of listening. Cyphre admits this himself when, in his other famous role as Mephistophilis, in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, he explains, «For when we hear one rack the name of God,/ Abjure the Scriptures and his savior Christ,/ We fly in hope to get his glorious soul./ Nor will we come unless he use such means/ ...Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring/ Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity/ And pray devoutly to the prince of hell» (I.iii.46-53). Cyphre's only means, then, of accruing his clients is by listening for their conjuring voices. By making Johnny listen to his own voice, Cyphre is exposing him to his secret self – «that which, concealed in reality, can reach human consciousness only through a code, which serves simultaneously to encipher and to decipher that reality» (Barthes 249). Cyphre, from experienced listening, knows that «to listen is to adopt an attitude of decoding what is obscure, blurred, or mute, in order to make available to consciousness the 'underside' of meaning (what is experienced, postulated, intentionalized as hidden)» (Barthes 249). Cyphre, then, is helping Johnny listen for an even deeper repressed identity than simply being Johnny Favorite.

The Vocalion label, which recorded Johnny's voice, may hold the true reason for Cyphre playing the recording. Vocalion was one of the four major «race» labels – recording black artists. One of Vocalion's most famous clients was the blues singer Robert Johnson who, legend has it, made a pact with the devil and was haunted by this theme in his music. «It could have been... that it was the black arts

that killed him», said his friend Johnny Shines. As Sam Charters writes, «He believed in the devil – or so it seems from his blues that he believed in the devil – something is there. In six of his blues he mentions the devil, or the supernatural – voodoo, and it seemed to force its presence on some of his greatest music» (22). Would this mean that Johnny Favorite was a black jazz singer who repressed his ethnicity and who – as Harry Angel – was trying to «pass» for white?

Harry does a lot of complaining about having to go back to Harlem. Harlem is where he meets with Cyphre; finds the voodoo shrine; and visits the nursing home where Johnny Favorite's band leader, Spider Simpson, resides. Subsequently Harry returns to his office and uses a tape recorder to record the progress of his investigation. As he speaks into the microphone – his manner uncannily resembling that of a singer during a recording session – he records the fact that Johnny was keeping company with Margaret Krusemark, a white socialite, but he decides to edit out the fact that Harry also had a «secret love» – the black Evangeline Proudfoot, Epiphany's mother. If all of these observations are not sufficient to make us wonder about the veracity of Johnny's ethnicity, then Harry leaves us no doubt when he boards the trolley in New Orleans and sits in the section labeled, «For Colored Patrons Only». As Freud writes, in his essay on «The 'Uncanny'», «[I]t is only this factor of involuntary repetition which surrounds what would otherwise be innocent enough with an uncanny atmosphere, and forces upon us the idea of something fateful and inescapable when otherwise we should have spoken only of 'chance'» (237).

Along with Evangeline, Epiphany, Margaret Krusemark and the sirens of the blues, there is another female – the woman shrouded in black – who has also been haunting Harry/Johnny. Rushing back to his room after his final meeting with Louis Cyphre, Harry/Johnny runs past the veiled woman who is sitting on the outside walkway near his room. On two previous occasions, Harry has even attempted to approach this woman to ascertain her identity but his attempts have always been thwarted – first by two men in Pastor John's church and then as he is awakened from a nightmare by the two New Orleans detectives who have come to question him about the murder of Toots Sweet. This time, however, he is completely oblivious to her presence. It is ironic that he runs past her because this time she sits unveiled – revealing her identity. Harry/Johnny does not see that the face belongs to Louis Cyphre – the true girl of Johnny's dreams – the angel of death – whose haunting melody proclaims: «destiny knocks at the door of conscious thinking» (Reik 168).

But when Harry/Johnny finally reaches his room, he leaves the door open, permitting the black shrouded Cyphre to hear Johnny's last confession. When Detective Sterne tells Harry/Johnny, «You're gonna burn for this, Angel», Cyphre hears Johnny's words, «I know – in hell», and with this Johnny's voice becomes music to Cyphre's ears.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 221-228

The death-and-rebirth archetype in poetry

An homage to Maud Bodkin

REUVEN TSUR (*)

This paper contrasts two critical approaches to Jungian archetypes in literature: the «this-stands-for-that» approach and the «emotional pattern» approach. The former turns the work into a shallow allegory; only the latter can account for the emotional appeal of archetypes in poetry.[1] The former is represented by, e.g., Eva Metman's reading of *Waiting for Godot*; the latter by, e.g., Maud Bodkin's discussion of the «Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner». In *Godot*, «in Lucky [...] we can see the destroyed contact with the creative sources of the psyche»; there is «a mutual sado-masochistic relationship between himself and Pozzo», which is «a mutual fixation» (Metman, 1965: 123). «The wish to control (Pozzo) and the wish to be protected (Lucky) remain inseparable. So do the impotence of consciousness (Vladimir) and the power of unconsciousness (Estragon)» (ibid., 132).[2] By contrast, Bodkin (1963: 4) says, «The hypothesis to be examined is that in poetry we may identify themes

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[1] I have elsewhere elaborated my own views on the «emotional pattern» approach to archetypes at great length (Tsur, 1992: 317-346).

[2] I have elsewhere criticised at great length Metman's reading of this play (Tsur, 1975; 1992: 471-489). Here, as a more detailed example of her approach I am quoting only the following two paragraphs, without comment.

> From all this we may gather that Godot has several traits in common with the image of God as we know it from the Old and New Testaments. His white beard reminds one of God's old-father aspect. His irrational preference for one brother recalls Jehovah's treatment of Cain and Abel; so does his power to punish those who would dare drop him. The discrimination between goatherd and shepherd is reminiscent of the Son of God as the ultimate judge; as a savior for whom men wait and wait, he might well be meant as a cynical comment on the second coming of Christ; while his doing nothing might be an equally cynical reflection concerning men's forlorn state. [...]
>
> Whereas Matthew (25.33) says: «And he shall seat the sheep on his right hand, but goats on the left», in the play it is the shepherd who is beaten and the goatherd who is favored. What Vladimir and Estragon expect from Godot is food and shelter, and goats are motherly, milk-providing animals. In antiquity even male goats among the deities, like Pan and Dionysos, have their origin in the cult of the great mother and the matriarchal mysteries, later to become devils (Metman, 1965: 125).

having a particular form or pattern which persists amid variation from age to age, and which corresponds to a pattern or configuration of emotional tendencies in the minds of those who are stirred by the theme». This approach enables Bodkin to account for the emotional appeal of a work by pointing out sequences and oppositions in the explicitly presented meanings of a poem, in stead of reading into them «hidden meanings». One of the most illuminating passages in her analysis of Coleridge's «Ancient Mariner» is that in which she compares two contrasting descriptions of the ship, one of its being in a state of stagnation, stuck, with the «very deep» rotting, underneath; the other, by contrast, indicating fast movement, when the ship glides homewards with full speed. Wittgenstein speaks of «aspect switching», which is similar to the ability to understand the request to pronounce the word «till» and mean it as a verb. The approach advocated here directs attention to certain *aspects* of the explicit contents and subsumes them in an emotional pattern. The contrast between stagnation and fast movement, between draught and rotting sea on the one hand and rain and refreshing water on the other, is indisputably there in the poem, and the reader may directly perceive it. The change occurs when the Mariner *perceives* the many «crawling slimy things» in the depth of the sea as beautiful, and blesses them «unaware». The «slimy things» contain the seeds of «new life».

«The death and rebirth archetype» contains three stages: (1) normal life, in which destructive tensions build up; (2) «descent» to the depth of the sea or the earth, to a state of Hell or Death, which already contains the seeds of «new life»; (3) «ascent» to a «higher» state, which usually involves purification, self-assertion, refreshening, leading to individuation. This sequence usually materialises in a sequence of spatial images described by Bodkin as follows: «Within the image-sequence examined the pattern appears of a movement, downward, or inward, the earth's centre, or a cessation of movement – a physical change which, as we urge a metaphor closer to the impalpable forces of life and soul, appears also a transition toward severed relation with the outer world, and, it may be, toward disintegration and death. This element in the pattern is balanced by a movement upward and outward – an expansion or outburst of activity, a transition toward reintegration and life-renewal» (Bodkin, 1963: 54).

This paper will show that Baudelaire's sonnet «Recueillement» re-enacts this archetypal pattern underlying (according to Bodkin) Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and Coleridge's «Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner» and «Kubla Khan». It is, metaphorically speaking, the age-old theme of descending to Hell and ascending to Paradise; or, the pattern of Death and Rebirth. Clarence's nightmare in the Tower prison in *Richard III.* re-enacts only the first part of this pattern, falling into the sea from the board of a ship, and then being tortured by the spirits of all those against whom he had committed perjury or some other crime. The dream does, nevertheless, lead to an atmosphere that contains the seeds of purification. This process is interrupted by Clarence's actual death, by murder.

I have elsewhere discussed at great length the Death-and-Rebirth Archetype in Goethe's *Faust*. As in Greek Tragedy, it occurs simultaneously, on parallel planes of reality. It is suggested by the contrast between confined and open space, darkness and light, draught, rot and sultry air unfavorable to life as opposed to fresh air and water. On Easter day, Faust gives the following description of the scene he sees «Outside the City Gate».

(1) FAUST. Released from ice are brook and river
By the quickening glance of the gracious Spring,
The colors of hope to the valley cling,
Now weak old Winter himself must shiver,
Withdrawn to the mountains, a crownless king:

This passage describes the Rebirth of Nature after the winter. By the same token, the people too awaken to a new life, emerging from dark, sultry, confined spaces to light, fresh air and open spaces:

(2) From the low, dark rooms, scarce habitable;
From the bonds of Work, from Trade's restriction:

From the pressing weight of roof and gable;
From the narrow, crushing streets and alleys;
From the churches' solemn and reverend night,
All come forth to the cheerful light.

Faust's description re-enacts the second half of the pattern described by Bodkin, quoted above. The rebirth of Nature and of the people occurs when God too is resurrected:

(3) Out of the hollow, gloomy gate
The motley throngs come forth clate:
Each will the joy of the sunshine hoard,
To honor the Day of the Risen Lord!
They feel, themselves, their resurrection:

The individual too experiences self-assertion and refreshening:

(4) Here high and low contented see!
«Here I'm a Man, – dare, man to be!».

A close scrutiny of the play reveals that its successive scenes as well as its pervasive figurative language are drawn from the foregoing description, and the whole play embodies a life rhythm of Death and Rebirth.

The entire pattern may be observed in a sonnet by Baudelaire too.

(5) *Recueillement*
Sois sage, ô ma Douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.
Tu réclamais le Soir; il descend; le voici;
Une atmosphère obscure enveloppe la ville;
Aux uns portant la paix, aux autres le souci.

Pendant que des mortels la multitude vile,
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,
Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile,
Ma Douleur, donne-moi la main; viens par ici,

Loin d'eux. Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,
Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;
Surgir des fonds des eaux le Regret souriant:

Le Soleil moribond s'endormir sous une arche,
Et, comme un long linceul traînant à l'Orient,
Entends, ma chère, entends, la douce Nuit qui marche.

Retreat
Be wise, ô my Sorrow, and keep yourself more quiet.
You demanded the Evening; it descends; behold;
An obscure atmosphere envelops the city;
To some bringing peace, to others worry.

While the vile multitude of mortals,
Under the scourge of Pleasure, this merciless hangman,
Goes to harvest remorse in a servile feast,
My Sorrow, give me your hand; come this way,

Far away from them. Behold our deceased years lean down
From the heavenly balconies in outmoded robes;
Smiling Regret float up from the depth of the waters;

The dying Sun fall asleep under a bridge,
And, as if dragging a long shroud toward the East,
Hear, my darling, hear, the sweet Night marching.

This sonnet begins with an atmosphere of restless ambivalence from which there is a descent to what, following Thomas Mann, Auerbach would call «Lusthölle» (a Hell of Lust). The sestet contains imagery of death and resurrection, suggesting purification and refreshening. The «sweet Night» appears in the last line, as in «The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner» with connotations of life-renewal and refreshening.

The sonnet offers a complex of opposites involved in each other; peace and worry are brought, together, by the obscure atmosphere of the evening. In evening itself one cannot tell the day from night. Two contexts are presented in the sonnet: the speaker addressing his Sorrow, facing the descent of darkness; and the vile multitude harvesting remorse. The latter context intrudes upon the former; the main clause of line 8 follows directly from the first quatrain. The two suggest opposite modes of escape from life. The narrative in lines 1-4 and 8-14 suggests retreat for contemplation, self-dedication to obscure atmosphere, to relieving nothingness. The narrative in lines 5-7 seeks remedy in vulgarity, *surfeit* of senses, lust. Language can present states only one after the other; but the conjunction «pendant que» suggests that the two successively presented modes are simultaneous. At the same time, the imperative «viens par ici, Loin d'eux» urges separation, an increasing distance in space between the two. The title itself «Recueillement» implies a spiritual and a physical act: retreat, religious meditation, contemplation; and collecting, harvest. As for the first sense, the clue for the main narrative, we should bear in mind what Erich Auerbach wrote about Baudelaire in general: «He invoked the forces of faith and transcendence only insofar as they could be used as weapons against life, or symbols of escape» (Auerbach, 1962: 165). The second sense is realised by the central verb of the second quatrain «Va *cueillir* des remords dans la fête servile» («Goes to harvest remorse in the servile feast»). As a result, the following «symbolic action» (as Kenneth Burke would say) emerges: there is an initial ambivalent state suggested, among other things, by the ambiguity of «Recueillement»; this ambivalence is split and sharpened into opposite moods and actions of «us» and «them» in the second quatrain. Purification is finally achieved when «we» move in space «far away» from «them».

The first quatrain opens on a note of tension, or, at least, of restlessness. One may gather this from the invocation to Sorrow to keep *more* quiet, from «réclamais» denoting demand and connoting insistance, impatience; and from the tone of reproach that Sorrow is still discontent, after having had its wish. From this point to the end of the quatrain there is a gradual calming down, beginning with an explicit demand that Sorrow be wise and quiet, ending with peace and worry brought by the evening. Sorrow has called for the Evening, the dusk of which suits it best. This Sorrow seems to be *gloomy*, but not *dark*. The evening atmosphere has something calm about it, after the feverish agitation of man in daylight. Similarly, the tone of the beginning of the sonnet, the tone of comforting a child after some shock, has a certain tranquillising effect.

The second quatrain continues, *in a different sense*, the sequence of descending – in an altered context; it is descent to base, low motives. Vulgarity reveals itself in «des mortels la *multitude vile*», and in «la fête *servile*». The violence of this quatrain is conspicuous as contrasted with the calm

atmosphere of the former one. «Plaisir» and «Douleur» are antonyms, the former positive, the latter negative; in this sonnet, they change roles. What is more, «Plaisir» assumes a strikingly paradoxical character by being personified as a scourging hangman. In contrast to the retreat for Spiritual exercise in the first quatrain, the multitude in the second quatrain tries to escape by sensual gratification – by lust. Pleasure thus achieved is deceitful: instead of relief it brings torture. This personification of Pleasure brings to mind the Mediaeval picture of the hangman scourging the body in order to drive out Lust. Paradoxically enough, here Lust itself is the whipper. This means, consequently, a vicious circle of pleasure and hopeless torture.

The emotional contrast between the two quatrains is reinforced by a corresponding contrast between their syntactic-prosodic structures. In the first quatrain, there is a loosening of emphasis and action related to verbs. There are two imperatives and an interjection in the first line; in the second and third lines the verbs are indicative; the only verb in line 4 is a present participle («portant»), a form between verb and adjective. The syntactical structure is in leisurely harmony with the prosodical one. The word order of the sentences is the most natural one, usually in the order of subject-predicate-object. At the end of each line one may easily stop – there is a natural ending of a clause. The first line has two clauses in the imperative mode, separated by the caesura, with an interpolated vocative, bestowing upon the line great flexibility. It is divided into three, with a natural stop at the end of each part, without any syntactical tension. Line 2, too, is divided into three indicative clauses, none of which is dependent on the subsequent one. There is a sequence of descending length and elaborateness in these syntactic units: the first clause fills the first hemistich, and has a subject, predicate and object; the second unit («il descend») is half as long, and has no object; the third unit («le voici») is a phrase; though derived from an imperative, it is a prepositive locution, here suggesting the beginning of a process. Line 3 moves with ease: it consists of a single simple sentence elaborated (as compared with the former ones) by an adjective and lengthened by long polysyllables. Line 4 consists of two parallel phrases, symmetrically balanced on the two sides of the caesura.

In the second quatrain, by contrast, the reader keenly perceives the various tensions. The sentence beginning in line 5 ends in line 9, «spilling», so to speak, out of the octet to the sestet, conflicting with the conventional units of the sonnet form. The elaborate time clause is spread over lines 5-7; it is most strained – owing to its phrasal elaboration, and to the inversion in line 5 («des mortels la multitude vile»). Between the subject and the predicate two phrases intervene, telling a whole story as it were («Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci»). This long and tense clause is subordinate to two short co-ordinate clauses in lines 8-9 («donne-moi la main; viens par ici») reverting to the tone of intimacy of lines 1-4. The main theme of the second quatrain is under the pressure of growing expectancy for the *main clause* – delayed till line 8. The theme of the main clause, in turn, links up with that of the first quatrain, and is a call for escape from the vile multitude.

Thus, the retreat *for* «contemplation» implies retreat from the vulgar and the sensuous. The second quatrain and first tercet act out the idioms «looking down on» and «looking up to». The former is informed by an attitude of contempt for the *despised* multitude. In the latter the speaker asks Sorrow to «look up» to the heavenly balconies. The downward motions of the sestet are purified of disdain: «the deceased years» lean down from the heavenly balconies – a leisurely posture seeking eye contact; the «dying sun» sinks under the bridge, falling asleep. As its counterpart, «smiling Regret» floats up out of the depth after ablution; the «smile» has, in the present context, connotations of purity, while regret itself has, in the religious sense, purifying effects. Thus, the process of death and rebirth is indicated, again, by the downward movement of the «dying sun» to the depth of the water, and the upward movement of «smiling Regret» from the depth of the water. Death imgery is introduced into the sestet by the «*dying* Sun» and the «long *shroud*». Notwithstanding, the death of the sinking sun, according to our interpretation of the first quatrain, brings a «fresh air» to the sonnet. «Remords» (in the second stanza) and «Regret» (in the third) are near-synonyms; but, as it should be expected, have different connotations. The former is more intensive, implying pangs, qualms of conscience, a sense

of guilt, and is derived from Latin *remorsus*, «biting back». The latter means, etymologically, weeping, lamenting. Thus, the movement from «Remords» to its near-synonym suggests, again, a process of purification.

In the sestet, too, Baudelaire moves freely within the strict boundaries of the sonnet form. We have seen how the last clause of the octet runs over to the sestet, clashing with the conventions (and the perceptual units) of the sonnet form. The sestet is to be contrasted with the second quatrain. It deals with purer levels of experience. It presents, too, a much smoother relationship between the syntactic and the prosodic level, though much more intricate than in the first stanza. Lines 9-10 are in sharp contrast to the asymmetrical second stanza, by forming a pointed, almost balanced couplet. The balance of the couplet is enhanced by the punlike rhyme «Années – surannées», but, on the other hand, disturbed by the remnants of the last clause of the preceding, stanza. The sestet (3 + 3 lines), is divided by the rhyme scheme int 2 + 4 lines. The main clause of the sentence in lines 9-12 is «vois» (subject + predicate), while the rest is a series of three *accusative-cum-unfinitive phrases* (two of them with an inversion of their constituents); each of them ending at the end of the line, resulting in an intricate though well-articulated structure.

The phrase in line 13, with its present participle («traînant») as nucleus, seems to parallel the preceding phrases. It turns out, however, to be subordinate to the clause in the last line. This uncertainty, by contrast, lends to the last line, that clarifies the structure, a sense of finality. This is reinforced by some additional contrasts. After a long series of phrases, there are three finite verbs in the last line, which thus gains vigour. The balance of the verbs on the one side of the caesura and the object including a subordinate clause on its other side has remarkable closural force. The whole sonnet has an implicit tone of affection. There are, however, only two explicit adjectives denoting affection, «ma chère» and «douce», both in the last line. The imagery of the sonnet appeals to the mind's *eye*; in the last line there is a sudden shift to the mind's *ear*.

The last line is parallel in certain aspects to the first one. This, too, enhances its closural force (some of those aspects occur in line 8 too, but, as we have seen, closure is blurred there by enjambment). In the first line there is a vocative between two imperative verbs; a similar structure recurs in the last line. Yet the difference between these two occurrences of the same mode, as applied in the present sonnet, is significant. The imperatives in the first line are meant to tone down mental activity; in the last line they are meant to excite a different, healthier kind of intense mental activity. While the central theme of the octet is the benumbing of the senses, the sestet advocates keen sense perception, in a more purified context. This comes to a climax, as we have seen, in the last line.

The image in the first two lines of the sestet is very effective, but its effect is poorly understood. So, let me end this paper with a comment on it.

> Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,
> Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;
>
> Behold the defunct years lean down
> From the heavenly balconies in outmoded robes;

This description is quite unique when considered in isolation as figurative language, and unique also as to its position within the archetypal pattern. Time is usually perceived as continuous duration regarded as that in which events succeed one another. Consequently, time is perceived as what constantly is on the move, usually moving fast. Time flies, the minutes, the hours, the days, the years fly by, disappear. When time as a sequence is personified, it is presented as being constantly on the move, or performing some violent action, as in «But at my back I always hear / Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near», or «Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws» (I have elsewhere discussed *Time* in poetry at great length: Tsur, 1987: 155-165). Poets may deviate from this conception in two opposite directions. When Joshua bids the sun in Giveon to stand still, it is an extraordinary act, and works only for a very short time. Andrew Marvell, by contrast, proposes to accelerate time, increasing the

experience content of the time interval: «Thus, though we, cannot make our Sun / Stand still, yet we will make him run».[3]

«Our defunct years» in Baudelaire's lines are presented as conflicting with this basic cognitive habit of translating successive events into fast movement of time units. In order to clarify the issue, let us distort for a moment Baudelaire's sonnet. Suppose, the speaker points at an old family photograph and says: «Behold our defunct grand parents lean down from the balcony in outmoded robes.» The grand parents, long dead, are unchanged; fashion has changed with time, and their robes became outmoded, offering a direct perception of intimateness and strangeness at once. Leaning down from the balcony is a relaxed posture, perhaps a pose rather than posture, assumed for the photograph. Thus, the deceased grand parents become a piece of idyllic past frozen into unchanging eternity.

Baudelaire eliminates the basic cognitive element in time, the succession of events, by presenting «Our defunct years» simultaneously present. They are personified in outmoded robes, thus freezing time in its «successive» aspect too. The years that are typically perceived as «flying» or «hurrying by» are turned into static, unchanging, strangely familiar entities, no longer active, with all energy spent. The scene is transferred to «*heaven's* balconies», in the plural. *Heaven's* may suggest unachievable distance as well as being dead and «blessed»; and translate infinite time, eternity, into spatial terms. *Balconies*, in the plural, suggests a great many defunct years, simultaneously present, all static.

These two lines are contrasted to the first three lines of the second stanza on such scales as positive-negative attitudes, static-dynamic, inactive-active pure (perhaps even sterile-impure). When we view these contrasts in the perspective of the death-and-rebirth archetype, they suggest the ambivalent nature of the pivotal point: the inactive-active contrast enhances at the beginning of the sestet the death quality, whereas the pure-impure or positive-negative contrast suggest the beginning of the rebirth quality.

To Sum Up

In the course of the present analysis we have seen some of the most obvious verbal features of the sonnet, to which the reader responds. I have skipped, for brevity's sake, such important features as the sound stratum of the sonnet; as for the Symbolist treatment of the metaphorical elements responsible for its particular *atmosphere*, I have elsewhere devoted to them some attention, in a discussion of «Chearlesse Night in Spenser and Baudelaire» (Tsur, 1987b: 168-175).[4] If, however, the reader realises that what has been said has a particular underlying pattern, the response to the poem may become far richer. We have discussed certain features perceived as contrasted. We have contrasted lines, stanzas, and the octet with the sestet. On the other hand, we have contrasted certain syntactic and prosodic aspects of the text, occurring simultaneously. All this *may* lead the reader to realise a *pattern*. The reader responds more intensively to this pattern, either – as Jung would have us think – because it is inherent in the human mind, or – as it is implied by Northrop Frye's (1968) and my own (Tsur, 1987a; 1992: 317-346) work – because it is an additional organising principle that helps the reader to

[3] This conception is compatible with recent experiments with subjective time. As Ornstein's (1969) elegant experiments show, subjective time is determined by the amount of information processed and stored ia memory during the period concerned.

[4] In the discussion following my presentation at the conference someone commented that he did, indeed, perceive a refreshening atmosphere at the end of the sonnet. Still, he felt, the pattern was incomplete, when it came to *Rebirth*. In the *Faust* example it was elearly there, but not in the Baudelaire example. I gave two answers to this comment. First, the pattern is frequently incomplete. *Faust* offers only the second part of the pattern; Clarence's dream only the first part. Second, and far more important, as I pointed out at great length in the comparison between Spenser and Baudelaire's Sonnet, in the former, the objects represent hard and fast concepts, whereas in the latter they are represented at the moment they are turned into fleeting moods and impressions.

realise clashing or concurring trends on different strata of the poem and organise them into a continuous, gradually changing pattern that is isomorphic with an emotional pattern. Maud Bodkin's (1963 [1934[1]]) position is somewhere between these two extremes.

Interpretation always involves the introduction of some external schema for increasing the coherence of a text. It should not, however, attempt to unearth some hidden meaning. I submit that archetypal patterns must observe the following constraints on interpretation: rather than introducing new features, the external schema should foreground and organize features existing in the text; features of the imported schema should not conflict with what is explicidy stated in the text – if there are any, they should be deleted. Consider the following sentence by Ehrenzweig: «We enter the manic womb of rebirth, an oceanic existence outside time and space». And consider the following description by Bodkin, quoted above: «Within the image-sequences examined the pattern appears of a movement, downward, or inward toward the earth's centre, or a cessation of movement – a physical change which, as we urge a metaphor closer to the impalpable forces of life and soul, appears also a transition toward a severed relation with the outer world, and, it may be, toward disintegration and death. This element in the pattern is balanced by a movement upward and outward – an expansion or outburst of activity, a transition toward reintegration and life-renewal». Such an image-sequence of movement toward the earth's center is typically treated by some psychologists and literary critics as if it *meant* Ehrenzweig's «manic womb of rebirth». According to the present conception, if we wish to refer the archetypal womb-image to the image of the movement inward toward the earth's center, we have to delete from the *womb* those features that are incompatible with the other image, and retain such features as «confined space», «cessation of movement», «transition toward a severed relation with the outer world» and, at a later stage of the pattern, «a movement upward and outward – an expansion or outburst of activity, a transition toward reintegration and life-renewal». Where there is no such image as «Kubla Khan's» underground caverns, or *Faust's* «low, dark rooms», the «confined space» feature, too, must sometimes be deleted, making us retain only the more abstract elements. Thus, the womb-image is not conceived of as *the underlying image* for which all other enclosure-images stand, but as a spatial image that serves as the most efficient cognitive coding of features relevant to the emotional sequence. This is a very far cry from, e.g., Eva Metman's archetypal approach, who suggested no emotional sequence, only identified the various personae in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* with certain specific archetypal categories derived from Jungian psychology.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 229-235

The blighting of love and growth in J. M. Coetzee's *Boyhood*

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The *deformed and stunted* relations between human beings that were created under colonialism and exacerbated under what is loosely called apartheid have their psychic representation in a deformed and stunted inner life.... I make this observation with due deliberation, and in the fullest awareness that it applies to myself and my own writing as much as to anyone else (J. M. Coetzee, «Jerusalem Prize Acceptance Speech»).

In *Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life* (1997) J. M. Coetzee offers vivid glimpses of his anxiety and alienation growing up in South Africa during the cold war. Although he includes some lyrical responses to the spaces and colors of the South African landscape, Coetzee's *Boyhood* is not a celebratory memoir. He presents scenes that one reviewer described as «unbearable... recreations of anguish» (*VQR*, 18), and he chooses techniques which destabilize his own narrative authority. Events are reported in a third-person, present-tense voice, for example, which «suggests construction rather than confession» (Phillips, 40). Coetzee uses such «formal singularity» (Attridge, 244) to reveal tensions and conflicts in a boy's relationships to his family, his teachers, and his fellow students, as well as to clarify his own complex involvements in the violence of South African society.

This portrait of the artist's boyhood suggests, furthermore, that the boy's struggles to protect and define himself reveal structural barriers to maturity and love within South Africa itself. The title – *Boyhood* – seems to refer not only to the pre-adolescent period of Coetzee's life, but to the repressions and guilts and anxieties blighting *everyone's* development toward maturity in South Africa.

Coetzee has framed a rather brief period of his childhood in this autobiography. The story begins when the boy is ten years old, and he has recently moved with his family from Capetown, the capital of South Africa, to a desolate housing development in the rural area of Worcester. Coetzee begins with

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a description of the house and yard in the raw, bleak development where, he says, streets have been given «tree names but no trees» and where, in fact, «nothing grows» (*Boyhood*, 1). The imagery indicates a blighting of the landscape and an uncertainty or deceptiveness within the uses of language.

The narrative includes nineteen untitled chapters or «scenes», and it ends when the boy, Coetzee, is thirteen years old. His family has, by then, returned to Capetown where his father fails in an attempt to establish a law practice. The father becomes a treacherous and childish drunk whom the boy finds disgusting and despicable.

In the concluding chapter, Coetzee describes the funeral of an aged, maternal Aunt who had devoted her life to school-teaching and to translating spiritualist tracts written in the German language by her tyrannical father. Upon leaving the cemetery, the boy wonders about his own future: «How will he keep them in his head, all the books, all the people, all the stories? And if he does not remember them, who will?» (166).

The memoir is, then, *about* Coetzee becoming the storyteller, accepting the burden of remembering the events, the stories, and the people that have defined his family and his personal identity. Early in the narrative, he observes that he loves the stories his mother and her brothers tell «for the thousandth time» about their «childhood on the farm». He says that «his friends do not come from families with stories like that» (*Boyhood*, 22). But Coetzee's own Boyhood identifies the loneliness and desperation of his childhood, not the «innocent joy» (*Boyhood*, 14) of conventional childhood adventures.

He describes his anguished relationships to the members of his family and to the teachers and fellow students at school, and he identifies tensions he experienced between English-language culture and the politically dominant Afrikaans-language culture. In an interview published five years before this memoir, Coetzee says that Afrikaaner Nationalist policies after 1948 forced him to feel like an «alien» (*Doubling*, 393) in South Africa.

Also, in the interview, he experiments with the narrative techniques which he uses in *Boyhood*. He writes of past events in the present tense, for example, and he refers to his own personal experience as a child by using the third person pronoun. In a somewhat playful coinage during the interview, he labels the literary results of these techniques as «*Autre*biography» (*Doubling*, 394). The narrative devices provide a detachment which enables him to depict his childhood «self» as the «other».

In this interview, furthermore, Coetzee identifies specific social and political practices which spewed forth in racist South Africa during the years of *Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life*:

> His years in rural Worcester (1948-1951) as a child from an Afrikaans background attending English-medium classes, at a time of raging Afrikaaner nationalism, a time when laws were being concocted to prevent people of Afrikaans descent from bringing up their children to speak English, provoke in him uneasy dreams of being hunted down and accused.... People of his parents' kind are thundered at from the pulpit as *volksverraaiers*, traitors to the people (*Doubling*, 393).

The *Scenes from Provincial Life* depict the boy's fears and confusions rather than examining Nationalist political policies. Coetzee seems, in this way, to be defining the kinds of experiences in South Africa under apartheid which «deformed and stunted» the emotional and interpersonal aspects of life.

Coetzee's narrative innovations are, clearly, attempts to reach beyond narrative convention to represent his childhood anxieties and alienations, and they reflect his studies in lingustics and literature at the University of Texas as well as his probing of usage patterns he encountered in South Africa during his boyhood.

His choice of the third-person parallels the devices used to place the self in history in *The Education of Henry Adams* and in such works of New Journalism by Norman Mailer as *Armies of the Night*, and *The Prisoner of Sex*. In addition, Coetzee's memoir identifies a specifically South African dimension to his use of the third-person. In a passage on the modes of address used by the Coloured people who work on his Uncle Son's farm, Coetzee reports that, as a boy visiting the farm,

> He does not know how to answer [the house-servant, Tryn] when she speaks to him in the third person, calling him «*die kleinbaas*», the little master, as if he were not present. It is all deeply embarassing (*Boyhood*, 86).

The third-person point-of-view in Coetzee's autobiography reflects the social and emotional distances between the Black and the White people in South Africa during his boyhood. Coetzee's third-person pronouns define the subject-narrator himself as if he «were not present». The literary device interrogates the effects of the social practice: When is the self *not present* to others? To the self? The boy's relationships to other people and to himself are drained of certainty, and Coetzee's use of the present tense suggests that these problems in his boyhood are still unresolved. At another point in the memoir, he observes that «Afrikaners are afraid to say *you* to anyone older than themselves». After quoting and mocking his father's fear-freighted use of the third person, the boy – Coetzee says – «is relieved he is not Afrikaans and is saved from having to talk like... a whipped slave» (*Boyhood*, 49). Yet the use of the third-person pronoun in *Scenes from Provincial Life* places Coetzee in such a role of subservience and submission.

In a formalist essay on Roland Barthes which he published in 1984, Coetzee notes the dangers to the artist's purpose in «writing in stereotypical form and genre and [using] characterological systems and narrative orderings where the machine runs the operator» (*Doubling*, 95). In these terms, Coetzee's choosing of the third person and the present tense in his autobiography are attempts to protect his artistic purposes from being run by the «machinery» of autobiographical conventions. A surrender to such conventions would be analogous, perhaps, to submitting to official censorship or accepting the South African categories of racial and cultural identity. Conventional devices would blur the events and issues in psycho-social development which Coetzee seeks to communicate.

Coetzee states that, as a child, he was certain that he did not wish to be a «normal» person in South Africa (See: *Boyhood*, 5, 78 and 124, for example). The child recognizes that being «normal» is more dangerous than the discomforts of his own alienation. To be «normal» is to be inside the values and practices of a poisonous society. In fact, he sometimes fears that his father and his brother show indications of being «normal». Perhaps his father's collapse at the end of the memoir should be seen as a result of psychological conflicts between his Afrikaans «normalcy» and his life-experiences as a political victim and a cultural outsider.

Coetzee himself is definitely *not* normal at his school in Worcester. Although his academic performance is highly successful, that distinction itself is a direct corollary of his deeper alienation.

The boy, Coetzee, achieves successes in school to prove his worthiness of his mother's love and to protect himself from maternal judgments which might cause him to lose that love. The boy sees that she has lost her love for his father (*Boyhood*, 122), and he fears that he could suffer a similar fate. As the favored older son, he sees himself as the «prince of the house» who has displaced his father, and his only competition for his mother's love is his younger brother (*Boyhood*, 12-3). And yet, Coetzee notes the deep uncertainties in this oedipal relationship. The child knows his own «fierce and angry» desire to break away from his mother, and he also believes that his mother once «decided to love him», and «therefore she can choose to stop loving him» (*Boyhood*, 162). There is an image of his mother's «bloody fingers» in the very first scene of the book (*Boyhood*, 2), and the boy remains anxious about her capacity for judging him harshly and rejecting him as she has his father. At the end of the book, Coetzee defines this childhood anxiety by noting that «he would rather be blind and deaf than know what she thinks of him» (*Boyhood*, 162).

Coetzee cannot even speak to his parents of his horror at the floggings imposed «upon the boys who are almost men» at the school in Worcester (*Boyhood*, 7-9). He is deeply anxious about his own possible responses to a flogging. He is careful and obedient in the classroom to avoid being flogged. He is not certain that he could endure the pain of such a beating, and he is bewildered by the perverse sexuality he glimpses in the teachers during the canings (*Boyhood*, 6).

He regards those who have been caned as members of an initiated group which he cannot join – because he is soft and babyish, and because his mother has not beaten him nor allowed his father

to beat him. And he fears that if he were caned he might experience a blinding and unendurable rage at the humiliation. He blames his mother for separating him from the «normal» men who, like his father and his paternal uncles, are able to reminisce with «a note of nostalgia and pleasurable fear» about the floggings they endured at school. In his depiction of Mr. Lategan, the woodworking teacher who has lost one of his thumbs and uses a cane that is more «a stick or baton than a switch» (*Boyhood*, 8). Coetzee's imagery establishes the connection between the genitally maimed teachers and the castration of the boys through the aggression and the perverse pleasures of the floggings.

As a new high school English teacher in Cleveland, Ohio during the years of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, I heard expressions of perverse erotic pleasure by some of my colleagues when, in the teacher's coffee room, they talked of bringing their nearly-grown male students to the edge of tears by applying wooden paddles to bodies bent submissively over their desks. Neither my home nor my schools had prepared me to comprehend such punishments. In this particular school, more than 99% of the students and all of the teachers were White. Coetzee's *Boyhood* makes me wonder whether these violent assertions of dominance were oblique expressions of American racial oppressions. Did the teachers impose rage and submissiveness upon the young men as training in the violence and the distortions of desire necessary maintaining racist social practices? Perhaps this question concerning racism as a source of violence in America is a validation of Coetzee's success in breaking through my spectator-relationship to forms of violence in South Africa (See: Jolly, xii-xv).

Coetzee suggests that, as a result of the school canings, the victims become locked into childish submissions and violent re-enactments of this castrating abuse. The boy notes such an idea in comments by his mother about his father and his Afrikaans uncles. She scoffs that both his father and his brothers remained emotionally children who were even afraid to light a cigarrette in front of their father (*Boyhood*, 127). It seems that such a lifelong immaturity is identified by Coetzee in the name of his farm-owning uncle: «Uncle Son». He is the heir, the first-son, but he is blocked from maturity Another verbally-imposed immaturity and loss of identity is explicit in the denial of maturity in the epithet, «Schochat's boy», which is used to denote a grown Native man who is employed to deliver groceries (*Boyhood*, 64).

The practice of caning is presented by Coetzee as a significant element in the «deformed and stunted» psychic life in South Africa. And castration is not simply a metaphor in young Coetzee's imagination. During a visit to the paternal farm, *Voelfontein*, the boy watches Ros, who is «nearly a Bushman» (*Boyhood*, 89), when he castrates the young sheep who are penned with the ewes. The boy attempts to ask his mother «why» the sheep are castrated, but he cannot ask. Instead, he asks her about the cropping of the sheep's tails which is done at the same time (*Boyhood*, 99). In «The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex», Freud says that the «threat» of castration usually «emanates» from a woman and repeats the first separation from the mother (Freud, 662-3). In these terms, Coetzee's mother is much more threatening than his powerless, disinherited father.

In a review of the *Notebooks* of the Black South African writer, Athol Fugard, Coetzee himself addresses the practice of violence in South African in explicitly Freudian terms:

> The humiliation of the weak by the strong has been a characteristic practice of the Afrikaaner. The humbling of children by parents, of students by teachers, and generally of the younger by the older... is part of the life experience of most Afrikaaners.... Afrikaanerdom strikes one as a society where castration is alloted a particularly blatant role (*Doubling*, 374).

Beyond the racial tyranny of apartheid is this pattern of oppression of the young and powerless. And, of course, the Black child and the woman are among the most powerless. When Coetzee's mother attempts to liberate herself from entrapment in their bleak housing development by riding a bicycle, the young boy joins with his father – in a unique instance of comradeship – to scoff at her modest attempt at resisting women's assigned powerlessness to pursue «her own desire» (*Boyhood*, 4). She soon gives up on riding her bicycle. Coetzee also reports upon the flogging of Eddie, a Coloured boy from the countryside of Stellenbosch, who was brought to help around the house when the boys were both about seven years old. Eddie had been caught after trying to run away

(from *what* exactly we do not learn). It is Trevelyn, an English boarder at their house in Capetown, who punishes Eddie fiercely before sending him back to the country. Trevelyn flogs him with «as much of a rage as any Afrikaaner» (*Boyhood*, 75), Coetzee says. South African violence against the powerless is not simply the behavior of the Afrikaans people.

The boy, Coetzee, experiences enduring shame as a result of *avoiding* being flogged. The shame may, perhaps, reflect an unspoken guilt concerning the flogging of Eddie. Coetzee's description of the conflicted emotions concerning flogging reveals the pressures in his use of the present tense:

> He has a sense that something is slowly tearing inside of him all the time: a wall, a membrane. He tried to hold himself as tight as possible to keep the tearing within bounds. To keep it within bounds, not to stop it. Nothing will stop it (*Boyhood*, 9).

The psychological damage from the practice of caning appears, in this grammatical construction, as a kind of rape which occurred the past but which continues to tear at the boundaries of the self.

In other comments on the Afrikaans school, Coetzee indicates that further training in brutality develops from the institutional religious practices. The boys in the Afrikaans majority are required to attend religious services, so all of the boys must identify their families' religious denominations: Christian, Roman Catholic, or Jewish. But these choices do not fit young Coetzee: his family, as he says, is «nothing» (*Boyhood*, 18). Such a category does not exist for the boys at the school.

In an attempt to close this gap in his religious identity, Coetzee recalls learning about Roman military heroism, and so he calls himself a *Roman* Catholic. This lie enables him to skip the Afrikaans Christian services, but it creates conflicts with the small group of Roman Catholic boys (who repeatedly ask him why he doesn't attend Catechism classes), and he is afraid that the priest will come to his house to ask his parents why he doesn't attend. Furthermore, the young Coetzee's absence from religious services identifies him with the Jewish boys – the other group of religious outsiders – and he is punched and taunted as a Jew by some of the Afrikaans Christian boys (*Boyhood*, 19). He is not comfortable within the «lie» of his Roman Catholicism, but he does not wish to join the Afrikaaner Christians in bullying the Jews and Catholics. In the context of brutality and bigotry, he can find no safe identity. His father is employed in a business owned by a Jewish man, which enables him to feel some solidarity with the Jews, but his mother's family blames Jewish traders for the loss of their family farm.

Visits to the farms of his aunts and uncles provide young Coetzee with glimpses of the traditional Afrikaans relationship to the landscape, but he also encounters the loss or distortion of many traditions, and he encounters instances of the the oppressions and lies of racism. On one glorious visit to the farm at *Skippersloof*, he meets his cousin, Agnes, and they roam in Edenic joy across the landscape. Coetzee says that their communion was so perfect that he «forgot what language he was speaking» (94). There is no other moment so joyous in this memoir – and there is no other instance of escape from the cultural tensions and barriers between English and the Afrikaans languages. The young boy wonders, «is this love? this easy generosity, this sense of being understood at last, of not having to pretend» (95). This relationship is free from the abjection and rage which he experiences in his love for his mother.

On the other hand, visits to the paternal farm, *Voelfontein*, force him to experience linguistic and cultural tensions between himself and the world of his Uncle Son. At one point, for example, the boy feels a joyous sense of his connection to the land, and wishes to tell his uncle, «I belong on the farm» or even «I belong to the farm». But he fears that in Afrikaans this might be understood as an assertion that «the farm belongs to me» (*Boyhood*, 96). It is not that Coetzee experiences all language as signs and syntax which are a separation from a pre-verbal state of nature. He does feel, however, that the Afrikaans boys «wield their language like a club» (*Boyhood*, 57), and he himself experiences a kind of separation «from the complications of life» (125) when speaking Afrikaans. He learned the language when he was four or five playing with the Coloured children on the farm. It is not the language of his home. It is not a language of emotional or intellectual subtlety.

Young Coetzee has no claim to ownership of the farm, and the loss of their claims to the land is disturbing to both Coetzee's mother and his father. Coetzee's father is a lawyer, a man who is culturally more English than Afrikaans, and he lacks Uncle Son's skill with tools and with animals. To the boy, his father's lack of a hold upon the materiality of the farm is an aspect of his disinherited powerlessness. The father's lack of claim to the land also seems to express the displacement of English language-culture by Afrikaans language-culture in South Africa in the period following the election of the Nationalist Party in 1948.

The boy's deep love of the land and his lack of an economic claim to the farm also reflect changes in the South Africans relationship to the landscape which Coetzee has discussed in such essays on South African literary history as «Reading the South African Landscape» and «Farm Novel and Plassroman» in *White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa* (Yale, 1989). Coetzee says that love for the landscape and a spiritual connection to its colors and spaces has been displaced by a desire to possess the farm as an object of exploitation. His Uncle Son, for example, has allowed the pressure of Japanese wool prices to push him into a mono-culture farming which breaks organic links to the past and damages the land (*Boyhood*, 82). Such abuse of the landscape is an part of the problem of achieving love and maturity in South Africa. During the hunting trip in which is described *Boyhood*, an annual family hunting ritual has become reduced to the shooting of tiny steenbok antelope illegally at night when they are blinded by the car headlights (*Boyhood*, 89). It is an ugly form of hunting, and yet, for the boy, the roast antelope is «tangy and soft, so soft that it melts in the mouth» (*Boyhood*, 90). He is implicated in the «deliciousness» of the loveless plundering of the land.

More difficult for the child are the lies and the seemingly petty oppressions concerning race. In South African history, for example, he is taught that the Coloureds were fathered by the trekkers and the original Hottentott people. But the boy says that it is clear from their features that the Coloureds have no Dutch blood – they are Hottentotts: «Not only do they come with the land, the land comes with them, is theirs, has always been» (*Boyhood*, 63). Their official category is a racist fiction. On the farm, the boy sees work relationship between Black and White that are somewhat more respectful than the imperiousness of Whites in Capetown (see 61). On one occasion, however, he finds that Ros and Freek will not help him to remove a jammed shell from the old .22 rifle he borrowed from a neighbor. Later he is told that, because of their racial identity as Coloreds, Ros and Freek «mustn't» touch firearms. They are forbidden that dimension of manhood and power. In reflecting upon the absence of South African heroes like «the boy in the battle of Jutland» and Robin Hood, the boy glimpses an Afrikaaner past which includes «shooting thousands of Zulus who didn't have guns, and being proud of it» (*Boyhood*, 128-9). Such a frontier history and the intense «gun culture» among the White populatuion since the end of apartheid are significant elements in South Africa. Rosemary Jolly discusses the role of the gun as «copula» in Coetzee's *Dusklands* (110). The gun represents «the desire for absolute mastery» (111) which displaces other possibilities of copulation.

The professional and emotional collapse of Coetzee's father is one of the most painful elements in the memoir. Even before the period of this narrative begins, the boy's father has been displaced from the farm and from the Civil Service in Capetown. When they return from Worcester to Capetown, the father fails as a lawyer, and he sinks into an abyss of debt. His son has won the oedipal war between them, and, in one scene, the boy looks on his father's body in drunken sleep as an object of despicable degradation (*Boyhood*, 159-60). By the end of the memoir, the father has become a powerless and resentful child. He sneaks back home to bed after pretending to go to work, and he urinates upon the toilet seat in an act of aggression against his family.

The painful events of the boy's world and the use of the third-person point of view have led some reviewers to propose that this could not, in fact, be an accurate or truthful autobiography. I myself wondered whether Coetzee actually maimed his younger brother's finger by thrusting his hand into a food-grinder. He writes that he «never apologised to his brother» and was «never

reproached for what he did». A few lines later, his maternal grandfather, a writer of rather mad religious tracts in German, is described as «a horrible old man.... cruel» (*Boyhood*, 119). Whether the maiming of his brother's hand was merely a castration-fantasy, or a fact, Coetzee's «confession» defines his experience of sibling hostility and connects him to the cruelty of his grandfather and others in his society.

Recent studies of autobiography have discussed the problems of truthfulness in the representation or invention of the self. Such works as Paul John Eakin, *Fictions in Autobiography* and Timothy Dow Adams, *Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography* discuss ways in which historical contexts, personal agendas, unseen repressions, and even the limitations of language push autobiography toward uncertainties where truths and inventions are necessarily intertwined. In reporting a talk with a boyhood friend about their first memories, Coetzee refers to a splendid memory of a small dog, struck by a car, that «drags itself away, squeeling with pain». In the next paragraph, he asks himself, «Was it true?» Did he really see the dog hit or merely the injured dog dragging itself from the accident? (*Boyhood*, 30). Is the memory the truth or a lie?

In an essay on self-representation in Tolstoi, Rousseau, and Dostoievski, Coetzee discusses writers' and literary characters who «confront or evade the problem of how to know the truth about the self without being self-deceived» (*Doubling the Point*, 252).

Coetzee's *Boyhood* is a brave exploration. It shows the experience of a terrible political reality in the psychosexual struggles of a child, and it suggests the continuing effects of such struggles upon the adult writer. Coetzee glimpses limitations in the self created in history, and he is conscious of limitations in his access to truth in his own memory. This memoir is a study in «self-criticism» at a number of levels, and perhaps it parallels the current struggle to distinguish the facts of past by the Truth Commission in South Africa (See: Edelstein). There has been in South Africa a blighting of the capacity for love and self-knowlege through violence triggered by a brutal racism, but there may be, perhaps, a plateau in history which allows South Africans to confront and depict more than is customary of the experiences of guilt and suffering. Coetzee's memoir helps to reveal that none of us are merely spectators.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 237-241

«Jumpin' Nights in the Garden of Eden»: Sensuality in John Duigan's «Sirens»

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My title is taken from an album by the Boston-based Klezmer Conservatory Band. For me, klezmer music conveys a vigorous affirmation of life which I believe is also central to the film «Sirens». The main characters in this 1994 film are a recently ordained and recently married Anglican priest named Anthony Campion (played by Hugh Grant) and his wife Estella (played by Tara Fitzgerald). Anthony is an Oxford graduate who has a reputation for being a «progressive» thinker. Sometime in the late 1920's the Campions have journeyed from England to Australia on an ocean liner resembling the *Titanic* because Anthony has been assigned to serve as the parish priest in a small town some distance inland from Sydney.

Meanwhile, a notoriously non-conforming artist (based on an actual artist named Norman Lindsay) has scandalized the Anglican establishment by contributing four paintings to an exhibit that is about to open at the Sydney Art Museum. Lindsay's specialty is voluptuous female nudes, but one of his pictures the clergy have found really offensive, even blasphemous. The Bishop of Sydney has asked Lindsay to withdraw the offending picture, and he has refused. Hence the Bishop sends the Campions to visit Lindsay on his estate in order to «reason with him» about his picture.

This is the ostensible premise of «Sirens». But it would be totally amazing if the naive, ineffectual Campions (who have just arrived in a strange country) could succeed in persuading Norman Lindsay to change his mind about exhibiting his picture. Rather the opposite seems likely: that Tony and Estella could be influenced by the libertarian lifestyle of the Lindsay family. As ads for the movie openly proclaimed: Let yourself be seduced!

«Sirens» might have proceeded as simple voyeurism or exploitation, but, like the manifest content of a dream, I believe that the surface story creates a distraction while the latent content – some of it serious, some comic, some richly allusive – is communicated to the viewer. That there is a considerable subjective element in interpreting works of art is now well established. I cannot speak for «the typical viewer» of a film, only for myself. In his *Five Readers Reading* Norman Holland showed how radically a literary text can be transformed when it is filtered through the psyches of five different bright, perceptive readers.

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Having plowed through several reviews and too many student essays on «Sirens», I noted three inaccuracies which came up frequently. First, there was the assumption that Anthony Campion is the central character. By the criteria of total screen time and degree of convincing character development, this is clearly Estella's story. Second, many people asserted that the Bishop's objection to Lindsay's paintings had to do with nudity. In fact, the Bishop found the full-figured nudes merely vulgar or silly. It was the painting entitled «The Crucifixion of Venus» which provoked his ire. (Although we are shown this picture at the beginning of the film and told its title, very few of my students remembered it!) Finally, a substantial number of people thought that the Campions had come to Australia «on vacation».

In «Sirens» Estella makes an emotional journey from repression and sublimation to a vibrant sensuality similar to what Norman O. Brown described as «The Resurrection of the Body». At the outset Estella is timid and submissive, but during the course of the film, she learns to shed her inhibitions and to «play» in the sense that Winnicott used the term.

In 1896 British psychologist Havelock Ellis published as essay on Casanova's *Memoires*. Far from condemning Casanova's work as pornographic, Ellis championed it as a «fairy tale for adults» and warned that modern society does not adequately nurture the capacity for imaginative play in adults.

Although «Sirens» is mainly concerned with Estella's odyssey of shedding her inhibitions and learning to play, writer/director John Duigan further reinforces the importance of play by «playing» with the audience. He makes allusions to mythology and to other movies which may briefly raise our anxiety level but turn out to be just part of the fun. For example, the film begins *in medias res*: we see a large ocean liner which looks like the *Titanic* and hear beautiful female voices singing as the title «Sirens» appears on the screen. We expect some sort of catastrophe – but none occurs. A young woman (not yet identified) comes out on deck and is subjected to a lascivious gaze by a young sailor. She gives him a look of withering contempt, which makes him smirk. She then walks to the rail and looks out to sea. Through the magic of cinema, we can see her face, which bears an enigmatic Mona Lisa expression. Perhaps she has discovered that it can be rather flattering to be regarded as a sex-object.

There is a quick cut to two men in clerical collars marching through an art gallery. They pass a dozen paintings which depict rugged individualism in rural settings (cattle herding, sheep shearing and so forth), presumably the «official» image that Australians want to project to the world. While viewing a picture of several men and a dog in canoes, we hear a dog bark! Now that's realism!

The two men – the Bishop of Sydney and Father Anthony Campion – then reach Norman Lindsay's paintings. The first one we see features a dreamscape of whimsical nudes engaged in slightly risqué behavior; but then the museum guard removes the black cloth which covered «The Crucifixion of Venus» and immediately crosses himself to ward off its evil effects. We can see why the Bishop would regard it as blasphemous and want it removed from the exhibit. The Campions are thus charged with the task of visiting the artist and reasoning with him.

The Campions' train journey is treated very briefly, but it includes the phallic symbolism of the engine thrusting through a narrow gorge. At their destination, the station attendant (who inexplicably has a live lizard on his desk) advises them that no taxi is available and that they should go down the street to the pub – no easy task with all their luggage. Outside the pub they are greeted by the town drunk, who may state the theme of the film most succinctly: «Get yourself fucked!» Inside, the surroundings do not appear very welcoming: several menacing characters look like refugees from the movie «Straw Dogs». But once again the director is just teasing us with his ominous allusions. Two young men offer Tony and Estella a ride to the Lindsay estate. They have an old flatbed truck. Estella sits between the two men in the cab, straddling the shift lever (which allows the driver many creative ways to get fresh with her while changing gears). Tony hangs on as best he can outside (and gets violently ill from motion sickness, which makes it rather difficult for him to maintain his dignity).

The Lindsay estate evokes qualities of the Garden of Eden, including a snake, which appears on four different occasions but manages only to tip over a teacup! After some minor misadventures, the Campions meet the Lindsays' extended family: Norman and Rose, their two young daughters (Honey and Jane), the resident models (Sheela and Pru) and the virginal Giddy, who was hired as a maid, but also models «as long as she doesn't have to take her clothes off».

Before dinner Tony and Estella look around Norman's studio. Tony picks up a model of a Viking ship very carefully, but just at that moment the mast collapses. He tries to fix it, but can't. He then puts the model down and looks like a naughty boy. Estella turns away and smiles. Apparently she has had prior experience with a collapsing mast! Just then the aptly-named Giddy (a teenager with raging hormones) enters to announce that dinner is ready but pauses to talk about Mr. Lindsay's paintings. The ensuing dialogue is a comic masterpiece of missed and misinterpreted communications. Giddy states that Norman's next project will be to paint the Sirens and asks if Tony and Estella know about them. Of course, Oxford-educated Tony is acquainted with the myth – and says so. But Giddy (showing off her knowledge) regales them with the story anyway. She suggests that they might consider posing and hands Estella a veil and Tony a Roman centurian's helmet. Incidentally, Norman has painted a picture of a fully-dressed soldier *wearing that helmet* with a nude woman sitting at his feet, her head resting suggestively on his lap. When Tony and the others are called out of the studio for dinner, Estella puts down the veil, but Tony «forgets» to take off the helmet! Perhaps his fantasies are showing – just as Estella was not overly upset by sailor's blatant gaze.

At dinner Norman Lindsay declares his belief in reincarnation and that he was once a citizen of Atlantis. The only notable sensuous activity is Sheela's eating Stilton cheese from a communal crock with her fingers. But when the Lindsay daughters (aged, I would say, 6 and 8) state that they are bored, their parents offer them the possibility of being waked up to see the fairies who appear at midnight on Fridays. The fairies are, of course, the three models in filmy white costumes. Through some clever devices, they seem to hover above the ground. We can see the delight on the faces of the two little girls – and also on their father's face. Clearly Norman has not lost the ability to look at the world with childlike enthusiasm. (I was reminded of the mother in «E.T.» who still enjoyed dressing up for Halloween.)

The Campions scarcely know what to make of the playfulness exhibited by their hosts. Their own relationship is affectionate but not passionate. When Tony impulsively joins Estella in bed and says «Do you want to?», she replies «I'm not sure». He says, «Well, wake me up if you do». And apparently she doesn't. The one other time that they attempt to have sex, we see Estella gazing blankly at the ceiling. Eventually Tony apologizes for his inability to perform. It is significant that the Campions' pet names for each other and «Pooh» and «Piglet» – characters from a children's story.

At the outset, Estella finds Australia to be a wild and dangerous place. She is often startled by strange creatures – a lizard, a koala bear, a barking dog, a baby kangaroo, the local handyman and assorted insects. (But none of them harm her.) Then there are the newspaper headlines such as: «Snake Runs Amok in Kindergarten» and «Disabled Veteran Killed by Shark as Wife Looks On in Horror».

Increasingly Estella seems to empathize with the liberated spirit of Sheela and Pru as they pose nude for Norman and go skinny-dipping in a nearby pond. (She herself wears a swimsuit.) She is also attracted to the local handyman with the suggestive name of Devlin. Supposedly he has lost most of his eyesight in a boxing match, so he must recognize people by their voices. Sheela and Pru tease Giddy and Estella about lusting after Devlin, and the evidence suggests that they're probably right.

The turning point of the film occurs when Estella goes for a walk and comes upon Devlin lounging naked on some rocks. He is a muscular, hairy man, quite the opposite of her trim, refined husband. She gazes at him for a long time – until his dog begins to bark, and Devlin throws his hunting knife into a tree near her. She runs away in a panic, much like Adela Quested at the Mirabar Caves in *A Passage to India*.

By chance, Estella comes to a road just as the three models are driving by in the Lindsays' car. They all head into town to have a drink at the pub. Since her own dress has gotten dirty, Estella changes into a tunic which is a costume used by the models, thus suggesting a closer identification with them. The owners of the pub give various lame excuses for not serving them, but the once-timid Estella asserts herself, and the four women get their drinks.

After leaving the pub, all four stop at their swimming place, where Sheela and Pru proceed to give a somewhat tipsy Giddy a full-body massage. Estella joins in; and Anthony, who happens to be walking nearby, observes the spectacle. Needless to say, he is considerably shaken! Also at about this time Estella begins to emulate Sheela by eating Stilton cheese with her fingers.

Anthony later suggests that he and Estella attend the evening service at the local church. With delightful irony, the humorless preacher is played by director John Duigan, and his message (that humans cannot hide their secrets from God) is not exactly what Estella wants to hear! At one point she even fantasizes that she is standing naked in the church.

Estella's sensual odyssey has proceeded so far that she soon initiates a tryst with Devlin, which may or may not culminate in intercourse. Some slow-motion footage raises the question of whether the encounter was just a dream, but other evidence seems to confirm that it actually took place. Earlier, as a joke, the models had tied Estella to a tree near Devlin's camp. In untying her Devlin had groped her face and upper body. Apparently she did not find this process entirely disagreeable since she later encourages Giddy to spend the night with Devlin and supplies Giddy with her dress, her perfume, her hairstyle and her wedding ring!

During that same night we see a statue in the Lindsays' garden come alive, step down from her pedestal and walk off into the pre-dawn mist, clearly alluding to the Pygmalion myth and to the transformation that Estella is experiencing. Estella dreams that she has gone to the swimming pond alone and that she has allowed herself to relax in the water and float on her back (definitely an image of «letting go»!). Mysteriously, hands break the surface of the water around her, and the three models appear and proceed to give her a sensuous rubdown. Her repressed self says: «I must wake up!» Giddy does wake her up and thanks Estella for encouraging her to go to Devlin: «I didn't let him do everything; but what he did do was wonderful!» – apparently a pleasurable sexual awakening.

Just at that moment an argument erupts outside: an enraged Anthony can be heard threatening to sue Norman, who, it seems, has painted Estella as a nude in his picture of the Sirens. Of course, she didn't pose for him; he merely painted her face onto another body. When Estella is asked for her opinion – Anthony is sure she will be as angry as he is – she examines the picture calmly and says: «It's a good likeness.» This leaves Anthony speechless. She exchanges a puckish grin with Norman and receives smiles of approval from Sheela, Pru and Giddy. Clearly she has been welcomed into their sisterhood.

A quick cut puts us in the middle of a train track with the engine rushing toward us, suggesting, perhaps, the momentum of Estella's awakened sensuality. The Campions have resumed their rail journey and are sitting opposite each other in a compartment with four other people. (The director's little jokes continue: there is a framed picture of the *Titanic* above Estella's head.) Tony is back to reading *The Decline of the West*, but Estella (noting that everyone else is asleep) places her foot between Tony's legs and gives him an unambiguously erotic massage. Shocked, he whispers: «We'll be arrested! We'll be excommunicated!» But he can't suppress a giggle, which wakes the other passengers (including a young sailor whose cap states that he's from the ship *Ulysses*). All of them apparently find the incident amusing rather than scandalous; and one feels that Tony and Estella's relationship is about to enter a new phase – no more of «Pooh» and «Piglet»!

At this point Estella has a daydream in which she is proudly standing naked on a hilltop with Rose Lindsay and the other three models – benign Sirens who give pleasure instead of doing harm. The camera does a flyover, the five women wave and there the movie ends.

«Sirens» would be enjoyable for its light comic surface story: it's a sort of *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue without the swimsuits! But I believe that the subtext of the film invites us to

consider seriously both polymorphous sensuality and adult playfulness as an affirmation of human life. And the director reinforces this subtext by the many ways in which he «plays» with his audience.

I would assert that «Sirens» supports Norman O. Brown's notion that modern man needs to explore a much wider range of sensuous experience than merely genital intercourse. In this context, Norman Lindsay's «Crucifixion of Venus» can be seen, not as an attempt to shock the religious establishment, but as a deeply-felt lament that repressive Christian values have virtually equated sensuality with sinfulness and thus negated the ideals associated with the goddess of love.

«Sirens» is one of those rare films which balances light erotic comedy with profound psychological insight. As Roger Ebert noted in his review of the film: «John Duigan sees sexual matters… with both affection and amusement.» «Sirens» exemplifies adult playfulness and – despite its apparent emphasis on sexuality – leaves the viewer more amused than aroused.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 243-247

Bachmann's style of posturing dying in *Malina*

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Ingeborg Bachmann's last work *Malina* (1971), which was to be the first novel in a trilogy entitled *Todesarten* [English: ways of dying or death styles], is an exquisitely executed presentation of the grindingly painful experience of tedium; it invokes a deathly waiting. The protagonist of *Malina*, who only refers to herself once with the initial «I», but who appears in earlier manuscripts as Ingeborg (*«Todesarten»-Projekt*, ed. D. Goettsche, 1995), insists – time and again – that the agony of her waiting, which litters the pages as overfilled ashtrays and piles of absently neglected mail, is all about the restless frustration she feels at the absence of her lover, the Guy Next Door. The protagonist's waiting, however, rarely results in a tryst; moreover, it nets her strangely irrelevant sexual encounters. The odium of Ingeborg's wait persists against her pronouncements of «happiness about love» (which Bachmann forefronts sardonically as the title of the first chapter).

The waiting is for the very sake of suffering – and for the gratification of a good show. In short, the novel *Malina* is a close and intricate exploration of suspended masochistic desire: There is simply no immediate sexual pleasure available in the pages of *Malina*; nor is there any graphic sex; there are not even any words of sexual phantasy or, to use a term from the Scene, «thought-rehearsal». The psychoanalytic motor for the figure Ingeborg, her motivation in this depiction of passion and pain, is conspicuously uncoupled or, to call up Freud («The Economic Problem of Masochism», 1924), «defused» from sexual lust.

Bachmann's literary presentation of masochism is, hence, a different and, I set out to show, a quantitatively different style of masochistic literature. *Malina* flies in the face of perverse erotic literature, such as the arch exemplar of the masochism of a woman – I am careful not to say Pauline Reage's (or Anne Declos's) *Story of O* (1954; English, 1965). Reage's story depicts the complicit if not willed degradation of a woman from the moment of her initiation into masochistic culture to the scene of her dissolution into an object and public spectacle. The trajectory of O's plunge into social and psychical suicide is punctuated with graphic and voluptuous description; it is a story meant to titilate. The reception of the *Story of O* and its status as cult literature attest to the efficacy of its erotic appeal. (I suggest only parenthetically the objections of the feminist community to this

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literature, perhaps most clearly documented in the collection *Against Sadomasochism: A Radical Feminist Analysis*, ed. Robin Ruth Linden, 1982.) Opposite Reage's story of a woman's self-destruction through masochistic practice, is Laura Reese's sexually explicit *Topping from below* (1996), which depicts a woman as masochist who dominates and ultimately destroys her sadistic male partner. Reese's protagonist walks away from the scene satisfied, unscathed, and victorious.

I mention Reage's and Reese's modern novels about masochistic women in tandem as something of a view to the range of literary depictions from destruction to triumph that, in the terms of this erotic literature, results from a life devoted to the sexual practice of sadomasochism. Reage's disgraced and mutilated character O presents a psychoanalytic profile that accords closely with Classic female masochism, as explicated in reductio by Helene Deutsch (*Psychoanalysis of the Sexual Functions of Women*, Engl. 1991) or Marie Bonaparte («Passivity, Masochism, and Femininity», 1935); Reese's victorious and ripped heroine, Nora Tibbs, is the nouvelle figure in erotic literature who exemplifies the postmodern notion of masochism as the sublime game of power that subtends traditional constructions of sex and gender, as conceptualized, most notably, by Leo Bersani (*The Freudian Body*, 1986) and expounded most recently by Nick Mansfiled (*Masochism: The Art of Power*, 1997).

The contemporary approbation of masochism as transgressive, heady, and sexier than old vanilla, which is to say genital, sex usually includes the recognition that s/m – the conjuncture of practices that outmodes codified sadomasochism – does not recognize traditional constructions of sex or gender. Yet most writers on the topic of s/m also acknowledge that the practice of masochism, which encompasses performance-art to literature, is still, in the main, an art preferred and developed by biological men (s. Carol Siegel's *Male Masochism*, 1995). Thus, the winning masochistic character Nora Tibbs is constructed in the fashion of the traditional male masochist; and her sex may be taken as equally irrelevant to her role and function. Nora may be the literary representation of the contemporary transgendered «woman», and as such, a figure who revives our appreciation of Freud's observation that many of his patients who displayed «female masochism» were men (1924). In teaming the characters O and Nora Tibbs, then, I take under awareness the limits of the term «masochistic women»; nonetheless, as the word «women» does describe a field of sex/gender expression, I use it unapologetically.

Quite often the current literature on masochism, both popular (e.g., *SM 101* by Jay Wiseman, 1996) and scholarly (e.g., *The Mastery of Submission* by John Noyes, 1997), looks back to the Austro-Hungarian Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1835-95). Sacher-Masoch, whose life and letters were the model for Richard von Krafft-Ebing's original term and concept «masochism» (*Psychospathia sexualis*, 1886), has become the guru of the popular cult and the author/ity recognized in the academy. The recuperation of the value of Sacher-Masoch as artist and *lebenskuenstler* (or artist whose medium is his life) has come about within the last fifteen years, concurrent with the rise in the popularity of the subculture (the current practices of the new tribalism, such as tattooing, branding, whipping parlors, s/m galleries, bloodfests, death/rape shows). Sacher-Masoch's life-style and writing are celebrated for their flagrantly and richly demonstrative sexual perversion (here I cite the particular contribution to this enthusiasm for Sacher-Masoch of Gilles Deleuze, who published his essay about the distinctions between sadism and masochism, «Coldness and Cruelty», in 1989 under one cover with the translation of Sacher-Masoch's centerpiece, *Venus in Furs*, original 1870).

I would like to take up Bachmann's *Malina*, which she began as early as 1962, as a precocious and self-reflexive re-styling of Sacher-Masoch's literary posture within the established genre of Victorian flagellation literature. My interest is to consider the tension that she interjects in the Masochian style of erotic literature when she styles her fictive Ingeborg as a masochist who must live under the actual conditions of being a biological woman of her time and in her society; Bachmann's regard for the real is directly at hand in this novel, patched as it is of dream-narrative, drug-trips, refutations of Chomskian linguistics, one-sided junk phone-conversations, panic-attacks, and outtakes from shredded letters, tossed through in the trash for artistic effect.

In making a case for a new and sex-specific or experientially-bounded type of masochism set down in *Malina*, I should mention that my reading is made possible by the visibility of sadomasochism, now s/m, in our society. When *Malina* appeared twenty-eight years ago, it was simply regarded as arcane. It was, in fact, disregarded. It was termed «radically out of tune with the times» («*radikal unzeitgemaess*»), «like a child's storybook» («*maerchenhaft*»), «peculiar» or «self-involved» («*eigensinnig*»), and «amusing» («*amuesant*»). Most took it for an off-beat love story. (NB: American feminists picked it up in the early 90s [it appeared in hardcover in 1990] because of its reference to fascism within the family as the precursor to Fascism writ large as institution.) Certainly, in a way, each of the above adjectives pertains, and I would like to show how reading in the context of the sadomasochistic culture brings them into a meaningful conjuncture, let us say, ties them all up.

* * *

Ingeborg Bachmann's autobiography *Malina* (translater, Philip Boehm, New York: Holmes & Meier) starts with a rambling prolog about early experiences in various streets of Vienna and even earlier rooms in Klagenfurt, Austria; Ingeborg the narrator («I»), glimpsing these places with her inner eye, closes in upon an unrecognized memory that, she repeats, «disturbs her in her memory». This odd phrase is as close as she can get in language to nameing her pain. the prolog fuses austrian german and a score from a folksong sung to her by some drunk in the park [4]. The difference between music and language falls away: the narrator is on free-fall in an id state of unparsed vision and sound.

Her retiring guide enters the scene or her awareness and the text unpunctuated by the formality of quotes when he lifts the half-empty whiskey bottle and speaks: «It still upsets you. Still.» [11]

This is Malina who likes to watch (Malina is his last name; his dead sister was Maria Malina). Ingeborg had mentioned Malina in the only recollection connected with any emotion: she had wept when she first met him – bumped into him –, wept because he pronounced the word «pardon». No one had ever said that to her. Since he begged her pardon, he is, she notes, destined to be her doom. Using a stress marked as italics at only this one pt. in the text, I. States: I was subordinate to him [5].

The other story that had evoked a response was an observation about lack of emotion; as a young girl, she was summarily slapped in the face by an unknown boy on a bridge. Ingeborg: «Iit was my first awareness of someone else's deep satisfaction in hitting. The first recognition of pain. Sometimes you really do know exactly when it began, and which tears are meant for crying.» [10] The narrator did not cry. in the end, at the end of the book, when Ingeborg vanishes into a crack in the wall, Malina will slap Ingeborg in the face [191]. From another realm, she blames him for her doom, her disappearance or departure, if not verifiable death.

When Malina mentions Ingeborg's suffering, it is clear that her monolog, which had seemed interior, is a speaking part; her tales are a staged and orchestrated exchange. The opening of *Malina*, with its production of pain, declamed by the drunken Ingeborg's partner, is a scripted Scene. The prolog could be lifted out of Theodor Reik's desciptions of playing in «Masochism in Modern Man» from *Love and Lust* (1949).

The requisites are in place: 1) the masochist in an altered state, an ecstasis, of synaesthetic perception, which invokes but does not replay the originary trauma, repeats old and known lines, which have a heightened value in the context, and 2) the masochist's partner, who, unobtrusively, observes and closely controls his trust, makes her regressive surrender safe. He is the perfect dom or male counterpart to a domina. The narrator is submissive to him. From the prolog to Ingeborg's exit into the wall in the third and final scene of classical redemption, Malina stands by. It is his job to watch.

The first chapter is the narrator's ongoing defense of her attachment, which is a sexual affair, with her neighbor, the Hungarian Ivan who is very clear-cut about their involvement: he loves only his children. Ingeborg attests to the healing power of their connection in impersonal, cosmic terms:

«The incidence of pain in the neighborhood is on the decline; moreover, the gaping split in the world's schizoid soul is healing itself imperceptibly.» [14] Yet her praise of the sanative effect of Ivan – on the world and by implication *on her* – is punctuated by a tally of cigarettes and drinks, generally consumed at the Sacher cafe in the Sacher hotel where she always orders the Sacher tort.

But unsually Ingeborg is home, waiting should Ivan call or waiting to place the call he has authorized for a particular time. In the midst of Ingeborg's unspoken witnessing about Ivan, an unbroken deluge of witty prose, which contains a philosophical consideration of the epistemology of language, comes the text of Ingeborg and Ivan's sporadic and drearily quotidian phone conversations. These are lined out as poetry:

Hello. Hello?
It's me, who'd you think?
Oh right, of course, sorry
How I am? And you?
I don't know. This evening?
I can barely understand you
Barely? What? So you can
I can't hear you very well, can you
What? Is something?
No, nothing, ater on you can
Okay, sure, I better call you later
I, I really should see these
Of course if you can't, then
I didn't say that, only if you don't
In any case let's call each other later
All right, but closer to six, since
But that'll be too late for me
Yes, really for me as well, but
Maybe it doesn't make much sense today
Did someone come in?
No, just the secretary is here
Oh, so you're not alone anymore
But please, later on, for sure! [19]

and the ancillary call-back:

It's nice you called.
Nice, why nice?
Just because. It's nice. [22]

The intensity of these phone conversations is on display in Ingeborg's posture: she is not on the phone, she is wrapped and bound in the apparatus: she makes use of it as material for bondage. She binds herself prostrate on the floor in an attitude of muslim prayer. She has yards and yard of phone cord, which she is perpetually wrapping, smoothing, fondling when she is not «on the wire». She has a relation to it; it seems to speak to her. This black phone is her fettish. In commenting on the non-value of the sentences she and Ivan have agreed on, she says «speech crosses to gesture and gestures are consistently successful rituals. «A ritual», she continues, «begins when it replaces feelings, it's no empty process, each repetition is significant, it is a solemn folmula, distilled, and accompanied by the only devotion of which [she is] truly capable.» [26] Her devotion to Ivan then, when set against Ingeborg's internal monolog on devotion to her conversational posture and bondage-ritual, is a bit displaced (Ivan, if the interest were Ivan, is just next door). Her devotion is to playing with her own issues.

And yet, they do have a physical relation off-stage apart from Ingeborg's agon of the phone. They take his kids to see the same Mickey Mouse movies, play poor games of chess, and smoke a lot. The only reference to their sex-life is sandwiched in a discourse on keeping up with the news, or «renting opinions»: Ingeborg finds her opinions all «rented», or accomodations, also her opinion of Ivan is rented. She could take them or leave them/ take him or leave him. She has «less and less of a will to tyrannize him, free him from her thinking, so he does not have to rub his wrists and ankles in his sleep. She's not so interested anymore in keeping him fettered and under the dictatorship of her eyes». [82]

Ivan's beauty, as Ingeborg confesses to Malina before her passage into the wall, is that he allowed her to experience beauty – she «became beautiful through Ivan». He was beautiful because he was «consummately ordinary». [201] It made her «happy» for once to watch and to watch someone who had not a notion. (Tedious Ivan had never understood she was a literary luminary, had thought she was a housewife, and therefore home in the afternoon. Although the telegrams from around the world to the eminent dr. dr. professor Ingeborg ... had caused him a bit of concern, once.) Malina hears out Ingeborg's confession – not of the affair but of the motive for the affair –, monitors her intake of pills, liquor, manages the piles of mail, in short hears out this confession as a needful part of the end of her storytelling and life. He assists her in tying up the «last things», title of the last chapter. He acts with decorum on her will, leaving this orb.

In passing from chapter one, «happines in Ivan» to three, «last things», I have withheld what triggered Ingeborg's passage from the will to be happy to the decision to exit: scene two is her descent into hell with Malina at her bedside. The central chapter is a sequence of dream-narratives ala Franz Kafka or Arthur Schnitzler. Yet the middle chapter of *Malina* is called «the third man» after Carol Reed's commercial detective film of post-war vienna (1949), based on a story by Graham Greene. Kafka, Schnitzler and Greene, in differening genres and media, are all concerned to track an evil, in fact a murderer. And so is Ingeborg Bachmann.

Ingeborg in hell has arrived at the lake of the dead daughters. Here she is forever pursued by her demonic father. He gouges her, flays her, drowns her, buries her alive, slams her in asylums and out of his house, burns her, slashes her, destroys her and yet always manages to shows her up as guilty and mad; but most significant of all, this father takes her to his bed. In her dreams, Ingeborg hears and uses the word «incest». When she awakes, where Malina sits at her side, she is still suffering from that «disturbance in her memory» – still! – and cannot name her murderer. She is distraught because she does not know who her father is. At Malina's forceful prompting, she can say: «It's not my father. It's my murderer.» [154]

This recognition comes after one dream in which the narrator is wearing a siberian jewish coat for her father who wants the coat for himself, and then takes it. She is separated from her father and realizes she has to find a hungarian in a terrible chaos. She finds a man in a barracks wearing the same fur coat, now a starry mantle, and says through her laughter and tears: «It really is you at last!» [126] Is the dreaming Ingeborg's «you» her father or the hungarian Ivan? Or is the difference all the same?

And is not the mantle that signifies recognition, the one she must wear and then pass along via her father to her lover the fur that was the fettish of Sacher-Masoch? The heritage and the legacy are certainly passed around in austrian letters. But the *sexuality* of this coat places it most squarely on the shoulders of Leopold von Sacher-Masoch.

The Ingeborg of *Malina*, taking this legacy and its genesis under awareness, has added a past to her sadomasochistic involvement with Ivan. She has connected the erotic frenzy around her fettishistic love to her urtrauma, the originary disturbance in her memory. Thus, she can no longer toy with an aura without calling up the exact source of pain. Her pain and the erotic gaming are uncoupled, defused. Topping from below or from above brings no satisfaction.

It is Malina who brought her to this point. He has set the scene, and now he breaks it.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 249-253

«The beautiful, wild animal Lulu» – Rereading Wedekind

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From the point of view of gender, it would seem that everything of significance has already been said about Wedekind's Lulu dramas and their female protagonist, the *beautiful, wild animal* Lulu. The direction literary criticism has taken with respect to the double drama – comprising *Erdgeist* and *Pandora's Box*[1] – and its protagonist can be described as demythification. Whereas critics as late as the seventies celebrated Wedekind's protagonist as an incarnation of feminine, autonomous sexuality,[2] nature's primal woman (unscathed by imposing and disfiguring cultural forces), later feminist critics, working in a tradition inspired by Bovenschen's work *Die imaginierte Weiblichkeit*,[3] arrived at the view that Wedekind does not reveal in his Lulu dramas the form of the mythic, primal woman. Rather, it is much more the case that the mechanisms leading to the construction of the *mythological woman* are dramatically staged in *Erdgeist* and *Pandora's Box*: what is shown is not that Lulu is the beautiful, wild animal, but how she is misused as a screen in a process of projection and *made* into a beautiful, wild animal. What remains for Lulu is not only to take up her role as victim, but to play with the characteristics ascribed to her.

That this reading accurately describes a central feature of the work is certainly right – and so it is not my intention to offer a revision of the (to use a brief term) *screen* theory. What I propose – and to this extent, I see my *lecture dramatique* too as demythification – is to examine textual structures that up until now have been left out of the critiques – myth-affirming and doubting alike – whose proponents knew all along that Lulu would be exposed as a beautiful, wild animal (whether by the author Wedekind or the drama's male protagonists). My concern is to illustrate (to

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[1] I do not refer to the text 'Monstretragödie' from 1894 that has recently been made available, but to the prior edition (that was also decisive for the reception process, about whose critical commentary I am concerned). The theses I present also lay claim to conformity with the 'original' from 1894.

[2] Cf. Wilhelm Emerich's interpretation: Die Lulu-Tragödie. In: *Das deutsch Drama vom Barock bis zur Gegenwart. Interpretationen.* Benno von Wiese. Volume II. Düsseldorf 1958, pp. 207-228.

[3] Silvia Bovenschen: *Die imaginierte Weiblichkeit. Exemplarische Untersuchungen zu kulturgeschchtlichen und literarischen Präsentationsformen des Weiblichen*. Frankfurt 1979, pp. 43-59.

use Paul de Man's terms) that the text does not practice what it preaches. To be sure, the postulate to which the text refers is that of the woman as misfortune-bringing monster, as beautiful, unreflective and wild animal entirely given over to sexuality (quite in keeping with the definition of femininity presented by Weininger in 1903 in his *Geschlecht und Charakter*[4]). The text practice, however, does not make good on these claims. A short look at the prologue[5] – and it is irritating that this has been overlooked by so many critics for so long – makes clear that the metaphor of the wild, beautiful animal is a *shifting* one that hovers over the protagonist without really touching down. The monster in the 'Monstretragödie'[6] too, as the male protagonists and the male interpreters of *Lulu* apprehend, changes his face in the course of the drama – the last scene presents the real monster. It neither has Lulu's face nor that of the second woman of significance in the *Lulu* cycle, the lady Geschwitz, but the face of a man: Jack the Ripper's. Even with reference to the use of animal imagery alone, the double drama deconstructs with persistence the discourse on femininity to which the protagonists and interpreters seem equally committed.

Let us begin with a look at the prologue of the first piece in the double drama, at the prologue to *Erdgeist*. Here («after the opened curtain reveals the entrance to a tent», p. 7[7]) an animal tamer enters the circus menagerie and greets the audience that has come expecting to get a look at beasts of prey: «The real animal, the *wild, beautiful* animal. That – my good ladies! – you'll see only in my circus» (p. 8). The context seems to indicate that the *wild, beautiful* animal in question is a tiger.[8] Moments later, the director has a worker carry «the actress playing *Lulu*, dressed in a Pierrot costume», onto the stage. He commands, «Bring me that *snake* of ours! ... She was made to wreak havoc, to entice, to seduce, to poison, to murder without anyone noticing. (In striking her chin.) My sweet animal» (p. 9). The *wild, beautiful* animal that the animal tamer had just introduced to the ladies in the audience turns into a sweet animal that is not an animal but «the female protagonist of *Lulu* in her Pierrot costume», but all the same – and here topical feminine attributes from the book of Genesis get resuscitated – a snake that can and will visit upon *man*kind every imaginable malady. The animal tamer, seeing the *sweet* animal involved in an imagined fight with the tiger, says to the audience, «There is nothing special to be seen in this, but wait and see what happens later: she winds herself around the tiger squeezes powerfully; it howls and groans! – Who is the victor at the end?» (p. 9). The fight between snake and tiger, *sweet* and *wild*, *beautiful* animal apparently masks the battle of the sexes. However, the prologue does not end with this configuration, but rather with the animal tamer's promise that he will place his head between the teeth of the beast of prey: «My life for a joke; I'll put away my whip and these weapons and I'll present myself just as harmless as God created me. Do you know what this tiger's name is? My honourable audience. – Come on in!!» (p. 10). It must be clear to the people in the audience sitting there in anticipation of a spectacle performed by, and with, the *wild, beautiful* animal that that the animal tamer is talking about themselves as beasts of prey. The theme of the *wild, beautiful animal* proves itself to be sliding, protean: the formulation describes actor as well as spectator – and women as well as men. In any case, on the basis of the prologue, the – generally accepted – clear identification of Lulu

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[4] Otto Weininger: *Geschlecht und Charakter. Eine prinzipielle Untersuchung*. München 1997.

[5] The prologue written in 1898, as Jörg Schönert points out, bears no close connection to the main text (Jörg Schönert: 'Lulu Regaines': Überlegungen zur Lektüre von Frank Wedekinds «Monstretragödie». In: *Literatur in der Gesellschaft. Festschrift in honor of Theo Buck on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday*. Frank-Rutger Hausmann, Ludwig Jäger and Bernd Witte. Tübingen 1990, pp. 183-193, here p. 192). However, the prologue contains 'annotations', or interpretive instructions for the drama that also serve as orientation for the reception of the Lulu pieces.

[6] This is what Wedekind calls his 'original' from 1894.

[7] I quote (also in what follows) the Reclam-edition. Frank Wedekind: *Lulu. Erdgeist. Die Büchse der Pandora*. Erhard Weidl. Stuttgart 1989 (my translation).

[8] After the tiger, a bear and an ape also appear.

with the *wild, beautiful animal* (an identification that once again attempts to locate animalistic drive in the woman), is not tenable. For in the prologue, the psychoanalytically verified discourse on femininity itself gets deconstructed, the discourse in support of which Wedekind's *Lulu* dramas were quoted for so long as evidence (even in the critical, feminist psychoanalysis of Christa Rohde-Dachser's[9]).

The animal imagery is also conspicuous in the double drama's last scene. Lulu, living as a disgraced prostitute in London, receives her last customer, Jack the Ripper, in the chamber in which Lady Geschwitz also finds herself. Jack the Ripper strokes «Geschwitz's head as one would that of a dog» – ruefully, he calls her «Poor animal!» Later, after Jack the Ripper has stabbed both women, he says of the lady: «This monster is completely safe from being touched by me» (p. 179). Jack the Ripper calls Geschwitz an *animal* and *monster* – this is made unambiguous by the context – because he recognized her lesbian disposition. What is so provocative about Wedekind's drama in this instance is that it has one of the most bestial and pathological murderers of women in all of history as part of its *personae dramatis* – who in his own twisted way is heterosexual: he 'penetrates' his female victims with a knife (and butchers them as if they were animals for slaughter) – express sympathy and revulsion for a person whose sole 'crime' it is not to be heterosexual (and who is otherwise almost the only character in the work whose love also has a sense of agape; in an emphatically humanistic sense, Geschwitz is one of the few *human beings* in the drama – it seems somewhat as if she is able to tap this 'humanistic' reservoir because she is liberated from the crude hunter-prey games of compulsory heterosexuality[10]).

The beast, the wild animal is apparently not a woman, but a man: *Jack the Ripper*. Lulu as wild, beautiful animal, and Lady Geschwitz as poor animal and monster, represent the *screen* behind which the real beast of prey and the real brute lurks – and it is not a woman. The content of Pandora's Box (the title of the second part of the double drama) the mythic *Überfrau*, is – a man.

Wedekind himself played the role of Jack the Ripper. In the May 29, 1905 showing of his play in the Vienna Trianon-Theater, he played the killer of women. In my view, this choice of roles is not contingent, it is no biographical triviality, rather it is aesthetically self-reflexive. It refers to the altogether gender-specific mortifying aspect of the artist's work, as this aspect is comprehensively described by Elisabeth Bronfen in her «Nur über ihre Leiche».[11] In Bronfen's extensive study, covering countless literary texts and paintings since 1750 as well as 'modern' films, she shows an remarkable equation between femininity and death and declares the female corpse a central cultural paradigm, «the reason and point of departure for our cultural system of representation».[12] According to her theory, beautiful women get sacrificed by male artists in the process of bringing forth a work of art, the female corpse gets treated in cultural narration as a work of art. What Jacques Lacan posits as a fundamental axiom of every culture and of every symbolic order: *La femme n'existe pas*, is illustrated by Bronfen in the work of art as poetological, production-aesthetic and culture-theoretical principle: the killing of the feminine, the establishment of the symbolic, cultural order through the exclusion of the (living) woman, the transformation of «the (female) body, perceived as animated nature, or culturally constituted, into inanimate aesthetic form».[13] Put somewhat more sensationally: Men make art 'only over women's dead bodies'; consequently, texts and artistic work have 'murder stories' as foundations. Structurally speaking, the lust murderer-victim constellation with which *Pandora's Box* ends depicts the painter-model constellation with which Wedekind's *Erdgeist* begins.

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[9] Rohde-Dachser, Christa: *Expedition in den dunklen Kontinent. Weiblichkeit im Diskurs der Psychoanalyse*. Berlin 1991, pp. 108-117.

[10] Cf. also Elizabeth Boa: *The Sexual Circus. Wedekind's Theatre of Subversion*. Oxford 1987, p. 114.

[11] Elisabeth Bronfen: *Nur über ihre Leiche. Tod, Weiblichkeit und Ästhetik*. München 1994.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 623.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 623.

Thus Frank Wedekind plays *Jack the Ripper* – and Georg Grosz (to point to an example from the area of graphic art that is organized very similarly) takes up the role of the brutal English serial killer in a photograph from 1918 bearing the title, *Selfportrait with Eva Peter in the artist's studio*. I quote from Maria Tatar's *Lustmord*: «George Grosz, who painted more than his share of what he called 'ladykillers' (in the literal sense of the term) and of their mutilated victims, once had himself photographed in the pose of Jack the Ripper. Menacing his victim with a knife pointed at her genitals, he transforms himself from the creative artist who frames, contains, and appropriates the seductive appeal of his model into a murderer prepared to destroy the source of male heterosexual desire and of artistic inspiration. The female model – absorbed in the contemplation of her own image (note the redundant presence of both a hand mirror and a near full-length mirror) – puts herself on display in a gesture of serene self-sufficiency.»[14] Tatar's interpretation continues as follows: «She [the female model – C. L.] has, in a sense, made the artist superfluous by creating herself as a work of art, as the target of the male connoisseur's gaze. And that reason alone may be sufficient to account for the artist's impersonation of a man prepared to assault, disfigure, and mutilate the body before him.»[15] I think Tatar is mistaken in this supposition. The artist is not turned into Jack the Ripper in the photograph (which Grosz himself produced) because his model does harm to him by way of rivaling him artistically – for that, precisely, she does not do. She stages herself rather on the model of the fetishizing looks that make her an *object* of art (in this sense she occupies the passive, not the active, artistically-forming and culturally as masculinely-sematisized position). The artist turns into Jack the Ripper because he can thereby literally put on the stage the the mortifying, immobilizing impetus that converts the living into inanimate, aesthetic form: it is a matter of literalization. Grosz' photograph demonstrates what Bronfen highlights as the figurative *and* literal principle of art production:[16] the mortification of the woman – and, in the case of Grosz, not of any odd woman. It concerns the mortification of Eva Peter, who was to marry Grosz two years later in 1920. Furthermore – by way of returning to Wedekind – the stage victim of Jack the Ripper, alias Wedekind, is not any odd victim. Wedekind's future wife, Tilly Newes, played Lulu, the woman to be murdered.

Wedekind writes the mortification theory described by Bronfen more or less into the 'border scenes' of the double drama. *Erdgeist* begins with the setting of an atelier (the reference is to the painter Conti and the discussion of art in Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*). The painter, Schwarz, is making a portrait of Lulu, the beautiful young wife of the old doctor Goll; the lively child-woman is rendered motionless in the aesthetic configuration – not a still-life, but nonetheless, a *nature morte*. The brush of the painter, in Wedekind's play simultaneously trivial and telling, takes the place of the male genitalia. Even Lulu takes notice – and puts it subtly: «A painter is actually not a man at all» (S. 18), and with that Wedekind's protagonist is at the height of Freudian sublimation theory. She defines a painter as someone who transforms sexual energy into pictorial art – and therefore is «actually [no longer] a man at all». In the final scene, Jack the Ripper will no longer perform mortification work, but literally enact it. Instead of a paint brush, he is in possession of a knife (and so the chain of phallic substitutions continues) – and with the knife penetrates Lulu's body. Jack's sexual energy is solely destructive: his lust is for murdering. And he is the only one among numerous male protagonists in the play who can close Lulu's, i.e. Pandora's Box. Male lust for murdering women appears to be somewhat of a last possible reaction to the feminine bacillus

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[14] Maria Tatar: *Lustmord. Sexual Murder in Weimar Germany*. Princeton 1995, p. 4 and passim.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[16] Hauke Stroszeck, in a reading of Lulu as an allegory of art, also speaks of Lulu's being 'immobilized' by Jack the Ripper (Hauke Stroszeck: «Ein Bild vor dem die Kunst verzweifeln muß.» Zur Gestaltung der Allegorie in Frank Wedekinds Lulu-Tragödie. In: Literatur und Theater im Wilhelminischen Zeitalter. Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer, Karl-Otto Conrady und Helmut Schanze. Tübingen 1978, pp. 217-237, here p. 235).

that is so dangerous and annihilating and which afflicts nearly all men (a few to such an extent that they themselves become feminine at the moment of their deaths. The painter, Schwarz, dies when he slits his own throat, a manner of death that I read as self-castration, i.e., feminization).

But who is this woman about whom all are convinced that she will bring them so much misfortune, this mythic *Überfrau* who annihilates all men – this superwoman who no man can resist? Wedekind's play is very exact when it comes to answering this question. The superwoman no man can resist is one constructed by all the men in the play – Lulu becomes whatever it is her husband-lover makes of her (they dress her in a costume, have her dance, or pose, etc.). And because there are many husbands and lovers, Lulu has so many names. Each of her creators calls her something else: Nelli, Mignon, Eva etc. Accordingly, all of Lulu's male victims go to their ruin as a result of a construction that they themselves have erected. Lulu is everything other than the autonomous, natural woman who arbitrarily annihilates men. In the words of Zadek, whose stage production at the end of the eighties with Susanne Lothar in the title role of Lulu is one of the most compelling Wedekind stage adaptations:[17] «In 1900 Lulu was a killer. Today a victim.»[18] Presenting her in his adaptation as a small abused girl, Zadek expresses with great precision why Lulu is a victim.[19] The text of Wedekind's dramas clearly suggests that Lulu was sexually abused by her social father, who is perhaps also her 'biological' father, Schigolch (and because that is the behavioral pattern which has had a formative influence on her, she again and again seeks out fathers who continue the pattern of sexual abuse). Zadek's stage adaptation elaborates Lulu's traumatization quite thoroughly. Susanne Lothar, as Lulu, behaves like a five-year old girl displaying prematurely sexualized, or hypersexualized behavior, is compulsively promiscuous and mistakes love and caring for sexuality – reproducing those disturbances (also handled in Fischer's *Lehrbuch der Psychotraumatologie*[20] and Alice Miller's *Du sollst nicht merken*[21]) that are typical for early abuse. A demythologizing reading of Wedekind's Lulu not only illustrates that the protagonist is not a *wild, beautiful animal*, but it also illustrates that the autonomous, 'natural' feminine sexuality, the primal femininity that Lulu is alleged to represent, is a mere phantasy of protagonists and critics – a phantasy that prevents them from understanding what Lulu is: an abused child in the body of a woman.

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[17] Zadek draws extensively from the 'original' from 1894.

[18] Peter Zadek, Johannes Grützke: *Lulu: eine deutsche Frau, frei nach Wedekind*. Frankfurt 1988, p. 16 and passim.

[19] Zadek suggests of his intention, that for him it is a matter of portraying paradisic innocence, natural sensuality, and absence of shame.

[20] Gottfried Fischer: *Lehrbuch der Psychotraumatologie*. Frankfurt 1998.

[21] Alice Miller: *Du sollst nicht merken*. Frankfurt 1981.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 255-265

Racism as a project: *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*?

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INTRODUCTION

Object relations are «templates of others in our minds». As Greenberg and Mitchell explain, «People react to and interact with not only an actual other but also an internal other, a psychic representation of a person, which in itself has the power to influence both the individual's affective states and his overt behavioral reactions» (Greenberg and Mitchell 10). We argue that the white self exists as an object relationship, a relationship that is sincerely fictionalized to guarantee the misrecognition of both the white self and the racial other and of the true basis of the relationship between the two. Sincere fictions, a concept introduced by Pierre Bourdieu (112), allow the persistence of an exalted white self-image as powerful, brave, cordial, kind, firm, and generous, a natural-born leader worthy to be respected and followed by those of other races. And they allow as well the invention of debased or fantastic images of racial others which originate as templates in the white mind. As the black hero of Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man* says of his relationship with whites, «You wonder whether you aren't simply a phantom in other people's minds» (Ellison 3).

Sartre's *Search for a Method* speaks of the need to study social relation in terms of their «project». To understand any human creation, we need to understand both the existing conditions and what they are allowed to build in the future, this is «the field of possibles». Sartre believes that Marx was correct that people have an objective situation in life: their work. But for Sartre the work only makes sense as an attempt to bring something into being. «Society is presented to each man as a perspective of the future.... Every man is defined negatively by the sum total of possibles which are impossible for him; that is, by a future more or less blocked off.» (Sartre)

Using Sartre's terms, racism is a *project*; it has something it wants to bring into being in the future. Racism is the *practice* and white supremacy – the condition of looking up to whites or down on people of color – is the *condition* that has resulted from it. The project of white racism is to make a non-racist world impossible in the future; it aims above all to perpetuate itself and its products.

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Therefore, to understand the white self, we need to look not only at the conditions of its past and present existence but also at what it wants to make, and makes possible (or impossible) in the future both for whites and for people of color. We would add that object relations help define the field of the possible; what we conceive of as possible or impossible is shaped by our relations to the object. Racism occurs both externally, as a project, and internally, in the feelings and desires of the white self. The project is thus enabled by the range of object relations available in a society at a given time.

THE PROJECT OF *GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER*

For example, what does a film such as *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967) want to bring into being – aside from entertainment and the profits it produces through the appeal to the widest possible audience that we can assume is true of any Hollywood movie? What conditions and events is it trying to bring into being? Under what conditions of possibility?

Guess came out in 1967, amid the impact of the Civil Rights Movement, which had been in full swing for a decade. It was directed by Stanley Kramer, known for producing or directing outspokenly liberal, anti-fascist, «message» films, such as *Judgment at Nuremburg* (1961) and *Ship of Fools* (1965), and anti-racist films, such as *Home of the Brave* (1949), *Pressure Point* (1962), and *The Defiant Ones* (1958). On the surface, the project of this film appears to be anti-racist. It tackles the ultimate American racial taboo of black-white romance. In this film the romance leads to a marriage accepted by both families, suggesting that «love conquers all». It preaches reconciliation between the generations as well as reconciliation between the races. Ostensibly, the dramatic tension is between bigotry and racial tolerance. It is a well-meaning, therapeutic comedy, a problem-solving film, a fable about two nice families, one white and super rich, the other black and middle class, who resolve their differences and unite in marriage.

But is this the actual project of the film? In practice, it turns out to be a rather tame, self-congratulatory liberal melodrama which actually expands the white self by announcing, «Look how tolerant we are!» The movie concerns a crisis in the white patriarchy, a situation which questions the validity and the power of one particular aging member of the white elite. But it ends by reaffirming the wisdom, power, and tolerance of the white patriarch as he adapts successfully to changing times. *Guess* plays not only on the objective situation – the audience's knowledge of the historical conditions – but also on the subjective racism of the audience.

Because of 1960s' «generation gap», the film's message of reconciliation between the young and old is as central as its message of racial tolerance; in fact, the two are connected. The passions about miscegenation are displaced onto the far safer topic of generational difference. In 1967, the superheated topic of interracial marriage could not be confronted head-on by a Hollywood film but «the generation gap» could. Stanley Kramer says, «'Who says it's a story only about the black man? .... It's about young and old viewpoints, and in this case the bone of contention happens to be the acceptance of interracial marriage. But this film says that the new generation won't live like the last generation simply because that's the way it's supposed to be. Life has moved on'» (Spoto 277). The crisis in American society in the late 1960s was brought about in large part by children acting on the ideals taught them by their parents and their schools. When the parents were shocked by their children's active protests against the Vietnam War or against racism, the children began to view their elders as hypocritical liberals who did not practice what they preached. *Guess* reassures audiences that parents are not hypocrites, that they want the best for their children, but that they are realists concerned about the pace of change, not about the eventual outcome of racial reconciliation.

In 1967, interracial marriage was illegal in many states. In the 1960 census, the last before *Guess*, black-white couples constituted only one tenth of one percent of all married couples in the U.S. Marriage between whites and blacks had been absent from Hollywood films «for over forty years, since the implementation of the Production Code. No one would touch this most explosive of social issues» (Spoto 274). Interracial romance and marriage could occasionally be countenanced in historical

films: westerns such as *Broken Arrow* (1950), colonial sagas such as *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935 and 1962), or musicals set in the past, such as *Showboat* (1936 and 1951). And by the late 1950s, contemporary marriage between whites and Asians was an acceptable subject for films such as *Sayonara* (1957) and *South Pacific* (1958) (both based on novels by James Michener). Yet even in the 1960s, it was still considered taboo to depict a screen marriage between a white and a black. The barrier was first breached in the low-budget feature *One Potato Two Potato* (1964), «the screen's first study of an interracial marriage. (Other features had dealt with interracial romances; there is a difference.)» (Bogle 201).

Then, in 1966 William Rose, who wrote *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World* (1963) for director Stanley Kramer, pitched Kramer an idea: a daring comedy about a white South African liberal whose daughter falls in love with a black man. Kramer suggested setting it in contemporary America instead: «I thought to myself, 'What a sorry sight to see a front-line liberal come face to face with his own principles right in his own house'» (Davidson 206).

Kramer and Rose decided on a light treatment of this heavy subject. «*Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* was conceived as having a consistently light tone: fundamentally a salon comedy, not above using sight gags and double takes, weak jokes, visual ironies, and snappish, cynical humor» (Spoto 275).

The casting was also intended to win a wide audience for this potentially controversial movie. Kramer cast it with an ideal, beloved white screen couple – Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn – and a black superstar, the paragon of rising black middle-class respectability, Sidney Poitier. These cultural icons legitimized and made believable the story by bringing it in line with cultural expectations of the time.

As Kramer's biographer Donald Spoto remarks, «Tracy is everywhere the mouthpiece for the struggles, hopes and beliefs of Stanley Kramer» (Spoto 280). Tracy and Hepburn had not worked in years: he was ill and she was taking care of him. But Tracy had often worked with Kramer and agreed to do the picture on the basis of the story idea. Katharine Hepburn persuaded Tracy to play the father by saying she would play the wife.

Hepburn had solid liberal credentials; she was a progressive, a lifelong feminist. Tracy was more conservative, but he too was anti-racist. In 1945 he refused to perform a benefit at the National Theater in Washington, D.C. because wounded white WW II veterans were admitted but not wounded black soldiers. Because of Tracy's stand, the segregated theater relented: for one performance only, blacks were allowed in the audience (Kanin 102-07).

Tracy and Hepburn were a legendary pair, two of the greatest actors of their time, a royal couple of the old Hollywood. Their screen careers had begun over thirty-five years before, with the beginnings of Hollywood sound films. From 1942 to 1957, they were teamed in eight pictures, of which the best remembered are four romantic comedies: *Woman of the Year* (1942), *Adam's Rib* (1949), *Pat and Mike* (1952), and *Desk Set* (1957). Ten years passed until they co-starred once again in *Guess*. Tracy was 67 and Hepburn 57, and they were ideal to portray the parents in this drawing-room comedy. *Guess* is their ninth and last film together: Tracy was very ill during the filming and died ten days after its completion. The fact that it is his swan song and that Tracy and Hepburn were offscreen lovers for twenty-five years (she was divorced; he was a devout Catholic who refused to divorce) gives the film added poignance.

Tracy and Hepburn represented a pairing of opposites. Their onscreen roles mimicked their real-life personalities: he was rugged, gruff, the epitome of the common man; she was a New England aristocrat, graduate of the elite women's college Bryn Mawr. Garson Kanin, who wrote two of their romantic comedies, explained the success of the pair: «Nothing more endears a Queen to her subjects than ... a marriage to a commoner» (Kanin 80). As Hepburn put it, «'Certainly the ideal American man is Spencer. Sports-loving, a man's man. Strong looking, a big sort of head, boar neck, and so forth. A man. And I think I represent a woman. I needle him, and I irritate him, and I try to get around him, yet if he put a big paw out, he could squash me. I think this is the sort of romantic ideal picture of the male and female in the United States'» (Davidson 86). In other

words, they were role models, one of the best-loved American couples of their generation. Tracy and Hepburn were the apogees of whiteness and gave the project the Establishment seal of approval. When a royal couple speaks your lines, the lines carry more weight. In addition, audience expectations from previous Tracy and Hepburn films assured that *Guess* would be taken more as entertainment, as romantic comedy, than as political message picture.

Once Tracy and Hepburn were aboard, Sidney Poitier, who had also worked before with Kramer, agreed to play the prospective son-in-law, although he doubted a studio would buy it. At that time, Poitier was the leading black male actor in America. If Tracy and Hepburn symbolized the old white establishment, then Poitier symbolized in Hollywood films of the 1950s and 60s the rising young American black. Poitier was the key to the commercial success of the project because he was so well recognized and so acceptable to the white audience. One critic writes, «in 1966, he was the only black actor who could conceivably woo a white girl without alienating a large portion of the American film public» (Carey 208). This is a crucial structuring condition of possibility. As the heroine Janie says in Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), «'De ones de white man knows is nice colored folks. De ones he don't know is bad niggers'» (Hurston 164).

> Donald Bogle writes: «Poitier's ascension to stardom in the mid-1950s was no accident.... in this integrationist age Poitier was the model integrationist hero. In all his films he was educated and intelligent. He spoke proper English, dressed conservatively, and had the best of table manners. For the mass white audience, Sidney Poitier was a black man who had met their standards. His characters were tame; never did they act impulsively, nor were they threats to the system.... And finally they were non-funky, almost sexless and sterile. In short, they were the perfect dream for white liberals anxious to have a colored man in for lunch or dinner.... He may have played the old tom dressed up with modern intelligence and reason, but he dignified the figure.... Poitier was also acceptable for black audiences. He was the paragon of black middle-class values and virtues» (Bogle 175-76).

Kramer says, «It's a tribute to Kate, Spence, and Sidney that Columbia went along» (Davidson 207). Kramer's dedication, his previous successes as producer or director, along with the talent and reputations of Tracy, Hepburn, and Poitier, and the clever script by William Rose, enabled the film about a touchy subject to be made and to become one of the box-office successes of 1967. Tracy said, «'Aw, you know, everyone knocks message pictures. Let me tell you something. They don't object to message pictures, nor does the audience. They object to message pictures *that don't make money'*» (Davidson 207). *Guess* «was financially the most successful picture of Spencer Tracy's thirty-seven-year career» (Swindell 274). It was nominated for ten Academy Awards and won in two categories: Best Actress and Best Original Screenplay.

REVIEWS OF THE FILM

Reviewers were divided between those who found it bold and those who thought it «treacly, sentimental, and contrived». The most common criticism was that it was «old-fashioned». *Guess* appeared at a transitional time and is an establishment film that makes some awkward concessions to the then growing anti-establishment mood. Hollywood in 1967 was facing the spreading turmoil of the sixties and trying to recapture young audiences. The movie business was changing so fast in the late 1960s that whereas *Guess* might have seemed bold in 1966, by 1967 «it was already out of date». *Guess* was «one of the last big-studio glossy pictures whose story could have been lifted from a slick magazine. Kramer, once the great hope of the avant garde, now was called Establishment; *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* were the 'new cinema'» (Swindell 274-75). Donald Bogle calls *Guess* «pure 1949 claptrap done up in 1940s high-gloss MGM style.... the last of the explicitly integrationist message pictures» before the onslaught of the angry or separatist films about black Americans in the 1970s.

Aside from criticism that it was old-fashioned, some reviewers objected that «the race issue is prettified and preguaranteed a happy resolution here because of the extraordinary character of the black man, and the built-in liberal stance of the parents, especially since Poitier represents the quintessentially respectable and unthreatening black, and Tracy and Hepburn represent the settled, establishmentarian liberals who can win over any case and make the nastiest world safe for love and ideals» (Spoto 275).

Both Kramer and Poitier defended the film against these charges. Kramer says, «'We took special pains to make Poitier a very special character in this story and to make both families, in fact, very special. Respectable, yes. And intelligent. And attractive. We did this so that if the young couple didn't marry because of their parents' disapproval, the *only* reason would be that he was black and she was white.... The critics simply missed the point'» (Spoto 275-77).

Poitier argues,

> People said I was cast as the stereotype of the intellectual black man with no flaws.... They said I should have played a garage mechanic... brought home to this wealthy San Francisco family by the daughter and presented as a candidate for marriage.
>
> Well, this objection has absolutely no historical sense. In 1967 it was utterly impossible to do an in-depth interracial love story, to treat the issue in dead earnestness, head on. No producer, no director could get the money, nor would theatres in America book it. But Kramer... prepared such a fine production that Columbia agreed to back it. He treated the theme with humor, but so delicately, so humanly, so lovingly that he made everyone look at the issue for the very first time in film history! *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* is a totally revolutionary movie.... For the very first time, the characters in a story about racism are people with minds of their own, who after deliberations in a civilized manner, and after their own private reflections, come to a conclusion - the only sensible conclusion that people could come to in a situation like that.... Hollywood was incapable of anything more drastic in 1967. It couldn't have been made, it couldn't have been distributed. But Kramer created an idea and molded it so lovingly... that a totally unheard-of theme opened in theaters around the country without incident (Spoto 278).

Poitier is saying that the field of possibles was such that this was the only movie that could have been made at that time. He takes the fact that the film played around the country «without incident» as a tribute to the expertise of Stanley Kramer in giving a controversial subject a light touch. But we might read it instead as a testimony to the movie's blandness. Why should a movie about an explosive topic, released during a time of tumultuous racial protest and change in America (there were riots in the black ghettos of Detroit, Washington, D.C. and other America cities in 1967), have aroused so little protest? Clearly it was not strong medicine but a sugarcoated pill guaranteed to pose no threat to the white establishment and thus to assure its commercial success. In his review, Arthur Knight accuses the film of a «patness» and «surface slickness that inevitably glosses over the urgency of its theme.... The very elements that prevent it from coming to dramatic grips with its potentially explosive material are probably also the ones that would commend it to a wide audience – and Kramer's canny enough as a producer to recognize this» (Knight).

One could argue that movies such as *Guess*, which are designed to offend no one, rather than advancing the cause of anti-racism, do the opposite by easing the public's mind, suggesting that there is no real racial divide that cannot be bridged in the course of a day by a meeting of open-minded whites and blacks of good will. *Guess* ignores the painful truth of the old joke: «What do you call a Nobel Prizewinning scientist? Doctor. What do you call a black Nobel Prizewinner? Boy.» These movies overlook the structural racism of American institutions, a racism built into the Hollywood system, in favor of individualistic quick fixes. They reassure the white audience of the fundamental decency and tolerance of the white self.

Guess does not really revolve around the young interracial couple: they fell in love and made up their minds to marry before the film began. Nor does it revolve around the white mother: she is briefly taken aback by the news of the engagement but quickly rallies behind her daughter. Nor does it revolve around the black parents: they are brought in only toward the end, and John is old enough (37) and independent enough that he will marry with or without their approval. Instead, the film revolves around the crisis of the white patriarch who is forced to give his blessing to a union to which he objects. Matt Drayton, the protagonist, is an aging leader of the white establishment, a powerful San Francisco newspaper publisher who lives in an elegant mansion. He is one of the best role models of the white self. The day constitutes a series of assaults in which his hold on power, his principles, his virility, and even his mental faculties are questioned. He is tested and tried. The movie pokes some fun at him. But in his closing speech, he reasserts his hold on power and reaffirms that he is still in control, still a wise old leader worthy of the admiration and love of white women and of black people. «It is Drayton who defines and delimits the black hero's problem as well as the problem of the hero's parents» (Kelley 161).

Mr. Drayton is portrayed in such a way that the audience cannot help but sympathize with him. His wife and daughter adore him. He is crusading newspaper publisher in San Francisco, a city well known for its tolerance. Setting the movie in San Francisco is one of the conditions of possibility for the film; the audience recognizes that San Francisco is a special case. In 1967, the time of the film, it was the setting of the rise of the hippie counterculture and the Summer of Love.

Drayton's liberal credentials are established even before he appears on the scene by a photo of F.D.R. prominently displayed on his desk. It is even larger than the photo of his wife and daughter. One of his daughter's friends tells Dr John Prentice (the character played by Sidney Poitier), «Matt Drayton really stands for something in this town.... It's a great paper. And he made it what it is. And there's never been a single public issue on which Matt Drayton didn't take a stand and spell it out».

As the crusading liberal whose tolerance is tested within his own home, Drayton is the target of much of the film's comedy. For example, in his first appearance, his wife, his daughter, and her black fiancé try to break the news of the engagement to him gradually, so as not to upset him, but they do it so gently that he doesn't even get it; he is oblivious. He leaves and starts to loosen his tie, getting ready for golf. His back is to them and to the camera when the light suddenly dawns on him and he turns around in shock. During the scene that follows, his tie is askew, mirroring his befuddlement.

Later, when he goes driving with his wife to get out of the house and momentarily distract them from the crisis, he appears like a forgetful old man. He stops at an ice cream parlor and requests the special flavor he had the last time – except he can't remember its name. The waitress, a young, gum-chewing blonde, rapidly recites the menu. He chooses boysenberry, tries it, then calls her back, stating that it isn't the flavor he was thinking of, but that, on second thought, he likes it anyway. The pretty young waitress tries to be polite to the customer but seems to be having difficulty not rolling her eyes at this doddering codger.

As he reverses his car out of the parking lot of the ice cream parlor, he hits a sports car driven by a young black man, who loudly denounces Drayton to the approving crowd as an old man who ought to have his driver's license taken away. The effect of the ice cream parlor scene is to make Drayton look for the moment like a foolish old man, out of touch with the young, and perhaps losing his grip.

Nevertheless, the scene also shows Drayton's positive side: his acceptance of the new flavor of ice cream, which was not what he wanted but he liked it anyway, anticipates his later acceptance of his daughter's black fiancé (Spoto 278). He is not completely closed to change. And he refrains from making any angry, racist retorts, even though the young black man publicly insults him.

In other slapstick scenes, Drayton is so rattled by his daughter's engagement that he slaps his shaving brush into his drink rather than into the shaving cup, rips his sock while putting it on, and spills the sock drawer on the floor.

However, the comedy directed against Drayton is largely gentle. The 1967 audience was familiar with Spencer Tracy in the role of the crusty, lovable, but flustered father in such films as *Father of the Bride* (1950) and *Father's Little Dividend* (1951). The associations from those sympathetic roles carry over to this domestic comedy.

The comedy in *Guess* is also related to an underlying oedipal rebellion. Drayton the patriarch is being challenged in his own home by a stranger, a young black man who has suddenly appeared out of nowhere to marry his daughter and demands his acceptance or rejection of the marriage the same day he meets him. That is why Drayton is made to seem hypocritical, foolish, and perhaps even senile at times: his authority and his manhood is being questioned.

Drayton makes a few racist comments, revealing his ignorant acceptance of stereotypes. First, he has an assistant check the credentials of Dr. John Prentice (Sidney Poitier). Next, he wonders to his wife, «How do you suppose a colored mailman produced a son with all the qualities he has?» And finally, he asks Prentice, «Are you saying they [black people] don't have a special sense of rhythm?»

Mr. Drayton's objections to the marriage, however, are not permitted to appear as racist. Instead, the crisis in the film stems from a series of dramatic contrivances: it was a whirlwind romance which took place out of state; the Draytons knew nothing about it because their daughter did not bother even to phone them from Hawaii; and now they meet their prospective son-in-law for the first time and are expected to give the couple their blessing on the spot because Dr. Prentice is flying to New York and Geneva that night. The pressure-cooker atmosphere intensifies during the day when Joanna decides to fly on with her fiancé and when she unwisely invites the Prentices to dinner. Mr. Drayton's objections appear then as the sensible reservations of a responsible father who does not want to be pressured into a snap decision about such a momentous life choice, not as the irrational objections of a bigot.

The racism of Drayton and his wife is further tempered by several other devices in the film. The first is their disdain for overt bigotry. Mrs. Drayton, who is even more anti-racist than her husband, says of their daughter Joanna,

> the way she is is just exactly the way we brought her up to be.... We told her it was wrong to believe that the white people were somehow essentially superior to the black people – or the brown or the red or the yellow ones, for that matter. People who thought that way were wrong to think that way. Sometimes hateful, usually stupid. But always, always wrong. That's what we said. And when we said it, we did not add, 'But don't fall in love with a colored man'.

Their daughter Joanna, however, is so color blind as to seem naive. Dr. Prentice says, «It's not that our color difference doesn't matter to her. It's that she doesn't seem to think there is a difference». One wonders if she is a liberal saint or an overprivileged white girl blithely unaware of the racial turmoil of her country.

According to Samuel Kelley, «The film's function is not to explore white racist attitudes toward interracial marriage, but to communicate the Draytons' liberal image toward interracial marriage by showing how harshly they deal with racists» (Kelley 166-67). When Hillary, Mrs. Drayton's employee at her art gallery, makes bigoted comments about the engagement («I simply couldn't believe it. I mean, it's so unlike Joey to do anything so appallingly stupid.... darling, what you must be going through?»), Mrs. Drayton coolly fires her on the spot. The scene makes Mrs. Drayton appear principled and heroic. The audience loves this scene because Hillary is «the kind of repulsive character that most people love to hate». Kramer is «following the familiar approach of using the most obnoxious types to represent racial prejudice» (Kelley 167). Hillary is a caricature, easy to dismiss, especially because Mrs. Drayton is her boss. Similarly, the vicious rednecks in *Mississippi Burning* make the white FBI agents who are the heroes of the movie seem by comparison like paragons of racial tolerance.

Another device to make the Draytons appear anti-racist is to displace the racism onto some of the black characters. Kelley says that «the burden of racial prejudice in the film has been slyly shifted onto Tillie, the Draytons' maid» (160). Kelley also notes that «While they are severe with white racists such as Hillary, they do not seem the least bit perturbed by the maid from whom they tolerate the most vicious kind of racism» (166-68). Tillie is used as comic relief. Her role is similar to that of Mammy in *Gone With the Wind*: the live-in maid, a bossy, fiercely loyal family retainer who has raised the white daughter, seems to have no family of her own, and so identifies with the white family that she aggressively protects what she sees as their interests. Tillie is hostile to Prentice from the moment he enters the house and makes no effort to disguise her hostility. «Tillie is drawn as childlike and confused, unable to accept or understand what is happening» (Kelley 170). She asks Mrs. Drayton, «You and Mr. Matt, you gonna put a stop to this damn nonsense foolishness?» She says she doesn't like to see one of her own kind «gettin' above hisself». Both Mrs. Drayton and Joanna brush off Tillie's objections. Joanna tells her, «You know I've always loved you, and you're just as black as he is».

Tillie is given the most vitriolic racist speech in the film. She denounces Dr. Prentice, saying,

> You may think you're fooling Miss Joey and her folks, but you ain't fooling me for a minute. You think I don't see what you are. You one of those smooth-talking, smart-ass niggers, just out for all you can get, with your black power and all that other troublemaking nonsense.... And as long as you're anywhere in this house, I'm right here watching. You read me, boy?

The scene is comic because of Tillie's profanity and excessive indignation. But it is also preposterous to believe that Tillie would treat any guest in her employer's home with such lack of respect. Mrs. Drayton fired Hillary for a much milder offense.

Two critics note that this scene, awkwardly filmed at oblique camera angles to suggest a skewed perspective, seems out of keeping with the otherwise highly conventional cinematography of the film. Kramer seems to have deliberately chosen a traditional, old-fashioned style of filming to soothe the audience about this potentially disturbing topic. The critics suggest that «the material here may have gotten out of Kramer's control» (Keyser and Ruszkowski 118). The sociologist Stanford Lyman complains that the scene is «one of the most subtly debasing ever to blacks», especially because Dr. Prentice is caught while changing clothes and covers his shirtless chest as if to protect his modesty or to ward off the old woman. Lyman claims that «no white star - Redford, Newman, McQueen – would have been asked to play that kind of comedy» (Dardner). Dr. Prentice's humiliation in this scene – caught half-naked and subjected to a racist diatribe by the maid – contrasts with the more gentle comedy directed at Mr. Drayton.

Kelley also claims that the racism is displaced onto «Dr. Prentice's parents.... They subscribe to an outmoded segregationist notion...» (Kelley 160). Actually, Mrs. Prentice accepts the marriage as much as Mrs. Drayton does. It is Mr. Prentice who cannot accept the notion of his son's marrying a white woman. «Adhering to the familiar strategy of heightening the protagonist's character through the negative portrayal of the antagonists, Mr. Prentice is unsympathetically drawn. Unlike Drayton he undergoes no character change» (Kelley 174).

The conflict between Dr. Prentice and his father escalates into the most dramatically charged scene in this otherwise rather tame comedy. It is the only scene in which we witness the explosion of the racial and oedipal tensions which underlie the film. Mr. Prentice treats his son «as if he were an errant teenager instead of a mature professional» (Kelley 175). He tells him,

> You don't know what you're doing.... you've got to stop and think. Have you thought what people will say about you? Why, in 16 or 17 states you'd be breaking the law. You don't change the way people feel about these things. You know, for a man who never put a wrong foot anywhere, you're way out of line, boy.

For the second time that day, Dr. Prentice has been called «boy», but in both cases it was not by a white racist but by a fellow black. Angry, he retaliates to his father's lack of respect with some rudeness of his own: «That's for me to decide, man. So just shut up and let -».

At this point, Mr. Prentice interrupts, telling his son, «You have no right to say a thing like that to me, not after what I been to you.... I'm proud of what you made of yourself. But you know I worked my ass off to buy you all the chances you had....» He tries to guilt trip his son into obeying him.

Dr. Prentice delivers a fiery speech, the only scene in the film in which he is allowed to show any passion. He says,

> You and your whole lousy generation believe the way it is for you is the way it's got to be! And not until your whole generation has laid down and died will the dead weight of you be off our backs! You understand? You've got to get off my back!

Remorseful at hurting his father, he reassures him, that he loves him, but he adds, «But you think of yourself as colored man. I think of myself as a man».

Samuel L. Kelley finds Mr. Prentice's attitude «a gross distortion of black attitudes.... Most black people who have not been formally educated, like the Prentices, tend to look up to their college educated children with respect.... Certainly one would not expect the outrage and temper tantrums exhibited by Mr. Prentice» (Kelley 175-76). The black intellectual Addison Gayle, however, describes the uneasy relationship between «Black Fathers and Their Sons»:

> Though we were the best of friends, and I loved and respected him deeply, he knew that in reality we were enemies. I was the young Hamlet who sooner or later would be forced to thrust the dagger into his heart, forced to stamp out his life in order to be free of the guilt which I felt, and would feel, so long as he lived (Gayle 144).

Whatever the sociological or psychological truth of the black father-and-son confrontation here, the sudden explosion of emotion only highlights by contrast the repression operative in other scenes in the film. If we view *Guess* as a film whose project is to maintain the white self in a time of racial struggle and change, this scene is yet another displacement of racism, which is again projected and seen as emanating from the black characters rather than from the amiable Mr. Drayton. The black father-son struggle also displaces the primary oedipal struggle in the film, which is that of Dr. Prentice versus Mr. Drayton. Dr. Prentice will marry despite his father's objections, but he will not disregard Mr. Drayton's objections. He gives more weight to the opinion of his prospective white father-in-law than he does to that of his own father.

To return to that earlier remark by Greenberg and Mitchell: object relations are «templates of others in our minds» (11). If we accept that Mr. Drayton is the true protagonist of *Guess* and not Dr. Prentice, and that the project of the film is to ennoble the embattled white liberal self, then Dr. Prentice and all the black characters in the film are sincere fictions, constructed according to templates in the white mind.

In order to overcome the huge, unacknowledged weight of white privilege, Dr. Prentice must be built up into a black superman. His credentials are formidable:

> He's an important guy.... Graduated maximum cum laude [sic] Johns Hopkins 1954; Assistant Professor Yale Medical School 1955; three years Professor London School of Tropical Medicine; three years Assistant Director World Health Organization; two textbooks and a list of monographs and medical society honors as long as your arm....

Another indication of the weight of white privilege is the mismatch in the couple's accomplishments. If mate selection is conceived of as an exchange between the couple and their families, then there is a balance in what each offers the other. Here, however, there is a gross imbalance: he is a world-renowned public health doctor; she seems to have no goals other than marrying him. Her accomplishments are being young, white, pretty, and rich. The mismatch extends to the casting as well: Katherine Houghton (Joanna), a novice actor, is the weakest of the major players. As Samuel

Kelley says, the film implies that «a black man has to have a superhero's credentials in order to marry a white woman with no credentials» (Kelley 178). Blacks are allowed to bridge the ultimate social barrier of intermarriage and be accepted as equals in the white world - as long as they are superheroes played by superstars like Sidney Poitier. The film really emphasizes how narrow the field of possibility is for black Americans.

There is a further mismatch: in order to have accumulated all these honors, the character must be made into an older man, 37 years old to Joanna's 23. This presents another problem for the screenwriter. At 37, Dr. Prentice can't be never married or divorced – either possibility might render him suspect to a 1967 American audience – so he is made into a widower whose wife and son were killed in a train accident, which increases sympathy for him.

As an object created to satisfy the needs of the white self, Dr. Prentice must fulfill contradictory needs: he must be super-accomplished and supremely confident in order to enter the white world as an equal, yet simultaneously humble so as not to offend that white world. As Samuel Kelly (163) notes, Dr. Prentice is

> confident to the point of arrogance, but his arrogance is always offset by his ingratiating humility and understanding for those whom he confronts. He places the feelings of his girl's parents above his own personal feelings.... he is willing to forego his opportunity for marriage and personal happiness if it jeopardizes the familial relationship that exists in the Drayton household.

Dr. Prentice is a reincarnation of a figure who has long existed in the white imagination: the tom, here reimagined as a «supertom». Writes Donald Bogle (5-6),

> Always as toms are chased, harassed, hounded, flogged, enslaved, and insulted, they keep the faith, ne'er turn against their white massas, and remain hearty, submissive, stoic, generous, selfless, and oh-so-very kind.

The innovation in this new, white liberal film is to shift the blame from whites by making the primary harassers and insulters of the tom into his fellow blacks (Tillie and Mr. Prentice).

As we mentioned, 1967 was a time of black rage in the United States, with riots in many urban ghettos. But the black characters in *Guess* are deferential to the whites. The only black rage in the film is black against black – Tillie versus Dr. Prentice or Dr. Prentice versus his father – a convenient displacement.

CONCLUSION

The last word in the film is given to the white protagonist, Matt Drayton, who has kept everyone in suspense by not publicly announcing his decision. In gender stereotyping, the fathers – Mr. Drayton and Mr. Prentice – represent the voice of reason and are against the marriage, whereas the mothers represent emotion and side with the couple. Mrs. Prentice accuses Drayton and her husband of being old men who have forgotten «what true passion is». This final assault on his manhood triggers a change in Drayton. He gathers everyone in the living room and finally speaks his piece. It is the longest speech in the movie and concludes the story. As Joanna's friend had said earlier, «Matt Drayton really stands for something in this town.... there's never been a single public issue on which Matt Drayton didn't take a stand and spell it out». This is exactly what Drayton does in his concluding speech: takes a stand and spells it out for everyone. He reasserts his manhood and his command as master of the household. He makes them all sit and listen to him, and when his daughter interrupts, he tells her to shut up.

He also brings Tillie in to listen to his speech, introducing her to the Prentices as «Miss Matilda Biggs, who's been a member of this family for 22 years». To call a domestic servant a member in equal standing of the family is a piece of white liberal piety the film never questions.

The film opens with a sappy theme song about «The Glory of Love»: «You've got to give a little,/Take a little,/And let your poor heart break a little./That's the story of,/That's the glory of love.» So we don't forget the message, the theme song is repeated later in a nightclub scene, and the music is reprised as background in many scenes. Americans like love stories and like to believe that «love conquers all», and that is the movie's message: true love can triumph over all obstacles, even racial barriers. This is essentially what Drayton says in his concluding speech: «The only thing that matters is what they feel – and how much they feel – for each other. And if it's half of what we [Mr. and Mrs. Drayton] felt – that's everything.»

The speech concluded, they go in to dinner together. The final image in the film is of the new, reconstituted American family, white and black together, all sitting down at the same family table, and further blessed by organized religion in the form of dinner guest Monsignor Ryan. Of course, we note they are still being served by the black maid.

Drayton's speech is one that is often repeated in the history of American film: it is the speech of the white liberal messiah coming to the rescue. The same strategy is used thirty years after *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* in the climax of Spielberg's film *Amistad* (1997) when John Quincy Adams takes a stand and spells it out in a long speech before the Supreme Court. The white patriarch frees the slaves; the old lion roars again.

By giving Drayton the last word, *Guess* legitimates white privilege. The movie offers impassioned speeches about generational difference and the glory of love but only tame platitudes about race. The ostensible project of the film – to increase racial tolerance – is paradoxically only possible as it pays homage to white privilege, which is the unacknowledged root cause of the problem it seeks to overcome. *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* thus reverses its intended consequences. It turns into a film about a crisis in the white patriarchy successfully resolved. Racial differences can be tolerated, it implies, so long as white privilege is never brought into question.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 267-279

Crowds at hangings, revolutions, and in media events – Mutations of the social tie?

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«Why is the populace attracted to executions?», asks the narrator of Denis Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste et son maître*. Not because of being inhuman, the narrator explains, but out of sympathy with the man to be executed:

> The man in the street goes to the Place de Grève so that he can see something which he can in turn *tell to others* in his suburb. Whatever the scene it doesn't matter, just so long as *it gives him a role to play, makes his neighbours gather round him*, and *makes them listen to him*. Put on some exciting festival on the boulevard and you will see that the place of execution will be empty. The populace is *hungry for something to look at* and goes there because *it enjoys seeing it* and even more *enjoys telling others about it* afterward. The populace is terrible in its fury but that does not last long. Its own poverty has made it *compassionate* and it turns its eyes away from the spectacle of horror which it has gone to see, *is moved to pity and goes home crying*. (my emphasis – UK) (Diderot [1796] 1986: 164).

The book in which this description appears was written between the late 1760's and 1778, and published in 1796. We could find here a text book illustration of the consequences of what Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish*, calls a bad economy of power (Foucault [1975] 1982: 79) that precipitated the political technology of the body characteristic of penal reform in the nineteenth century. A bad economy of power insofar as punishment can, at that date, no longer meet the requirement that it was designed to serve: namely that of revealing the truth of the crime and simultaneously annul it with the death of the man found guilty (Foucault [1975] 1982: 45). Instead, the roles are being reversed: the tortured criminal becomes an object of pity or admiration, he turns into a hero with whom the populace identifies, being elevated into an unanointed but no less glorified saint after his death at the hands of justice (Foucault [1975] 1982: 67). It is a bad economy of power insofar as the execution inadequately channels the powers it seeks to ritualise,

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thus failing to justify justice (Foucault [1975] 1982: 68). A bad economy of power insofar as the populace chooses the 'wrong' leader/figurehead. The manifestation of the force of the sovereign as the guarantor of the law is being replaced by another force – either religion, or more significantly, the constitutive force of the populace itself, which it discovers in identifying with the criminal. The criminal becomes a *homo sacer* – the originary figure of life taken into the sovereign ban. Human life is politicised at the moment at which it is abandoned to the unconditional power over death exercised by the sovereign – a power about to be usurped by the new sovereign nation state and sovereign subject. The criminal to be executed preserves the originary memory of the constitution of the political (see Agamben 1998: 128, 90, 83).[1]

For Foucault, the decline of a visibly enacted relation between power and the law comes about with this «bad economy of power». Its limitations are instrumental in shaping a new technology of power through disciplining of the body, not only as a matter of economising human agency, but also by way of instituting a moral subject (Foucault [1975] 1982: 24, 123).

However, against some of Foucault's suppositions, I would contend that what Diderot's passage reveals, and what Foucault places on the other side of the break that inaugurates modernity, is already part and parcel of the modern subject. The consequences of what Foucault designates as «bad economy of power» – namely, in Diderot's narrator's words, sympathy and compassion and pity, role-playing, living to tell the tale, hunger for something to look at – come to define the libidinal and moral economy of the modern subject in very important aspects. The scopophilia in scenes of executions and other public spectacles has not been eradicated, but rechannelled in modernity in ways that I wish to describe by reference to three 'scenes': that of group psychology, that of the moral law, that of theater, and of modern transformations of tragedy in particular. It will be my task to analyse each one of these 'scenes' in the way in which they have channelled forces of a collective unconscious, and their interrelation.

Diderot's narrator does concede, for a minute, that «the populace is terrible in its fury» (Diderot [1796] 1986: 165), even where it sympathises with the man to be executed. He anticipates the rather dim view held by Kant, Le Bon, Tarde, McDougall, and to some extent Freud, of crowds, associated by them variously with enthusiasm, passion, intoxicating emotion, suggestibility, fascination, bondage, identification/imitation, contagion, mass hypnosis, mass hysteria, mysticism, absence of reality testing, disappearance of the conscious personality, of conscience and of inhibitions, bringing to the fore unbridled destructive instincts.[2]

However, aspects of sympathy, compassion, and pity outweigh the «fury» in the description of the crowd given by Diderot's narrator. His characterisation of the crowd is more friendly than that of Kant and Freud. But what is common to all of them is a hint of ambivalence arising from the multifaceted if not contradictory capacities that they see at work in group phenomena.

«Forces that move us which have their origin in a will outside of us» (Kant [1766] 1976: 29) – that is how Kant ambivalently describes both mass phenomena, and supreme moral feelings. He

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[1] In this context, it is interesting to note Benjamin's remarks in his *Critique of Violence*. The admiration of the public for the «great criminal», he states, «cannot result from his deed, but only from the violence to which it bears witness», which the criminal usurps from the law. The State fears this violence, and, I would add, the fascination of the crowd with it, for its (new) law-making character, its threat of declaring a new law (Benjamin [1979] 1992: 136, 138).

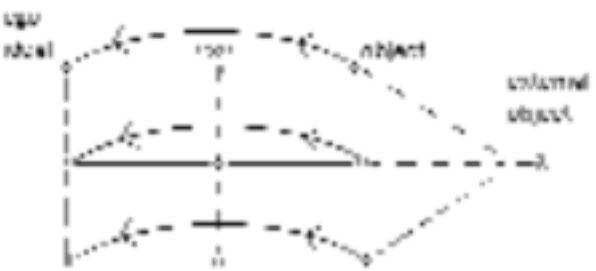
[2] This is certainly the tenor that characterises most of the historical and novelistic accounts of crowds at the end of the eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century. This is evident in the writings of Engels (*The Condition of the Working Class in England*), Baudelaire (*Fleurs du Mal*), Flaubert (*L'Education sentimentale* - a novel set during the Revolution of 1848), of the historian François Guizot recalling the crowds that had installed the Orleanist regime, the novelist Edmond de Goncourt writing on the Paris Commune, the historian/philosopher Hippolyte Taine writing on the crowds of the French Revolution (in *Origines de la France contemporaine*, 1876-1893), the novelist Emile Zola (*Germinal*, 1885; *Le Débâcle*, 1892). (For a historical survey of writings on crowds and crowd psychology see Nye 1995: 42-55.)

explains: «A secret power makes us simultaneously direct our attention towards the well-being of others, and towards the arbitrary will of others» (Kant [1766] 1976: 29). It is one and the same power that makes us dependent on the will of others, and causes us to act in unison with other reasonable beings; one and the same power is the source of both suggestibility, contagion, dependence, fascination, bondage, and of achievements for the good of all of the highest ethical standards (see also Kant [1793] 1974: [para 28] 194, 198-199, 202). Kant's occupation with «the powers that move the human heart» (in *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, written in 1765 and published in 1766) encompasses his earlier insights on both mental illness (1764) and feelings of the beautiful and the sublime (1764). What characterises both is the affect of enthusiasm, defined as «the condition of passionate participation in moral "imaginings" that fail to "harmonize with concepts"» (see Kant's *Anthropology*, quoted in Kneller 1996: 464).

Freud, along with Le Bon, describes groups in surprisingly similar terms:

> In a group every sentiment and act is contagious, and contagious to such a degree that an individual readily sacrifices his personal interest to the collective interest. This is an aptitude very contrary to his nature, and of which a man is scarcely capable, except when he makes part of a group. (Le Bon [1920: 33) (Freud [1921] 1985: 101-102)
>
> In order to make a correct judgement upon the morals of groups, one must take into consideration the fact that when individuals come together in a group all their individual inhibitions fall away and all the cruel, brutal and destructive instincts, which lie dormant in individuals as relics of a primitive epoch, are stirred up to find free gratification. But under the influence of suggestion groups are also capable of high achievements in the shape of abnegation, unselfishness, and devotion to an ideal. While with isolated individuals personal interest is almost the only motive force, with groups it is very rarely prominent. It is possible to speak of an individual having his moral standards raised by a group (Le Bon [1920]: 65). Whereas the intellectual capacity of a group is always far below that of an individual, its ethical conduct may rise as high above his as it may sink deep below it. (Freud [1921] 1985: 106)

Both Kant and Freud locate this force with its divergent effects outside of the subject or the ego. A primary group is defined by Freud as «... a number of individuals who have put one and the same object in the place of their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego» (Freud [1921] 1985: 147). «The individual gives up his ego ideal and substitutes for it the group ideal as embodied in the leader.» (Freud [1921] 1985: 161) Both Kant and Freud adduce the same optical model to account for the vectors that link internal impulses with an external object in which they converge. The *focus imaginarius* which Kant describes optically and acoustically (in terms of waves of sound), is imaged by Freud in the following diagram:



(Freud [1921] 1985: 147).

Kant calls this focus – this point at which vectors emerging from the internal ideal of the ego in members of a group converge on an external object – an imaginary one, precisely in so far as it involves the imagination, or more generally aesthetic judgement. In the absence of a determinate concept for the object, it relies on the interplay of imagination and reason that defines the feeling of the sublime (Kant [1793] 1974: [para 27] 182). Conversely, the feeling of the sublime is not attributable directly to objects, but to the feeling arising from the *contemplation* or *judgement* of objects of nature, a contemplation or judgement that encompasses the idea of the object's infinity (Kant [1793] 1974: [para 26] 178, 179). It is on account of this aesthetic rather than objective quality of judgement that a *sensus communis* is implied (Kant [1793] 1974: [para 8] 128). In as much as group phenomena are covered by Kant's definition of both the dynamical and the mathematical sublime, it is on the basis of their imaginary appeal, involving aesthetic judgement and contemplation, that they achieve their ethical dimension.

For Kant, it is possible for human beings to get involved in the suffering of other human beings by merely watching. It is thus not surprising to see that (thirty years later), Kant re-directs the focus of the assessment of the achievements of the French Revolution as political revolution from the actors to the spectators/witnesses, in order to emphasise the requirements of a socio-ethical revolution over and above those of a political revolution. He outlines «an event of our time» as a sign «which demonstrates [the] moral tendency of the human race»:

> This event consists neither in momentous deeds nor crimes committed by men whereby what was great among men is made small or what was small is made great, nor in ancient splendid political structures which vanish as if by magic while others come forth in their place as if from the depths of the earth. No, nothing of the sort. It is simply the mode of thinking of the spectators which reveals itself publicly in this game of great revolutions, and manifests such a universal yet disinterested sympathy for the players on one side against those on the other, even at the risk that this partiality could become very disadvantageous for them if discovered. Owing to its universality, this mode of thinking demonstrates a character of the human race at large and all at once; owing to its disinterestedness, a moral character of humanity, at least in its predisposition, a character which not only permits people to hope for progress toward the better, but is already itself progress in so far as its capacity is sufficient for the present.
>
> ... this revolution ... finds in the hearts of all spectators a wishful participation that borders closely on enthusiasm, the very expression of which is fraught with danger; this sympathy, therefore, can have no other cause than a moral predisposition in the human race. (Kant [1798] 1979: 153)

Kant replaces the scene of public execution with the scene of political revolution. However, his focus remains the spectators, whom he endows with a moral disposition. For Kant – and here I read Kant with Foucault –, what is important in the Revolution is «what takes place in the heads of those who do not make it, who are not its principal actors; it is the relationship that they themselves have with that Revolution of which they are not the active agents» (Foucault 1988: 92). Kant treats the Revolution as the sign of a moral disposition – that does not calculate interests, cause and effect, but resides in a disinterested sympathy: «... genuine enthusiasm always moves only toward what is ideal and, indeed, to what is purely moral, such as the concept of right, and it cannot be grafted onto self-interest» (Kant [1798] 1979: 155). The desire of the people «to give themselves a political constitution, freely chosen, avoiding war», for Kant, shows that «there is something in our phenomenal nature which rebels against despotism and shows affinity with freedom». The notion of Freedom as conformity to the Moral Law (outlined in Kant's *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*) is evident here: Freedom of will is autonomy, and autonomy in turn is the property of the will to be a law to itself (rather than being subject to the political sovereign/despot).

The sign of a moral disposition in this sense is also to be found in what is attributed to the crowds at hangings (as described by Diderot's narrator) precisely in as much as they are spectators.

From a Kantian perspective on the French Revolution, it is instructive to *take another look*, as it were, at the populace flocking to the Place de Grève to watch an execution. They go there, Diderot's narrator tells us, out of *sympathy, compassion, and pity*; to see something which they can in turn *tell to others*. Their status as narrators of a noteworthy *scene* gives them *a role to play*. The *spectacle of horror* moves them to *pity*. A spectacle being enacted turns into a theatre/narrative to be represented. In this process, both Kant (explicitly) and Diderot's narrator (implicitly) locate the emergence of the moral subject. This kind of transformed crowd is celebrated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his *Letter to D'Alembert on the Theatre*. The crowd in which supreme morality triumphs is the crowd in which I am obeying myself as a member of a general will. In a vision similar to that of Kant's, Rousseau describes the «public festivals of a true republic»:

> But what then will be the objects of these entertainments? What will be shown in them? Nothing, if you please. With liberty, wherever abundance reigns, well-being also reigns. Plant a stake crowned with flowers in the middle of a square; gather the people together there, and you will have a festival. Do better yet; let the spectators become an entertainment to themselves; make them actors themselves; do it so that each sees and loves himself in the others so that all will be better united. (Rousseau [1758] 1968: 126)

Thus, it seems that in the visions of Diderot, Rousseau, and Kant, a certain type of engaged, sympathetic but disinterested contemplation or spectatorship, and a narrative representation are required to transform the notion of malleable, suggestible, furious, uninhibited crowd into the other face of the crowd – the crowd capable of supreme unselfish moral achievement for the good of all. In order to mobilise the latter aspect of the crowd against its destructive potential, it seems, certain stage directions are inserted by the Enlightenment philosophers and reformers. There certainly is a programme at work in the visions of Diderot, Rousseau, and Kant. To return to Diderot's formulation, the narrator firmly upholds the possibility of changing the face of the crowd, in the suggestion that is phrased here as a command: «put on some exciting festival on the boulevard and you will see that the place of execution will be empty» (Diderot [1796] 1986: 165). In Rousseau's words, «plant a stake crowned with flowers in the middle of a square; gather the people together there, and you will find a festival. Do better yet; let the spectators become and entertainment to themselves; make them actors themselves; do it so that each sees and loves himself in the others so that all will be better united» (Rousseau [1758] 1968: 126). A philosophical programme of the ethical «progress of the human race», in Kant's terms.

What gives the Enlightenment philosophers this assurance, we might ask. With what confidence can Kant uphold the idea that «the human race is constantly progressing for the better»? What is involved in changing the face of the crowd? How are the directions for the staging, in the description of crowds and crowd events, being instituted or changed?

A partial answer to this set of questions, I would say, is to be found in the dual nature of the crowd itself, which gave rise to the ambivalence with which Kant and Freud treated the crowd and the specific type of imagination that is ascribed to the social tie, and its theorisation. The *focus imaginarius* is that point where for Kant, the two vectors – one of the imagination and one of the sensory impression of the object – converge. In other words, the *focus imaginarius* is the point from which onwards feelings and ideas, originally separate and distinct, can run in the identical direction. In the case of fantasy, the two vectors converge inside the nerve centre of the brain; in the case of sensory impression of the object, they converge outside of the brain and manifest themselves in clear perception in a waking state. It is only from the vantage point of the point posited outside of the corporeal existence of the individual, that fantasy can be recognised as such, and distinguished from sensory perception, thus severing the «correspondence» of the forces of the soul with the organs of the body. This correspondence that is to be severed, is what initially defines the notion of 'sympathy' for Kant. It is the illusion of a correspondence between the interior and the exterior of the individual that accounts for the projection of mental states onto external figures and situations, or for the unconditional interiorisation of the external object that Kant observes in

phenomena of premonitions, prophecies, spirit-seeing, etc. It is only in the severance of this correspondence that a different kind of sympathy, that of moral feeling, based on a non-idiopathic *sensus communis*, can arise (Kant [1766] 1976: 44, 73). It is the latter kind of (disinterested) sympathy, one exhibiting conformity with the moral law, that occasions feelings of the sublime, accompanied by enthusiasm and passion.

Freud similarly lays down the precondition of group formation as some degree of reciprocal influence through a primitive kind of sympathetic response (Freud [1921] 1985: 112). Sympathy arises from identification: one ego perceives an openness to an emotion similar to that of another. Thus, «identification is the original form of emotional tie with an object» (Freud [1921] 1985: 137). However, in a way reminiscent of Kant, Freud proceeds to distinguish two types of identification, one of which is mobilised for the explanation and elucidation of the workings of the other one.

In outlining the first type of identification accounting for the emotional tie with the object, Freud recuperates the accounts of group psychology of his predecessors, and of Gustave Le Bon in particular. In this account, the group creates the conditions that allow the individual to throw off the repressions of his unconscious instinctual impulses (Freud [1921] 1985: 101). It thereby brings to the fore the unrepressed unconscious impulses which form part of «the archaic heritage of the human mind». The throwing off of repressions of unconscious instinctual impulses is facilitated by the fact that in this type of identification, the (internal) ego ideal is replaced by an (external) object. This simultaneously facilitates the identification of group members with one another in their ego. In as much as the ego ideal is replaced by the object, and the object is maintained outside of the ego, «conscience has no application to anything that is done for the sake of the object...». Inhibitions, self-reproaches, and censorship fall away under conditions of fascination and bondage. The ego, having surrendered itself to the object and having substituted the object for its own most important constituent, is left impoverished (Freud [1921] 1985: 144). On the basis of this kind of identification, Freud arrives at the definition of the primary group, as «... a number of individuals who have put one and the same object in the place of their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego» (Freud [1921] 1985: 147). «The individual gives up his ego ideal and substitutes for it the group ideal as embodied in the leader.» (Freud [1921] 1985: 161)

However, this kind of identification giving rise to the definition of the primary group, comes up against some limiting conditions:

> ... the Father-Leader represents the ideal of crowd members, an ideal with which they can and must identify (to whom they must submit, whom they must obey..., since his will is theirs), but without being required or able to really identify (that would destroy his authority...) (Borch-Jacobsen 1989: 223)

Freud exemplifies this limiting condition of identification by the soldier who has to take the leader of the army as his ideal but becomes ridiculous if he identifies with the general (Freud [1921] 1985: 167).[3]

Correspondingly, Freud's formulation to the effect that «...group members [identify] with one another in their ego» because they have put one and the same object «in the place of their ego ideal», would have to be reformulated to the effect that they identify with one another *inasmuch as they do not (really) identify with the object* (Borch-Jacobsen 1989: 224). Group members, in this version of the formulation, identify with each other not by virtue of a shared object love, but on the basis of a shared non-identification with the Father, as a basis for religion, morality, and politics (Borch-Jacobsen 1989: 224).

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[3] Zizek's example of a «pragmatic paradox» – «a self-contradicting performative» – applies here:

> ... if you do not follow promptly the order of a corporal, you are bound to meet with his rage and threats; if, however, you do carry out the order as required, he sneers at you for your overzealous attitude, for your taking seriously where a proper distance of taking-it-easy is appropriate. (Zizek 1993: 236)

If it were otherwise, if the ego could '*really*' identify with the ego-ideal (or the ego-ideal in the object) in the sense of aspiring to become identical with the ego ideal (or the ego-ideal in the object), we would be dealing with a case of mania (as opposed to melancholia and more generally neurosis in the case of the *introjected* object). Freud, describes this mania in a way reminiscent of Kant's polemics against the 'correspondence' between internal and external world that constitutes the spirit world of the prophet Immanuel Swedenborg:

> ... in cases of mania the ego and the ego ideal have fused together, so that the person, in a mood of triumph and self-satisfaction, disturbed by no self-criticism, can enjoy the abolition of his inhibitions, his feelings of consideration for others, and his self-reproaches. (Freud [1921] 1985: 165)

The limiting condition - the fact that the members of the group cannot 'really' identify with the ego ideal in the object – can be positively stated. If identification cannot be an object relation, it can be thought of as a mimetic relation: the ego ideal is the result of moulding one's own ego after the fashion of the one that has been taken as a model (Borch-Jacobsen 1989: 177) (see also Freud [1921] 1985: 134).

The positive statement of this limiting condition is to be found in the other type of identification that Freud outlines. In a secondary type of identification, identification becomes a substitute for a libidinal object-tie, by means of the introjection – also often pictured as devouring – of the object into and by the ego. The object is lost as the ego is transformed according to its model in a process of mimetic identification. «... the object has been lost or given up; it is then set up again inside the ego...» As the ego introjects the object, it enriches itself with the properties of the object, partially altering itself in modelling itself on the lost object (Freud [1921] 1985: 144).

However, the model remains transcendent, inaccessible, and inimitable: «the categorical imperative shifts from outside to inside, taking on the form of a voice of conscience commanding the ego from a position of intimate transcendence, in the mode of an auto-heteronomy» (Borch-Jacobsen 1989: 222). Of the two groups that Freud refers to in illustrating his group psychology, the Christian Church would find its place here. In the sense that the model remains transcendent, inaccessible, and inimitable, the Christian Church simultaneously points beyond the constitution of the group.

The individual psychological conditions, by which Freud illustrates this type of identification and its place in group psychology, are listed as melancholia and conscience. Both represent predispositions for neurosis. In both cases, the ego-ideal is split off from the ego and comes into conflict with it in taking up a critical attitude towards the ego: self-observation, moral conscience, censorship of dreams, feelings of inferiority and self-depreciation. In short, this conflict is the chief influence in repression (Freud [1921] 1985: 165).

This form of identification that operates by means of the introjection of the object into the ego, is also termed idiopathic identification. However, the ego ideal forbids truly devouring identification. «The ego ideal, in other words, regulates relations with others by regulating the proper distance from others – ... the distanciation of identification» (Borch-Jacobsen 1989: 223). The function of distanciation even within the context of introjection remains crucial in guarding against the scenario that Freud outlines for neurotics and that Kant identifies as one of the ghosts of the spirit-seer Immanuel Swedenborg (see Kant [1766] 1976: 73-74):

> If he is left to himself, a neurotic is obliged to replace by his own symptom formations the great group formations from which he is excluded. He creates his own world of imagination for himself, his own religion, his own system of delusions, and thus recapitulates the institutions of humanity in a distorted way... (Freud [1921] 1985: 176)

«If he is left to himself» – Freud here calls for an intervention that sets the two types of identification outlined above in dialectical relation to one another, each conditioning and limiting the other. While opposed to each other in terms of their logics, they nevertheless presuppose each

other and elucidate each other to such an extent that Freud voices a temptation to mobilise the one to counter the pathological effects of the other one:

> ... a neurosis ... [makes] its victim asocial and ... [removes] him from the usual group formations. It may be said that a neurosis has the same disintegrating effect upon a group as being in love. On the one hand it appears that where a powerful impetus has been given to group formation neuroses may diminish and, at all events temporarily, disappear. Justifiable attempts have also been made to turn this antagonism between neuroses and group formation to therapeutic account. Even those who do not regret the disappearance of religious illusions from the civilized world of to-day will admit that so long as they were in force they offered those who were bound by them the most powerful protection against the danger of neurosis. (Freud [1921] 1985: 176)

To be precise, Freud for a moment voices the temptation to therapeutically hold neuroses in check through group formations. However, this would go beyond psychoanalysis. In themselves symptomatic, in the sense that they involve the return of an 'archaic heritage' across differential modes of psychic and social organisation, group formations are moved out of the sphere of psychoanalysis as clinical approach. That is one of the reasons why group formation cannot be mobilised as an antidote to neurosis in the individual case. The reverse case is not equally prohibitive. Freud himself, with McDougall, mounts some speculation about «conditions for raising collective mental life to a higher level» (Freud [1921] 1985: 114). Beyond McDougall's 'five principal conditions', though, Freud aims «to equip the group with the attributes of the individual»:

> The problem consists in how to procure for the group precisely those features which were characteristic of the individual and which are extinguished in him by the formation of the group. [Freud 1921] 1985: 115)

More than that, however, Freud's point of departure in 'Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego' as a whole merits close attention in this regard. In three introductory sections Freud provides a literature survey on the work of his predecessors on crowds, most of which meet his own views on the subject. However, he notes the absence of an explanation of the nature of suggestion (McDougall), of the nature of the peculiar kind of political love that forms the emotional tie of the group, of the role of the leader in the group (Trotter). These criticisms amount to Freud's contention that his predecessors' analyses were wholly confined to a social (pre-individual, pre-subjective) psychology that equates archaic sociality with archaic psychology. Freud, in contrast, claims that social psychology is derived from individual psychology:

> ... the entire «difference» of psychoanalysis with respect to social psychology lay in its claim to ground the collective in the individual (in the love of individuals) whereas Le Bon, Tarde, or McDougall established it at the outset in a collective-being (hypnotic suggestibility) that came before any individuality (Borch-Jacobsen, 1989: 233).

While Freud recognises «the archaic heritage of the human mind» in the manifestations of an unrepressed unconscious in group phenomena, he insists, against Le Bon, on an unconscious repressed that is instrumental in explaining group psychology on the basis of individual psychology (Freud [1921] 1985: 101, n1). However, Freud himself seems to contradict this version at various points. He refers group psychology to an «archaic heritage which is repeated in individual psychohistory. He calls the psychology of groups «the oldest human psychology» from which individual psychology has emerged (Borch-Jacobsen 1989: 234-235).

How is this apparent contradiction to be explained? Freud firstly wants to distinguish his own explanatory efforts from those of his predecessors which, as mentioned above, remained tied to a social psychology which did not have a distinct space for the psychic. Freud shows up Le Bon's limitations in the light of the fact that the latter had no concept of an unconscious repressed. Explaining group psychology in terms of the abolishment of all inhibition and the repression of the

unconscious, as Freud's predecessors implicitly or explicitly do, would presuppose a notion of a repressed unconscious. And it is by reference to McDougall's account that Freud argues that as preconditions of group formations, the rudiments of an organisation must already be in place: a common interest in an object, and a degree of reciprocal influence (McDougall 1920: 23) (Freud [1921] 1985: 112) through a primitive sympathetic response (McDougall 1920: 25) (Freud [1921] 1985: 112). Being stated as preconditions for group formation, their explanation cannot be sought exclusively in group formation itself.

Thus, Freud wavers when it comes to assigning primary or secondary status to individual and group psychology respectively. One might be inclined to say that genealogically, in terms of an 'archaic heritage', the group is primary, while individual psychology enjoys a logically primary status. However that may be, what becomes clear is that Freud sets them in dialectical relation to each other, in such a way that they presuppose and elucidate each other, and possibly most importantly, offer the possibility of critique through their dialectical relation. An ontogenetic account of a psychohistory, limited in its immanence, is exploded by a phylogenetic account which, however, moves out of the ambit of psycho-analysis proper; and a phylogenetic account is limited by its myths of origin or its speculative history that cannot lift the psychoanalytic symptom. They reveal their asymmetry in Freud's contention that while the group cannot lift the individual's psychological symptom, the divided psychic apparatus with its capacity of repression, as it is described in individual psychology, might act as a corrective to the potential destructiveness wrought by and in groups. To that extent, Freud remains true to the ethical visions of the Enlightenment.

To return to the description given by Diderot's narrator, of crowds that are «not inhuman», then, the mimetic identification based on the introjection of the object into the ego, and the subsequent identification of the ego with its model, is central to the description of the compassionate crowd that is moved to pity. The introjection is here cast in terms of a desire to devour the object of the spectacle:

> The populace is hungry for something to look at and goes there because it enjoys seeing it and even more enjoys telling others about it afterwards. (Diderot [1796] 1986: 165).

Mimetic identification involves the interiorisation of the object, transforming the ego according to the model of the object while the object is destroyed as object; what remains is identification as a substitute for the original libidinal object tie. This mechanism was clearly recognised by some of the Enlightenment philosophers. In his comments on and attempted interpretation and amplification of the Kantian sublime as it pertains to the art of tragedy, the German playwright and poet Friedrich Schiller outlines the conditions of sympathy and identification:

> It is necessary that we should form of suffering an *idea* of such a nature that we are obliged to share and take part in it. To this end there must be a certain agreement between this suffering and something that we have already in us. In other words, pity is only possible inasmuch as we can prove or suppose a resemblance between ourselves and the subject that suffers. Everywhere where this resemblance is lacking, pity is impossible. The more visible and the greater is the resemblance, the more vivid is our pity; and they mutually slacken in dependence on each other. In order that we may feel the affections of another after him, all the *internal* conditions demanded by this affection must be found beforehand in us, in order that the external cause which, by meeting with the internal conditions, have given birth to the affection may also produce on us a like effect. It is necessary that, without doing violence to ourselves, we should be able to exchange persons with another, and transport our Ego by an instantaneous substitution into the state of the subject. Now, how is it possible to feel in us the state of another, if we have not beforehand recognised *ourselves* in this other? (Schiller [1792] 1900: 351-352)[4]

[4] Die Möglichkeit des Mitleids beruht ... auf der Wahrnehmung oder Voraussetzung einer Aehnlichkeit zwischen uns und dem leidenden Subjekt. Ueberall, wo diese Aehnlichkeit sich erkennen lässt, ist das Mitleid

This type of identification is the precondition for the modelling of the crowd in the image of the moral subject of the categorical imperative, whereby the subject – here the crowd – becomes the donor and recipient of its own moral law, being bound and binding itself simultaneously. In seeing the spectacle, according to Diderot's narrator, the populace must be given a role to play. In Rousseau's vision of the binding force of the general will, the spectators must become actors themselves – «so that each sees and loves himself in the others so that all will be better united» (Rousseau [1758] 1968: 126). For Kant, similarly, moral feeling is defined as the perceived dependence of the private will on the general will. The perception of this dependence, in turn, is mediated by aesthetic judgement. Hence he privileges the *spectators* of the French Revolution as moral subjects. Showing *signs* of a moral disposition will predispose them, as spectators with disinterested sympathy, to be the legislators and the legislated of the moral law which will bind them as they are willing to make this moral law binding for everyone. As spectators of the spectacle, they become its active (social) role players.

It is not co-incidental, I would argue, that the space of the theatre has become the most prominent metaphor in setting out the role of mimetic identification in transforming crowds along the lines of the moral subject that is not just legislated but becomes legislator at the same time, spectator being transformed into actor. In a mythical account of the emergence of theater, the sacrifice of the goat served to bind the group together through the killing and devouring of the totem animal, the identification with and introjection of the ego ideal, and the shared guilt that provides the primal social tie. Theatre itself has its basis in group formation, and re-enacts the primal social tie in each new instance. Yet it simultaneously sets in motion processes based on individual libidinal economy. It has the scope of group formation checked by the categorical imperative of the second type of identification - the cultural space of neurosis, and the taming of the death drive. In his historical outline of drama on the basis of the possibilities of the evoked affect, Freud exemplifies the struggle between the two types of identification in modern psychopathological drama, characterised for him by the struggle between one conscious and one repressed source of psychic suffering. The scene of tragedy is transposed from its origin in the group, staging a mythical or individual-social conflict, to the individual, or to be more precise, to the individual psyche. The tragic conflict is transposed from the conflict between the God(s) and the hero, or society and the hero, to the neurotic conflict between one conscious and one repressed impulse (Freud [1942] 1985: 124-125). The condition for enjoying this kind of psychopathological drama, Freud states, is that the spectator him/herself be neurotic; for only a neurotic will enjoy the conscious recognition of a repressed impulse that marks the end or resolution of modern psychopathological drama (Freud [1942] 1985: 125). It is the principle of mimetic identification that authorises the recognition of the repressed in the disclosure at the end of the play. Thus, modern dramaturgy presupposes a generalised neurosis in the culture and society in which it is embedded. Furthermore, the tragic conflict and its resolution through recognition facilitated by mimetic identification, is shifted from the actor to the spectator in more ways than one. In the act of recognition, the spectator (of a generally neurotic kind) is made to bring into play the principle of identification, bearing the stamp of its earliest prototypes, namely his prior object relationships, and re-subject them to the mechanism of mimesis. S/He will do so not consciously, but under averted attention:

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nothwendig, wo sie fehlt, unmöglich. Je sichtbarer und grösser die Aehnlichkeit, desto lebhafter unser Mitleid, je geringer jene, desto schwächer auch dieses. Es müssen, wenn wir den Affekt eines andern ihm nachempfinden sollen, alle innern Bedingungen zu diesem Affekt in uns selbst vorhanden seyn, damit die äussre Ursache, die durch ihre Vereinigung mit jenen dem Affekt die Entstehung gab, auch auf uns eine gleiche Wirkung äussern könne. Wir müssen, ohne uns Zwang anzuthun, die Person mit ihm zu wechseln, unser eigenes Ich seinem Zustande augenblicklich unterzuschieben fähig seyn. Wie ist es aber möglich, den Zustand eines Andern in uns zu empfinden, wenn wir nicht uns zuvor in diesem Andern gefunden naben? (Schiller [1792] 1962: 160)

> It appears as a necessary condition [of modern psychopathological drama] that the impulse struggling into consciousness, however clearly it is recognizable, is never given a definite name; so that in the spectator too the process is carried through with his attention averted, and he is in the grip of his emotions instead of taking stock of what is happening. (Freud [1942] 1985: 126)

Freud's account here recalls Kant's disinterested spectator. Thus, the theatre, recuperating the primal group, recuperating the spectacle, is the site where man is led to perform a task of the group, upon himself: theatre as moral institution in the Kantian sense.

«The world as stage» or «theatre as moral institution» are metaphors that have fallen into disuse in the twentieth century, particularly in the context of the development of the media and information technology in the second half of the twentieth century. What remains, nevertheless, is the type of relationship and mediation, albeit a transformed one, of actors and spectators as the structure and character of an era or a type of society. «The Network Society» has come to designate that supposed isomorphism between the digitalised networks, and the decentralised networks that replace the centrality of the State with its monopoly over the use of violence.

More than the age of executions and the age of revolutions, the media age has all the means at its disposal for an orchestrated mass scale visibility of violence. The media are progressively perfecting the capacity to broadcast spectacular images in which horror and beauty converge in real time, best illustrated in CNN's view of the bombing of Bagdad and Belgrade. It has been pointed out that «the power and fascination of television seems inseparable from its ability to bring the worst near while yet keeping it apart, distant, removed» (Weber 1999: 1), thus allowing us to watch it from the safety of our own homes and the comfort of our armchairs. However, the vistas of delightful horror afforded by the electronic home do not allow for the identifications constitutive of the social bond. They do not allow for an encounter with death mediated through the libidinal economy of the sublime, through sublimation, through aesthetic judgement, through the de-realised spaces of art, religion, theatre and fiction. Instead, they throw the individual back onto its monadic definition.

Politics leaves the space of theatre that it once had in common with the group, and with aesthetic judgement. In late modernity, and especially with the rise of what is termed the «Network Society» of digital communications technology, civil society is being dissipated in favour of more fragmented, localised defensive identities around communal principles and projects, refunctionalising earlier modes of communal resistance, and reconstructing institutions as expressions of these identities. This development can be observed in an all the more exacerbated forms where the nation-state under multinational capitalism loses its erstwhile role. The state is more and more experienced as an empty shell – «a simple formal framework for the coexistence of the multiplicity of ethnic, religious or life-style communities» (Zizek 1997: 42). This would explain the apparent paradox of the crisis of the nation-state and the simultaneous explosion of nationalisms (Castells II 1997: 11, 306).

The counter-argument has been made that worldwide interactive telecommunications networks have been and are being used by various contenders who thereby amplify their struggle, «as, for instance, when the Internet becomes an instrument of international environmentalists, Mexican *Zapatistas*, or American militia, responding in kind to computerized globalization of financial markets and information processing» (Castells II 1997: 2).

Castells cites the case of the Zapatistas as the first informational guerrilla movement. While they did not have an organised military centre of control, their communication tactics relied on popularisation through the dissemination of a group headed by a leader, and in that sense mimicked the mechanisms of Freud's 'Group Psychology'. The display of arms, the guerrillas' demonstrated willingness to sacrifice themselves for the cause, the imaged cult of the leader, the emblems of the group – these were all part of the Zapatistas' media strategy. Without being a card-carrying member with a political initiation and rites of passage, all over the world one could become a member by

wearing the group's insignia (see Castells II 1997: 79). This, and the Zapatistas' link-up with other NGO's and alternative communication networks, allowed them to inform the world about the events of the their uprising, to make their appeals to the rest of the world in real time, to produce an international public opinion that would act as a barrier to direct repression by the Mexican government (Castells II 1997: 80).

Since 1994, the Zapatistas' media strategy has functioned as a model for many other interest and resistance groups. Another group recently resorting to electronic media strategies is the PKK, protesting in mass actions across Europe against the forcible repatriation of its leader, Abdullah Öcalan. In opting for electronic media strategies, it made a mockery of restrictions on the media inside Turkey in the wake of Öcalan's seizure by Turkish commandos in Kenya on February 15 1999, and the mass-scale detentions and intimidation that surrounded it. Through the international dissemination of news on the e-mail and internet, it showed that it could outsmart repressive state power. It rendered absurd the stern warning of Turkish Justice Minister Selcuk Oztek's, that action would be taken «against those conducting political or cultural separatism, and who publish messages, press statements or images which constitutes a crime» (2 March 1999; quoted in Norm Dixon: 'Resistance and repression continue in Kurdistan'. In: *Green Left Weekly*, relayed electronically on the list 'Green Left Parramatta', 17 March 1999). However, this absurdity is rendered less blatant in the context of the intense media battles over the status and fate of Öcalan. These media battles seemed designed to dis-figure Öcalan's leading role within a group formation, and to lead to the disintegration of the electronic media strategy of the PKK. Pro-military newspapers were ostensibly publishing lengthy «confessions» by Öcalan. Skeptical commentators of newspapers critical of the Ankara government pointed out that these «confessions seemed to be almost word-by-word transcriptions of the Turkish authorities' accusations». Other «leaked» statements portrayed Öcalan as yielding to his interrogators' pressure. Certain other newspapers claimed that Öcalan was implicating Islamic groups in his statements. The baton-wielding Turkish authorities have understood the reliance of even virtual political mobilisations on the figure of a leader, and attempted to undermine his position even there.

As powerful as the impact of electronic media appeals by and images of political and insurgent movements have proved to be, they suffer from major limitations. Their societal goals are limited. As Castells notes, they are identity-based mobilisations in reaction to a clearly defined adversary: «They are reactive, and defensive, rather than purveyors of a societal project ...» (Castells II 1997: 106). This pertains to the American militia in particular. In the strategy of the Mexican Zapatistas, we can clearly see an attempt to overcome this limitation in introducing the cult of the leader, and the spirit of sacrifice to establish, even by mimicking it, the social bond of groups. These symbolic leaders are to give a face or a mask to symbolic insurgency. However, they remain symbolic and virtual, and remain subject to contestations even in their virtual role. With all the display of weaponry and of the spirit of sacrifice – which is tied to an earlier memory and prototype of the charismatic leader in group psychology – they cannot enact and extract group cohesion on the basis of the embodiment of divine might and human might in a single person (however distant in the modern subject's unconscious cultural memory) that translates the power of the law into a voluntary submission born of political love. What remains is an atrophied form of the group. Atrophied as it is, this type of identification nevertheless goes unchecked in the media. It can roam unhindered by a psychological constraint which Freud insisted on as a fundamental condition for raising the ethical standards and standing of groups. The externalisation of the ego-ideal in a group created and mediated by electronic media is unchecked by mimetic identification. The condition for the introjection of the object into the ego, and the consequent modelling of the ego on the lost object, is not met. Thus, the possibility of equipping the group with the attributes and (repressive) capacities of the individual is ruled out from the start. In the reception of the messages transmitted through the electronic media, the repressed unconscious, the source of individual psychology that Freud saw as vital in controlling the unchecked tendencies of group psychology, does not come into the picture, as Benjamin so aptly demonstrated (Benjamin [1939] 1977).

It is thus not co-incidental that today's information technology is one of the major sites for the

fomenting of a refigured violence in the name of specific 'group identities'. The political task arising from this unprecedented potential for violence is not simply a «progressive counteroffensive» (Castells II 1997: 350-353) in the electronic media, in the service of reconstructing democracy in the network society. Equally if not more urgent is the task of politically raising the question of the place of the human, and strengthening its role, in the context of forces that attempt to refigure the human technologically and culturally.

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Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 281-292

My *Shakespeare in Love*

NORMAN N. HOLLAND (*)

It's a delight. It's peaches and cream. It's funny. I love it, for all that it's nothing but a bit of fluff. Or is it? It's comedy, and comedy is hard to analyze. As some actor has said, Tragedy anybody can do, but comedy is hard. Can one analyze a bit of fluff?

And why do I feel I have to analyze it? Somehow, I can't just enjoy – I have to talk about that response and analyze it. It's my way, I suppose, of competing, of asserting my own intelligence against Shakespeare's. I show that I can master even his infinitely complex texts. I have to analyze it, because I'm challenged by it. As Freud said in «The Moses of Michelangelo», «Some rationalistic, or perhaps analytic, turn of mind in me rebels against being moved by a thing without knowing why I am thus affected and what it is that affects me». It's the critic's occupational disease. I can't even laugh without figuring out why.

That's why I wrote a book about why people laugh. I concluded that every individual laughs for his or her own particular reason. We each have an individual sense of humor. We each laugh because we each re-create our identity in a sudden and playful way. So, I should be able to say why I love this film so and and laugh so delightedly at it.

Shakespeare in Love starts with an early «war of the theatres», the rivalry between two of the public theatres in London in 1593. One rival is the debt-ridden theatre manager Philip Henslowe, whose Rose Theatre is on Bankside, the south bank of the Thames across from the city. The other is Richard Burbage, the great tragedian of the 1590s, who owns the Theatre, across the river on the northern side of the city.

The film opens with slapstick. A moneylender, Hugh Fennyman (penny-man?), is trying to force payment out of Henslowe. He has two of his frighteners hold Henslowe's feet to the fire – quite literally. Promising payment, Henslowe goes off to make sure that the writer he has contracted with, Will Shakespeare, finishes his new comedy, «Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's Daughter». We go from farce to facts to farce.

Henslowe tries to get the play out of Will Shakespeare, who dodges. (He puts Henslowe off by rhyming:

> Doubt thou the stars are fire,
> Doubt that the sun doth move ...

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but that's from Hamlet, which doesn't come till 1601 – an in-joke for us Shakespearean scholars.) Poor Will is suffering from writer's block. (*Shakespeare with writer's block??!*) He sits at his desk idly practising signatures. (*This is another in-joke, about the six known signatures of Shakespeare.*) Will rushes off to see an Elizabethan version of a psychoanalyst, complete with couch and hourglass to time the 50-minute hour and «See you next week» – a delightful conceit! From Shakespeare's all too obvious phallic symbols, the «analyst» infers that he is blocked not only in his writing, but in his sexual performance as well. I am reminded of a passage in Freud I recently ran across:

> The sexual behaviour of a human being often *lays down the pattern* for all his other modes of reacting to life. If a man is energetic in winning the object of his love, we are confident that he will pursue his other aims with an equally unswerving energy; but if, for all sorts of reasons, he refrains from satisfying his strong sexual instincts his behaviour will be conciliatory and resigned rather than vigorous in other spheres of life as well.

As in this psychotherapy episode, the film makes outrageous sport with us. Inevitably we project our twentieth-century knowledge into the Elizabethan setting, and that provides a lot of the fun. At the same time, the film portrays Elizabethan street life and stagecraft quite accurately. How plays were directed, how costumed, how the audience sat and stood and what they were charged - all that fits what I learned in my twentieth-century graduate school. And the horsetroughs and costermongers and slops on the unpaved streets, all that seems accurate, too. This Elizabethan world is indeed Elizabethan.

On the other hand, as with the «psychoanalyst», the film playfully lets me – us – project my ordinary twentieth-century knowledge into the realistic world of 1593. The whole film from beginning to end builds on the conceit that **we** know that Will Shakespeare will become perhaps the greatest dramatist the world has ever known, while **they** in 1593 know him only as a hack playwright, playing second fiddle to Kit Marlowe. Hence *we* can laugh when we see Marlowe and Viola feeding him titles, names, and plots. *We* can understand and laugh at a souvenir mug from Stratford-on-Avon in Shakespeare's garret. In sum, we project, parsing the ostensible past with the present we know.

This playing to our projection of what we know into the film provides for someone who has taught Shakespeare, like me, the extra fun that screenwriter Tom Stoppard described in an interview as «pure mischief». A lot of what delighted me in this film was its repesentation – a pretty accurate representation – of Elizabethan stage practice. I took a seminar in graduate school with a great scholar of the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage, Alfred Harbage. He devoted the whole seminar to Elizabethan theater construction and stage practice. I was tremendously impressed by Harbage's learning. Years later, I could remember some of his lectures almost verbatim. I was dazzled by some of the details we knew, the profit and loss of owning a theater or a share in an actors' company, how plays were contracted for, the size of the playing space, the uses of the tiring-room and the upper stage, the lack of act and scene divisions, how an actor rehearsed with his part on a roll tucked into his sleeve, how directors directed with a staff to point out the blocking (as Shakespeare tells us in The Tempest*), the cost of admission, the seating layout. I particularly remember one gadget: a folio piece of paper glued on a board. This was the prop man's scene-by-scene list of props. The board had a square hole cut in it – evidently it hung on a peg by the tiring-room door, and someone stood there and handed the actors the props they would need – sword, book, candle – as they entered on that bare forty-foot-by-forty-foot stage. Imagine such a detail surviving for three hundred and fifty years! I was delighted! I thought it detective work, finding these fascinating details – facts, certainties – behind the fictional surface of the plays.*

Of course, there was a lot we didn't know. But so much that we did, and I took inordinate pleasure in these historical minutiae. I suppose you could say, psychologically, I was substituting the historical realities derived from research for the fantasies being played out on the stage itself. Facts about stagecraft were safe and solid, knowlege with which you could make a career as a scholar. You could get tenure at Harvard learning this kind of thing. Look at Harbage.

Naturally, I was delighted when, decades after, they began constructing the New Globe nearly at the site of the old one in Southwark. When the project was under way, I dragged poor Jane through hours at the little basement museum that described what they hoped to do and the stages they were trying to imitate. When finally the New Globe was built and set to open, I got up at 3:00 a.m. to call the box office in London the day they began selling tickets. I had to make sure we would get in to one of the opening performances.

This movie does show what we know of Elizabethan London and its theaters pretty well. Granted, the film shows the earlier Theatre and Rose stages, about which we don't know as much as the Globe, but the film seemed quite accurate to me. And that was a lot of the fun.

The movie ties ability in writing to ability in sex. You could read this film then, using the theories of metaphor developed by the *soi-disant* cognitive linguists (George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Mark Turner, and others). They develop the idea that metaphor is one of the human ways of knowing, perhaps the most basic and pervasive. In metaphor, broadly understood, we use something we understand well, the source domain, to understand something we understand less well, the target domain. We «map» the source domain, say, a journey, onto the target domain, say, a love affair. We arrive at expressions like: We've had some bumps in our relationship. We've come a long way together. We've come to a parting of the ways. We're just spinning our wheels in this relationship.

We use things we know well, like a car's spinning its wheels, to understand something harder to grasp, a standstill (*sic*) in an affair. *Shakespeare in Love* builds on such a mapping. This is an end-of-century film, though, and we think we understand sex and love so well we can use them to map onto something more mysterious: the creative imagination. Hence this is a film that understands Shakespeare's block as a writer by means of his block as a lover.

Till now, Will Shakespeare's plays have been hackwork and Will distinctly second-rate compared to Marlowe. The movie has Marlowe snoot Will Shakespeare's *Henry VI*s, which are indeed half-successful imitations of the fashionable Marlowe. We can read the film as mapping Will's limitations as a writer onto Will's limitations as a lover. All Will's women have been easy up to this point – hackwork, so to speak: Anne Hathaway, who lured him into marriage; Aphrodite «who does it behind the Dog and Crumpet»; the various whores who greet him in the tavern scenes; and Rosaline. She is Burbage's seamstress, who, in the course of the movie, is had by all its principal men and treated by all of them with considerable contempt. She is also, of course, Romeo's first love in *Romeo and Juliet*. Shakespeare thinks she is the woman who must wear the bracelet the «psychoanalyst» has given him to cure his impotence.

She isn't. Enter beautiful, rich Viola de Lesseps, stagestruck and crazy about poetry. We meet her as she is watching a comedy being performed at court before Queen Elizabeth: Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. He has come to the performance to see the audience's response. Elizabeth guffaws at the slapstick scene of Launce and his dog Crab, but she dozes during Valentine's lovelorn soliloquy, «What light is light, if Sylvia is not seen?» *Two Gentlemen* is indeed a rather stilted and artificial love comedy, but that soliloquy sends Viola into joyful erotic trance (*another bridge between play and life, between creativity and sex*).

I recognize all these in-jokes, because I taught Shakespeare for the first eleven years of my teaching career, and I wrote two books about the plays. Only now, thirty years later, am I slowly beginning to forget the quotations. I had memorized dozens, because I was constantly advancing them as evidence for my interpretations to my brainy and skeptical M.I.T. students.

In those days, I believed that I was teaching them how to dig out «the» meaning, a unifying principle that would enable them to recognize and experience the satisfying aesthetic unity of a Shakespearean play or, indeed, any work of art. I was quite dogmatic but to hard-edged minds like theirs, effective. They liked solid facts and exact reasoning. So do I. Although I fled the intellectual history laid on me in graduate school, I enjoyed interpreting the unity and meaning of complex, mysterious works of art like The Seventh Seal *or* Last Year at Marienbad *– or Shakespeare's plays. And I can't get past it. I'm afraid I have little enthusiasm for current literary studies. They seem to*

me to wallow in doubtful «theory» but pay little attention to the beauty, the unity in diversity of the works of literature they address. «Unity», «diversity», tsk, tsk – bad words nowadays!

I like knowing odd historical facts like those I've mentioned about Elizabethan theatrical history, and that's an inconsistent thing for a relativist like me to say. Conservative Congressmen have announced that America's civil or not-so-civil culture wars of the 1990s are between lovely «absolute truth» (good) and relativism (evil). Absolute truth, I suppose, ultimately refers to some deity - for who else has access to it? But surely god has died well before our time, although right-wingers would like to keep him alive and enlist him as a celebrity endorsement for various projects of giant corporations and the very rich.

Absolute truth? I think not. I've written recently that I think we have gradually accepted relativism to the point where it dominates the intellectual life of our time:

> *It seems to me that that has been the dominant motif of our century. It really began with the cultural movement in anthropology in the 1880s, Tylor and on to Malinowski, Boas, Mead, Kluckhohn, and their successors. Values are expressions of different cultures and have no validity beyond those cultures.*
> *We get relativity in physics, starting in 1905, then later, quantum physics, the Heisenberg principle, and so on. The physical properties of an event depend upon the position and the methods of the observer.*
> *In the human sciences, we get a further push toward relativism from psychoanalysis, starting in the 1900s .... Events, traumatic events, do not cause neurosis directly. How the individual mentally handles the event determines the outcome.*
>
> * * *
>
> *In the 1950s, psychologists turned toward constructivism, the idea, as I read them, that people construct events, drawing on their culture and personality. Implicit in the whole cognitive science movement is the idea that you cannot know anything apart from some human mode of perception, which is relative to a personality, a culture, the circumstances of the event.*
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> * * *
>
> *Yet another thrust in the direction of relativism [was] the widespread acceptance of Thomas Kuhn's thesis ... that science ... comes in sudden revolutions and long periods of «normal science». During such periods, what scientists conclude, what they even perceive, depends on what they already know.*
>
> * * *
>
> *Relativism, I say, is the central intellectual issue of our century and has been growing for ten decades.*

I've played a bit of a joke on you. I'm quoting a fictional intellectual historian who is addressing a focus group in an intellectual playlet I wrote, one of my fitful tries in recent years at fiction. Really, though, I think I'm hedging my bets, using intellectual content to justify untalented creative writing. Which brings us back to Shakespeare in Love *and me, not as would-be writer, but critic.*

Shakespeare in Love builds on the basic pattern of Shakespeare's love stories. That is, in both his plays and poems, there are no lovers who are simply happy and in love. From *Comedy of Errors* to *The Tempest*, all his lovers have to overcome obstacles. They face barriers of class, race, nationality, mistaken identities, but most often of parental (particularly paternal) opposition. (*Note the anagram.*) Then the play breaks through the barrier to its happy or tragic ending.

This movie love story runs true to the Shakespearean formula (which indeed almost all writers of comedy use). Beautiful, rich Viola falls for Will Shakespeare, a hand-to-mouth actor and a hack playwright, not quite as good as Christopher Marlowe. But, and a very big «but» it is, her father is marrying her off to Lord Wessex, a brutish owner of tobacco plantations in Virginia. (*No. Jamestown isn't settled until 1607.*) Wessex is in debt, interested only in her money, and tells her

so. Will Shakespeare, too, is penniless, but they love each other. Wessex, moreoever, can offer a distinguished title, while Will is one of a despised class, actors.

That's a «Freudian» reading of Shakespeare and *Shakespeare in Love*, a hypothesis to try out. They're «oedipal». I could say it a wiser way, though. The obstacles of class, race, fathers, and so on, provide us a «forbiddenness» that counters our fantasies of an overwhelming passion for someone who utterly and totally satisfies us, a «soul mate», perhaps a Muse, a «perfect» woman or man like Viola de Lesseps for Will or Will Shakespeare for her. We represent internal inhibition by external force. «Oedipal», so understood, is a word for a forbiddenness that can provide both the threat and the ecstasy for all our romantic loves and rivalries, beginning with mother and father. As I see it, this movie creates and then crosses such barriers, as *Romeo and Juliet* does, the one comically, the other tragically.

As part of this oedipal pattern, I see a second great Shakespearean theme: betrayal. Will betrays his former partner, Rosaline. He cuckolds Wessex. He betrays Viola by not telling her he is married. He betrays Marlowe by leading Wessex to believe that it is Marlowe who has been coupling with Viola. Further, the actors and theater owners are constantly betraying one another by stealing one another's plays. And various of the men are betraying Burbage with Rosaline.

In short, there are barriers – sexual (oedipal), ethical, financial, genderal, artistic. Sometimes it is good to break through them; sometimes breaking through is betrayal.

In all this, the film friskily parallels the stage play, *Romeo and Juliet*, and the film/play, *Shakespeare in Love*. In both the lovers meet at a ball. In both we have paternal interference. In both we have a forbidden lover and a sanctioned lover and enforced marriage (Wessex as Paris). Ned (Edward) Alleyn, Henslowe's leading actor, plays a Mercutio. In both, the ruler (Queen or Prince) steps in at the end to sort things out. Even Will's earlier fornications correspond to Romeo's infatuation at the beginning of *Romeo and Juliet* with Rosaline. While the parallels are not exact, I find them amusing and suggestive – penetrating, if you will.

Stagestruck Viola dresses as a boy, Thomas Kent, and tries out for a part in Will Shakespeare's yet-to-be-written play, «Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's Daughter». But when he tries to hire her, she escapes to her family's mansion up the Thames. Class separates them. Will follows him/her and asks for Thomas Kent at the huge, imposing door – but no one (except Viola's nurse) realizes what has happened. But, like her, **we** know.

This being a 1990s movie, it has added a new barrier to romance besides the usual ones of class and paternal opposition – gender. Playing to today's interest in cross-dressing, *Shakespeare in Love* takes advantage of the Elizabethan convention that women could not appear on the stage. Viola/Thomas has done something taboo for someone in her class and gender, something that could cause Henslowe's theater, the Rose, to be shut down (and later does). Will's pursuit of this boy, his kissing him, is – disquieting.

At this point, the plot speeds up and entangles itself in complications. Will meets Viola at a ball in her father's mansion, a prelude to her engagement to Wessex. (Like *Romeo and Juliet.*) They fall in love. Romeo, however, we twentieth-century folk know, improvised a charming sonnet with Juliet when he met her. Will, however, is tongue-tied and interrupted here. He can say nothing. Similarly, he cannot climb the balcony as Romeo did. Instead, he climbs up, comes fact to face with nurse, yells, falls, rouses the house, and has to run for it. Compared to the ideal lover of the stage, this real-life lover comes woefully short.

Even so, his meeting with Viola/Juliet inspires Will. He begins churning out his «Romeo» comedy, and the Admiral's Men start rehearsals with Thomas Kent playing Romeo. Through Thomas, Will sends love letters to Viola (the «summer's day» sonnet). This time, though, he succeeds in climbing her balcony, and they consummate their affair in a night of ecstatic love. Interestingly, the language of this erotic scene comes from the balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, a scene **before** Romeo and Juliet consummate. Is the film implying the play is chaster, more «poetic» than «real» life?

In the morning, Viola insists (as she will throughout) that Shakespeare get busy and write, and Will, now inspired, begins writing the «real» *Romeo and Juliet*. As he churns out text barely in time

for the actors to rehearse it, the film cuts back and forth from love scenes in Viola's bedroom to the action onstage, with the text of *Romeo and Juliet* (notably the balcony scene) serving as a sound overlap.

After fights between the two rival companies of actors, Viola learns that Shakespeare is married. She points out that any marriage for them is doubly impossible. He is married, and she must marry Wessex. «If not you, why not Wessex?», she realistically says. He must write. We return to the cross-cutting between sex scenes and play rehearsal in a jumble of gendered roles, speeches, and locales.

Wessex realizes that Shakespeare is Viola's lover, and now he charges the Rose, sword in hand. Will defeats him, but the Master of the Revels closes the Rose for having a woman onstage. (*Symbolism of roses?*)

The players' drunken sorrows turn to joy, though, when Henslowe gallantly offers the use of his own theater, the Theatre. They are really going to put on *Romeo and Juliet*! Alas, just as they are about to begin, the voice of the lad who was to play Juliet – changes. (*Another breakthrough?*) We have no Juliet!

But, guess who is in the audience! Viola. Having escaped from Wessex after the marriage ceremony in order to see the final production, Viola steps in. She plays, now, Juliet. We have at long last Shakespeare's full-fledged *Romeo and Juliet* with Will himself as Romeo and Viola as Juliet. It is the «real» (i.e., historical) *Romeo and Juliet* in this fictional *Shakespeare in Love*. But the play is staged, a fiction, while the naturalistic film portrays «real» life.

The play's being put on at all is another crossing of barriers. As for how it happens, as Henslowe says, «It's a mystery». In effect he brings in what we know are the origins of Western drama in the Dionysian mysteries of ancient Athens. At the same time, he suggests that we in the audience are witnessing the «mystery», the astonishing act of creativity involved in Will Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and the almost as astonishing creativity involved in *Shakespeare in Love*.

After the final death scene and the Prince's eulogy, Queen Elizabeth steps in, imperiously pardons everybody for having women on stage, and praises Will Shakespeare. This is Will's breakthrough. Alas, realistic Elizabeth also insists, harshly, that Viola go off to Virginia with Wessex. Though Will Shakespeare loses her as a woman, she will be his «heroine», his «heroine for all time». His social and sexual breakthrough with her equals, quite precisely, his breakthrough as a playwright.

It is in the production of the play that the film develops its themes (as I see them) most clearly. Will and the rest of the actors had rehearsed *Romeo and Juliet* with Viola playing Romeo (and, thus, more gender-crossing). The film then moved into a series of cross-cuts from Viola playing Romeo to Will and Viola making love in her chamber (the Nurse standing guard). Sound – the language of *Romeo and Juliet* – overlapped the cuts. In effect, the lovers, in their lovemaking, were creating the words of the play. Life creates art. Or – let me put it another way – the sexual penetration of Viola leads to Will Shakespeare's breakthrough in his writing. As Elizabeth points out, Shakespeare has succeeded in putting «the very truth and nature of love» on stage. And a sad love it is, with its barriers and sorrows. An inhibited love, an – if you will – oedipal love.

In other words the film (in the best Hollywood tradition) treats artistic creations as simply recording the artist's life in painting, music, or words. I suppose I saw too many movies as an adolescent, because that was what I thought when I was in my teens and twenties and wanted to be a writer. You have an experience and then you write it down and that's how you make literature. After all, isn't that what Hemingway and Wolfe did?

I was grandiose. I had sky-high ambitions. I was going to be the new Shakespeare. Just write down what I was experiencing or feeling. It took me years to realize that what counts in writing is not the content but the writing – the words. A writer – a real writer – writes words that are unexpected but feel right. Incidents, too, should be surprising but right. And characters. But you can have all kinds of incidents or characters so long as the language works. Readers find themselves saying, I didn't expect that, but yes, yes, it feels right, that makes sense, that satisfies. These days,

when I get a memo in my English department, I can tell in a sentence or two if it's from one of our «creative writers». I am surprised and delighted – as I am with this film.

You have to be able to surprise, to go beyond the cliché, and that I never could do. Can never do. I can do «right» all right – as a critic, for example, or a scholar. But «surprising»? No. Shakespeare's block is my block. That is my point of identification with this film.

He goes to a shrink. I went to a shrink. I had been trying to write poetry for several years with virtually no success. I got an appointment with an analyst and the first thing I blurted out as I walked into his narrow, quiet room was, «I want to be a writer, but I don't want to write». I wanted the prestige, the romantic fantasies I had of a writer's life, but the writing was painfully beyond me. Once I said it out loud, I scarcely needed the analyst. I was over it. I had made my breakthrough. I could turn to other things. I found I was good at doing criticism, and I, quite enthusiastically, became a critic or, nowadays we would say, «theorist». I settled for the truth, the board with a hole in it hanging on a peg instead of trying to write fantasies for the stage.

As I think of imaginative writing now, writers have to draw from places in their heads that are «deep», uncomfortable, touchy, even painful. They have to wrap the thoughts they so mine in words they love, words that surprise and delight, «edge words» a poet friend calls them. I had not been able to do that. End of creative writing career, except for occasional stabs at it in recent years.

Barriers, barriers, barriers. This is a film about writer's block, sexual block and breaking through the blocks. But not just writing and sex. There is the breaking through the barriers of class and parental opposition. Will jumps across class lines and just as surely, like Romeo, he risks death to make love to Viola. «A river separates us.» In mythic fashion, Will has to cross the river to enter Viola's castle or to enter Viola, for that matter. «My lovers have to cross a wide river.»

Will has to cross the gender barrier as well. The film has him kiss Viola even while she wears the mustache and tights of Thomas Kent/Romeo. I must confess that I would have found this disturbing had it not been for my knowing (in my twentieth-century capacity) that Thomas is really yummy Gwyneth Paltrow.

At the end of the film, a woman has appeared successfully on an Elizabethan stage, in fact two women: Viola de Lesseps and Queen Elizabeth. That taboo has also been broken (*no – not historically*).

The film penetrates the past with the present, when it has us project our twentieth-century knowledge into a sixteenth-century London. These are the lines that get the loudest laughs from a modern audience:

> «The show must –» «Go on.»
> «Break a leg.»
> «Follow that boat.»
> «I think tobacco has a great future.»
> «I know something of what it is to be a woman in a man's profession.»
> «Are you the author of the plays of William Shakespeare?»

Conversely, «lines from Shakespeare» occur in street life. «A plague on both your houses», shouts a Puritan, reviling the two theaters. «The Rose by any other name would smell as ...» referring to Burbage's theater.

The ending, in particular, uses what we know. Queen Elizabeth sets up a wager between Shakespeare and Wessex as to whether the «very truth and nature of love» can be presented onstage – and we know *Romeo and Juliet* did that. There follows a joke about cloaks and Sir Walter Raleigh, another chance for us to project. The Queen asks Will to produce something more cheerful for Twelfth Night, and we know he will produce that delightful comedy (*but in 1600, not 1593!*). Then follows a drowning scene as Viola and Wessex sail to Virginia (*after all, if it worked in* The Piano*, why wouldn't it work here?*) In the last shot of the film, Viola as sole survivor walks from sea to land across a deserted beach. We are, I guess, to think of the second scene of *Twelfth Night* (although in *Twelfth Night* she was accompanied by the sea captain Antonio and some sailors). «What country, friends, is this?» «This is Illyria, lady.»

We see, cross-cut with the drowning, Will Shakeseare in his garret, fulfilling his lonely destiny as Great Writer with the lost Viola as his «heroine for all time». It looks like the ultimate in romantic notions of «the writer». It is, though, the conclusive penetration of love and life into art. On a blank sheet, Shakespeare writes «Twelfth Night, Act I», and, in voiceover, begins to describe the plot of that comedy. But – and this is the astonishing thing! – Elizabethan public theater plays were not divided into acts and scenes in Shakespeare's day, only by later editors. More obviously, what the voiceover gives us is not lines from the play *Twelfth Night*, but a recounting of the plot, a synopsis such as one would write as part of a «treatment» for a modern film. What this Shakespeare is writing is not the Elizabethan play *Twelfth Night*, but a twentieth-century «project», a film treatment of *Twelfth Night!* Surely this is the ultimate breakthrough from the staged and filmed story to life, to the medium we are at that very moment seeing before us. But I am playing critic. Perhaps 'twere to consider too curiously to consider so.

The film crosses yet another barrier between life and art in the final performance scenes, the barrier between audience and actors. The camera filming includes both players and spectators and so melds the audience's oohs, aahs, boos, and tears – real life – into the onstage play. The film also has fun with the closeness of audience and actors in the Elizabethan public playhouse. We see the groundlings staring raptly up at these loving and dying actors not six feet away from them.

I've been there! I stood as a groundling that first summer the New Globe in London was in operation. I was tremendously excited at the prospect of actually seeing the things I had learned in my decades-old seminar.

The theater itself is as exact a reproduction of Globe II as could be made, and it is an extraordinary sight. It is elaborately ornate in the Tudor-Jacobean mode with gilt and color and paintings and mascherons on the back facade, faux marble columns, and a painted «heavens», but that big open playing space, forty feet by forty feet, is just out there and waiting. The circular building means that wherever you sit or stand (on the asphalted groundling-space) you are within about thirty feet of the actors. It's as though everybody were in orchestra seats in the tenth row in a proscenium theater. Yet you and the actors are, by the same token, very much aware of the physical presence of the people around you as an audience. They move and shuffle and scratch and sweat. They are not, not as in a modern theater, vague shapes in the dark, but actual faces and clothes. This is particularly so with the groundlings, who are shifting positions, moving around, going out to the lobby, and so on. So this is not a theater of illusion, but one of listening.

The theater was wonderful. The production of The Winter's Tale *we saw was not. The director had ingeniously staged Sicilia and Bohemia as two African kingdoms, complete with thrones made of cut up tractor tires (tyres?). But the Elizabethan theater is not a theater where you look at a visual effect, but a theater where you watch and listen to an actor. The director's role is much reduced from its modern status, so that in S*hakespeare in Love *sometimes Shakespeare directs his play, sometimes Ned Alleyn. (Come to think of it, we know the names of a lot of Elizabethan actors and theater owners, but next to nothing about any directors.) This Globe should be an actor's theater, not a director's.*

The Autolycus in Winter's Tale*, however, was superb. Where the other actors were caught up in trying to look African, Nicholas Le Prevost played a plain English rural con artist, working on the audience. In the latter part of the play, I left our (fairly expensive) seats in the first gallery and stood as a groundling right in front of the stage. It was fantastic! Like watching a close-up in a movie. I was often a mere yard from the actors (just like the groundlings in* Shakespeare in Love*). The actors would be playing to the whole house and I would see the sweat and spit of their speaking. It was exciting, like watching boxing close-up. But there was more to it than watching someone perform.*

Being a groundling worked beautifully with Autolycus. He was, as I say, playing to the crowd, strumming a ukelele and otherwise carrying on, confiding his shady schemes to both the groundlings and the upper galleries. Yet I, as groundling, felt he was doing this ***to me****. When he began cadging money, everybody in that front row of groundlings began tossing coins at him, even penny-pinching*

me. These real(!) coins he cheerfully picked up and pocketed to the guffaws of the rest of the audience. I've never felt quite that relation to an actor, that he was acting, but that I was ***part of his acting****. People talk about crossing the line between performer and audience, but this happened in a very special way. He remained the performer, playing to the rest of the house, but I was there in his act, with him. I've never experienced anything quite like that in a theater. I was awed. Truly, as Henslowe says in this movie, it is a mystery. Part of the mystery is that Le Prevost's feeling for the experience strikingly matches mine, as he tells us at http://www.rdg.ac.uk/globe – truly a mystery beyond the critic's or scholar's ken.*

Shakespeare in Love mixes actors acting actors acting a part in a Shakespearean play with an audience of actors (extras) acting an audience responding to actors acting actors acting a part in a Shakespearean play – very cute! Very postmodern. Even more postmodern is the way that the film's reality (the affair) creates the fictional play. But the fictional play is historically real and the seemingly real affair is fictional. Reality is a fiction and a fiction is reality. And yet, for all the postmodernism, no small part of the delight I took in this film was quite old-fashioned. I was simply seeing parts of *Romeo and Juliet* performed by superb actors on a quite accurate Elizabethan stage.

For me, the most important of the penetrations in *Shakespeare in Love* is the way life breaks into the theater and vice versa. It's obvious in the interplay of lovemaking on and off stage, but it is also the subject of the wager between Will and Wessex. Can real love – can real life – be represented in a play? Earlier, Viola had said that the stage would never be able to represent love truly so long as women were played by these «pipsqueak boys». And in the finale, we have a woman playing a woman, Viola playing Juliet to Will's Romeo.

Likewise, life breaks in again when Viola reconciles herself to her marriage. She ruefully agrees that it, or something like it, is inevitable. Life breaks in with Elizabeth's insistence in the finale that everybody realistically accept their destiny, Viola as playless in Virginia, Wessex as deceived bridegroom, Shakespeare as writer. In this film – *as in life?* – the women deal in reality, the men in fantasies. And the «very truth and nature of love» seems to be a sad truth: frustration and defeat or – psychologically – inhibition.

Finally life – our life at the movies – breaks in at the end when Will begins writing. The sentences he speaks in voiceover are not the play, *Twelfth Night*, but a synopsis for a screen play like the one we are seeing. (As many have pointed out, were Shakespeare writing today, he would be writing not for the stage for the screen. Whether big or little screen is debatable and debated.)

In this as in all fine films, one can read its essence in its first few scenes. In this film, it's the first few seconds. The first thing we see is a series of images of an Elizabethan theater. Cut to a playbill, advertising a play, «The Moneylender's Revenge». It flashes by, and the next shot shows moneylender Fennyman torturing poor catch-as-catch-can Henslowe, who owes him money, by sticking his feet into a bucket of hot coals. We are seeing the translation of a play into life or life into a play – as the film will do with the creation of *Romeo and Juliet* from the affair of Will Shakespeare and Viola de Lesseps or, equally, the creation of what we are seeing at that instant in the movie theater, *Shakespeare in Love*, out of *Romeo and Juliet*. At the same time, we are seeing a modern idiom (like «Follow that boat») being turned into an episode in a fictional 1593. We are seeing Fennyman «hold his feet to the fire», as we say today of financial and political coercions. The film moves from theater-words, «The Moneylender's Revenge», and our words, the modern idiom, to reach «life», the people on the screen, who are, of course, fictional. The film crosses barrier after barrier, that, a few scenes later, in the psychoanalyst scene, we see Will blocked from doing. Then the action of the film shows his breaking through the barriers - his penetration.

The film equates potency in writing with potency in sex. That's a standard, cookbooky kind of «Freudianism». There is another formulaic psychoanalytic interpretation that seems to me relevant here: primal scene. A child sees or overhears or fantasies the act of love, servants having sex or parents or animals or an episode on television or in the movies. The child may misunderstand sex as a scary, aggressive act. The child may fearfully fantasize about missing body parts or become confu-

sed about what is real and what is unreal in the scene. Am I in this scene or or out of it, watching? Watching stage plays or movies, for that matter, «stands for» the primal scene, the analysts tell us.

In this film, of course, it being an end-of-century film, primal scene and sexual intercourse are real enough. We see Will and Viola making love in several highly erotic scenes. Will, by means of his poetry, has penetrated, quite literally, the de Lesseps mansion and the hitherto virginal Viola.

The first time they make love, Viola's nurse hears what is going on. She plunks her rocking chair down in front of the door, keeping out intruders and rocking more and more noisily as the sounds from inside get louder. She herself gets more and more itchy and restless and hot. *The audience laughed, but I found it unfunny and uncomfortable*. She is both witness and participant in the forbidden scene, but soon the film is cross-cutting between the romantic scenes in *Romeo and Juliet* and the deliciously erotic scenes in Viola's bedroom. The language of the play we are seeing rehearsed on a stage flows seamlessly back and forth from scenes in the bedroom to the next scene on the stage. What is real and what is fictional? *Talk about primal scene!*

Rich and poor, noble and base, male and female, stage and life, actors and audience, past and present – all barriers broken through – penetrated – and especially Shakespeare's creative and sexual block. If I were to try to put all this into a «unifying idea», a theme of themes, I would say something like, «the ability of artistic creativity to penetrate». «Penetrate» expresses for me what I feel is the essential quality of the film: these sexualized breakings through barriers. Modern critics say such a theme «marginalizes» details. I think not. I think such a theme gives a reason for existence even to such tiny details as the nurse sticking a scraper in Viola's ears, scouring them out, penetrating them, before putting her to bed.

In crossing these barriers, both the play *Romeo and Juliet* and the film *Shakespeare in Love* are being created moment by moment by Will's breakthrough on both the theatrical and the erotic fronts. Life's creativity – sex – breaks through Shakespeare's inhibitions to poetic creativity. Would we could all do the same.

But we can't. Or, at least, I can't. Some of us settle for hard facts and solid proofs and unifying ideas – intellectualizing (like this essay) about art and sex. No breakthroughs for us – me. Instead I get a safety that wards off the fears of the uncertain and the unknown and the not understood, waiting somewhere deep down in me to jab their way up to the surface. When I try to think of them, my hands tense, my skin feels cold and damp, my heart starts pumping. Like the nightmares I suffered as a child.

Like many film critics, I got nightmares as a child from something I saw at the movies. I suppose we film buffs are all over-compensating as adults. At any rate, at the age of seven, I started having nightmares because of something at the movies. For several years, my parents kept me from going to movies at all. (Needless to say, I've been making up for lost time ever since.) Decades later, in analysis, I recalled this and verified that primal scenes were an important part of my childhood. I was even able many years after analysis was over, to discover what it was that had frightened me: a perfectly innocuous trailer for a Laurel and Hardy film. But it had images I interpreted as other images, more frightening, more overpowering. If I break through, if I give up certainty, they will still be there, and they will be overwhelming. And when I think about this, my heart tenses.

Shakespeare's block is my block. He broke through. I didn't. And it's just as well.

I settled for a safe life as a professor and critic (often a movie critic) against some slambang writer's life of taking chances, never knowing where the next dollar is coming from. Or a life of sexual and domestic lurchings and, yes, breaking through sexual inhibitions. Perhaps that's why I can be so content with data about the Elizabethan playhouse, the board hanging on a peg. Facts are solid, facts are safe, facts pay. I can use my sexual and creative inhibitions to content myself, in other words, to defend.

Freud said that, to be a creative writer, you had to have a «lack of inhibition». Writers are sexy, he thought. I've even written an essay suggesting that some of Freud's faintly contemptuous thinking about writers being given over to the pleasure principle or being like children playing

came from his own fear and jealousy of them as romantic beings, more powerful sexually than a scholar like himself. I think most people read this film with that idea in mind. I know I do.

I think most people, however, read this film as enabling. If you can have this terrific sexual affair, you can write Romeo and Juliet*. You can be a great writer. All you have to do is write down the experience you're having.*

Oddly, that isn't the way the film ends. Queen Elizabeth seems to be saying, You can't have this totally desirable woman that you are madly in love with, but you can be a great writer. You must inhibit yourself. Then you can sublimate your love into writing that I and everyone else will celebrate. That is, of course, nonsense, but blessed nonsense. Hollywood is soothing us. Writers need to be less inhibited, not more inhibited, and that can be a disturbing thought. It is for me, anyway.

I too feel the film links writing prowess to sexual prowess – it is, after all, quite explicit on the point, so to speak. But for me, the ending says, You must accept your sexual inhibitions **and** *you must accept your limitations as a writer. You are not Shakespeare and you are not going to be. You can't have Gwyneth Paltrow,* **and** *you can't be a great writer.*

But somehow **that's OKAY***! You don't have to defy the harsh Queen or killer Wessex. You're safe. Writing about inhibition, Freud called it «civilization and its discontents». Yet inhibitions are the contentments of civilization as well as the discontents. You could not be sitting, reading this essay, if you had not accepted inhbitions. I could not be writing it had I not also accepted them. For me, the film comforts me in the choice I made, critic instead of writer, the peg and the prop list instead of the play. I am, in my bourgeois way, safe, reassured – content.*

When I dig down into my feelings, that is why I love this unbelievable film so, this film that dramatizes a sexual and creative freedom I have given up. Because I'm safe. Because I've had and I'm having a good life, as good as it gets. I can take pleasure, at long last, in there being a Will Shakespeare without my having to be that Will Shakespeare. I can simply delight in the play of his imagination and the filmmakers' without trying to compete, to do the same myself. That's enough pleasure for me, and that terrible imperative I felt when young to do or to be the biggest, the most, the best, has quieted. I can witness Shakespeare's breakthrough without feeling that I have to do it, too. In effect, I can use my sexual and creative inhibitions to content myself, in other words, to defend. «The sexual behaviour of a human being often lays down the pattern for all his other modes of reacting to life.» Just the opposite of Will Shakespeare in this film.

That's comedy for you. It lets us be easy on ourselves. When we see a tragedy, we break down a defense. We feel anxious and uneasy. When we see a comedy, we begin by breaking down a defense – penetrating – but we end by building one up or restoring one. We feel secure again. Shakespeare in Love *allows me some old friends, repression and denial. I am not Shakespeare nor do I want to be. 1593 is not 1999. Uh-huh.*

Where does that leave me as a critic and you as my reader? What have I been writing here? On the one hand I generalize about tragedy and comedy or point out about metaphorical mappings of sexual love onto creative writing. On the other I talk about my own poetic ambitions and their coming to nothing. I can understand why you might be interested in what I can say about comedy or metaphor, but why should you give a damn about my youthful aspirations?

What has happened to my fall-back position as critic? I think I am still behaving as a critic, as, if you will, handmaiden to the muse. If the aim of the writer be, as Horace put it, *aut prodesse aut delectare*, to enlighten and to delight, the aim of the critic is to enhance the writer's work. As a critic, I try to add to your pleasure and your sense of the «rightness» of the work.

With a little bit of luck, I may have done that here. I've set out the processes and associations in my own mind by which I like this film as much as I do. You can, if you are willing, use those themes that were psychologically important to me. You can try them out. You can, as I phrase it, «pass them through» the film and see what, if anything, they do for you.

That is, you can say, Holland says this is a film about inhibitions, sexual inhibitions and writing inhibitions. Let me think about my inhibitions as a writer. You did once want to write,

didn't you? Most people have. Let me think my thoughts about writing as I watch this film. How do I feel when I think about my limitations as a writer in connection with *Shakespeare in Love*? You can bet that Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman, when they wrote the film, were thinking about themselves as writers competing with Shakespeare.

More interestingly, you can say, How do I feel when I think about my own sexual inhibitions in connection with *Shakespeare in Love*? And, yes, you have them, we all do. I cannot guarantee it, but I feel quite sure that, if you think about your inhibitions as you think about *Shakespeare in Love*, you will find a more complicated, a more intriguing, and a more pleasing response to the film. I will then have done my work, less idolized than the writer's, but work that works for me, my work as a critic.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 293-301

Changing cultural perceptions of war: Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*

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War tramples in blind fury on all that comes in its way, as though there were to be no future and no peace among men after it is over: It cuts all the common bonds between the contending peoples, and threatens to leave a legacy of embitterment that will make any renewal of those bonds impossible for a long time to come.

Freud to Einstein, Why War?

My subject is the changing cultural perceptions of war in theatrical performances of *Troilus and Cressida*, which, of necessity, involves stage history. I shall confine myself to the stage productions of our own century and particularly the latter half of it for reasons that will become obvious. The play was written in 1602-3 and there is some evidence for a performance of it before a select audience at one of the Inns of Court in 1603. Certainly the linguistic difficulty of this dense, allusive drama might support that idea. There is no evídence for it having been performed at the Globe. The first Quarto edition of the play in 1609 proudly announces that the play has never been «clapper-clawed with palmes of the vulgar» nor «sullied with smoaky breath of the multitude». It was entered in the Stationers' Register on 7th February 1603 «as it is acted by my Lord Chamberlain's Men». This entry, Stanley Wells suggests, «seems to be a blocking entry, and the first Quarto did not appear until 1609». Its original title-page described it as having been «acted by the King's Majesty's Servants at the Clobe».[1] During the printing this title was, replaced by a

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[1] Stanley Well, *Shakespeare An Illustrated Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 178. See also David Bevington, Arden editor (1998) of *Troilus and Cressida*, p. 398.

'cancel', which omits the reference to performance.[2] (See also the Introductions in the Signet and especially the Arden edns.)[3]

Shakespeare's text of *Troilus and Cressida* was not «clapper-clawed» again for nearly three hundred years. Commentators and adaptors of this play, such as Dryden in the 17th century and Kemble in the early 18th century, felt they had to reorder what they considered to be the bewildering disorder of the play according to neo-classical rules. Dryden arranges for Cressida to kill herself to prove her faithfulness to Troilus, and he leaves out Helen altogether. After Dryden, John Philip Kemble tried re-writing Shakespeare's play in the late 1790s, cutting and transposing various scenes, but in the end, he decided it could not be performed, partly because of the lack of starring roles. This withdrawal was a definitive one for the play for the next 117 years.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries a renaissance of Elizabethan scholarship inspired revivals, of the drama. But this scholarship still considered it a difficult play, and early critics were divided as to its seriousness and its genre. Was it comedy? tragedy? tragi-comedy? Was it, as Arthur Simonds, suggested, the most comical of all tragedies, or the most tragical of all comedies? He goes on to ask «Did Shakespeare simply write this play to please himself?»[4] The answer to that question must be a decided no; Shakespeare was a consummate theatre man and not a closet dramatist. Was the love story of Troilus and Cressida its focus, as in Chaucer`s poem *Troylus and Criseyde*, with its origins in Bocaccio, and with which Shakespeare would have been familiar, or was the focus the war between the Greeks and Trojans, as in *The Iliad*, which Shakespeare would most probably have read in Chapman's 1598 translation of the *Seven Books of the Illiad* and *Achilles' Shield*. (Chapman's complete *Iliads* and *Homer's Odyssey* were not translated until 1614-15). Shakespeare may have had access to William Caxton's *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* (1475) and or John Lydgate's *Troy-Book* (c. 1412-20) Homer's epic is about a love story, an abduction, and military action. The play was the last to be included in the First Folio of 1623 where it was placed between the Histories and Tragedies.

Of course one might argue that, historically and dramatically, although Shakespeare's world was ravaged by fighting, as represented in his two sets of tetralogies, it was never threatened with the massively mechanized and ever more sophisticated weapons of our own century, nor with total physical destruction. The late medieval wars that form the basis for most of Shakespeare's experience of the subject only involved a small percentage of the population, and that for only limited periods of time. And we have no historical knowledge if soldiers suffered from stress induced psychiatric disorders, nor how the traumatic effects of war were experienced by the victims and survivors of war in general. Yet war *was* a central element in Shakespeare's time, as it is in our own. But this does not invalidate my argument.

Shakespeare's attitude to war, as far as it can be analysed from his plays varies a great deal, and is often ambiguous; however, this does not invalidate Shakespeare's perception of war for our own war-ravaged twentieth century. Our own knowledge of how tramatic events have affected the psychological functioniong and adaptation of the victims of war has developed gradually until the end of the twentieth century when global warfare and massive social upheaval throughout the world has caused an acceleration in the neuro-psychiatric understanding of the impact of trauma on soldiers, civilians, and entire cultures. Shakespeare would not have been familiar with Freud's (1920) psychoanalytic terminology of shell shock and war neuroses, or of the later terms combat stress reaction and post- traumatic stress syndrome; nevertheless, Shakespeare's insights into militarism and the psychological basis of aggression are essentially timeless. As a dramatist of the late fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries, he certainly seemed to understand that on the

[2] Wells, p. 179; see also Bevington, pp. 88-89.
[3] *Troilus and Cressida*, Arden, ed. David Bevington (London: 1998).
[4] *Troilus and Cressida*, Signet ed. Daniel Seltzer, (New York: Signet Classics, 1963).

collective level, the lack of inhibition of the aggressive impulses, owing to which war-killing was considered normal, was an important problem just as it has been for us in the twentieth century. With ever increasing sadistic savagery and ferocity the last decade of our twentieth century ends with its Bosnia, East Timor, and Kosovo barbarities. And yet we now know that human civilization in its entirety is founded on the change of aim of the aggressive tendencies, through inhibition, sublimation, displacement, and fusion with Eros. To the extent to which the individual superego is connected to society, which assumes its functions, the problem of war brings into focus the psychoanalytic problem of the defusion or eros and aggression brought about by war through specifically social processes. In an early attempt to define war neuroses, Freud writes of the conflict «between the soldier's old peaceful ego and his new warlike one», becoming acute «as soon as the peace-ego realises what danger it runs in losing its own life to the rashness of its newly formed parasitic double» (SE 17 209). Yet these conflicts do not often result in soldiers refusing point blank to fight, that might be considered dishonourable, even immoral, such is the power of the social superego and its militarist authoritarianism. This is particularly true of a conscripted army.

Of course my essay is bound to be provisional, incomplete, but any analysis of Shakespeare's dramas at whatever level, should always be a process of exploration discovering new questions to ask and possibly answer.

SHAKESPEARE'S VIEWS ON WAR

As a brief illustration of some of Shakespeare's views on war we might recall how, in *Henry V* Hal attempts to discuss, what a just war might be in his talk with Bates and Williams. When, he asks, is force justifiable? Henry fails to justify war, although he satisfies Williams on religious grounds: «Tis certain, every man that dies ill, the ill upon his own head – the King is not to answer it.» (1 V.i.174) And Bates determines to fight well for the King: «I do not desire he should answer for me, and yet I determine to fight lustily for him.» (1 V.i. 178-) Everyone has free will. Their soul is their own. But that is not all Shakespeare tells us through Williams: «There are few die well who die in battle.» (1 V.i. 133-34)[5] Bates speaks graphically of the inscription war makes upon the bodies of men: «... all those legs, and arms, and heads, chopped off in a battle.» (1V.i. 129) The obscenity of dismemberment and mutilation is fully imagined, and yet the argument for or against force is not really settled.

Falstaff kills off all but three of his men and he doesn't bat an eyelid: Falstaff is a fool and a coward, although an intelligent coward. «God keep lead out of me, I need no more whight than mine own bowels. I have led my ragamuffins where they are peppered. There's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive – and they are for the town's end to beg during life.» (1 H.1V.iv. 13)

When Hal asks him who are these «pitiful rascals», he is told, «Tut, tut, good enough to toss, food for powder, food for powder, they'll fill a pit as well as better. Tush, mortal men, mortal men.» (11.i.)

«They'll fill a pit» – this echoes, the appalling history of our twentieth century; just think of all the mass graves that have been discovered in Arminia, Levice, Katowice, Babi Yar, Auschwitz, Dachau, Cyprus, Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo – the list, though stupefyingly long, is by no means exhaustive.

In his Henry V1 Trilogy Shakespeare dramatizes the Wars of the Roses in England in the 14th century. His treatment of civil war includes the tragic scene whose stage directions read: «*Enter a Son that hath killed his father, at door, bearing the body in his arms*.» and a few lines further on we

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[5] *Henry V William Shakespeare The Complete Works*, Ed. and General Ed. Alfred Harbage, (New York: Viking, 1977).

have the antithesis: «*Enter, at another door, a Father that hath killed his son, bearing of his son.*» I quote briefly from this harrrowing scene:

Son How will a mother for a father's death
Take on with me, and ne'er be satisfied.

Father
How will my wife for slaughter of my son
Shed seas of tears, and ne'er be satisfied
.....

Father
These arms of mine shall be thy winding sheet;
My heart sweet boy, shall be thy sepulchre,
.....
I'll bear thee hence, and let them fight that will,
For I have murdered where I should not kill.
(3 Henry VI. ii. 102-106, 114-115, 120-121)[6]

The traumatic impact of this moving scene, the guilt, fear and stress of killing a beloved kin, the primal killing of father by son, and son by father collapses the ego, questions at last, in this extremity, the command of the aggressive communal superego.

Let us turn now to Shakespeare's view of war in *Troilus and Cressida* and the way it has been represented on the stage in the twentieth century. We might start by asking the question why is it that *Troilus and Cressida* has become the anti-war play for our times? After all Shakespeare wrote other plays about war, some of which I have just mentioned. Yet, starting with William Poel's 1903 production, it is *Troilus and Cressida* that holds the stage in the twentieth century, especially after World War Two with over sixty three performances since 1945 in England alone, and several more in America and Germany. After a period of some 117 years of no performances whatsoever. *Troilus and Cressida* seems to have come into its own in the twentieth century. Indeed it can be considered to be one of the defining plays of our war-torn century. For the remainder of this paper I want to trace briefly the differing ways in which particular moments in 20th century history have been articulated through particular productions of the text and trace how the history of these productions as «theatres of war» might inscribe shifts in the cultural perception of war from the beginning to nearly the end of the 20th century. These shifts are cultural rather than psychoanalytic, the latter perception is yet to take hold of the public understanding of the psychological reasons why war is waged.

Without question the most important starting point for modernism's claim on *Troilus and Cressida* is William Poel's 1912 production. The Elizabethan Stage Society, under Poel's direction, staged the play at Covent Garden and later at Stratford's Shakespeare Memorial Theatre with Edith Evans making her first stage appearance as Cressida. There was a great deal of attention given to Miss Evans performance, summed up by the Times critic as «repulsive-attractive» (The Times, 11.12.1912). Styan quotes Tyrone Guthrie, late in this highly innovative director's career, on Poel's production, «I believe», said Guthrie, «that he, íf anybody, ought to be regarded as the founder of modern Shakespearean production».[7] Poel formed the Elizabethan Stage Society in 1894 and his innovation was to retum to the non-illusionistic stage of the Renaissance. In this he was perhaps anticipatíng other dramatists and directors who would also question illusion on the stage, such as

[6] *Henry V1 Part 3, William Shakespeare The Complete Works*, General Ed. Alfred Harbage, Eds. Robert K Turner Jr. and George Walton Williams, (New York: Viking, 1977).

[7] J. L. Styan, *The Shakespeare Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 47.

Pirandello, Cocteau, Brecht and Beckett. Poel changed for ever the Victorian perception of Shakespeare by taking the actors out of their usual Victorian clothes and dressing them historically as Elizabethans. Poel also eliminated almost all scenery, allowing Shakespeare's scenes to flow rhythmically in the order in which he had dramatized them originally, and all this speeded up the play, as did Poel's attention to verse-speaking. Poel made his position clear in a letter to The Era, quoted in Styan:

> Managers must not repeat the mistakes of past actors and add to them more of their own. Stage conventionalities must be ignored, tampering with the text and rearranging the order of scenes to meet the requirements of the modern stage, forbidden.
> Actors must endeavour, by a careful and searching study of the text, in its first published form, to originate a method of presentation that shall be just to the poet's dramatic intentions, and conformable to the conditions for which the plays were wiitten.[8]

In spite of the Elizabethan-ness of the production which one might think would remove ít from the spirit of the first decade of the twentieth century, it nevertheless reflected a certain anxiety and antimilitarism in the tense years leading up to the First World War. Germany's political ambitions and military power, and the political unrest in the Balkans constantly made the newspaper headlines at the time, and the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo was to occur in less than a year.

Styan believes that the audience's sense of the theme and subject of a play by Shakespeare has much to do with the sense of the rhythm of contrasts in the ordering of events, and so it is vital that they not be changed. William Poel was the first for over three hundred years to recognise this rhythm, and it is to his credit that he restored it to the early modern English stage. Poel, in Styan's opinion, «can claim to be the first to sense that the creation of realistic illusion was not the purpose of Shakespeare's drama».[9]

In 1923, the Tercentenary year of the publicatíon of the First Folio, *Troilus and Cressida* was the last play to be performed thus completing Lilian Baylis nine year's great effort to produce the entire canon. This production would have played to an audience of war veterans and the trauma of World War One must have given it added power. In their book about Miss Baylis Sybil and Russel Thorndike write that the Old Vic «It was the only theatre that did consistently good plays all through the war». They go on to quote the Diiector of the Old Vic herself, «Shakespeare never fails us, Lilian used to say, (and she was no scholar where Shakespeare was concerned; I doubt if she ever saw a play completely through)»[10]

As Bowen[11] points out, most of the major productions of the play have coincided with war years, and more often with years that felt the threat rather than the actual presence of war Poel's in 1912, MacOwan's in 1938, Guthrie's in 1956; both Papp's in 1965 and Barton's in 1968 alluded to Vietnam. In 1961 Jack Laundau produced an American Civil War *Troilus and Cressida* taking his cue in the War's centennial celebration. The Trojans were the Confederates and the Greeks the Union troops. In the 1980s in England there was, a most important shift in emphasis, reflecting the

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 52. In an article in The Old Vic Magazine of September 1923, Poel writes, «In Shakespeare's time dramatists had no other object in view than performance, and the public judged the merits of a play by its performance. When the play became successful, to the extent that it was repeatedly being actect, then, and only then, did it go into print». In another article in the Stratford Herald, January 1923, he wrote, «For over two hundred, years the errors made on the stage have been equally disadvantageous to Shakespeare interests owing to the Restoration plays being built on French and not English models». And again in the same source, «Unfortunately, with the disappearance of the Elizabethan stage, all its traditions were soon forgotten, and plays being adapted to new conventions made a delicate piece of dramatic work become simply ranting melodrama».

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

[10] *Lilian Baylis*, Sybil and Russell Thorndike, (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd., 1938), pp. 59-60.

[11] Barbara E. Bowen, (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1993), p. 48.

changed and changing cultural role of women. In the 1990s the play seems to represent the depressing permanence of war in human history.

In 1938 Michael MacOwan decided to do the play in a commercial theatre, The Westminster, and in modern-dress. The contemporary clothes, though contrary to Poel's thinking, was part of the movement he inspired toward immediacy in the theatre, and with it went a relaxation in the style of verse-speaking that made Shakespeare's plays more accessible to a wider range of people. The use of modern dress was deliberately shocking: the military uniforms and battle-dress reflected the near certainty of war, even in this so-called year of appeasement, the year of the Munich agreement. Thersites was cast as a war correspondent.[12]

The Times critic wrote «After a minute or two one notices the clothes scarcely at all, but modern warfare is another matter and its artillery is difficult music for Shakespeare's verse and tales of single combat. *Troilus and Cressida* being so far removed from Greece and Homer.»[13] He misses the point I think. The focus of the play has shifted to 20th century warfare, its political-military authoritarianism, commodified patriotism, and its inscription on the body. And, moreover, from single combat of two individuals fighting with swords or pistols, to platoons, brigades and divisions of men fighting and bombing each other to the death with an incredible variety of mechanized weapons that makes two men fighting each other with swords seem like child's play. This cacophony is to be the music of our times: a continuing blitzkrieg all over Europe: gunfire, exploding bombs, crashing buildings, the anguished cries of those whose lives are broken, and those left behind to mourn the dead. (As I write, the Kosovo war is raging, on and on).

The stage was developing a tradition of staging battle scenes in thick smoke, and through the use of such properties as cannon, carts, ladders, flags, and battle-dress. The staging of crowded battle scenes as opposed to single combat between epic heroes, implies, a democratic approach to history which recognises the massive contribution the ordinary soldiers play in modern warfare. But the increased numbers also imply the potential for massive violence and appalling loss of life. Only 19 years before, in 1919, just outside this same Westminster Theatre in London, there had been a Victory Parade with tanks and regiments marching to Parliament Square to celebrate the ending of the war to end all wars. Most of the audience at this 1938 production would probably have seen the immensely popular anti-war play which came out of the first World War, Richard Sherriff's «Journey's End», a play set in a dugout on the Western Front.

That war cost the lives of 8 million people in Europe alone, and left 2 million more mutilated and mentally traumatized. No doubt many in the audience of MacOwan's 1938 production of *Troilus and Cressida* were still mourning the loss of a loved husbands, brothers, fathers or lovers. Probably many of the women in the audience were the new career women, some of the 1 million women whose prospective husbands had been buried in France twenty years ago. Furthermore, the twenty years between the two world wars was time enough for the sons of those who fought in World War One to be conscripted for World War Two.

If Poel's production had seen *Troilus and Cressida* as an opportunity to recreate the past, and more specially the heroism of the past; MacOwan's seized the opportunity when the public was perhaps receptive to a criticism of war, to collapse the distinctions between the ancient epic heroic, and the actual present threatening post-Munich atmosphere of immanent war. Shakespeare shows us the process, not just the result of the destruction of romantic heroism in love and politics.

The next notable production of *Troilus and Cressida* is Tyrone Guthrie's at the Old Vic Theatre in 1956, the year of the Suez Canal War. Alhough he cut the text considerably, Guthrie follows both Poel and MacOwan and sees the play as a sharp indictment of war. Despite his sense

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[12] This idea for Thersites as a War Correspondent has been repeated in the most recent Royal Shakespeare Company production of *Troilus and Cressida* at The Pit, London, Autumn 1998, directed by Michael Boyd. I have not seen, neither had any access to reviews of this production. (Information from Prof. Jay Halio).

[13] The Times, London, 1938.

that the play was an attempt to show the «confused and unreasonable» nature of war, Guthrie brought to his production a sense of drama as ritual and he used the stage in a revolutionary way. Like Brecht, by whom he was much influenced, Guthrie wanted to get rid of the proscenium stage which he thought encouraged the audience to be lazy, and essentially uninvolved in the intimacy of the stage, in other words the proscenium could encourage audience passivity. But it must be said at once that it did not discourage empathy. Guthrie set the play in the early part of the twentieth century, in 1913 when uniforms were more important part of war than death, as someone said. There were glittering epauletes, yellow braid, plumed helmets, decorations and dangling swords, «It is as if Ruritania were at war with Metro- Golden Mayer, wrote Milton Shulman, the drama critic for the Evening Standard, in a largely negative review.[14]

But The Telegraph critic was of the opinion that no ancient world dressing of the play could so deride militarism for a modern audience – modelled on the German and Austrian Empire's armies with the French navy for variety. There was lots of parading, drilling and saluting. The war was made to look tremendously ceremonious and abysmally silly. The costumes were devised to turn the long contention between frivolous Troy and fractious Greece into a struggle (let us say) between Ruritania and the Central European Powers in the year 1913. Again the setting is the Balkans a year or so before that fatal assassination at Sarajevo in June 1914. Guthrie cut the Prologue of course.

One critic writes, «by the time the Greeks are having their war council which might be the atmosphere of the Kaiser's Berlin, the stupidity of "blood and iron", militarism, the hollowness of love, deceit and wantonness, "wars and lechery", is hammered home, but if the sense is in, the sound is out». Another complaint was that the effect of the play, as always, when Shakespeare is modernized, is to emphasize its universality at the expense of the poetry. «What is lost is the sense of the actuality of an ancient war being waged» and the critic goes on to say, «It is no use our imagining that the war is taking place in 1900 or thereabouts. These men, calling one another Aeneas and Ajax, and Agamemnon, and speaking with modern intonations are fundamentally impossible. The Greeks and Trojans were personal heroes – unbeatable in battle, these officers dashing about the field with swords, after ordering canon-fire, merely cut ridiculous figures, devoid of nobility».

This critical cultural bias towards war and its resistance to the centrality of Shakespeare's anti-heroic, anti-militaristic attitude towards war perhaps made the play unpopular with certain classes, especially with the military and ruling class, until after 1945. Of course it is possible that the play's anti-glory, anti-heroic theme will always be unacceptable to some parts of an audience who resist cultural change. The audiences of the mid 1950s were living lives very much dictated by what had happened during the Second World War, and there was still a strong post-war blues feeling. We'd won the war, but lost the peace, the disillusioned were saying. There was considerable hardship: food rationing still, bombed cities to rebuild, not enough houses, not enough jobs, and behind it all was the stupefying figure of the total dead and injured: 60 million human lives lost. As has happened all too often in 20th century history, men and women's involvement in what often seems like interminable and apparently pointless wars and the immense effort to adjust to the hardships of post-war life can demoralize and debilitate entire sections of society; the ideals for which the war was fought can turn into disillusionment, and a prevailing cynicism. These same feelings are intrinsic to Shakespeare's dramatic treatment of war in *Troilus and Cressida.*

In spite of what the critics said, the perception of the play reproduced by MacOwan in 1938 and Guthrie in 1956 proved unbeatable. These two productions have had an enormous influence on productions of *Troilus and Cressida* in the second half of the twentieth century and established it in the repertory as a satire against war.

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[14] Milton Schulman, The Evening Standard, London, 1956.

With the tremendous social and political upheavals in the Europe of the 1960s, then the Civil Rights movement in America, the Viet-Nam war, the anti-war movements, the anti-nuclear movements, *Troilus and Cressida* and its iconography became almost a required play for any aspiring director.

The John Barton and Peter Hall production of the play in 1962 and Barton's 1968 and 1969 productions for the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford and in London continued the satiric anti-war treatment. The 1962 production presented a kinky, blood-red vision of Trojan life which offered an anatomy of a bored, corrupt, gossipy, perverted and lecherous society. The set was de-located, a sanded platform raised not more than 2 feet above the stage; the backcloth by Leslie Hurry was abstract, suggesting restless conflict. For the Greeks and for the Trojans in Barton's production, ideals have become disillusion, and the sickness of their society is deathly. What this production represented is something we all know, that what motivates patriotism is not always love of country, and what passes for love is often lust.

But it was Barton who in 1968-9 took the play in a new direction and gave it a definitive shape by merging the images of bed and battlefield, emphasizing the homo-erotic bonding of the Greek camp, and the connection between sex, war and aggression, thus attempting to reconcile the harshness of comedy and heroic drama into a cynically coherent modern story of mutability and disillusion.

Another important cultural change in the perception of *Troilus and Cressida* was a fairly long time coming; yet, there had been hints of it since the early 1970s, (perhaps even as far back as Dryden's unconscious resistances) – and that was the feminist interpretation of the play. In 1985-6 season, Howard Davies directed Juliet Stevenson as Cressida for the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford and London. I quote Stevenson herself in an interview with Lynn Truss, The Times, 6.5.86.

«No way was, I going to play her (Cressida) as a wanton, faithless hussy. There is no morality in the play, no system of values, no objective truth. No one speaks disinterestedly. One minute they will describe Helen as a goddess and the next she's a whore – it depends on what suits the argument. I see Cressida as streetwise; she knows what the game is and she plays it well. She knows that the only value women have in society is their sexual worth. And her wisecracking with men – which people have taken to be a sign of her wantonness – is all part of her protection. Moreover, it is quite clear that, if Cressida does not look after herself, no one else will. Her father has betrayed her, her uncle Pandarus betrays her, and then Troilus whom she genuinly loves, simply hands her over the the Greeks as a political hostage she offers no resistance. She had to protect herself all the time – and she does it by covering herself.»

Here then the emphasis of the play has shifted radically from the defining anti-war concepts of the past forty or so years to the femininst cultural critique of the previous fifteen years, and to the important recognition of the serious links between militarism and sexism in patriarchal society. In this revision of the love plot the erotic has become radically political. And this leads the play into the 1990s and to Sam Mendes production at The Swan in 1990, again there is great sympathy for Cressida who is played this time as a helpless girls responding to Diomedes in sheer panic. The threat of rape is very heavy in the greek camp scene.

MacOwan and Guthrie (1938 and 1956) both linked the play to the most disillusioning of conflicts, World War One, but Sam Mendes' 1990 production at Stratford included not only the feminist critique of the play, but also sought to broaden the historical references and scepticism by combining khaki tunics, medieval breat-plates and German helmets. The soldiers might be simultaneously fighting ín the Battle of the Somme, the Battle of the Bulge in W.W.2 or in Bosnia or Northern Ireland, or at Agincourt or Marathon. Out of these confusions could be seen the historical distinctions between the combatants and the similarities. A dead soldier is not a dead Frenchman, German, Croatian or Greek, but a *dead man*. In this recent production of *Troilus and Cressida* the audience is made to see that the drama explores the changed and changing, yet continuing state of war that seems to characterize all human history. One thing that seems to come

through loud and clear in *Troilus and Cressida* is Shakespeare's loathing of war, or perhaps he did not see it as a political necessity which had to be condoned.

We might end by asking why is it that *Troilus and Cressida* has become the anti-war play for our times? After all Shakespeare wrote other plays about war some of which I have already mentioned. Yet it is *Troilus and Cressida* that holds the stage with over 63 productions since 1945 in Britain alone, and more in Germany and America. The answer lies in our changed and changing attitudes to war, to the military and to militarism; our healthy suspicion of heroes, our distaste of any glamour or glory associated with battle, and our general and collective sense of guilt for the atrocious military history of our own century, its commodified patriotism, imperialism and its inscription on the body. Militarism is rife in the modern world and it is in the interests of the moral understanding and moral limitations of war that the widespread distribution and continuing influence of militarist ideas and values should be recognized. Can war ennoble? Can force be justified? Shakespeare faced up to these questions. The complex and continuous scrutiny with which Shakespeare dramatizes this theme of war for his own age, resonates deeply within our own 20th century psyches and cultures.

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 303-309

Cognitive/behavioral psychology and the case of *Pride and Prejudice*

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I

«An ounce of action is worth a ton of theory.»

Friedrich Engels

Although the title of this paper refers to «cognitive/behavioral psychology», it might better have been entitled «cognitive/behavioral therapy», for it grows out of a cognitive/behavioral practitioner's perspective, a perspective in which the question of «how?» is usually of greater moment than the question of «why?» Cognitive/behavioral therapy is, arguably, now the most frequently employed psychotherapy modality in the United States. Although its methods and theory predate the rise of managed care, it has been nurtured by a health care context focused on limiting expenditures.

Responses by cognitive/behavioral therapy to reimbursement limitations imposed by health maintenance organizations (and, indeed, the threatened cutoff of all reimbursements on the grounds that psychotherapy is of questionable value) have included empirical studies aimed at demonstrating the efficacy of its treatment methods, as well as the development of a manualized treatment technology/methodology designed to produce change in a relatively short period of time.

To be sure, a foundation of theory underlies cognitive/behavioral treatment methods, but typical cognitive/behavioral treatment texts reflect a preponderant concern with methods that facilitate the alleviation of symptomatology and movement toward constructive change. For example, Padesky and Greenberger, in the therapist's manual accompanying their popular client

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workbook, devote two pages to describing basic cognitive/behavioral theory and 260 pages to its application in therapy sessions. The etiology of cognitive structures, although not without interest, is secondary to identifying and changing them.

Can ideas gained from the practice of cognitive/behavioral therapy make an interesting contribution to the understanding of literary texts? This paper will use an examination of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* as a case study, a tactic which, while not the stuff of cognitive/behavioral outcome study empiricism, does fit within the circle of therapeutic collaborative empiricism designed to facilitate patient change.

In a foreword to a book by his daughter, Judith Beck, Aaron Beck, a key figure in the development of cognitive/behavioral therapy, describes the cognitive/behavioral «system» as a theory of personality and psychopathology whose postulates are supported by empirical research, a psychotherapeutic model providing treatment protocols, and a body of empirical outcome studies providing evidence of efficacy and change (vii). As mentioned above, the potential to effect change in a relatively short span of time has been central in spurring the development of cognitive/behavioral methods. These methods are targeted at cognitive change: «The therapist seeks in a variety of ways to produce ... change in the patient's belief structures ... in order to bring about emotional and behavioral change» (J. Beck, p. 2). While cognitive/behavioral therapists assess the role of cognitions, affect, behaviors, biology, and environmental factors in understanding and alleviating client problems, a central interventional focus is, generally, on identifying and modifying dysfunctional, maladaptive cognitions.

Meaning-making cognitive structures, called «schemas», interact with psychological systems of behavior, emotion, attention, and memory (Alford & A. Beck, pp. 15-17), and these schemas are «held firmly in place by behavioral, cognitive, and affective elements» (A. Beck & Freeman, p. 10). Schemas – that is, absolute core beliefs about the self, others, and the world – give rise to assumptions and rules that shape behavior and expectations, as well as to moment-to-moment automatic thoughts (Padesky & Greenberger, p. 5). For example, a person whose core belief is «I'm incompetent», will often have a related, propositional, predictive assumption, «If I try, I'll fail», and will have automatic thoughts such as «I can't do anything right», in the context of a failure to perform some specific task.

Modifying dysfunctional, systematically biased cognitions is achieved by what Aaron Beck and Freeman have termed «collaborative empiricism» (80). Patient and therapist work together to collect data and identify systematic bias – prejudice, if you will – in the patient's cognitive patterns. Padesky, a well-known cognitive/behavioral researcher and practitioner, explained recently in a seminar in St. Paul, Minnesota, that she literally teaches patients that they are essentially prejudiced against themselves. Specific cognitive mechanisms of bias, such as dichotomous, either-or thought, are identified in the patient. Therapist and patient evaluate evidence for and against these biased beliefs: «The therapist gets the patient to focus more on what is going on (thus forcing the patient from the dominance of dysfunctional schemas), to search for more information, and to generate alternative explanations for a particular event» (Alford & A. Beck, p. 24). This process provides «distance», or in the terms of a psychodynamic modality, an «observing ego». In addition, «experiments» are often devised in the service of confirming or disconfirming the patient's biased expectations. The essence of a cognitive/behavioral experiment facilitating change amounts to increasing observational estimation abilities through data collection and interpretation of that data. Such experiments can be powerful vehicles for change.

For example, a woman who will not drive her car outside a narrowly circumscribed area around her house because she believes there is a high probability she will become lost, confused, and unable to find her way home (that is, she believes she is incompetent in this area of endeavor) might be assisted in generating a plan for use in case she does become lost, and then actually trying it out if needed. Any outcome of the experiment can be therapeutically useful. If she doesn't need the plan, her estimate of the probability of becoming lost will decrease somewhat; if she needs the plan and it succeeds, her estimate of her competence will increase; and if she needs the plan and it doesn't work well, a non-perfectionistic approach to problem solving and plan revision can be explored.

II

Jane Austen is an interesting author to consider in the context of cognitive/behavioral therapy, as many of her novels are very much concerned with characters' distortions of objective evidence, as well as with the personal and psychological ramifications of cognitive error. The novel, *Emma*, for instance, examines Emma Woodhouse's cognitive errors – as she imagines that Harriet Smith would make a suitable mate for Mr. Elton or Frank Churchill, or that Jane Fairfax must have had a secret relationship with Mr. Dixon, the husband of her newly married friend. Marianne Dashwood, in *Sense and Sensibility*, is similarly filled with romantic illusions about Willoughby. Marianne begins with certain expectations about love which much of the rest of the novel dismantles. Anne Eliot, the heroine of *Persuasion*, Austen's last completed work, spends much of that book anxiously recycling thoughts that Captain Wentworth, whom she was persuaded some nine years earlier to reject as too risky and imprudent a marriage choice, is now indifferent to her and would prefer others.

There is a marvelous passage in *Sense and Sensibility*, which exemplifies Austen's view of the omnipresence and power of cognitive error. Mrs. Henry Dashwood and Lady Middleton, mothers of two children of nearly equal age, squabble over the comparative heights of their two sons, leading Austen to this wry comment:

> Had both the children been there, the affair might have been determined too easily by measuring them at once; but as Henry only was present, it was all conjectural assertion on both sides, and every body had a right to be equally positive in their opinion, and to repeat it over and over again as often as they liked. (204)

The need for objectivity, perspective, and the application of standards of evidence and proof could hardly be clearer.

Pride and Prejudice offers an extended example of how Austen deals with the need to reshape cognitive processes to deal with recurrent error. The basic problem Austen sets up in the book is Elizabeth Bennet's «prejudice» against Mr. Darcy stemming from his initial behavior. Darcy seems to her excessively proud – aloof and disdainful toward all those beneath him in social status. Austen makes clear the psychological reasons why Elizabeth feels so critical of Darcy: she is mired in a quite dysfunctional family, nearly all the members of which are likely to bring shame upon the family at the drop of a hat. There is thus a protective and defensive aspect to Elizabeth's aggressive dislike for Darcy, which one author of this paper has explored in another essay. The important thing from a cognitive/behavioral point of view, however, is that Elizabeth harbors a core belief that she is unworthy, part of a shameful family, a family which a sophisticated outsider like Darcy would be quick to condemn. Elizabeth manifests some anxiety disorder tendencies – watchfulness and prickly sensitivity toward any perceived slight – as well as an angry and scornful defensiveness learned from her father.

Elizabeth's use of dichotomous thought – i.e., a tendency to categorize things as absolutely good or absolutely bad rather than to see them as existing along a continuum – underlies her negative, shameful self-estimation and her misreading (or, at least, caricatured reading) of Darcy. Avoidant persons like Darcy are often regarded by others as cold, superior, and rejecting rather than as primarily anxious about their self-presentation. The sharply hierarchical class structure in which Elizabeth lives helps create schema which predispose her to interpret Darcy's behavior from the outset as snobbish condescension, pure and simple. This is an example of «confirmation bias» in action - the tendency in human information processing to seek confirmation of what one already believes. Dichotomous thought and confirmation bias are two common mechanisms of cognitive misestimation.

Contributing to Elizabeth's prejudice against Darcy is, of course, her attraction to George Wickham, who is able to poison the well with misinformation and partial information of his own about Darcy. Wickham, to be sure, has all the manners, charm, and apparent openness which seem

lacking in the «proud» Mr. Darcy, making Wickham's slanders all the more credible. If Elizabeth's assessment of Darcy is too critical and negative – a response partly to his avoidant personality features – her assessment of Wickham is, on the other hand, too positive, as she succumbs to the influence of the charms of his antisocial personality.

Austen devotes the precise center of her three-volume novel to exposing and unraveling Elizabeth's errors. Austen begins this shift of perspective with the very tense scene in which Darcy proposes to Elizabeth and in which Elizabeth replies by spurning and heatedly denouncing him (Chapter 34). The next chapter is devoted to Darcy's letter of explanation, in which he for the first time gives his side of Wickham's story, as well as offering his defense for discouraging the relationship between his friend Bingley and Elizabeth's sister, Jane. Chapter 36 contains Elizabeth's response to Darcy's letter, beginning with her «strong prejudice against anything he might say» and her wish to «discredit it entirely.... 'This must be false! This cannot be! This must be the grossest falsehood!'» (168). Elizabeth, however, soon finds herself able to «bring no proof of [the] injustice» of Darcy's accusations against Wickham, unable even «to recollect some instance of goodness, some distinguished trait of integrity or benevolence, that might rescue [Wickham] from the attacks of Mr. Darcy» (169). Chapter 36 ends, in fact, with a perfect example of cognitive reformulation: «After wandering along the lane for two hours, giving way to every variety of thought; reconsidering events, determining probabilities, [Elizabeth reconciled] herself as well as she could to a change so sudden and so important...» (172). The process of «re-considering events» and «determining probabilities» is a fine example of cognitive reprocessing. Clients in a cognitive/behavioral setting are frequently asked to complete «homework» in which they are called upon to assess the likelihood of one interpretation of events versus another – by actually assigning a numerical value to each probability.

By Chapter 40 Elizabeth is ready to confide in Jane that her assessment of the relative merit of Darcy and Wickham «has been shifting about pretty much» so that she is now «inclined to believe it all Mr. Darcy's» (185). Elizabeth is also now in a position to recognize the dysfunctionality of her wit:

> Yet I meant to be uncommonly clever in taking so decided a dislike to him, without any reason. It is such a spur to one's genius, such an opening for wit to have a dislike of that kind. One may be continually abusive without saying any thing just; but one cannot be always laughing at a man without now and then stumbling on something witty. (185)

Elizabeth's humorous scorn, so well modeled by her father, has allowed her to feel morally superior to Darcy and to discredit him as a source of feedback, but it also has served to prejudice her and distort her judgment.

III

One of the ways a cognitive/behavioral approach seems particularly appropriate to *Pride and Prejudice* stems from the fact that, in addition to showing how her characters mislead themselves, Austen also misleads her readers, encouraging them to adopt cognitive sets that will be proven wrong, inadequate, or incomplete. For example, just as the entire Meryton community falls for Wickham's apparent openness, pleasing manners, and ready conversation – as a result crediting the charges he levels against Darcy – so too does the reader believe them, guided by Elizabeth's judgment of the relative merit in these two gentlemen. The reader begins to learn the true story along with Elizabeth as she peruses Darcy's letter – reading over Elizabeth's shoulder, as it were. Austen utilizes her reader's own (largely Romantic) prejudices by taking advantage of the reader's pre-conceptions in favor of candor, openness, charm, and volubility, as opposed to apparent snobbishness, pride, and condescension. Gradually, along with Elizabeth, the reader becomes cognizant of his or her own prejudiced mistakes and misreadings.

Austen takes this confusion one step farther, however, by making a number of key moments and key issues in the novel opaque, extremely difficult to evaluate and judge. Many of them precisely involve difficulties in assessing Darcy which are strewn across the reader's path.

The first is the initial «insult» to Elizabeth at the Meryton Assembly, when Darcy is encouraged by his friend Bingley to dance with Elizabeth Bennet: «Turning round, he looked for a moment at Elizabeth, till catching her eye, he withdrew his own coldly and said: 'She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me'» (13). In context, this is hurtful and inexcusable. Elizabeth overhears Darcy's remarks, and resolves to get her own back: «She told the story ... with great spirit among her friends; for she had a lively, playful disposition, which delighted in any thing ridiculous» (13). Darcy's behavior, indeed, seems to confirm the popular judgment that «he was the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world, and every body hoped that he would never come there again» (12). Popular opinion with broad assent is, however, always an unreliable indicator in this novel, as demonstrated by the famous dubious assertion with which the book begins: «It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of good fortune, must be in want of a wife» (5). The book's second sentence makes clear that this «universal truth» is credited principally by parents with marriageable daughters. Darcy's remark at the Meryton Assembly is rude and indefensible, except, perhaps, after one comes to know his character better and to understand his shyness and reserve, his anxieties about mixing socially with strangers, and his status as an eligible bachelor with a fortune, which makes him so prime a target. The reader comes at last to understand and appreciate Darcy's complexity and the complexity of his social situation, if not entirely to excuse his comment.

A second example occurs during Darcy's first proposal of marriage to Elizabeth during her visit with the Collinses in Kent. In this chapter, as is so often the case in the book, the narrator's perspective is closely allied with Elizabeth's, transmitting her disgusted response to Darcy's confession that he has struggled against his affectionate feelings because of his sense «of the family obstacles which judgment had always opposed to inclination» (157). Elizabeth is offended by what she takes to be raw condescension and snobbery, and it is only in the succeeding chapter that this is modified by Darcy's explanation that the problem for him is less the social status of Elizabeth's family than their behavior – «the total want of propriety so frequently, so almost uniformly betrayed by [your mother], by your three younger sisters, and occasionally even by your father»[1] (163). In the proposal scene, however, the reader still cannot know Darcy's thoughts and meaning, and is required to share the narrator's assessment, which articulates Elizabeth's point of view and her reading of Darcy's intentions:

> He concluded with representing to her the strength of that attachment which, in spite of all his endeavors, he had found impossible to conquer; and with expressing his hope that it would now be rewarded by her acceptance of his hand. As he said this, she could easily see that he had no doubt of a favorable answer. He spoke of apprehension and anxiety, but his countenance expressed real security. Such a circumstance could only exasperate farther, and when he ceased, the color rose into her cheeks.... (157)

A re-reader of this novel might easily wonder whether Darcy's countenance actually does express both security – given that he is a wealthy, most eligible suitor – and some uncertainty and anxiety about Elizabeth's response – given what he is trying to communicate about the obstacles to their union and his knowledge of her feistiness. When Elizabeth turns on Darcy to accuse him of being

[1] Mr. Darcy's criticism of Mr. Bennet here, effectually begins a reconsideration of the character of Elizabeth's father. For the first half of the book, he has been presented as Elizabeth's protector and defender, as well as the parent from whom she derives her intelligence and wit. From this moment forward, however, Austen raises increasingly serious charges against Mr. Bennet and documents his irresponsibility toward his family, his failure to do his duty by them.

«the principal if not the only means of driving» Elizabeth's sister Jane away from Darcy's friend Bingley, Darcy «even looked at her with a smile of affected incredulity», the reader is told (158). Again, though the reader hasn't a clue at this moment, in retrospect it seems clear that there can be nothing «affected» about Darcy's incredulity. He must be genuinely amazed at what he is hearing, since he had no idea that Jane actually cared much for Bingley (163). In the context of the book as a whole, including what will be revealed later, the reader or, better yet, the re-reader of the novel is being invited to sift the evidence, to assess the probability of alternative interpretations, and to consider the possibility of prejudice in Elizabeth's response and in the narrator's voice.

Some twenty-four chapters later, in Chapter 58, Darcy and Elizabeth are coming at last to a full understanding following the meddling of Lady Catherine De Bourgh, and they review that first proposal scene. Much has been presented in Austen's third volume to repair the reader's view of Darcy's character and even to suggest a more sympathetic assessment of his pride. The reader has read the description of Pemberley House, heard the high praise of Darcy by his «intelligent servant» (205), the housekeeper of Pemberley, and been exposed to the favorable assessments of Darcy by Elizabeth's intelligent and insightful aunt, Mrs. Gardiner (210). In Chapter 58, however, Darcy owns up to his misconduct in the earlier proposal scene: «I cannot be so easily reconciled to myself. The recollection of what I then said, of my conduct, my manners, my expressions during the whole of it, is now, and has been many months, inexpressibly painful to me» (296). Darcy even introduces the idea that his powerful, explanatory letter that immediately followed the rejection of his marriage proposal was not written in the temper he thought at the time: «When I wrote that letter, ... I believed myself calm and cool, but I am since convinced that it was written in a dreadful bitterness of spirit» (297). Darcy next launches into a long confessional paragraph, in which he charges that «I have been a selfish being all my life» and that «I was given good principles, but left to follow them in pride and conceit»:

> I was spoilt by my parents, who though good themselves ... allowed, encouraged, almost taught me to be selfish and overbearing, to care for none beyond my own family circle, to think meanly of all the rest of the world, to *wish* at least to think meanly of their sense and worth compared with my own. Such I was, from eight to eight and twenty; and such I might still have been but for you, dearest, loveliest Elizabeth! What do I not owe you! You taught me a lesson, hard indeed at first, but most advantageous. By you, I was properly humbled. (297)

The novel has certainly provided ample evidence to support the idea that Darcy's pride has been, fundamentally, a proper pride – that, in the words of Charlotte Lucas, Darcy «has a right to be proud», or that, in the judgment of the bookish Mary Bennet, Mr. Darcy's pride is quite distinct from «vanity» (19-20). Near the close, however, Darcy has come to the conclusion that «I cannot be so easily reconciled to myself», that his conduct, manners, and speech have indeed been wanting. Perhaps Elizabeth's summing up is most on point:

> We will not quarrel for the greater share of blame annexed to that evening [of the Meryton Assembly, when they first met].... The conduct of neither, if strictly examined, will be irreproachable; but since then, we have both, I hope, improved in civility. (296)

Elizabeth suggests that it is simply not possible for the characters or the reader to lay all the blame on one party. Over the course of the book both the principal characters and the reader have learned to assess behavior in more complex, nuanced terms, rather than in stark black and white.

Pride and Prejudice is a novel, then, in which the principal characters and the readers are constantly reassessing events, interpretations, and judgments. It constantly establishes how the perceptual schemas of the characters are colored by negative and defensive thoughts, and are distorted by various moods of anxiety, anger, and shame.

Austen's premise is thus also a fundamental premise of cognitive/behavioral therapy – that by a «collaborative empiricism» individuals can achieve a more realistic, balanced appraisal of their

situations. The Austen critic, Marilyn Butler, sees this thematic of the need for constant self-examination in a specifically Christian context: the individual requires reason and objective evidence in order to clarify conjecture and banish erroneous assertions (122-23, 186-96). Surely Austen herself must have in part conceptualized the process in this way. But the psychological change Austen depicts also resembles modern cognitive/behavioral psychotherapy; as prejudices are tested, evaluations of characters and their behavior shift, and the individual acquires a more objective perspective, one in which the danger of being overwhelmed by dysfunctional feelings and thoughts is reduced.

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